

## **JOBs: post-doc fellowship & PhD fellowship, University of Geneva / *eidos***

The Department of Philosophy at the University of Geneva offers 2 fellowships within Fabrice Correia's SNSF project DESCRIBING THE WORLD:

- One four-year post-doc fellowship
- One four-year PhD fellowship

The project will be linked to *eidos*, the Centre for Metaphysics (<https://eidoscentre.org/>).

For a brief description of the project, see the end of this message.

### **STARTING DATE**

January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, or a later date depending on the availability of the candidates.

### **LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

Geneva is part of the French-speaking area of Switzerland, but for the purposes of the position only English is compulsory.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

Applications must be sent by e-mail to Fabrice Correia ([fabrice.correia@unige.ch](mailto:fabrice.correia@unige.ch)) by **November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. They should include a CV, a list of publications, a writing sample and the name of two persons who can act as referees if contacted.

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

Semantics, broadly characterised, studies the representational relations between language and world. One particular framework for semantic theorising, the framework of worlds semantics, has been particularly dominant since its inception in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century via the work of Saul Kripke and others, and has been successfully applied in many different areas, both within and outside philosophy.

The central notion of the framework is that of a world verifying or falsifying a statement. In the orthodox or "intensional" worlds framework (most usually called "possible worlds semantics"), worlds are thought of as both possible—there is no statement that a world both verifies and falsifies—and maximal—every truth-apt statement is verified or falsified by any given world. Non-orthodox frameworks have emerged that drop one or both of these conditions, motivated by the thought that the intensional framework does not allow one to make distinctions that are sufficiently fine-grained to adequately deal with certain notions or phenomena (e.g. the propositional attitudes).

The most visible non-orthodox framework in the last century was without doubt situation semantics, first systematised by Jon Barwise and John Perry in the 1980s. Very recently, Kit Fine has developed in detail another non-orthodox framework, truthmaker semantics, and has argued that it is far superior to the other frameworks. The core difference between truthmaker semantics and these other frameworks lies in the fact that it invokes relations of "exact" verification / falsification where the others invoke the weaker relations of "inexact" and "loose" verification / falsification.

The truthmaker framework is very powerful, because it supersedes the other frameworks: (i) whatever can be done in the other frameworks can be done in the same way in the truthmaker framework, while (ii) on a number of topics, in particular on many topics that involve hyperintensional notions, the truthmaker framework is much more effective than the other frameworks—in some cases, the other frameworks simply perform very poorly.

However, the truthmaker framework suffers from serious limitations: it is indeed incapable of handling a wide array of notions and phenomena. The main aim of this project is to develop a better semantic framework, one that is free of these limitations. The central idea behind this new framework is to replace the world-to-language relations of verification / falsification by the language-to-world relation of describing. The description framework is intended to supersede the truthmaker framework, in much the same way as the latter supersedes the previous frameworks. In order to substantiate the claim that the description framework does indeed supersede the truthmaker framework, and hence by transitivity the previous frameworks, a number of applications in a wide range of different areas will be examined, in particular applications in metaphysics, logic, epistemology, theories of truth, the philosophy of language, and linguistics.

For further information, please contact Fabrice Correia ([fabrice.correia@unige.ch](mailto:fabrice.correia@unige.ch)).