Postdoctoral Fellow in Philosophy

Job description

Applicants are invited for a full-time 2-year position as Postdoctoral Fellow in philosophy, to be employed at the Institute of Basic Medical Science of the University of Oslo and to be based at the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas, University of Oslo.

We are looking for an enthusiastic and self-motivated person with a background in philosophy (preferably applied ethics or bioethics) and experience of conducting qualitative interviews. The position is supported by PINpOINT, a project funded by the Norwegian Research Council under the theme Digital Life, see https://digitallifenorway.org/.

Scientists are increasingly expected to consider the ethical and social impacts of their research. Accordingly, ‘responsible research and innovation’ (RRI) has become a necessary component of science projects. However, the means by which researchers should achieve this is not always clear. RRI is not the same as research ethics, though there is clearly some overlap. Research ethics focuses primarily on the ways in which the research is actually carried out, especially the risks of harm to individual research subjects. RRI covers a broader array of social and ethical questions, and involves consideration of the future applications of the research and its acceptability to the public.

The postdoctoral fellow will work with scientists who are engaged in complex multidisciplinary projects in digital life sciences, to ascertain the ways in which different team members understand and respond to ethical and social challenges in their work. Rather than applying ‘top down’ ethical principles, the successful candidate will take an exploratory approach. He or she will elicit, rather than impose, the goals of the scientists both in terms of their scientific aims, and in the socio-ethical challenges that these may raise.

The work will involve three distinct phases. Firstly, undertaking qualitative interviews with scientists working on PINpOINT and related projects. Secondly, analysing the data from these interviews, to ascertain the ways in which scientists perceive and respond to socio-ethical challenges in their work. Finally, the development of vignettes illustrating these challenges, which will be used in workshops with the scientists involved, as a tool to stimulate deliberation and discussion. The overarching aim of the work is to facilitate the development of ‘responsible research and innovation’ (RRI) in science. PINpOINT is a flagship research project in the area of personalized cancer therapy.

We expect the successful candidate to have a PhD in philosophy but will also consider applicants whose main discipline is sociology but who have studied philosophy and can demonstrate expertise and experience in applied ethics.

The postdoctoral fellow will work independently but in close collaboration with Dr Anna Smajdor at the University of Oslo. Interested candidates are strongly encouraged to contact Dr Smajdor for an informal discussion.

Qualification requirements

- Applicants must hold a degree equivalent to a Norwegian doctoral degree in Philosophy (or in exceptional cases, a PhD in Sociology may be acceptable). The Doctoral dissertation must have been submitted for evaluation by the closing date. Appointment is dependent on the public defence of the doctoral thesis being approved.
- Fluent oral and written communication skills in English.

Personal skills

- Demonstrable experience of undertaking qualitative research
- Ability to work collaboratively across disciplinary boundaries
- Excellent organizational and time management skills
- Self-motivation and capacity to work independently

We offer

- salary NOK 532 300 - 605 500 per annum depending on qualifications in position as Postdoctoral Research Fellow (position code 1352)
- 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 must include

- cover letter (statement of motivation, summarizing scientific work and research interest)
- Preliminary project description, including progress plan (max. 4 pages)
- CV (summarizing education, positions, pedagogical experience, administrative experience and other qualifying activity)
- copies of educational certificates (academic transcripts only)
- a complete list of publications
- list of reference persons: 2-3 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 should be in English (or a Scandinavian language).

In assessing the applications, special emphasis will be placed on the documented, academic qualifications, the project description (whenever this is required in the call for applicants), and the quality of the project as well as the candidates motivation and personal suitability. Interviews with the best qualified candidates will be arranged. It is expected that the successful candidate will be able to complete the project in the course of the period of employment.

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

Associate Professor Anna Smajdor, tel: +47 22 85 75 46, e-mail: anna.smajdor@ifikk.uio.no

Professor Arnoldo Frigessi, tel: +47 957 35 574, e-mail: arnoldo.frigessi@medisin.uio.no

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 Institute of Basic Medical Sciences overall objective is to promote basic medical knowledge in order to understand normal processes, provide insight into mechanisms that cause illness, and promote good health. The Institute is responsible for teaching in basic medical sciences for the programmes of professional study in medicine and the Master's programme in clinical nutrition. The Institute has more than 300 employees and is located in Domus Medica.

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