



Jobbnorge ID: 254871

Deadline: 3/4/2024

Website: <https://uit.no/startside>

Scope: Fulltime

Duration: Fixed Term

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Multilingualism and Language Learning

The position

A Postdoctoral Research Fellow position in multilingualism and language learning is available at the [Department of Language and Culture \(ISK\)](#), [Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education \(HSL\)](#). The position is affiliated with the Center for Language, Brain & Learning (C-LaBL), more specifically the Learning domain (see more detailed description below). C-LaBL is financed by the Trond Mohn Foundation 2024-2029.

The position is a fixed term position for a duration of **3** years. Appointment to the position of Postdoctoral Research Fellow is mainly intended to provide qualification for work in top academic positions. It is a prerequisite that the applicant can carry out the project over the full course of the employment period. No person may hold more than one fixed term position as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the same institution.

Expected starting date is August/September 2024.

The workplace is at UiT in Tromsø. You must be able to start in the position within a reasonable time after receiving the offer.

The Department of Language and Culture (ISK)

[The Department of Language and Culture \(ISK\)](#) hosts 84 permanent employees, 8 adjunct professors, and approximately 15 PhD fellows, as well as roughly 30 temporary research and teaching positions. The Department has a very active and diverse research profile. It houses one of the world's most excellent research communities in linguistics represented by AcqVA Aurora Center established in 2020, and which is now continuing as C-LaBL. In addition there are research groups within cognitive linguistics, theoretical linguistics, Sami language technology, as well as sociolinguistics and revitalization. The Department also has research communities within literature, art history, and media and documentation studies.

ISK offers one-year programmes, as well as full Bachelor and Master programmes in the following fields: General linguistics, literature, art history, media and documentation studies, English, Kven, Finnish, Norwegian, Russian, Sami, Spanish, and German. It also offers PhD programmes in linguistics, cultural/literary studies, art history, as well as media and documentation studies.

The Center for Language, Brain and Learning (C-LaBL)

The advertised position will be one of eight postdoctoral positions in the Center for Language, Brain & Learning (C-LaBL), two starting in the fall of 2024, three in 2025, and three in 2026. Additionally, a fully funded PhD student will be hired in 2024. The center will also hire a lab director, a lab/admin position and six Professor II positions (20% professorships).

The Center for Language, Brain and Learning (C-LaBL) will provide a step-change in our understanding of how multiple languages interact in the mind/brain, develop innovative longitudinal methodologies to study multilingualism, and train the next generation of scholars and research leaders in this increasingly important field. By fostering collaborative research across linguistic theories, neuroscience, and language acquisition/processing, we will focus on the effects of multilingualism - for the languages involved, for the brains that house them, and for the learning and teaching of multiple languages. C-LaBL is divided into three domains of study (Language, Brain, and Learning) that will be linked by a cross-cutting research theme focusing on Linguistic Distance. Thus, the core work of C-LaBL will investigate the interaction of multiple grammars in the multilingual mind/brain, with a main focus on the significance of linguistic distance (similarities/differences between languages) for development, crosslinguistic influence, neurocognitive adaptations in the brain as a result of multilingual experience, as well as instructed additional language learning.

Work at the center will be theoretically motivated and use a variety of research methods, including offline behavioral experiments, eye-tracking, electroencephalography (EEG), and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). The research will be of practical relevance to current societal challenges related to education and health. The C-LaBL Mentorship Program will provide a comprehensive training scheme to a number of postdoctoral fellows, ensuring that future leaders in the field of multilingualism have a solid background that crosscuts all three domains.

C-LaBL springs out of an active and productive research community in language acquisition and multilingualism at UiT The Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø, currently funded as an Aurora Center (2020-2024).

The research community in language acquisition and multilingualism at UiT currently consists of approximately 45 active researchers, including ten professors/associate professors, a lab manager, six researchers, eight postdoctoral fellows, five MSCA postdocs, four PhD students, and several Professor II positions. The group members are involved in a number of research projects both locally and internationally, e.g. the [MuMin](#) and [MultiLit](#) projects financed by the Research Council of Norway, the ADIM project funded by EEA/Norway grants and the [HeLPiNG project](#) funded by the Tromsø Research Foundation. For further information about the group's work and activities, see the website of the [AcqVA Aurora Centre: The Dynamic Nature of Languages in the Mind](#).

