



UNIVERSITETET I OSLO

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Deadline: 10/15/2024
Website: <http://www.uio.no/>
Scope: Fulltime
Duration: Fixed Term

Postdoctoral Fellows in Human Geography within ERC research project UNRULY

Postdoctoral Fellows in Human Geography

Job description

Two postdoctoral research fellowships (SKO 1352) in human geography are available at the [Department of Sociology and Human Geography](#).

The positions form part of the ERC Advanced Grant-funded research project [UNRULY - Unruly entanglements of sociomaterial change, knowledge and power in energy frontiers](#). The positions are for three years, or four years with a 25% teaching component. One position is dedicated to methodological development, while the other is dedicated to a Sub-Saharan Africa case study. Both positions are central to the overall research project and will be closely involved with theory and methods development.

About the project

UNRULY is dedicated to understanding uncertainty related to hydropower projects in the face of climate change. The project explores how entangled social, political and environmental processes shape change. We are especially interested in the non-linear processes of change which are not factored into existing models such that efforts to manage the future create more uncertainty. At present, existing research methods have not kept pace with social science theoretical developments which reject an ontological separation of social from environmental and material processes. UNRULY is an ambitious, anti-colonial project that seeks to creatively challenge existing research conventions and reimagine novel approaches to our shared planetary crisis.

The project builds from theoretical advances in geography, science and technology studies (STS), feminist theory, socioenvironmental systems and cognate disciplines on reframing ontologies of 'environment' and 'society'. The project seeks to advance methodological approaches that take these ontological insights seriously. Methodologically, the project will experiment with acoustic methods, embodied methods, story-telling and stochastic mathematics to think through how uncertainty shapes energy justice concerns and outcomes of renewable energy projects, working on the ground in Nepal and Sub-Saharan Africa to co-create new insights with local people.

The UNRULY team is led by Professor Andrea J. Nightingale and will be comprised of two postdoctoral fellows, two doctoral fellows (PhD Candidates), three research affiliates, and an advisory board of international academic leaders.

All project activities will be conducted in English.

Contact [Prof. Nightingale](#) for a description of the project.

More about the positions

The postdoctoral fellows' projects are expected to engage with UNRULY's ambitions to advance theory and methods in order to understand how uncertainty and chaotic change shape efforts to expand energy access. It is desirable to demonstrate strong interdisciplinary and creative thinking skills for both positions.

One postdoctoral fellow will be dedicated to methodological development, with a starting point in methods that share concerns with scale, temporality and change, and show excellent potential for thinking about risk and chaos. The postdoctoral fellow will help lead the methodological development aspects. Potential methods that will be considered by the team include: acoustics, stochastic mathematics, embodied and affective methods, story-telling and visual methods.

The other postdoctoral fellow will be dedicated to advancing the Sub-Saharan African case study. This case study will investigate how colonial histories, climate change programs, technology and developmental ambitions to expand energy access shape the way that renewable energy is being implemented and the struggles for justice that result. The fellow is expected to be able to carry out independent research in rural areas of Africa and to achieve a level of local language competence. Experience in Sub-Saharan Africa is a requirement. Experience with participatory research methods and knowledge of anti- and decolonial practices will be an advantage. The fellow will also manage local research assistants to help with translation and participatory methods.

Fellows will be core members of the UNRULY research team as well as part of the research group on Sustainable Transformations, which provides a stimulating scientific context for research on environment-society and sustainability challenges. They will also have opportunities to engage with the Oslo School of Environmental Humanities at the Department of Musicology, University of Oslo (UiO), and Professor Giulia di Nunno of the Risk and Stochastics group at the Department of Mathematics, UiO. The project includes a close collaboration with Dr. Helene Ahlborg of the division of Environmental Systems Analysis at Chalmers Institute of Technology, and Dr. Aaron Rice of the K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics at Cornell University. The positions include opportunities for research exchanges at these institutions.

Candidates who are creative with an interest in interdisciplinarity and sociomaterial methods are strongly encouraged to apply. Opportunities to learn methods such as acoustic analysis will be provided as needed. Note that this is not a socioenvironmental systems analysis project; candidates who come with that background need to show an ability to work outside of systems frameworks in the project proposal.

Residence within commuting distance from Oslo is expected during the appointment, but the postdoctoral fellows will also spend time abroad for training and research.

Applicants, who at the time of appointment cannot provide documentary evidence of basic formal teaching competence, must acquire such competence by completing a mandatory pedagogical course provided by UiO within the first two years (4 year contracts only).

