



Nordic Humanities Center

Call for a Collective Research Project: 6 Senior Fellows and 2 Junior Fellows

Deadline: Thursday, June 13, 2024

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 and 2 junior fellowships from February 1, 2025 – January 31, 2026.

The fellowships are one-year full-time appointments to pursue a collective research project in the center and to co-organize the center's seminars and outreach activities in cooperation with the head of communication, the center administrative coordinator and the center director. Selected faculty will be fully bought out from other departmental obligations February 1, 2025 – January 31, 2026 (with the possibility to continue minor obligations such as PhD supervision).

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 with key societal challenges. 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, and solutions for one of the many societal challenges we face – at local, regional, and global levels.

To handle urgent challenges such as inequality, war, health, the climate crisis, or artificial intelligence, we often turn to the natural sciences, the social sciences, or to technology. But insights into culture, language, history, philosophy or communication from the human sciences are crucial, if often overlooked, resources for addressing central societal challenges and building better collective futures. 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 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.

The project team will consist of senior scholars who are well-established in their respective fields and able and willing to put their field-specific knowledge to use and work together with other scholars of different backgrounds in an interdisciplinary effort to explore and rethink a major societal challenge. A collaborative mode of inquiry is therefore key to the working



methods in the center. Through joint discussions, readings, workshops, and writing labs, the fellows will work together on a range of outputs: research publications, short books, and policy papers along with dissemination activities in the form of podcasts, briefs, newspaper articles, etc. An important objective is to make humanities scholarship more visible for the public and to integrate the research and ideas developed in the center closely with societal institutions. Dissemination activities will therefore also involve the coordination of stakeholder meetings and events involving, for example, cultural institutions, NGOs, and national media.

Project

Between 2024-2028, the center hosts five one-year-long collective research projects. The center now invites proposals for the second collective research project. The first and current project is titled *Legitimacy Contested: The Past and Future of the Nordic Model*. Against the backdrop of this on-going project, the center now widens the scope and invites proposals that address a societal challenge with global as well as local 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 persistence of warfare and its derived effects, the increased pressure on the health system, 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. Further, it should address the particular Danish or Nordic inflection of the global challenge and describe how the research project will engage with relevant institutions and stakeholders in Denmark.

The second collective project runs from February 1, 2025 – January 31, 2026.

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 – all should be tenured faculty members. In addition, the two PIs are responsible for outlining the subprojects for the 2 junior fellows at the postdoc level as part of the larger collective project. The team comprises 8 scholars who will work closely with the core center staff (the center director, the head of communication and the center administrative coordinator). Moreover, the budget includes 11 months' salary for a visiting international senior fellow. These funds may be used to host either one visiting fellow for all 11 months 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.

Organization

The Nordic Humanities Center is a single center housed at two universities. To ensure the integration of all fellows in the collaborative endeavor, researchers will have a joint office space at both institutions. All fellows are required to be in residence in the center offices during the project period. Once a week – every Tuesday – 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 core center staff. Fellows should expect that dissemination activities may



extend beyond the fellowship period and all fellows are expected to participate in the center's other activities and promote its overall mission.

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:

- the approach to rethinking the chosen societal challenge and explains how the research expertise of each team member will help address it
- a workplan for the year with draft descriptions of research activities, events, outreach activities and collaborations that will support the center's ambitions and existing output formats.
- The plan should include a reflection on how these activities will reach and engage different target audiences: institutions and stakeholders, the broader public, students, and scholars
- a reflection on how the team will develop productive collaborative work methods
- 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 impact, new collaborations, synergy, and creativity, and with the most persuasive vision for outreach activities that can connect humanities research to societal institutions to effect positive social change. The center serves as a sandbox for new ideas and new ways of doing humanities research, and the steering group therefore prioritizes projects that do not simply continue existing research but set new research agendas based on the combined expertise of the fellows involved. The steering group further prioritizes projects that unite big-picture conceptual reframings of a given challenge with concrete engagements at a national level e.g. via collaborations with institutions, NGOs, and stakeholders in Denmark. 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). The decision will be announced in June. A new call for the next collective project from February 1, 2026 – January 31, 2027 will be announced in November.

For further details, please visit <https://nordichumanitiescenter.org/> and do not hesitate to contact the director via email or phone (+ 45 53440771).