

## **Nordic Humanities Center**

### **Call for a Collective Research Project: 6 Senior Fellows**

**Deadline: Monday March 30, 2026**

The Nordic Humanities Center invites applications from permanent faculty members at the faculties of Humanities at the University of Southern Denmark and the University of Copenhagen for a collective research project that will include 6 senior fellowships from February 1, 2027 – January 31, 2028.

The fellowships are one-year full-time fellowships to pursue a collective research project in the center and to co-organize the center's seminars and outreach activities in cooperation with the center coordinator, the head of communication, and the center director.

#### **Nordic Humanities Center**

The Nordic Humanities Center is an innovative and ambitious center of advanced study that fosters new ways of doing humanities research. The center constitutes a forum for collective humanities research that engages major societal challenges, and it connects humanities scholarship with societal actors and institutions to effect positive social change. Established with the generous support of The A.P. Møller Relief Foundation, the center is a collaboration between the Faculties of Humanities at the University of Copenhagen and the University of Southern Denmark. Every year, a new group of scholars from the two universities will come together to marshal insights from the humanities to develop new perspectives, frames, narratives, or solutions for one of the many societal challenges we face – at local, regional, and global levels.

Insights into culture, language, history, philosophy or communication are crucial, if often overlooked, resources for addressing central societal challenges such as inequality, war, health, the climate crisis, or artificial intelligence. We need a more precise understanding of the historical and cultural preconditions of the challenges we face, we need new humanistic visions for our future coexistence, and we need a tighter integration of the human sciences with adjacent knowledge fields and, especially, with stakeholders and societal institutions. Uniting scholars from the two humanities faculties and reaching out to researchers in adjacent fields, the Nordic Humanities Center engages leading scholars in a collective, interdisciplinary, and creative endeavor to offer alternative perspectives on – and potential solutions to – some of our contemporary grand challenges.

We are looking for tenured scholars who are able and willing to put their expertise to use in a new way and to work together with other scholars of different backgrounds in an

interdisciplinary effort to explore and rethink a major societal challenge. An open, collaborative, and exploratory mode of inquiry is therefore key to the working methods and the research conducted in the center. Through joint discussions, readings, workshops, writing retreats, and other activities, the fellows will work together on a range of outputs: research publications first and foremost, but also reports, and policy papers along with dissemination to the broader public in the form of podcasts, short videos, briefs, newspaper articles, etc. A key objective is to integrate humanities scholarship more closely with societal actors and institutions to create impact in the form of positive social change. Activities will therefore involve stakeholder meetings, events, and collaborations with, for example, cultural institutions, NGOs, and politicians. These activities are also intended to catalyze new ideas for further collaborations and research projects beyond the fellowship year.

Between 2024-2029 the center hosts five year-long collective research projects. The center now invites proposals for the fourth collective research project.

### **Project**

The center invites proposals that address a major societal challenge with global as well as regional and national dimensions. From an interdisciplinary perspective, the group should engage with issues such as misinformation, rising inequality, the climate crisis, the erosion of democratic institutions or public trust, the global rise of unhappiness, the uncertainties wrought by advanced AI – or other major challenges. The proposal should delineate how the combined competencies of the team will seek to analyze, frame, intervene in, and manage the challenge at a meaningful scale of engagement. The project should establish collaborations with external partners who will be involved with the project on a recurring basis throughout the year to maximize societal impact.

The fourth collective project runs from February 1, 2027 – January 31, 2028.

### **Project Team**

The project should be a collective endeavor undertaken by a single research group established across the two universities. The team should comprise 1 co-PI and 2 senior scholars from SDU and 1 co-PI and 2 senior scholars from UCPH. The core team thereby comprises 6 scholars, and all must be tenured faculty members. In addition, the budget includes 8 months' salary for visiting fellows. These funds may be used to host either two to three visiting fellows for longer stays or they may be divided among up to 6 visiting fellows for shorter stays. To strengthen collaborative networks in the region, some of the visiting scholars should hail from the Nordic countries. To enhance impact and forge strong ties to societal institutions relevant for the project, an additional 2,5 months' salary is dedicated to one or two so-called praxis fellows, i.e. non-academics from, for example, ministries, NGOs, companies, or cultural institutions. The praxis fellows may come from Denmark.