Qualification requirements

- Applicants must hold a doctoral degree in either geography, anthropology, science and technology studies (STS), (socio)environmental systems analysis, environmental studies, or cognate disciplines. The doctoral dissertation must have been submitted for evaluation by the closing application date. Appointment is dependent on the dissertation and public defense of the doctoral dissertation being approved.
- Applicants must have the capacity for independent academic research, and relevant methodological experience, preferably documented through publications in international scientific journals.
- Applicants must have outstanding written and oral proficiency in English.
- Candidates for the Sub-Saharan Africa fellowship must have experience in the region.
- Candidates for the methodological fellowship must show methodological competence.

Assessment criteria

In assessing applications, emphasis will be placed upon the academic and personal capacity of the candidate to contribute to the project within the given time frame, to interact within national and international networks, and to be part of a dynamic research group.

Specific emphasis will be placed on:

- The quality and relevance of the project proposal
- Knowledge of theoretical debates on socio-environmental change including the ontological challenges presented by the separation of society from environment that is pervasive in current scholarship.
- Knowledge of anti-colonial and decolonial debates and ethical issues in research.
- Methodological skills in one or more of the following:
 - Qualitative methods in social science, including participatory, anti-colonial and feminist methods.
 - Quantitative methods in social science or research in uncertainty and risk.
 - Bioacoustics or acoustic methods for social science.
 - Interdisciplinary conceptual and methodological frameworks.
 - Embodied, affective methods, story-telling or visual methods.
- The applicant's ability to contribute to the aims of the UNRULY project.

We offer

- Salary NOK 594,500 - 657,300 per annum depending on qualifications
- A professionally stimulating working environment
- Attractive welfare benefits and a generous pension agreement, in addition to Oslo's family-friendly environment with its rich opportunities for culture and outdoor activities

How to apply

The application should be written in English and must include:

- Application letter (1-2 pages). Please indicate if you are applying for the Sub-Saharan African fellowship, the methodological fellowship or both. Please describe your motivation for applying for this position and explain how your background, research and experience are relevant to the research project.
- Project proposal. This should be 2-3 pages (maximum, candidates who exceed this limit will be disadvantaged). If you are applying for both positions the proposal may be up to 4 pages. Please address the following 'working hypothesis': 'New relations emerging within energy transitions generate unruliness beyond existing risk assessments. Identifying and characterizing this space requires novel thinking.' The proposal should address how you would approach the project and its relationship to your current experience. Please outline the types of methodologies you are interested in working on within the framework of the project.
- 3-page CV summarizing education, positions, research experience, and other activities.
- A complete list of publications.
- Academic diplomas and transcripts (university degrees only).
- Up to five pieces of academic work for consideration in the assessment process (a doctoral dissertation or a monograph will count as three publications).
- List of 2 references (name, relation to candidate, e-mail and phone number).

The application with attachments must be delivered in our **electronic recruiting system**. Foreign applicants are advised to attach an explanation of their University's grading system. Please note that all documents must be in English (or a Scandinavian language in the case of transcripts; the application materials should be in English).

The final hiring decision is the responsibility of the department's board and will be based on an evaluation of the overall qualifications of the shortlisted candidates as well as the department's needs.

Formal regulations

Please see the [guidelines and regulations](#) for appointments to Postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Oslo.

No one can be appointed for more than one Postdoctoral Fellow period at the University of Oslo.

According to the Norwegian Freedom of 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.

Inclusion and diversity are a strength. The University of Oslo has a personnel policy objective of achieving a balanced gender composition. Furthermore, we want employees with diverse professional expertise, life experience and perspectives.

If there are qualified applicants with disabilities, employment gaps or immigrant background, we will invite at least one applicant from each of these categories to an interview.

Contact information

[Professor Andrea Nightingale](#)

About the University of Oslo

The University of Oslo is Norway's oldest and highest ranked educational and research institution, with 28 000 students and 7000 employees. With its broad range of academic disciplines and internationally recognised research communities, UiO is an important contributor to society.

The Department of Sociology and Human Geography is Norway's leading department for both Sociology and Human Geography. The Department offers four Bachelor's and three Master's programmes. Research, teaching and dissemination activities within both fields are of the highest level. The Department is renowned both for the breadth of topics and methodologies employed and for its highly qualified researchers. Gender balance among the academic staff is an important distinguishing feature. The Department has 35 permanent academic staff, nearly 40 doctoral and post doctoral research fellows and 14 administrative staff members. There are approximately 80 PhD. candidates and 1500 students enrolled in the Department.

Additional information

Place of service:

Boks 1072 Blindern 0316 Oslo (Oslo Municipality)