

APPLY 10-2026

Postdoctoral Research Scholar - Understanding habitability in a changing climate

The **Systemic Risk and Resilience (SYRR)** research group of the **Advanced System Analysis** program is seeking a motivated and intellectually curious Postdoctoral Research Scholar. The SYRR group investigates systemic anthropogenic and environmental risks, combining advanced quantitative modeling, qualitative research, empirical assessment, and soft systems analysis to address some of the most pressing challenges of our time. The selected researcher will play a key role in developing a novel conceptual framework on habitability under climate change, as a part of the ERC-funded project ALTHAEA

ABOUT ALTHAEA

ALTHAEA investigates how climate change affects the habitability of places and how societies respond when conditions become untenable and who gets to define what "habitable" means, how these decisions are made, and how habitability loss is governed. At its core, the project introduces the idea of "lived habitability," bridging environmental realities with social, and political factors, and explores it through four richly grounded case studies on planned relocation in flood-prone regions across southern Europe: Italy, France, Greece, and Spain.

MAIN TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead field research across 2 of the 4 case study sites. Activities include desk research on relevant policy and legislative documents for each case study and carrying out semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion.
- Assess how habitability is framed and negotiated across governance scales, focusing on the role of (im)mobility decisions and contested stakeholder perspectives.
- Drive the conceptual development of "lived habitability", by identifying and mapping its psychological, emotional, social, institutional and political dimensions, and the dynamic relationships between them.
- Produce high-quality scientific publications in peer reviewed journals and contribute to project deliverables, translating field insights into rigorous, impactful research outputs.
- Present methods and results to both technical and non-technical audiences. Initiate and organize conference sessions and workshops.

SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- A PhD degree in environmental psychology, human geography, anthropology or a related social science discipline.
- Demonstrated experience in working on disaster risk reduction or/and climate adaptation.
- Strong command of qualitative methods, including policy analysis, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups.
- Hands-on fieldwork experience, ideally in complex socio-environmental contexts
- Excellent written and spoken English, with a track record of academic writing and confident presentation skills
- Knowledge of the language(s) of one or more case study countries (Italian, French, Spanish, or Greek) is an **asset**.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in an interdisciplinary international research environment.

APPOINTMENT TERMS

The successful candidate should be available to take up the position as of **1st October 2026**.

The place of work is IIASA in Laxenburg, near Vienna, Austria (home office options available).

The successful candidate will be appointed as a research scholar (**R2**) in accordance with the [IIASA profiles for research careers](#).

WE OFFER

- **3.5-year full-time** fixed term contract (100%, 40 hrs/week) with the possibility of extension thereafter. Flexible arrangements on duration can be discussed.
- An attractive annual salary, exempt from income tax in Austria (subject to deductions for health insurance and/or social security), of *at least* **EUR 55,215.00**
- The possibility to contribute to environmental sciences for sustainability and global wellbeing.
- An international atmosphere and pleasant working environment in a historic market town surrounded by green areas.

IIASA salaries are:

- Not directly comparable with other employers in Austria, due to the unique legal status and privileges granted to IIASA.
- Subject to the principle of income aggregation (Progressionsvorbehalt in German).

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- Educational subsidies for children of school age enrolled in private schools in Austria.
- A generous annual leave entitlement.
- Relocation allowances and paid home leave for employees in scientific and professional categories who are hired from international locations.
- Assistance for newcomers to Austria with visa, work and residency permit applications.
- Support finding accommodation in Austria.

Further details [here](#).

About IIASA

IIASA is committed to a working environment that promotes equality, diversity, tolerance and inclusion within its workforce. This is reflected in our [IIASA core values](#). We encourage qualified candidates from all religious, ethnic, and social backgrounds to apply. In the case that candidates are equally qualified, preference will be given to applicants from countries where IIASA has a [Member Organization](#).

Further Information

For further information about this opportunity please contact:

[Elisa Calliari](#) - Senior Research Scholar

For general information about working at IIASA, please contact: recruitment@iiasa.ac.at

Applications

In order to apply for this opportunity, you will need to provide the following documents in English:

- A cover letter outlining your motivation for and fit to the position.
- A detailed Curriculum Vitae and a recent example of your research work
- The names, addresses (including e-mail), and telephone numbers of two reference givers.

Deadline for receipt of applications: 14 June 2026

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