

2 PhD Positions in the MANTRAMS Project (m/f/d, 65%)

Application Deadline: January 10, 2025

Position Start Date: April 1, 2025

Duration: 36 months

Employment Type: 65% (TV-L E-13)

The Faculty of Humanities at the University of Tübingen is excited to offer two PhD positions as part of Task Force 2 of the ERC-funded Synergy Project MANTRAMS: Mantras in Religion, Media, and Society in Global Southern Asia.

This project explores the multifaceted roles of mantras across cultures, focusing on South and Southeast Asia. Task Force 2 aims to produce an anthropological study of sonic efficacy in southern Asia, and an ethnographically grounded understanding of lived mantra practices, including in the context of Dalit religions, Adivasi communities and Muslim-majority societies. More information about the project can be found here: [MANTRAMS](#)

Your field of activity:

The Principal Investigator (PI), Prof. Dr. Carola Lorea invites applications for two PhD positions to join her research group on *Sonic Efficacy in Global Southern Asia*.

Sonic efficacy in global Southern Asia employs immersive ethnography and participant observation, sound studies and sensory anthropology methods to pursue two research strands. The first, **Religious sound, religious space: Mantras in sonic soteriology and place-making**, will study 'mantra' as a relational category that considers the ways powerful syllables and sacred sounds are embedded within local sonic ideologies and musical genres. This research strand also studies inter-religious tensions and controversies surrounding competing soundscapes and amplified religious sounds. The second, **Mantras from below: Ensounding the margins** radically expands the conventional archive of mantra studies and gives centrality to sonic practices among Dalit religions, Adivasi traditions, Muslim healers, performers, drummers, subaltern communities, women, and queer practitioners.

Your key responsibilities:

- Develop and pursue a doctoral project that aligns with the objectives of the MANTRAMS project.
- Engage in interdisciplinary research focused on mantras and/as sound.
- Participate in workshops, conferences, and collaborate in setting up research group activities.
- Collect new fieldwork data including a variety of sound recordings to be analyzed, mapped and archived on the interactive project website.
- Collaborate with our digital humanities expert to assist with the development of the "OMnibus of Mantras" project website.
- Support the MANTRAMS team in organizing international academic events, and contribute to the preparation of project reports, research papers, and creative research outputs.
- Share your empirical and theoretical contributions with the MANTRAMS team, and with the international community of scholars.

Your profile:

- A Master's degree (MA) or equivalent in Anthropology, Sound Studies, Religious Studies, Asian Studies, Indology, Ethnomusicology, or a closely related field.
- Proficiency in at least one language of southern Asia.
- Strong expertise and relevant experience in academic research on at least one of these topics in Asian contexts: sacred sound; orality; traditional music and dance; ritual performance; festivals; religious traditions; healing; gender; body and embodiment.
- Prior experience with research and academic writing. Previous peer-reviewed publications are not a requirement, but highly desirable.
- Excellent communication skills in written and spoken English, with the ability to work collaboratively in an interdisciplinary, international team.
- A proactive, innovative, and independent approach to research.

What we offer:

You will be part of an ambitious and challenging interdisciplinary project, committed to cutting-edge research, ethical international collaboration, and creative formats of knowledge dissemination. We offer excellent training, access to extensive academic

resources, a highly collaborative international environment and resources for funding your fieldwork, conferences and professionalization courses.

The University of Tübingen has ~ 28,000 students and more than 500 years of academic tradition. It has national excellence status and offers a vibrant research environment in a picturesque city. You will benefit from a variety of training opportunities and language courses as well as the university's graduate academy.

Start date for successful applicants is **1st April 2025**.

How to Apply:

Please submit the following documents as a single PDF file:

- Cover letter
- Curriculum Vitae
- Research project proposal (maximum 2,000 words)
- Copies of academic certificates
- List of publications (if applicable)
- Contact details of two referees

Applications must be sent to carola.lorea@uni-tuebingen.de by **January 10, 2025**.

Informal inquiries are also welcome at this address. For further details about the project, you can look at the webpage: <https://uni-tuebingen.de/fakultaeten/philosophische-fakultaet/fachbereiche/alertums-und-kunstwissenschaften/institut-fuer-religionswissenschaft/mantrams/>

We look forward to receiving your application and welcoming you to this exciting research endeavor at the University of Tübingen.

*** Employment (TVL E13, for 3 years; 65%) will be arranged by the University of Tübingen. The positions are available immediately. Salary will be determined according to the German collective wage agreement in public service. The University aims to increase the proportion of women in research and teaching and therefore urges suitable qualified women scientists to apply. Qualified international researchers are expressly invited to apply. Severely disabled persons with equal aptitude will be given preferential consideration. ***