

The Hamburg Institute for Advanced Studies (HIAS) invites applications for the HIAS Summer School 2026 to be held from 5-11 July 2026 in Hamburg on “State, Religion, and Family Law in Comparative Perspective”.

The workshop is open to scholars in an early career stage, working on topics at the intersection of law, religion, and the state, with a special focus on matters related to the family. We invite applications from a variety of disciplines, including law, political science, anthropology, sociology, and religious studies.

In this research retreat we will focus on finding ways to reach across disciplinary boundaries. We will explore overlaps on three levels and ask these and other questions:

- On a conceptual level: What do terms like “religion” or “state” mean in different disciplines?
- On a substantive level: What exactly is being compared?
- On a methodological level: How do the disciplines “compare”?

The workshop will be led by **Nadjma Yassari**, the director of the Swiss Institute for Comparative Law in Lausanne and professor of law at the University of Hamburg, and **Nathan J. Brown**, professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University and HIAS alumnus. Other experts from various disciplines will be invited for specific sessions and to give feedback to participants. Another important focus of the workshop will lie in the exchange among peers: In the afternoons, participants will each lead a discussion of their individual research project.

The aim is to foster methodological awareness and practical competence for addressing complex questions at the intersection of law, politics, and religion. More general, it is an excellent opportunity to develop one's ability to conduct research projects in an interdisciplinary and comparative manner, using a methodologically reflective approach.

A substantial subsidy for travel costs to and from Hamburg as well as per diem support for accommodation and meals will be provided.

Participants will be selected based on the quality and promise of their research project and their scholarly record to date. The organizers will strive for disciplinary and topical diversity as well as complementarity among participants.

Eligible for participation are early career researchers actively engaged in academic research on the subject matter (from current doctoral candidates up to postdocs and scholars within five years of completing the PhD).

Applications should be sent to by 31 January 2026 to nbrown@gwu.edu and include:

1. A statement outlining the research project to be discussed at the summer school (max 500 words)
2. Academic curriculum vitae
3. Letter of support from dissertation director or scholarly mentor

For additional information or inquiries, please contact Nathan Brown at nbrown@gwu.edu.