



The Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies e.V. (IASS) is an international, interdisciplinary center of excellence located in Potsdam, Germany. The IASS is financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal State of Brandenburg and devoted to promoting science and research for global sustainability, particularly in the areas of climate change, the earth system and the development of new technologies and social pathways to sustainability. Further information about the IASS can be accessed under [www.iass-potsdam.de/en](http://www.iass-potsdam.de/en)

**Applications are sought for the position of  
Research Associate (50%) (m/f)**

Reference Number: TranS-Mind-2022-02

**Project Description**

Complex challenges as the ones humanity is facing in the era of the Anthropocene require a fundamental transformation of human relationship patterns with the more-than-human world with respect to human modes of being, knowing and doing. Increasingly it is acknowledged that these challenges cannot merely be considered as intellectual enterprises but may involve or even require an 'inner' transformation of humans with respect to thinking, behavioral patterns and underlying mindsets (e.g. ethical values, worldviews, and individual or cultural notions of a good life).

The research group TranS-Mind starts from the insight that such changes cannot be "taught" to others in a conventional sense. Rather the research group is convinced that systemic changes emerge within given conditions and that this emergence can be catalyzed by providing spaces and processes with context-sensitive supportive conditions.

Based on this background, the intention of the Research group "Transformative Spaces and Mindsets" (TranS-Mind) is to

- Design, host and investigate spaces and processes that allow people and stakeholders to experience transformative change as a catalyst for taking action for sustainability.
- Conduct research that helps clarify the relevance of mindsets in the larger context of the societal transformation to sustainability
- Offer a platform and facilitation of dialogical learning processes that provide space for reflection and networking for sustainability-related change agents
- Train researchers and non-academic stakeholders in how to run formats that integrate 'inner' and 'outer' dimensions of transformations to sustainability

In order to achieve this, the project is based on three main pillars:

- **Understand:**  
The project advances scientific and practical understanding about the potentials of mindsets and transformative practice for sustainability. We identify, discuss and share examples of context-specific insights, experiences, and practices as source of inspiration for others.
- **Connect:**  
The project connects individuals and stakeholders that are moved by similar aspirations and provide a platform for exchange and joint learning. In order to do this, we experiment with innovative forms of exchange and co-creative reflection and learning.
- **Practice & Inspire:**  
In line with the research work of the project, the members of the project want to continuously cultivate relational reflection and transformative practice and share this process with others as a source of inspiration. This involves supporting other projects and people in developing sustainable practice by integrating of reflexive practices and mindsets in their context.



We are currently looking for a **Research Associate (50%)** to complete our team.

You are matching our team if you are motivated to explore modes of relational change in an academic context oriented towards socio-ecological transformation.

### **Tasks**

The successful applicant will be responsible for the following key tasks:

- Observing and evaluating the processes designed and hosted by the TranS-Mind research group incl. cooperation with researchers from inside and outside IASS
- (Co-)Designing and coordinating a transdisciplinary network as a community of transdisciplinary research practice
  - Harvesting, evaluating, and sharing the process dynamics and results
- Contributing to academic publications about transformative spaces and processes such as the ones co-designed and hosted by the successful applicant
- Further development and curation of the project's website and online database;

### **Qualification**

- The candidate has completed an M.A. in a relevant scientific field of studies (sustainability sciences, environmental studies, qualitative social science, (social) psychology etc.)
- The candidate is familiar with key concepts and literature in the fields of transdisciplinarity and transformation research, particularly with respect to the connection of inner transformation and sustainability / mind-behaviour-gap / transformative practices
- The candidate has practical experiences in (co-)hosting and evaluating reflexive and dialogical group formats (incl. e.g. systemic coaching formats) both physically and online.
- Proven effectiveness as a team worker;
- Preferably fluent in both English and German.
- Other relevant assets include:
  - Knowledge of and contact to potentially relevant case studies and stakeholder networks (in Germany and/or other countries);
- Minimum previous work experience: 1-3 years

### **Personality**

We are looking for a new team member who

- Is grounded in a research perspective and at the same time genuinely honoring the diversity of forms of transdisciplinary knowing and meaning making
- is able and willing to actively identify and take responsibilities as part of the group and managing the own commitments realistically and responsibly
- is sensitive for subtle inter-personal group dynamics and his/her own role in these
- brings a high interest and awareness for conscious self-development



- appreciates the complementarity of intellectual, emotional, intuitive, and practical work as part of a research process

**What we offer:**

- The opportunity to work in a dynamic, multicultural, inter- and transdisciplinary research environment in the field of sustainability science in general, and climate policy in particular;
- Excellent contact with a range of national, European, and international organizations, research institutes, and think tanks;
- Remuneration in accordance with the German salary group TVöD (Bund E13).

The position is a part-time position (50%) available beginning in mid-July 2022. The position is foreseen until 31 December 2022. An extension beyond this date is not anticipated. The place of work is Potsdam, Germany.

**Please address the following questions/topics in your letter of interest:**

1. How does your research agenda tie in with the mission of the TranS-Mind research group?
2. How will your expertise enhance the team's expertise? Please choose one of the aforementioned fields of expertise and describe your experience in one specific case.
3. Describe your experience or ideas of working collaboratively within a research team.
4. Describe your experience with respect to engaging with diverse stakeholder groups.

IASS seeks to increase the number of women in those areas where they are underrepresented and therefore explicitly encourages women to apply. We encourage applicants of diverse backgrounds. Applications of disabled persons with equal qualifications will be regarded favorably.

If you are interested in this position, we look forward to receiving your application, including a letter of motivation and a CV. Please submit your complete application, combined in a single PDF file no larger than 5 MB, **no later than 24.06.2022** to [thomas.bruhn@iass-potsdam.de](mailto:thomas.bruhn@iass-potsdam.de) using the Ref. No. given above.

For further information and details on this position please contact [thomas.bruhn@iass-potsdam.de](mailto:thomas.bruhn@iass-potsdam.de) (Tel.: +49 331 28822-357)