PhD Candidate in Public Health Policy

Applications are invited for a 3 year position in a Research Fellowship in public health policy to be based at the The Institute of Health and Society, University of Oslo.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The position is part of a project entitled Inclusive Evaluation of Public Health Interventions. The project is funded by the Research Council of Norway for the period 2017-2020. It is a truly collaborative project, administered from the University of Bergen, with several partner institutions in Norway and internationally.

The basic premise for the project is that public health interventions (PHIs) are critical for meeting many of Norway's and the world's greatest challenges. Sedentary lifestyles, overweight, and non-communicable diseases are among them. Rigorous evaluation of PHIs is indispensable for ensuring that these interventions are properly prioritised. Yet, previous evaluations of PHIs have often been narrow: omitting costs, benefits beyond health, and impact on inequalities. Interventions promoting physical activity are among the PHIs for which we need more evidence. Moreover, today's process for evaluation tends to be fragmented and poorly linked to the policy-making process, thereby jeopardizing the implementation of even favourably-evaluated PHIs.

The objective of the project is to generate new tools and evidence to promote PHIs that are cost-effective, that generate both health and non-health benefits, and that reduce inequalities. Specifically, we will: I) further develop newly proposed methods for inclusive evaluation of PHIs, i.e. economic evaluation that incorporates non-health benefits and distributional concerns; II) evaluate three clusters of PHIs promoting a) walking and cycling, b) lifestyle services for overweight or obese children, adolescents, and adults, and c) physical activity among socioeconomically disadvantaged women using the new methods; and III) identify and assess new ways to bridge the evaluation and implementation of PHIs.

We will employ both quantitative and qualitative methods, including method development (subproject I), cost-effectiveness analysis (subproject II), and comparative policy analysis and interviews (subproject III). We will utilise data from multiple sources, including health surveys and the national burden of disease project.

CANDIDATE’S ROLE

The PhD-candidate will be responsible for subproject III. The candidate will seek to identify and assess new ways to bridge the evaluation and implementation of public health interventions (PHIs) in order to promote the implementation of favourably-evaluated interventions. Please also see project description.

According to the current study protocol, the candidate will first examine the current process of evaluation of PHIs in Norway and several other countries. These will include Canada, the UK, and a purposive sample of European countries. The candidate will also examine recent changes to the process of evaluation in the same countries and the impact of these changes, especially with regard to inter-sectoral collaboration and implementation. To do this, the candidate will conduct a cross-national comparative study, utilising policy-document analysis, semi-structured key-informant interviews, and established frameworks for policy-making analysis. The candidate will examine a pre-determined set of options in particular depth, to determine the extent of current implementation and in-principle feasibility and attractiveness. As part of subproject III, the candidate will also examine how a designated national body for evaluation of PHIs best can be designed. The findings from this subproject will help authorities and stakeholders in Norway to improve the process of evaluation in a way that promotes implementation of favourably-evaluated PHIs.

The fellowship period is 3 years and devoted to carrying out the subproject "Bridge to implementation".
The research fellow must take part in the Faculty's approved PhD program and is expected to complete the project within the set fellowship period. The main purpose of the fellowship is research training leading to the successful completion of a PhD degree.

The applicant must, in collaboration with her/his supervisor, within 3 months after employment, have worked out a complete project description to be attached to the application for admission to the doctoral program. For more information, please see our web site.

Qualification requirements
- Applicants must hold a Master's degree (120 ECTS) or an equivalent qualification in social sciences, medicine, public health, or other relevant field, minimum grade B (ECTS grading scale) or equivalent. The Master's degree must include a thesis of at least 30 ECTS.
- Fluent oral and written communication skills in English is required, and fluency in a Scandinavian language is an advantage.
- Expertise in political science, public policy or related field
- Expertise in medicine and public health or related field
- Expertise on relevant research methods for the project
- Knowledge of evaluation of interventions is an advantage
- Research experience is an advantage

Personal Skills
We are looking for a candidate with an enthusiasm for research. The successful candidate has the ability to work both independently and in teams, is reliable, effective and with a high work capacity.

We offer
- An opportunity to contribute to better priorities for public health.
- A stimulating and friendly research environment and close interaction with national and international collaborators
- Salary NOK 436 900 - 490 900 per annum depending on qualifications in a position as PhD Research fellow, (position code 1017)
- 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 with statement of motivation and brief overarching plan for how you would like to develop the project (2-3 pages in total)
- CV (summarizing education, positions and academic work)
- Copies of educational certificates (academic transcripts only)
- Documentation of English proficiency if applicable
- A complete list of publications and academic works
- 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, please follow the link “apply for this job”. 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).

When evaluating the application, emphasis will be given to the eventual project description and the applicant's academic and personal prerequisites to carry out the project. Applicants may be called in for an interview.

Formal regulations
Please see the guidelines and regulations for appointments to Research Fellowships at the University of Oslo.

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.

The appointment may be shortened/given a more limited scope within the framework of the applicable guidelines on account of any previous employment in academic positions.

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

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

Deadline: 15. October 2017

Contact persons:
Associate Professor Trygve Ottersen tlf +47 909 49 257
HR Advisor Marie Cecilie Bakken tlf +47 22 85 05 08

Jobbnorge-ID: 141032, Søknadsfrist: Avsluttet