



Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas

## Doctoral Research Fellow in Philosophy of Science - AssemblingLife

### Job description

A Doctoral Research Fellowship (SKO 1017) in philosophy of science is available at the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas, University of Oslo.

The Doctoral Research Fellowship is associated with the project "[AssemblingLife](#)" funded by the European Research Council (ERC).

The candidate must develop a project description, which must be submitted as a part of the application. The candidate's PhD project will contribute to the "AssemblingLife" project.

### More about the position

Many complex structures and processes of life are at least partly the result of spontaneous self-assembly processes. In the AssemblingLife project, a central aim is, within the framework of philosophy of science, to develop new ideas of life and life science explanation by bringing in the increasing knowledge and awareness of self-assembly processes from various scientific fields (for example nanoscience, molecular biology and soft material science). Important objectives are to provide a comprehensive analysis of the concept and idea of self-assembly across fields and scales and to decipher differences, similarities and connections between self-assembly and ideas of self-organization of living systems. The project aims to challenge (but also to build on) existing accounts of explanation in philosophy of biology and life sciences, such as current accounts of genetic causation as well as mechanist and interventionist ideas of explanation. It is also a central goal to explicate how several explanatory frameworks, such as for example biophysics and molecular biology, may compete and/or integrate from the viewpoint of self-assembly processes. The project aims at building bridges between mechanist and organicist views of life, to provide new answers to questions of scientific explanation, the relation between scales and levels of explanation, and ultimately to the question of how to understand life itself.

This PhD position will be specifically associated with one of two research strands in AssemblingLife:

- (1) One strand considers how the understanding of genetic causation may be transformed by bringing in current knowledge about self-assembly processes. One possible route would be to investigate genetic material as "nudgers" of self-assembly processes.
- (2) A second research focus will be an investigation of the concept and idea of self-assembly across fields and scales, and how it connects to the idea of self-organization in living systems. The candidate's proposed doctoral research need not address these topics exactly as described here. Candidates should, though, in their research description and application address how their proposed research relates to one of the research strands described. More information about the relevant work packages can be made available to applicants (see contact details below).

The candidate is expected to work closely with the PI and the other participants in the AssemblingLife project.

The candidate will be situated in a strong, lively and supportive research environment. To mention some of the current activity, the department hosts several ERC philosophy projects in addition to "AssemblingLife" and also hosts the [Centre for Philosophy and the Sciences](#), which is funded as a prioritized research area from the Faculty of Humanities, UiO.

The person appointed will be affiliated with the Faculty's organized research training. The academic work is to result in a doctoral thesis that will be defended at the Faculty with a view to obtaining the degree of PhD. The successful candidate is expected have Oslo as their primary workplace and to join the existing research milieu or network and contribute to its development. Read more about the [doctoral degree](#).

The appointment is for a duration of 3 years. All PhD Candidates who submit their doctoral dissertation for assessment with a written recommendation from their supervisor within 3 years or 3 ½ years after the start of their PhD position, will be offered, respectively, a 12 or 6 month [Completion Grant](#).

### Qualification requirements

- A Master's degree or equivalent in philosophy. It will be considered an advantage if the candidate has some background in one or more of the natural science fields relevant for the project. Candidates with a Master's degree in a natural science field will also be considered if they can demonstrate sufficient philosophical competence to take on a philosophy of science PhD project. The Master's degree normally must have been obtained and the final evaluation must be available by the application deadline. In exceptional cases, we can consider applications from candidates who do not yet have an MA degree but who are close to completing one. If so, the degree must be awarded by the time the position is taken up
- Fluent oral and written communication skills in English, see [Language requirements](#)
- Personal suitability and motivation for the position

To be eligible for admission to the doctoral programmes at the University of Oslo, applicants must, as a minimum, have completed a five-year graduation course (Master's degree or equivalent), including a Master's thesis of at least 30 ECTS. In special cases, the Faculty may grant admission on the basis of a one-year Master course following an assessment of the study programme's scope and quality.

In assessing the applications, special emphasis will be placed on:

- The project's scientific merit, relevance and innovation
- The applicant's ability to contribute to one of the described research strands of the AssemblingLife project.
- The applicant's estimated academic and personal ability to complete the project within the time frame
- The applicant's ability to produce philosophical work of high quality
- The applicant's ability to complete research training
- Good collaboration skills and an ability to join interdisciplinary academic communities

Applicants who have recently graduated with excellent results may be given preference.

## We offer

- Salary NOK 501 200 - 544 400 per annum depending on qualifications
- A professionally stimulating working environment
- Membership in the [Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund](#)
- Attractive [welfare benefits](#)

## How to apply

The application must include:

- Application letter describing the applicant's qualifications and motivation for the position
- Curriculum Vitae (with a list of education, positions, teaching experience, administrative experience and other qualifying activities, including a complete list of publications)
- Transcript of records of your Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Applicants with education from a foreign university must attach an explanation of their university's grading system
- Documentation of [Language requirements](#) (if applicable)
- A project description, including a detailed progress plan for the project (3 - 5 pages, maximum 14,000 characters. See [Template for project descriptions](#))
- An academic writing sample of up to 8000 words

Please note that all documents must be in English or a Scandinavian language.

Educational certificates, master theses and the like are not to be submitted with the application, but applicants may be asked to submit such information or works later.

The application with attachments must be delivered in our electronic recruiting system, [jobbnorge.no](#).

Short-listed candidates will be invited for an interview.

## Formal regulations

See also [regulations](#) as well as guidelines for [the application assessment process](#) and [appointments](#) to research fellowships.

Following the Freedom of Information Act (Offentleglova) § 25, Chapter 2, demographic information about the applicant may be used in the public list of applicants even if the applicant opts out from the entry in the public application list.

The University of Oslo has an [Acquisition of Rights Agreement](#) for the purpose of securing rights to intellectual property created by its employees, including research results.

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

## Contact information

For questions about the position:

Senior Lecturer and Project Leader [Gry Oftedal](#)

For questions about how to apply:

HR Officer [Anders Rykke](#)

## 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 embraces four disciplines: Philosophy, Classical Languages (Greek and Latin), History of Ideas and Art History. The Department is also responsible for the introductory philosophy courses, obligatory for all students attending study programmes at the University of Oslo. The Department has about 110 employees.

Jobbnorge-ID: 241487, Søknadsfrist: 15. mai 2023