



**Jobbnorge ID:** 297424  
**Deadline:** 4/7/2026  
**Website:** <https://www.unis.no>  
**Scope:** Fulltime  
**Duration:** Fixed Term

## About UNIS

The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), located in Longyearbyen at 78°N, is the world's northernmost institution for higher education. UNIS specializes in Arctic studies and offers field- and research-based courses at bachelor's, master's, and PhD level in Arctic biology, geology, geophysics, technology, and safety. UNIS makes use of its year-round presence in the unique Arctic environment, using the environment as a natural laboratory for research and education.

We attract around 700 students annually from all over the world. All teaching is conducted in English and roughly half of both staff and students are international. UNIS was established in 1993 and is operated as a state-owned company under the Ministry of Education and Research. The administrative language is Norwegian. UNIS' values are inclusion, transparency, engagement, reliability, and respect.

## PhD position in the field of Terrestrial plant ecology

### About the department

The Arctic biology department constitutes 2 professors, 6 associate professors, 5 PhD students, 8 adjunct professors and 1 technician. The department conducts research and education in Arctic terrestrial and marine biology. The department focuses on an integrated approach to High-Arctic biology, within the focal research topics (1) climate change biology, (2) seasonal ecology, and (3) biodiversity.

### About the position

The PhD position is in the field of terrestrial biology, focusing on the ecology of Arctic plants in a warmer climate. The research aims to investigate effects of amplified climate warming on abundance changes in High Arctic vegetation. It will also shed light on plant phenology, especially the recently observed phenomenon of re-flowering thought to be caused by the longer and warmer summers. Lastly, the study also highlights the need to rethink solutions for Arctic seed conservation in the future and will test whether long-term storage of seeds is a viable option.

The candidate will be responsible for 1) analysing long-term monitoring data from the International tundra experiment (ITEX) in Endalen after 20 years of artificial warming, 2) setting up monitoring plots to study re-flowering in a range of Arctic plant species and 3) conduct germination experiments on seeds after 20 years of storage in the Global Seed Vault.

The candidate is expected to take part in extensive field and lab work, which requires endurance and the ability to work systematically, both independently as well as in a team. Upon employment, the successful PhD candidate will work on a detailed project description together with the supervisors. The supervisor team consists of Lovisa Gustafsson and Simone I. Lang (The University Centre in Svalbard), Siri Lie Olsen (Norwegian University of Life Sciences), Inger Greve Alsos (UiT - The Arctic University of Norway), and Natasha de Vere (Natural History Museum of Denmark, University of Copenhagen, Denmark). Short research visits with the national and/or international collaborators will be possible.

The four-year contract includes a year of required duties. Alternatively, the candidate may choose a three-year position which excludes these duties. Duty work will include teaching in courses at BSc and MSc/PhD level, e.g., [AB-201 Terrestrial Arctic Biology \(15 ECTS\) - UNIS](#), [AB-329 Arctic Winter Ecology \(10 ECTS\) - UNIS](#). Required duties for the successful candidate will be specified upon employment. Other duties may be assigned by the head of department as required.

### Qualifications

This position requires:

- Applicants must hold a master's degree in a field relevant for the position or the degree must be completed by July 1, 2026.
- Admission to the doctoral program at Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) is a condition for the employment. For requirements, see [PhD Education | NMBU](#) and [Environmental Sciences and Natural Resource Management | NMBU](#). A plan for the implementation of the research training must be approved by the faculty during the first months of the appointment. The candidate is expected to complete a coursework component of 30 ECTS as part of the formal PhD training.
- Experience of terrestrial field work and capability of conducting long field campaigns.
- Ability to work independently and in a structured manner and demonstrate good collaborative skills.
- Experience in plant identification.
- Experience and skills in basic laboratory, analytical, and statistical methods.
- Proficient in both written and oral English.

You will be offered the opportunity to participate in digital Norwegian language courses during your employment.

## Advantageous knowledge and skills

- Experience with terrestrial field work in polar and/or alpine regions.
- Experience in the identification of bryophytes and lichens.
- Knowledge of R.
- Scientific publications within related subjects.
- Driver's license class B (valid for Svalbard).

Motivation and personal suitability will be emphasized.

## Required documents

- Motivational letter (max. 1 page) to state your scientific and personal interest in pursuing a PhD on the announced topic, and your motivation for conducting your PhD at UNIS.
- Full academic CV.
- Transcripts and diplomas showing the completion of bachelor's and master's degrees, alternatively an official confirmation that the master's degree will be completed by July 1, 2026.
- Contact information for two references, one of which must be your master's supervisor.

All applications must be sent through our JobbNorge system. All documents must be uploaded as attachments to the application.

Applications lacking required documents will not be considered.

## We offer

UNIS offers a challenging and varied job in an exciting and international environment. As an employee you will be a member of the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund (SPK), which provides one of the best pension schemes on the market. We also offer excellent insurance schemes, coverage of travel and relocation expenses (max NOK 10.000) upon starting the position, and staff housing in accordance with current regulations.

The position is classified under the job code "Stipendiat" (PhD position, code 1017). In addition to the base salary, a Svalbard allowance of NOK 44,640 per annum is provided. A 2% contribution to the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund is deducted from the salary. The income tax rate in Svalbard is currently 8%, and a national insurance contribution of 7,6% is also deducted.

## Application process

Inquiries about this position may be directed to:

- Assoc. Prof. Lovisa Gustafsson, [lovisag@unis.no](mailto:lovisag@unis.no)
- Assoc. Prof. Simone Lang, [simonel@unis.no](mailto:simonel@unis.no)

Application deadline: 07.04.2026

## Security policy cooperation

UNIS prioritises applicants who are citizens of countries with a security policy cooperation with Norway. This mainly includes countries that are members of the EU/EEA or NATO. Employees holding citizenship from countries outside EU/EEA or NATO may encounter difficulties accessing the government infrastructure that UNIS relies on to hold our courses and perform research work.

## Selection and appointment

A committee appointed by the Head of Department will evaluate the qualifications of the applicants and invite the highest ranked person(s) for an interview. The appointment will be made by the Director of UNIS based on the recommendation of the committee.

## Public disclosure

It is possible to request that your name/application be exempt from public disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (Offentlighetsloven) § 25. The request must be justified. Please note that if the request is not granted, the applicant will be contacted and given the opportunity to withdraw the application.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

One of the UNIS values is inclusion. We are committed to achieving diversity within the workforce and creating an inclusive working environment in the High Arctic. We therefore welcome applications from all qualified candidates irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, beliefs, age or other characteristics.

## **Additional information**

### **Contact persons:**

- Lovisa Gustafsson, Associate Professor  
Phone: | E-mail: lovisag@unis.no
- Simone Lang, Associate Professor  
Phone: | E-mail: simonel@unis.no

### **Place of service:**

Pb. 156 9171 Longyearbyen (Svalbard Municipality)