

## ENS – IISER Network / BIOSANTEXC Project

### Internship Proposal Form France to India

(Discipline/Field name)

---Human Sciences (Medical Humanities)---

**Internship title: Reading the COVID-19 Pandemic in Visual Narratives in India**

**COVID-19, visual narratives, medical humanities, cultural representation of pandemics**

Keywords related with the subject (minimum 3):

**Name of the IISER:** IISER Bhopal

**Name of the laboratory(ies):**

**Name of the internship supervisor(s):** Dr. Antara Chatterjee, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Email(s):** achatterjee@iiserb.ac.in

**Prerequisites for the internship:**

**Requested level:** M1/M2 (MS)

**Foreseen internship dates:** May-July 2025

**Internship type (refer to guidelines):**

☒ 3–6-month internship      ☐ Research stays      ☐ 6+6 months internship

**For 3 to 6 months internships, please indicate the desired duration:** 3 months

**For 6+6 months internships, please also fill in:**

- **Name of the internship co-supervisor:**
- **Name of the co-supervisor's laboratory/entity:**
- **Email of the co-supervisor:**

**Internship proposal (description and expected training outcomes / half page min, 1 page max):**

*BIOSANTEXC is a project co-funded by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs  
(Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Etrangères).*

This internship for 3 months will offer the student an opportunity to undertake guided research on the project 'Reading the COVID-19 Pandemic in Visual Narratives in India'. The research envisages examining narratives across a range of visual media and texts from India to uncover the narrativisation and representation of the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020-2022 across a spectrum of visual forms like paintings, including a range of Indian folk paintings like Gond, Bhil, Phad, Madhubani and Patachitra, photographs which had widely circulated through print and digital media in India during the pandemic, and graphic narratives like comics.

The proposed research is from the vantage point of the human sciences and is situated within the interdisciplinary domain of the medical humanities, a domain engaging with the complex intersections of health, disease, medicine, and medical and caregiving practices with society, politics, economics and culture. The research will be a valuable intervention in understanding the overlapping contexts of the domains of the bio-medical and the social, cultural, political and economic. The research intends to understand the socio-political and cultural experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic through the lens of the visual, by undertaking an analysis of a visual archive of the pandemic, including a range of visual forms from photography to comics (a form which combines the visual with the verbal) and from cartoons to folk art. It will uncover how the register of the visual including a visual language, grammar and vocabulary were instrumentalised in encoding the COVID-19 experience and narrative through varied visual forms. It will also analyse how the visual register helps to uncover the multi-dimensional affective experiences of the pandemic

This wide range of COVID-19 visual representations formed a crucial cultural and visual archive of the pandemic, which documented people's lived experience of the pandemic through the register of the visual. Such a visual archive was also generative of a range of emotive, affective responses to the pandemic filtered through the lens of visual consumption, including fear, shock, horror, humour and therapy. It offers a valuable archive of the history of the pandemic, giving a glimpse into this unique historical moment through the lens of cultural, particularly visual and artistic expression. This visual archive of the pandemic merits critical examination and analysis through primary close-reading of the texts and visual analysis, braiding them with theoretical insights drawn from a range of domains including health humanities, visual studies, photography, art history etc. This internship will offer the student the platform to undertake this important study.

This will be a reading and writing intensive internship which will equip the student to decipher and analyse complex and multi-layered visual texts like photographs, comics and paintings, braided with critical and theoretical framing and insights. The envisaged outcomes of the internship includes training in critical reading and analysis of visual narratives of the COVID-19 pandemic in India. A co-authored journal article/essay is an envisaged output of the internship tenure.

### **Internship conditions:**

- monthly stipend of INR 15,000
- Accommodation will be provided on the IISER Bhopal campus
- cultural tour of nearby locations for ENS students during the stay.