

## **PhD Position (4 years) – Political Science & Public Administration - UCLouvain – Institute of Political Science Louvain-Europe (ISPOLE)**

### **Application Deadline: 21 June 2026 (23:59 CET)**

#### **Project Overview**

The F.R.S.-FNRS-funded project CITEXPAL examines how citizens' everyday experiences with public administrations shape their perceptions of state legitimacy. By bridging research on administrative burden and policy feedback, the project shifts focus from an institutional perspective on bureaucratic encounters to citizens' lived, subjective experiences. It explores how cumulative and layered encounters with bureaucracies and policies shape the legitimacy citizens grant the state. The project studies the case of Belgium, collecting qualitative data in Wallonia and Flanders (longitudinal interviews and focus groups).

#### **Position Details**

- **Supervision:** Prof. Claire Dupuy (ISPOLE) & Prof. Samuel Defacqz (IRIS-L).
- **Duration:** 4-year fixed-term doctoral scholarship.
- **Start Date:** 1 October 2026 (flexible based on candidate's availability).
- **Funding:**
  - €2,500/month (tax-free, including social security).
  - Coverage for research expenses (fieldwork, conferences, etc.).
- **Environment:**
  - Enrollment in UCLouvain's doctoral training program.
  - Access to research support, seminars, and academic networks.

#### **Candidate Profile**

- **Master's degree** in political science, public administration, or related field (minimum 14/20 or equivalent to meet the requirements for admission to UCLouvain's doctoral programme). Final-year students are encouraged to apply provided that they obtain their degree before the start of the scholarship.
- **Research interest:** State-citizen interactions (e.g. administrative burden, policy feedback), legitimacy, interpretive methods.
- **Language skills:**
  - French and Dutch (spoken).
  - English (written and spoken).
- **Research experience:** MA thesis, research assistance, publications, and/or conference presentations.
- **Mindset & Research Skills:** intellectual curiosity, self-motivation, and initiative, along with strong critical analysis and the capacity to carry out independent research—even in challenging or sensitive fieldwork environments.
- **Engagement & Collaboration:** Active participation to ISPOLE's research activities, national and international conferences or research events, and research stays abroad when relevant.

## Application Requirements

Submit one PDF file to [marina.kyndt@uclouvain.be](mailto:marina.kyndt@uclouvain.be) by 21 June 2026 (23:59 CET) with the following:

- **Cover letter** (2 pages max): Your research interests, motivation and alignment with CITEXSPAL's goals.
- **Research proposal** (2 pages): Preliminary ideas for your PhD project.
- **CV**: Academic background, relevant courses taken, publications/conferences.
- **Writing sample**: MA thesis (or chapter), research paper, or equivalent.
- **References**: Contact details of two academic referees (no letters required).

## Selection Process

- Shortlisting: Notifications sent by 29 June 2026.
- Interviews: 2 July 2026 (in person at Louvain-la-Neuve or via Teams).

## Additional Information

- Diversity Policy: UCLouvain promotes equal opportunities and non-discrimination.
- Contacts:
  - Project inquiries: Prof. Claire Dupuy ([claire.dupuy@uclouvain.be](mailto:claire.dupuy@uclouvain.be)) and Prof. Samuel Defacqz ([samuel.defacqz@uclouvain.be](mailto:samuel.defacqz@uclouvain.be)).
  - Administrative questions: Ms Marina Kyndt ([marina.kyndt@uclouvain.be](mailto:marina.kyndt@uclouvain.be)).