The **University of Bremen**, U Bremen Excellence Chair Prof. Mario L. Small PhD/ Research Group "Large-Scale Data and Field Research in the Study of Social Networks" at the SOCIUM – Research Center on Inequality and Social Policy, invites applications for the following position

# 65% Research Associates (f/m/d) – Position for PhD-candidate in Sociology (qualitative empirical social research)

**German pay-scale EG 13 TV-L (65%),**

**part time (65%), three years  
Start of contract: as soon as possible (presumably March 2021).**

The time limitation is based on § 2 (1) WissZeitVG (Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz, i.e. temporary science employment act). Therefore, candidates may only be considered who dispose of the respective scope of qualification periods according to § 2 (1) WissZeitVG.

The **University of Bremen**, a mid-sized university with 320 professors, 19.500 students and a full-spectrum of academic disciplines is one of Europe’s leading research universities and maintains close cooperation with international universities and non-university research institutions in the region. The promotion of young researchers is a core element of Bremen's research strategy.

The 'U Bremen Excellence Chairs' program is a new initiative at University of Bremen since 2019. It enables internationally outstanding researchers to establish their own working groups at the university and to integrate them into a network of excellent research institutions worldwide in their respective disciplines. Mario L. Small's research group will study “**Large-Scale Data and Field Research in the Study of Social Networks**.” One major promise of “big data” was the ability to understand how social networks emerge, operate, and shape human behavior on a much larger scale than previously possible. However, as wide-eyed enthusiasm has given way to sober analysis, researchers and the public have become increasingly aware of the limitations of such data. This project will examine the extent to which field-based research (interview and survey research) can help address the limits of computationally intensive analysis of large-scale administrative data. Focusing on problems such as boundary specification, locality of interaction, algorithmic confounding, and misinterpretation of meaning, we will examine the extent to which bringing field research to bear on the analysis of large-scale administrative data can help improve our understanding of the relationship between networks and social inequality.

**Tasks:**

* Conduct in-depth interviews or help conduct surveys with users, non-users, designers, and others involved in online platforms related to social networks or in other forms large-scale data related to inequality or social networks, broadly conceived;
* Work with a postdoctoral researcher and others to help design, execute, and write the results of research combining field methods and large-scale data;
* Conduct independent research and development of own PhD project within the methodological and analytical framework of the group based at U Bremen;
* Support the organisation of international workshops.

**Requirements:**

* Training and experience in qualitative interview methods and empirical social research.
* Very high level of proficiency in English (including demonstrated academic writing skills and the ability to interview native English speakers effectively); proficiency in German is welcome, but not required.
* Either coursework or other forms of training in social networks is useful but not required.
* A completed, high quality Master's degree in sociology or a related social science.
* Demonstrated evidence of initiative, independence, drive, efficiency, productivity, the ability to work in groups, and a commitment to high quality social science research.
* Strong interest in developing connections with other researchers.  Experience gained at other national/international research institutions is welcome.

Salary and benefits are linked to the German employee scale TVL13 (65%). International candidates are highly encouraged to apply.

The review process will begin on **January 1, 2021**. Applications and inquiries should be sent **by December 31, 2020** with the **reference number A284/20** to

SOCIUM – Forschungszentrum Ungleichheit und Sozialpolitik  
Verwaltung, Frau Dorit Lafferenz  
Postfach 33 04 40  
28334 Bremen

or electronically as pdf-attachment to [socium-bewerbungen@uni-bremen.de](mailto:socium-bewerbungen@uni-bremen.de).

Please note that the application should be submitted in English and that we can only accept it if it includes all required documents as a single PDF file: CV, a cover letter describing your background, interests, and motivation for applying (all in English), academic certificates and a written paper (in English or German).

The University of Bremen has received a number of awards for its gender and diversity policies and is particularly aiming to increase the number of female researchers. Applications from female candidates, international applications and applications of academics with a migration background are explicitly welcome. Disabled persons with the same professional and personal qualifications will be given preference.

For further information please contact Prof. Mario L. Small, PhD ([mario\_small@harvard.edu](mailto:mario_small@harvard.edu)) or Prof. Dr. Betina Hollstein ([betina.hollstein@uni-bremen.de](mailto:betina.hollstein@uni-bremen.de)).