



Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas

Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Philosophy - AssemblingLife

Job description

A Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (SKO 1352) in philosophy is available at the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas, University of Oslo.

The position is associated with the philosophy of science project "[AssemblingLife](#)" funded by the European Research Council (ERC).

We are looking for candidates whose research falls broadly within one or more of the following areas: philosophy of science, philosophy of biology, philosophy of (bio)physics, philosophy of (bio)chemistry, philosophy of nanoscience, theoretical philosophy, and/or within one or more of the natural science fields relevant for the project.

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

More about the position

Many complex structures and processes in living organism 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 postdoc position is specifically associated with the research strand in AssemblingLife, which addresses the vices and virtues of mechanist and interventionist ideas of explanation when evaluated in the light of current knowledge of self-assembly processes and their significance in living systems. We will evaluate to what degree research on self-assembly processes fits with current mechanist and interventionist ideas of explanation and develop a framework for life science explanation that accounts for the characteristics and significance of self-assembly and self-organization of living systems. The candidate's proposed postdoctoral 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 the topics 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 position is available for a period of 3 years. There is a 10 % component of the position which is devoted to teaching and administrative duties.

The successful candidate is expected to have Oslo as their primary workplace, to become part of the research environment/network of the department and contribute to its development. The main purpose of postdoctoral research fellowships is to qualify researchers for work in higher academic positions within their disciplines

Qualification requirements

- PhD or equivalent academic qualifications with a specialization in philosophy of science, philosophy that interacts with science or other relevant theoretical philosophy. Some background in one or more natural science fields in addition to philosophy will be an advantage but is not a requirement. Candidates with a PhD in one of the natural science fields relevant for the project will also be considered for the position if they can show sufficient philosophy competence that makes them prepared to contribute to philosophy research literature
- The candidate's research project must be closely connected to the AssemblingLife project
- Fluent oral and written communication skills in English
- Personal suitability and motivation for the position

Applicants who do not hold a PhD at the time of application must have submitted their doctoral dissertation by the closing date of this call. Appointment to the position is dependent on a successful doctoral defense.

In the evaluation of the applications, emphasis will be placed on:

- The research project's scientific merit, project relevance and innovation
- The applicant's estimated academic and personal ability to carry out the project within the allotted time frame and its contribution to the relevant research strand of AssemblingLife
- Good co-operative skills, and the ability to successfully join in academic collaboration within and across disciplines

We offer

- Salary NOK 544 400 - 626 300 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 grades listed (with a list of education, positions, teaching experience, administrative experience and other qualifying activities)
- List of publications
- Project description (approx. 3 - 5 pages, maximum 14,000 characters. See [Template for project descriptions](#)). The project description must present a feasible progress plan. It is expected that the applicant will be able to complete the project during the period of appointment
- An academic writing sample of up to 8000 words

Diplomas, certificates, doctoral thesis and other academic works may be requested later.

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

The application with attachments must be delivered in our electronic recruiting system, jobbnorge.no. Applicants with education from a foreign university must attach an explanation of their university's grading system.

The short-listed candidates will be invited for an interview.

Formal regulations

See also [Regulations concerning Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships](#).

Following the Freedom of Information Act (Offentleglova) § 25, Chapter 2, 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.

No one can be appointed for more than one Postdoctoral Fellow period at the University of Oslo

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:

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: 241485, Søknadsfrist: 15. mai 2023