The advertised postdoc position will give the successful candidate the opportunity to work closely with an outstanding team of linguists. The appointed postdoc is expected to participate in meetings across domains, which will facilitate collaboration.

The project/position's field of research

The advertised postdoc is part of the Learning domain in C-LaBL. This domain studies the interplay of multilingualism and learning within individuals, exploring how linguistic distance between languages interacts with language exposure and experience, with a clear focus on educational aspects such as literacy and academic achievement. To this end, we will undertake a series of controlled interventions and carefully planned experiments tapping into various aspects of linguistic competence. We will collect background information by combining detailed questionnaires on language exposure and experience with available register data from Statistics Norway and link them to measures of language competence and acquisition outcomes to assess their relative impact. Three language situations will be at the center of our attention, each unique in terms of linguistic distance between the varieties they involve: (i) the acquisition of English by Norwegian children and adolescents, (ii) multilectal literacy among Norwegian adolescents, and (iii) the linguistic attainment of students of Sámi and the role of the educational system for Sámi language revitalization.

The current postdoc position will be associated with the first of these three situations. The investigations will highlight intramural versus extramural learning of English among Norwegian adolescents and asymmetries in terms of access to and engagement with English and the cognitive effects thereof in terms of language separation and activation. The linguistic background and competencies of the participants will be highlighted and enable us to assess the role of (existing) multilingualism and linguistic distance. Studies of metalinguistic awareness will be at the center of attention, and we plan intervention studies measuring classroom learners' lexical and morphological knowledge and development, tapping into whether and how linguistics-based instruction of morphology enhances literacy development. We will also explore whether explicit vocabulary instruction yields significant language and literacy gains, especially in learners with low proficiency.

The candidate will be expected to contribute to the planning of new aspects of the project as it develops. They will work closely with the research team but also need to be able to work independently and take day-to-day responsibility for project management. Duties include contributing to the recruitment of participants; planning and execution of fieldwork (including in schools and/or other relevant settings); organizing and analyzing data sets; disseminating results and collaborating actively with other researchers of the Learning domain and C-LaBL at large.

Contact

For further information about the position, please contact Professor Øystein A. Vangsnes:

- Email: oystein.vangsnes@uit.no

Professor Roumyana Slabakova:

- Email: r.slabakova@soton.ac.uk

or Head of Department Cathrine Theodorsen:

- Email: cathrine.theodorsen@uit.no

Qualifications

Required qualifications:

- A completed PhD in Linguistics, Language Education, Applied Linguistics, Psychology or another relevant field involving language sciences.
- Experience with empirical methods in language research.
- Excellent command of spoken and written English.

Qualification with a PhD is required before commencement in the position. You may apply for the position also if you are in the final stages of your PhD. You must then submit parts of your dissertation with your application, so that the committee may evaluate its quality as well as the likelihood that it will be completed by August/September 2024. You should also submit a letter from your supervisor confirming the expected date of completion of the PhD degree.

Desired qualifications:

- High command/competence of statistical modelling and knowledge of relevant programs.
- Experience working with bi-/multilingual young populations.
- Good command of Norwegian or another Scandinavian language (Danish or Swedish).
- Knowledge of other languages.

During the assessment emphasis will be put on the candidate's motivation, potential for research, and personal suitability for the position. We are looking for candidates who:

- Have good collaboration skills.
- Have good communication and interaction with colleagues and students.
- Wants to contribute to a good working environment.

At UiT we put emphasis on the quality, relevance and significance of the research work and not on where the work is published, in accordance with the principles of The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment ([DORA](#)).

Inclusion and diversity

UiT The Arctic University i Norway is working actively to promote equality, gender balance and diversity among employees and students, and to create an inclusive and safe working environment. We believe that inclusion and diversity is a strength, and we want employees with different competencies, professional experience, life experience and perspectives.

If you have a disability, a gap in your CV or immigrant background, we encourage you to tick the box for this in your application. If there are qualified applicants, we invite least one in each group for an interview. If you get the job, we will adapt the working conditions if you need it. Apart from selecting the right candidates, we will only use the information for anonymous statistics.

