Postdoctoral Research Fellow/Research Fellow in the Field of Food Safety (PathoSeq)

Job description

A position as either postdoctoral fellow or research fellow (postdoctoral fellow preferred) is available for two years, to undertake research as part of the project “Food safety with high precision - Pathogenomics for the food industry” (PathoSeq). The project is funded by the Norwegian Research Council and led by Nofima AS. It involves collaboration with a large number of industry partners, including Orkla Foods Norge AS, Nortura SA, Grilstad AS, Norsk Kylling AS and Salmar AS.

The appointee will work as part of an interdisciplinary team comprising researchers from the Norwegian Research Center for Computers and Law (NRCCL) and researchers from Nofima AS.

More about the position

The PathoSeq project concerns the implementation of modern DNA sequencing technology for the purpose of monitoring and tracking pathogens in food production processes.

The pathogens in focus are Listeria monocytogenes (Lm), which constitute the most substantial pathogenic challenge for the Norwegian meat and salmon production industries.

The project is aimed at providing both a scientific and legal basis for enabling use of whole genome sequencing (WGS) technology to control these pathogens. An important part of the project involves mapping the legal and broader regulatory framework for WGS applications in pathogen control. It is to this part of the project that the postdoctoral or research fellow position is dedicated.

Further information about the scope and remit of the PathoSeq project may be found here: https://nofima.no/en/project/pathoseq/

The appointee will:

(i) map the current state of legal regulation regarding food safety, both in Norway and at the international level;
(ii) identify and analyse legislative initiatives that (directly or indirectly) may mandate the use of WGS for food safety purposes;
(iii) examine how the Norwegian food industry has implemented and complied with food safety rules;
(iv) elucidate the issues that today’s rules leave unresolved;
(v) discuss the need for future regulatory reforms and the likely ramifications of such reforms.

Although the appointee’s research will have a legal focus, much of the research involved will be interdisciplinary, drawing on expertise in socio-economic, technological, and political processes, along with law.

Moreover, the research will focus not just on legally binding codes (“hard law”) but also a range of “soft law” initiatives (e.g., industry/branch codes of practice, technical standards, and recommendations).

It will take account of regulatory policy in jurisdictions outside Norway - particularly EU and US policy. And the research will involve qualitative interview-based surveys with key stakeholders.

The research will tackle cutting-edge regulatory issues involving a need to rethink aspects of the interaction of new technology, public safety, business interests and human rights, along with the impact on Norway of external (US and EU) regulatory pressures.

Qualification requirements

Applicants for a position as postdoctoral research fellow must have a PhD or other corresponding education equivalent to a Norwegian doctoral degree in law. Applicants must also hold a Norwegian master degree in law or its equivalent. Other education at the same level may be accepted, based on an assessment in each case, if the education is highly relevant to the subject matter and remit of the PathoSeq project.

Applicants for a position as research fellow must hold a Norwegian master degree in law or its equivalent. Other education at the same level may be accepted, based on an assessment in each case, if the education is highly relevant to the subject matter and remit of the PathoSeq project.

As the project leader will define more precisely the research agenda of the appointee, applicants do not need to submit an extensive project proposal. However, applicants are requested to submit a short proposal (maximum 5 pages) sketching how they would tackle their part of the research project as outlined above, in light of the methodological challenges they envisage the research will present.
In assessing the applications, special emphasis will be placed on the applicants’ assumed academic and personal ability to complete their part of the project within the given time frame, taking particular account of the interdisciplinary requirements of the PathoSeq project.

The working language for the project is Norwegian and many of the rules making up the national Norwegian regulatory framework are available only in Norwegian, so applicants should have an excellent command of Norwegian or another Scandinavian language. As the main results of the research will be published in English, applicants should also have an excellent command of English.

Short-listed applicants will be invited for an interview with the University of Oslo.

We offer

- Salary for postdoctoral fellow NOK 532 300,- - 594 400,- a year. Salary for research fellow NOK 479 600,- - 523 200,- a year.
- An inspiring, friendly and inclusive working environment
- Pension arrangements in the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund.
- Attractive welfare arrangements

How to apply

The application must include:

- A short (maximum 5 pages) description of the proposed research to be undertaken during the 2 year project period, including a description of the aims, methodologies and theoretical ambitions. The proposal must clearly demonstrate how the research will contribute towards the goals of PathoSeq.
- CV (summarizing education, positions, pedagogical experience, administrative experience and other qualifying activity)
- Copies of educational certificates and diplomas. Diplomas issued in other languages than Scandinavian or English must be provided in the original language as well as in an English translation. Applicants with grades from outside Norway must attach an explanation of their university grading system.
- Names and contact details of 2-3 references (name, relation to candidate, e-mail and telephone number)
- For applicants for the postdoctoral fellow position a copy of their doctoral dissertation, along with a maximum of 50 pages from other academic works that the applicant wishes to be considered by the evaluation committee.
- For applicants for the research fellow position a copy of their Master thesis, along with a maximum of 50 pages from other academic works that the applicant wishes to be considered by the evaluation committee.
- In the case of co-authored works, a statement by the co-author(s) must be enclosed explaining the extent of the contributions by the various people involved.

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.

The University of Oslo has an agreement for all employees, aiming to secure rights to research results etc.

The University of Oslo aims to achieve a balanced gender composition in the workforce and to recruit people with ethnic minority backgrounds.

Contact information

Professor Lee Andrew Bygrave

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 Private Law (IFP) was established in 1955 and is one of the five departments that together comprise the Faculty of Law. The department is the largest Norwegian academic milieu working directly with private law subjects.

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