

The **Sir Peter Ustinov Institute for the Research and Combatting of Prejudices**, following the recommendation of its scientific advisory board and subject to successful funding, is pleased to announce the

Sir Peter Ustinov Visiting Professorship of the City of Vienna 2026 at the University of Vienna

(short-term professorship within 90 days).

Scholars from all disciplines who hold a habilitation or an equivalent qualification and have demonstrable expertise in the following research area are encouraged to apply:

The Crisis of Liberal Democracy: Causes, Background, and Counterstrategies

This visiting professorship is dedicated to analyzing the current challenges facing liberal democracy. The primary goal is to identify the causes, historical contexts, and global developments that have contributed to its current crises. In addition to global and socio-economic factors, the focus will include social-psychological dimensions, such as experiences of loneliness and declining solidarity. The professorship will also explore shifting boundaries of public discourse, particularly in the tension between free speech and hate speech. Successful candidates will possess an interdisciplinary approach and a strong research profile in this field. Applicants should be prepared to offer both a **seminar** and a **public lecture** at the Institute for Contemporary History at the University of Vienna.

Key Topics for the 2026 Professorship

- Causes and historical background of the erosion of liberal democracies
- Populism, authoritarianism, and societal polarization
- The impact of digital media and AI on political discourse and opinion formation
- Social and economic inequality and its effects on democratic structures
- Freedom of speech and the limits of free expression
- The shifting boundaries of public discourse
- Strengthening the resilience of liberal democracy and fostering democratic innovation

The visiting professor will address these topics interdisciplinarily, engaging students and the broader academic community through **Two courses** (one lecture and one seminar) offered during either **Summer Semester 2026** or **Winter Semester 2026/27**. To ensure effective student engagement, the visiting professor is expected to be **present in Vienna during the contract period**.

Applicants must submit the following documents:

- **Motivation letter**
- **Curriculum vitae**
- **List of publications**
- **Lecture proposal (Bachelor level):** A detailed plan outlining the structure of a **12-session course (90 minutes per session)**, approximately 4,000 characters
- **Seminar proposal (Master level):** A detailed plan outlining the structure of a **12-session seminar (90 minutes per session)**, approximately 4,000 characters

The visiting professorship is remunerated with a total gross salary of **€ 20,155**. For further information, please contact the Sir Peter Ustinov Institute.

The University of Vienna has an anti-discriminatory employment policy and attaches great importance to equal opportunities, the [advancement of women](#) and [diversity](#). We lay special emphasis on increasing the number of women in senior and in academic positions among the academic and general university staff and therefore expressly encourage qualified women to apply. Given equal qualifications, preference will be given to female candidates.

Applications should be sent via email to the Sir Peter Ustinov Institute at office@ustinov.at by **31st May 2025**.