### **Organization**

The Nordic Humanities Center is a single center housed at two universities. Fellows will have an office space at either SDU or KU. To ensure synergy and a good working environment,

fellows are required to be in residence in the center offices at least two days a week during the project period. Once a week – every Monday – the two groups will meet – in Copenhagen one week, the following week in Odense. These meetings will provide the opportunity for joint discussions, work groups, internal center events, and for planning outreach activities in collaboration with the two project coordinators. Fellows who are selected for the center must be available for various preboarding activities during the nine months leading up to the launch of the project. Fellows should also expect that dissemination activities will extend beyond the fellowship period, and all fellows are expected to participate in the center's other activities and promote its overall mission.

### **Budget**

In addition to the one-year buy-out and 10,5 months' salary for visiting fellows, the research group has an activity budget. It consists of two lump sums managed by the two PIs – one for travel and conference activities and one for outreach activities.

- a. Travel and conferences: The research group disposes over 147.000 DKK in total.
  - b. Outreach: The group disposes over 119.000 DKK for outreach activities such as public events, invited speakers, publications etc.
- Moreover, the group has a total of 300 hours of student assistance at its disposal for scientific purposes.

Please note that the center covers all the costs of the following obligatory activities.:

- The commute between Odense and Copenhagen for the weekly meetings.
- a study trip
- Travel and accommodation at Folkemødet, Bornholm and Kulturmødet på Mors
- Fees for speakers invited to Folkemødet, Kulturmødet på Mors, and the Word festival in Odense
- The publications of HumBriefs and the book series "Udfordringer"
- An onboarding retreat and social events
- the end of the year conference

### **Activities and formats**

We expect the applicants to develop a plan of activities and events for the year (see more below). Applicants should also bear in mind that the center has developed a number particular formats that should be taken into consideration when planning the year's activities:

- Publications throughout out the year:
  - o 10 so-called *HumBriefs*. [Please see more here.](#)

- o One or two books (possibly more) in the center's own book series *Udfordringer*. [Please see more here](#)
- Participation in Folkemødet in June 2027, in Kulturmødet på Mors in August 2027 as well as the Word Festival in January 2028.
- A closing conference in January 2028. This can be half a day to two days depending on the project team's ambitions.

## Application

The two co-PIs are asked to supply the following to the center:

- A single proposal for the collective project (max 5 pages, 12 point Times New Roman, 1,5 spacing, excluding references) which outlines:
  - o 1) the concrete societal challenge that the research team has identified and intends to tackle and explains how the research expertise of each team member will help address it
  - o 2) a detailed plan for the year with draft descriptions of activities and events in the form of a series of integrated, connected outreach activities and collaborations with external partners and stakeholders that will support the center's ambitions of societal impact. The plan should also include a description of expected research output, including the team's contribution to the written formats the center has established (*HumBriefs* and the book series *Udfordringer*). It should also include a brief indication of which long-lasting collaborations and partnerships as well as larger collaborative projects and goals the team will work toward beyond the fellowship year. We do not require a separate budget at this stage.
  - o 3) a reflection on how the team will develop productive collaborative work methods and other effective formats most relevant for the project.
- CVs of all participants (max 2 pages per fellow).
- Approval of the fellowship period from the candidate's head of department

## Selection Criteria

Applications will be assessed by the center's steering group, which consists of Dean Simon Møberg Torp, Dean Kirsten Busch Nielsen, Head of Department Anne Jensen, Head of Department Per Krogh Hansen, and the center director Anders Engberg-Pedersen. Preference will be given to an interdisciplinary project with the greatest potential for collaboration,

synergy, creativity, and impact, and with the most persuasive plan for outreach activities that can make humanities research visible to the wider public and connect new ideas with societal institutions. The steering group further prioritizes projects that combine big-picture conceptual reframings of a given challenge with concrete engagements at a national and regional level e.g. via partnerships and collaborations with institutions, NGOs, and stakeholders. The center wishes to reflect the diversity of society and welcomes applications from all qualified candidates regardless of personal background.

Please send your application (in either Danish or English) as one aggregated PDF file to the director of the Nordic Humanities Center, Anders Engberg-Pedersen ([engberg@sdu.dk](mailto:engberg@sdu.dk)). The decision will be announced during the second half of April.

For an overview of the center's structure and previous activities, please see [www.nordichumanitiescenter.org](http://www.nordichumanitiescenter.org).

All interested applicants should consult with the center director before submitting a proposal. Please write to [engberg@sdu.dk](mailto:engberg@sdu.dk) or call +45 53440771 to set up a meeting at SDU or KU.

If you need help to find researchers for your project team, please also reach out to the center director, who coordinates with the deans' offices to identify researchers with a particular expertise.