

EXTRACTIVISM

CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS 2026

EXTRACTIVISM is accepting applications for short-term fellowships, funded for up to two months, at the University of Kassel and/or the Philipps University of Marburg in 2026.

EXTRACTIVISM is a collaborative research project funded by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology, and Space (BMFTR). It is based at the University of Kassel and Philipps University of Marburg. The project examines natural resource extraction worldwide, with a focus on Latin America and the Maghreb. We analyze extractivist states within the broader context of the climate crisis and its intersection with ongoing geopolitical shifts, rising global inequalities, and energy regime transitions. We argue that understanding the implications of global decarbonization, exploring the “dark sides of sustainability” and its effects in the Global South, is essential for understanding the role of countries that depend on the extraction and export of raw materials and natural resources.

The fellowship program:

At EXTRACTIVISM, we strive to understand how and under what conditions North-South and South-South relations develop, especially in situations where energy security and the geopolitics of raw materials become more significant. To do this, we collaborate and learn with scholars from the regions we study, inviting guest researchers annually to Kassel and Marburg to research with us for up to two months. Therefore, we seek to combine a strong empirical focus with theoretical work, connecting regional field research and primary data with both qualitative and quantitative analysis to facilitate important cross-regional comparisons. This approach enables us to develop new theories and methods from a cross-area, trans-regional perspective, examining whether and why similar social, cultural, and political patterns emerge across regions.

Our fellowship program aims to promote in-depth discussions among scholars from and/or working on the Global South, with a particular focus on Latin America and the Maghreb, but not exclusively, by bringing together academics from disciplines such as political science, economics, sociology, anthropology, sustainability studies, and history. The interdisciplinary approach of our fellowship is crucial for encouraging knowledge exchange among academics worldwide. In this way, we aim to create intellectual spaces where interdisciplinary scholars can engage in dialogue and explore policy options grounded in solid empirical, theoretical, and methodological foundations.

In 2026, we welcome guests to examine the geopolitics of global energy transition from a Global South perspective.

Deadline for submissions is 31.03.2026.

Fellows are asked to analyze the conditions under which negotiations and structural changes occur. Specifically, we examine the geopolitical and geoeconomic impacts of the energy transition and how they shape the political actions of strategic groups in the Global South, especially

in Latin America and the Maghreb. We are also interested in including historical perspectives in our social science approach to gain insights from past energy transitions. We seek scholars working on:

- Which raw materials are expected to become more important, and which strategic groups domestically and internationally might benefit from these changes?
- What geopolitical shifts and outcomes are already occurring in Latin America and the Maghreb?
- Who stands to gain or lose from this transition? Are there progressive reactions toward regional integration or domestic structural reform? Are reactionary actors gaining influence through this process?
- How are countries in the Global South, especially in Latin America and the Maghreb, responding to these challenges in terms of their economic policies, foreign relations, and development plans?
- Which social, political, and economic groups are driving change, and which are hindering these efforts?

Thematic scope:

The world is transitioning into a new energy era. Decarbonization in favor of renewable energy sources has already begun globally, boosting the demand for strategic, or 'green', raw materials. The resurgence of geopolitical tensions and geoeconomic competition has accelerated national efforts to reorganize production and consumption to reduce vulnerability and capitalize on new technological opportunities, especially in green technologies. Nevertheless, demand for fossil fuels continues to rise, and technological advances enable unconventional extraction, ensuring that oil and gas will remain valuable resources for years to come.

Against this background, many countries in the Global South receive mixed, and sometimes contradictory, signals about adjusting their position in the global economy and their partnerships. On one hand, they gain new prominence for those seeking access to the emerging 'green' resources, which are often abundant and cheaper in these regions. On the other hand, they also attract the interest of many actors aiming to increase oil and gas production at low costs to counter the global energy transition. Latin America and the Maghreb are central to these shifts.

Since at least the nineteenth century, Latin America and Africa have largely followed extractivist development models, structured around exporting natural resources to industrial centers in Europe, North America, and Asia. Today, both regions are central to the global energy transition, hold major reserves of critical raw materials, and are increasingly seen as future producers of renewable energy. As debates over strategic minerals, hydrogen, and large-scale solar and wind projects intensify, these dynamics are generating domestic conflicts and reshaping political coalitions. Yet energy transitions are fundamentally power struggles: China, the EU, and the United States, alongside transnational corporations, dominate key green industrial sectors and compete for leadership and access to strategic raw materials worldwide. Initiatives such as the EU Green Deal and Global Gateway are already transforming Latin America by linking investment, mineral extraction, and supply-chain positioning, while Trump-era tariff policies disrupt economies in the Global South and China expands its influence through a reoriented Belt and Road Initiative shaped by technological and geopolitical rivalry.

Therefore, extractive states in the Global South, particularly in Latin America and the Maghreb, face a dual challenge. On one side, they must navigate a new dynamic in geopolitical relations with the Global North, driven by the desire for access to strategic resources. On the other

side, this geopolitical dominance within energy transition dynamics fosters significant rivalry and protectionism, further limiting the potential for a sustainable transfer of technology or knowledge to the Global South. This limits their ability to leverage this moment to grow their economies, promote structural change, and address issues caused by the ongoing extractivist development model. Ultimately, the geopolitics of the energy transition highly impacts the development pathways and alternatives for these extractivist states. Understanding the many ways this process can simultaneously risk reproducing old extractivist hierarchies or enable genuine developmental autonomy and sustainable transformation is the guiding threat of this fellowship program.

Requirements and Conditions

The fellowship is open to outstanding social scientists, including those in economics, sociology, political science, international relations, anthropology, and history. Fellowships start as early as mid-September, and fellows must stay in Germany for at least one month. The scientific committee will select candidates based on academic excellence and reputation, publications, research experience, and the quality of the submitted project. Additionally, applicants should be familiar with at least one of the project's languages: English, German, Spanish, or French. It is also strongly recommended that applicants have an intermediate level of English communication.

Fellows will receive a monthly stipend of 3.000€. Travel costs to and from Kassel or Marburg will be covered once. Finally, EXTRACTIVISM supports families and is committed to gender equality, social inclusion, diversity, and affirmative action policies. Applicants from the Global South or from minority groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Application:

The following documents are required in English, French or Spanish:

- Application form ([download here](#)) in which you state your available dates,
- A motivational letter stating why the candidate is a good fit,
- Short CV (max. five pages), including a list of project-related publications,
- Copy of the doctoral certificate,
- Research proposal with research schedule, work plan, and expected outcomes (max. 2.500 words).

Applications must be sent by 31.03.2026 electronically as a single PDF to fellows@extractivism.de

For more information about the project, please access www.extractivism.de

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