

Young Scholars' Workshop

State–Business Relations in Comparative Perspective: Theories, Methods, and Empirical Insights

22nd – 24th of April 2026, Erfurt

In an era of geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, and new forms of economic interventionism, relations between states and business actors are undergoing profound transformation. Governments across the world regions increasingly rely on industrial policies, infrastructure investments, and economic statecraft to secure strategic goals. At the same time, corporate elites, firms, and business associations adapt their strategies to shifting political and economic environments.

How do these mutual adjustments reshape the political economy of different world regions? What conceptual and methodological tools are best suited to capture these dynamics?

We invite doctoral and postdoctoral researchers from different area backgrounds and research communities to present and discuss their work in an open setting. The event aims to bring together early-career scholars from political science, international political economy, sociology, and related disciplines to exchange theoretical and methodological approaches. We want to discuss these topics from a cross-area perspective and connect different empirical insights from a diverse set of cases.

We welcome paper proposals that explore state–business relations in times of global economic fragmentation from multiple perspectives. Contributions may be

conceptual, methodological, or empirical. We particularly encourage submissions that engage with one or more of the following thematic foci:

1. (Relative) State Autonomy and the Theory of state-business relationships
2. Economic Statecraft and Geoeconomics
3. Industrial Policy and the Reorganization of Production
4. Infrastructures and the Material Politics of Connectivity

See also the longer call for papers here:

Format and Submission:

Participants will circulate a written paper in advance to allow for in-depth discussion and peer feedback during the workshop.

Please send your **abstract (max. 250 words)** and a short **bio (max. 100 words)** to the organizer of the workshop Jan Ickler, University of Erfurt, Jan.Ickler@uni-Erfurt.de. Accepted participants will be notified by 20th of December 2025.

Travel grants and accommodation will be paid according to university and funding guidelines.

For more Information see: