

[Ph.D. Program Beyond Borders 2023](#)

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BEYOND BORDERS provides scholarships for different stages of Ph.D. research. It supports research about borders and boundaries in past and present times and promotes interdisciplinary exchange in the social sciences and humanities. The program is open to applicants of any nationality.

BEYOND BORDERS 2023

The Call for Applications 2023 is open until **1 March 2023** and focuses on „Borders, Contestation and Conflict“.

Borders are an integral part of our everyday life. Political, social, virtual, intellectual, and cultural borders are hotly contested, both in international contexts around issues of migration, security, trade, or global education and within nations trying to deal with increased diversity and changing notions of national identity and culture. Geographical borders separate states, regions, and cities. They mark the breadth and depth of territorial organization while informal symbolic and social boundaries define values and norms for social, cultural, and religious life. All types of borders can be conceived as social constructs: they may refer to cultural and historical contexts, result from international treaties or political negotiations or reflect public debates on controversial topics.

In our increasingly globalized world in which human mobility and the constant circulation of goods, objects, ideas, and practices are also an integral part of everyday life, the importance of border making and crossing is growing. Borders and cross-border regions function therefore as manifestations of social, political, economic, and cultural change.

Focus 2023 - Borders, Contestation and Conflict

Borders' violations have been back in the breaking news since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. The war expanded the armed conflict from the Donbas region to a large part of Ukrainian territory. Following the annexation of Crimean Peninsula in 2014, the Russian Federation has attempted to incorporate further occupied areas to its state territory. The leadership in Moscow has been openly questioning the integrity and sovereignty of the Ukrainian state.

The war in Ukraine together with further ongoing border disputes and clashes, i.e. between China and India, Ethiopia and Sudan or Armenia and Azerbaijan show that multilateralism is currently at stake. As the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, Martin Kimani, underlined in his speech given on the 21st of February 2022 at the emergency session of the UN Security Council on the situation in Ukraine, a renewed commitment to international cooperation is needed for worldwide peace and security. He invoked his nation's struggle for independence from the British

Empire and the necessity to consent to existing borders despite their colonial heritage. Can defining the limits of jurisdiction and governance ensure peace and the international order? And what would or could this 'international order' look like?

How did state borders develop historically in different parts of the world? How do they relate to cultural and social boundaries and depend on historical - national, imperial, colonial etc. - heritage? And what does territoriality mean today in times of geopolitical competition and changing domestic environments? How do borders contribute to the definition of sovereignty and belonging? What are their origins and how have they been transformed in the past and present times? What are the prospects of cross-border cooperation and integration?

Questions concerning borders, their contestation as well as territorial conflicts and disputes are the focus of the current call for applications for Ph.D. scholarships. We encourage applications for projects concentrating on following aspects, although other topics will be also considered:

- historical dimension of territory, borders, and boundaries
- border demarcation and revision and their impact on national and local identity formation
- physical and symbolic boundaries
- practices of border management
- resolution of territorial disputes
- border policy on state-level
- everyday border realities experienced at the local level
- movement of minorities, borders' selectivity, and policing of bodies.

We invite applications from Ph.D. students worldwide studying borders and bordering phenomena in different regions of the world. Both empirical research based on extensive fieldwork and projects centered on theoretical reflection are eligible for support. Innovative and challenging research questions as well as comparative approaches are highly welcome.

More informations can be found on: <http://beyondborders.zeit-stiftung.de/>

If you have any further questions, you can contact Felix Oldenburg, assistant in the science and research department of the ZEIT Stiftung under: Oldenburg@Zeit-Stiftung.de (<https://www.zeit-stiftung.de/stiftung/mitarbeiter-innen/>)

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