

Applying at the EHESS for an associate or full professorship

In 2023, the EHESS is recruiting 2 associate professors, 2 professors at large and 6 full professors in the social sciences. The application files must be sent in at the latest by Tuesday October 11, 2022, midday (Paris time) on <http://recrutement.ehess.fr>.

The elections will take place in March/April 2023.

In part the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) owes its special standing within the international community of research in the humanities and social sciences to the way in which its faculty is recruited.

It is original on two counts. First of all, there is no profile or earmarking (by field or research theme) of the open positions: the assistant and full professorships are open to the entirety of the social sciences. Furthermore, the entirety of the EHESS faculty, gathered in a plenary assembly, participates in the recruitment of their new colleagues, all fields and areas of specialization together. Even if one's research is primarily carried out from within a research center and one's teaching takes place within a certain program, each and every individual is first and foremost a member of the EHESS as a whole.

This originality constitutes one of the strengths of the institution and provides immense opportunities to faculty who are atypical, both in their backgrounds and in their projects. It does, however, make it necessary to make our procedures explicit. This *vade mecum* aims to present in detail the positions on offer and the election process at the EHESS.

What is the EHESS?

The School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) is a research and teaching institution that is unique within the international scientific and intellectual landscape. Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu, François Bourguignon, Fernand Braudel, Michel de Certeau, Jacques Derrida, Françoise Héritier, Milan Kundera, Jacques Le Goff, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Nicole Loraux, Germaine Tillion, to mention only a few, found in the school an institution and an intellectual environment conducive to the development of their work.

Today, the EHESS counts 215 faculty members who work in the area of the humanities and social sciences (anthropology, arts sciences, law, economy, science studies, geography, history, linguistics, literature, philosophy, psychology, sociology). The research carried out combines disciplinary rigor with interdisciplinary perspectives and encourages dialogue between knowledge systems. This openness is not just disciplinary. The international dimension of the institution can be measured in its recruitment practices as well: 20% of the faculty members come from countries other than France and the institution is home to a majority of foreign students. Many faculty members work on extra-European cultural areas.

Unique because of its capacity to blend different disciplinary traditions and academic cultures, the EHESS has also developed original teaching methods, in particular in the French context. The linchpin of teaching is **the seminar**. This practice of training for research through research has formed an environment in which didactic activity is closely bound up with scientific production, through publications, conferences, meetings and collective projects, or else through seminars given by foreign visiting professors (250 invitations per year). These

activities are carried out in parallel in research centers, among the most innovative in France, most often co-accredited by the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS).

The School is a founding member of the public institution Campus Condorcet – Paris Aubervilliers, which aims to build an International Campus on which about half of the EHESS research teams is located since 2021.

Finally, the EHESS has a press that publishes about thirty books per year, as well as 8 internationally-renowned journals, both generalist (*Annales, L'Homme*) and specialized.

What positions are open?

The School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) is recruiting faculty members at different ranks:

- associate professors,
- full professors
- professors at large positions.

In both cases, the positions are **permanent French civil servant posts**.

The two ranks must however be distinguished. The associate professors who wish, as their career develops, to move on to a full professorship at the EHESS must apply again. The professors at large retain their position in their home university or institution (in France or abroad); they must teach their seminar at the EHESS and are full members of the faculty assembly.

All the jobs on offer are designated as **faculty member positions in the “social sciences.”** This expression is to be understood in the broad sense, including the humanities and the mathematical sciences applied to the social. This common designation indicates that the positions are not predefined as to field or theme—a specificity which reflects the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary commitment of the EHESS. It is the faculty assembly that chooses among the applicants, through an absolute majority vote of those present, without distinction of field or theme.

The election is based on two main criteria: on the one hand the scientific profile, which includes the background of the applicants and their publications; and on the other hand on the research and teaching project. The latter is an original aspect of the recruitment process at the EHESS: it is through this project that the applicants themselves define the profile of the position for which they will be recruited.

How does one put together an application file?

