

## POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP IN COMPARATIVE LEGISLATIVE STUDIES

### **Thematic Research Project:**

Political Institutions, Patterns of Executive-Legislative Relations and Government Capacity

**Principal Investigators:** Fernando Limongi and Argelina Figueiredo

**Areas:** Comparative Politics, Legislative Studies

### **Title of the Post-Doctoral Research Project:**

Presidential Regime and Coalition Government: Brazil and Latin America

The Project “Political Institutions, Patterns of Executive-Legislative Interaction and Capacity of Governance” has opened a call for applications to select a postdoctoral fellow. The research proposal must analyze Executive-Legislative relations and the formation and the operation of coalition government in Latin America.

The project is based at the Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning – CEBRAP (<http://www.cebrap.org.br/>) and it also counts on the support of the Research Center for Comparative and International Studies at the University of São Paulo – NECI/USP (<http://neci.fflch.usp.br/>). Both institutions are based in São Paulo, Brazil. The financial support is provided by São Paulo Research Foundation – FAPESP.

The selected candidate is expected to develop an innovative research project in accordance with the main themes of the Thematic Research Project, contributing to the national and international debate. The selected candidate will be required to agree with the following terms:

1. To develop his/her own research in line with the objectives of the project and the fellowship;
2. To create a database on the patterns of Executive-Legislative relations in Latin-American presidential regimes, focusing on institutional variables and systematic information regarding the legislation output, roll call votes and the composition of coalitions;
3. To share this information with CEBRAP Legislative Database;
4. To produce reports under the supervision of professor Fernando Limongi;
5. To present seminars and participate in other activities and meetings related to the project;
6. To submit articles for scientific events and to national and international journals presenting the results of research supported by the fellowship;
7. To supervise undergraduate students who have received a research scholarship.

The fellow researcher will earn a monthly stipend of R\$ 5,578.80 (current value as defined in [www.fapesp.br/3162](http://www.fapesp.br/3162)) and will also count on a technical reserve fund (rules available in [www.fapesp.br/rt](http://www.fapesp.br/rt)). The fellowship will be granted for a 24 month-period.

Eligible candidates for this call are researchers with a PhD or doctoral degree title obtained in any institution of education and research in Brazil or any other country. To apply, please send the following materials electronically to [neci@usp.br](mailto:neci@usp.br) by **April 28, 2013**: curriculum vitae, a recommendation letter and a research project (maximum 10 pages).

The selection will happen in two stages: analysis of the documentation and an interview. Only candidates approved in the first stage will be called for the interview, which may be done via *Skype*.

## **Research Questions and Objectives:**

The incompatibility between presidential systems and party coalitions has already been questioned and denied by an extensive literature. While coalition presidentialism was considered to be a rare characteristic of the Brazilian political system, it is frequently found in democracies in Latin America and Eastern Europe. Little is known about how coalitions are formed and work in presidential regimes. The notion that coalitions obey different logics in presidential and parliamentary systems, in spite of the theoretical contestation and evidence reporting opposite results, is still maintained. Such misunderstanding is the result of a lack of systematic studies on this theme. It is this gap that this project seeks to fill.

Thus, in line with the objectives of the Thematic Project, the Post-Doctoral research fellow will be expected to gather data in a structured form to analyze two institutional variables: the legislative powers of the Executive and the internal organization of the Legislature, which have proven to be fundamental to understand Executive-Legislative relations and government performance in Brazil. In particular, the research project should draw direct attention to how agenda-setting powers affect the management of disputes within governmental coalitions.

In this project, agenda powers are considered to be weapons of the majority, rather as resources that facilitate the working of the coalition, protecting its unity by facilitating the bargaining process inside the coalition, than a tool to circumvent the opposition. Such a perspective implies a redirection of the central axis of coalition governments' research from an excessive focus on examining the formation and breakdown of coalitions towards research guided to understand how the coalitions actually work. A coalition works if it proves capable of internal coordination.

According to the mainstream literature on comparative studies, the project stresses the explanatory power of institutional variables. However, it differs from dominant trends in this field by questioning the emphasis on variables related to the electoral and party systems and to the form of government. Analyses of government coalitions were damaged by this type of excessive emphasis. While the study of this phenomenon is quite common for parliamentary regimes, little focus has been put on this dynamic in presidential regimes.

This project aims to fulfill this gap by extending the research that has been developed by the Thematic Project on the Brazilian case for other Latin American countries, seeking therefore to understand how coalitions work in presidential regime settings. Rather than simply helping to understand the way coalitions operate in specific countries, this project will also contribute to knowledge about the Brazilian political system, while simultaneously producing a more accurate understanding of democratic systems in general and Presidentialism in particular.