We offer

- Involvement in an interesting research project
- Good career opportunities
- A good academic environment with dedicated colleagues
- Flexible working hours and a state collective pay agreement
- Pension scheme through the state pension fund
- Postdoctoral Research Fellows are normally given a salary of 624 500 NOK.

Norwegian health policy aims to ensure that everyone, irrespective of their personal finances and where they live, has access to good health and care services of equal standard. As an employee you will become member of the [National Insurance Scheme](#) which also include [health care services](#).

More practical information for working and living in Norway can be found here: <https://uit.no/staffmobility>

Application

Your application must include:

- Application letter.
- Contextualizing statement/proposal (max 2 pages), detailing how the candidate fits into the research done in C-LaBL (including investigations across the domains).
- Contextualizing statement/proposal, detailing how the candidate plans to contribute to the research in the Learning domain (2-3 pages).
- CV (containing a complete overview of education, supervised professional training and professional work, as well as a list of publications).
- Diplomas and transcripts (all degrees).
- Documentation of [English proficiency](#).
- Contact information to 3-4 references.
- 3 samples of published work or other professional writings.
- The doctoral thesis or parts of the incomplete doctoral thesis.

All documentation to be considered must be in a Scandinavian language or English. We only accept applications and documentation sent via Jobbnorge within the application deadline.

Assessment

The applicants will be assessed by an expert committee. The committee's mandate is to undertake an assessment of the applicants' qualifications based on the written material presented by the applicants, and the detailed description drawn up for the position.

The applicants who are assessed as best qualified will be called for an interview. The interview should among other things, aim to clarify the applicant's motivation and personal suitability for the position. A trial lecture may also be required.

General information

The appointment is made in accordance with State regulations and guidelines at UiT. At our website, you will find [more information for applicants](#).

The remuneration for Postdoctoral research fellow is in accordance with the State salary scale code 1352. A compulsory contribution of 2% to the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund will be deducted. You will become a member of the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund, which gives you many benefits in addition to a lifelong pension: You may be entitled to financial support if you become ill or disabled, your family may be entitled to financial support when you die, you become insured against occupational injury or occupational disease, and you can get good terms on a mortgage. Read more about your employee benefits at: [spk.no](#).

The successful candidate must be willing to get involved in the ongoing development of their department and the university as a whole.

According to the Norwegian Freedom and Information Act (Offentleglova) information about the applicant may be included in the public applicant list, also in cases where the applicant has requested non-disclosure.

In case of discrepancies between the Norwegian and the English version of this description, the Norwegian version takes precedence.

Eallju - Developing the High North

UiT The Arctic University of Norway is a multi-campus comprehensive university at the international forefront. Our vision is to be a driving force for developing the High North. The Northern Sami notion eallju, which means eagerness to work, sets the tone for this motive power at UiT. Along with students, staff and the wider community, we aim to utilise our location in Northern Norway and Sápmi, our broad and diverse research and study portfolio and interdisciplinary advantage to shape the future.

Our social mission is to provide research-based education of high quality, perform artistic development and carry out research of the highest international quality standards in the entire range from basic to applied. We will convey knowledge about disciplines and contribute to innovation. Our social mission unites UiT across various studies, research fields and large geographical distances. This demands good cooperation with trade and industry and civil society as well as with international partners. We will strengthen knowledge-based and sustainable development at a regional, national and international level.

Academic freedom and scientific and ethical principles form the basis for all UiT's activities. Participation, co-determination, transparency and good processes will provide the decision-making basis we need to make wise and far-sighted priorities. Our students and staff will have the opportunity to develop their abilities and potential. Founded on academic integrity, we will be courageous, committed and generous in close contact with disciplines, people and contemporary developments.

We will demonstrate adaptability and seek good and purposeful utilisation of resources, so we are ready to meet the expectations and opportunities of the future. We will strengthen the quality and impact of our disciplines and core tasks through the following three strategic priority areas.

Additional information

Place of service:

Hansine Hansens veg 18 9019 Tromsø (Tromsø - Romsa Municipality)