The application file reflects the specific profile of EHESS faculty. The complete list of documents is detailed in the sheet published for each recruitment campaign. Typically, it includes:

- **an administrative information sheet,**
- **a complete *curriculum vitae*,**
- **a selection of the main publications,**

but also two documents that are more specific to the EHESS and key elements of the file:

- **the research and teaching project,**

- **the 2-page summary.**
- The ten-page **research and teaching project** is a key document for the evaluation of the application files. It articulates the scientific and intellectual project that the candidate proposes to conduct as a member of the EHESS. If the applicant is recruited, its title will become the title of the chair of the new faculty member. This is the indication that this project must deploy an intellectual ambition, an approach as much as a subject or a fieldwork area. It differs in this way from projects to request research funding (from institutions such as the ANR, for example). A coursework program is also not what is expected: a teaching program can in no way take the place of the project; rather such a program bolsters the project by indicating one's interest in advanced students. It is also not a three to five years research subject, but rather a medium- to long-term project that can dare to be truly ambitious. The main expectation is for a problematic, a thought process grounded in an object, in fieldwork, in a discipline, but always open to the other social sciences or at least in dialogue with them. The election by the EHESS faculty as a whole is based on the premise that the social sciences are all closely related, speak to each other, and the vocation of the institution is not a narrow specialization but openness and interdisciplinary dialogue. Furthermore, since the basic tool of research is the seminar, it is expected that the project shall consider research and teaching together, and not as two separate subjects. The project is written in French.
- The **2-page summary** is a summary of the CV and the project on one double-sided page. It is often a strategic piece of the file, because for most of the voters it is the piece of the applicant's file they look at first. Taking extra care with it is therefore recommended. The front page is a selection of the stand-out elements from the CV. Using written paragraphs is not recommended: better to present it in traditional form, using bullets and lists. This enables the reader to get a preliminary sense of the applicant's background. Do not forget to include your name. The back page summarizes in one page the research and teaching project discussed above. Once again, its purpose is to provide a preliminary sense of the project, its problematic, its import, and its intellectual and scientific stakes.

Applicants can contact EHESS researchers in their field. However, once the recruitment campaign has begun, contact must cease. Those who request it of the president's secretary may have an appointment with a member of the school's presidential board at the latest by February 10, 2023.

What is the procedure for the elections?

Recruitment at the EHESS takes place in two phases: (1) evaluation of all the files by an electoral commission; then (2) election by the faculty as a whole gathered in an electoral assembly.

Two electoral commissions are put together for the open positions: one for the election of the assistant professors, the other for the election of full professors and professors at large.

These commissions are composed of the presidential board (5 members), the members of the science board (6 full professors, plus 4 associate professors for the electoral commissions of

associate professors only), and approximately 15 EHESS faculty members who are randomly selected each year.

These commissions meet once initially to designate an in-house reporter and an external reporter for each application.

The commissions examine the files, in light of the input from the reports and the recommendation letters in favor of the applicants. After a critical discussion of the applications, and after having listened to the recommendations of the presidency, the commission votes and establishes a ranking of the applicants that is proposed for the examination of the electoral assembly. This ranking is merely a guideline; the faculty assembly remains completely sovereign in its votes. All the application files, with the reports are available for the assembly members to consult.

The EHESS faculty, gathered together as an electoral assembly, sit three times: all of the associate professors and all of the full professors for the associate professorship elections, all of the full professors for the full professorship and professorship at large elections (which constitute two separate election procedures).

The president's office reports on the work of the electoral commission, then gives its own recommendations. The assembly then proceeds to examine the files that received a sufficient number of votes in the electoral commission or that members of the assembly would like to examine.

For each applicant, the reports are read, then EHESS faculty members can speak in favor. Once all of the files have been examined, the assembly votes.

To be elected, an applicant must obtain an absolute majority of the votes. As many rounds of voting as necessary are organized so that all the open positions are filled, but it is customary for voting to stop after the 10th round.

The files of the candidates elected by the assembly are then transmitted to the competent academy of the Institut de France to be validated. It is only after this step that nomination by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation can proceed. The new colleagues then become members of the EHESS.

During this entire process, the president's office of the EHESS plays a crucial role: it defines the scientific policy of the institution, makes sure the elections proceed properly and that applicants are treated fairly.