

# Postdoctoral position for the project *Edutopias. Reforms of everyday school practices. Denmark 1945 – 1975*

The Danish School of Education (DPU) at the Faculty of Arts, Aarhus University, invites applications for a fixed-term postdoctoral position associated with the project *Edutopias. Reforms of everyday school practices. Denmark 1945 – 1975*, funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark (Humanities).

The postdoctoral position is full time (37 hours/week) for a duration of 24 months, commencing on 1 Oktober 2024 or as soon as possible thereafter. The position will be based within the Departments of Educational Sociology and Education Studies at Emdrup Campus (Copenhagen NV).

## Research context

The project *Edutopias. Reforms of everyday school practices. Denmark 1945 – 1975* aims to investigate how utopias, ideas and visions of the child-centred school for all were negotiated, disputed and materialised on the level of everyday practices in the period in question. In four interrelated studies on school experiments, teacher training, school architecture and the small-school movement, the project will examine the utopias, expectations and passions that, through everyday work and experimentation, gave the actors of the period the courage and belief that it was possible to change the school. Framed within a new-materialist approach, the project aims to create a new understanding of school reforms as rooted in complex – and potentially contradictory – everyday processes that involve changes not only to the structure of the school, but also to the relationship between teachers, parents and students. Methodologically, this involves working with archival assemblages, combining a wide range of empirical sources, e.g. texts and visuals from public and private archives, interviews, films and literature.

The project team consists of Professor Ning de Coninck-Smith, Associate Professor Lisa Rosén Rasmussen, and one PhD student and one postdoctoral researcher. The research team is embedded in an international network and is expected to host a series of digital seminars and participate in relevant international seminars.

## The position

The selected applicant will work on the changing edutopian imaginaries and actualisations within the myriad school experiments carried out in the Danish elementary schools between 1945 and 1975. Exploring the experiments' resonance with the school reforms of 1958 and 1975, there will be a particular focus on experiments relating to the introduction of the democratic and comprehensive school and the changing relationship between teachers, students and parents. In addition to four in-depth case studies, the aim is to examine sources of inspiration for developing the experiments, educational materials and teaching practices (e.g. pedagogical literature and ideas, networks and encounters) as well as material on the changing legislative and organisational aspects of school experimentation.

Apart from carrying out the sub-project, the postdoc is also expected to:

- Actively participate in the project's research team and relevant national and international research networks
- Publish research findings independently and collaboratively in international peer-reviewed journals/anthologies
- Initiate, join and help organise activities with the research team, such as conferences, webinars and other project-related endeavours.

## Qualifications

The project lies within the field of the history of education, and the applicants must hold a PhD or the equivalent in history, ethnology, educational science or similar. Applicants must be able to document:

- Experience with and courage to experiment with historical research methods using written sources, visuals, materialities and interviews
- Knowledge of the Danish school system and its history
- Advanced language proficiency level in Danish, as written sources and interviews will mainly be in Danish

**Application Deadline:**  
15 August 2024

**Faculty:**  
Faculty of Arts

**Institute/Faculty:**  
The Danish School of Education

**Academic contact person:**  
Ning de Coninck-Smith  
Professor  
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**Vacant positions:**  
1

**Hours per week:**  
37

**Number of months:**  
24

**Expected date of accession:**  
01/10/2024

- Mastery of spoken and written English at an advanced academic level.

Experience publishing in English will be an asset.

### Work environment

The position is hosted by the Department of Educational Sociology and the Department of Educational Studies. The selected applicant will be based at the Emdrup campus.

The selected applicant is expected to be present at the department on a daily or at least a weekly basis. We respect the balance between work and private life and strive to create a work environment in which that balance can be maintained.

For more information, please contact Professor Ning de Coninck-Smith at [ning@edu.au.dk](mailto:ning@edu.au.dk) or +4530539404.

*The application must include the formal statement on your PhD project if you have completed your PhD degree.*

### International applicants

For further information about the benefits of working at Aarhus University and in Denmark, including healthcare, paid holidays and, if relevant, maternity/paternity leave, childcare and schooling, international applicants are encouraged to visit <https://international.au.dk/research/researcher-positions/workingconditions/>.

Aarhus University offers a broad variety of services for international researchers and accompanying families, including a relocation service and career counselling for expat partners. For information about taxation, check the taxation aspects of international researchers' employment by AU.

### The Danish School of Education

The Danish School of Education at Aarhus University is Denmark's largest centre for research and teaching in the fields of education, didactics and learning, with approximately 240 full-time researchers, including 80 PhD students, and 4,500 Bachelor's and Master's degree students. The school's activities are characterised by a high degree of interdisciplinarity and close interaction with society, including businesses, organisations, government agencies and institutions, both in Denmark and abroad.

For more information on the school's research and educational profile, please visit: <http://edu.au.dk/en/>

### Qualification requirements

Applicants should hold a PhD or equivalent academic qualifications.

### Formalities

The Faculty of Arts refers to the Ministerial Order on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Danish Universities ([the Appointment Order](#)).

- Appointments shall be in accordance with the [collective labour agreement between the Danish Ministry of Taxation and the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations](#).
- Further information on qualification requirements and job content may be found in the [Memorandum on Job Structure for Academic Staff at Danish Universities](#).
- Further information on the application and supplementary materials may be found in [Application Guidelines](#).
- The application must outline the applicant's motivation for applying for the position, attaching a curriculum vitae, a teaching portfolio, a complete list of published works, copies of degree certificates and examples of academic production (**mandatory, but no more than five examples**). Please upload this material electronically along with your application.

Aarhus University also offers a junior researcher development programme targeted at career development for postdocs at AU. You can read more about it here: <https://talent.au.dk/junior-researcher-development-programme/>

If nothing else is noted, applications must be submitted in English. The application deadline is at 11.59 pm Danish time (same as Central European Time) on the deadline

day.

Aarhus University's ambition is to be an attractive and inspiring workplace for all and to foster a culture in which each individual has opportunities to thrive, achieve and develop. We view equality and diversity as assets, and we welcome all applicants.

Shortlists may be prepared with the candidates that have been selected for a detailed academic assessment. A committee set up by the head of school is responsible for selecting the most qualified candidates. See this link for further information about shortlisting at the Faculty of Arts: [shortlisting](#)

### **Faculty of Arts**

The Faculty of Arts is one of five main academic areas at Aarhus University.

The faculty contributes to Aarhus University's research, talent development, knowledge exchange and degree programmes.

With its 550 academic staff members, 240 PhD students, 9,500 BA and MA students, and 1,500 students following continuing/further education programmes, the faculty constitutes a strong and diverse research and teaching environment.

The Faculty of Arts consists of the School of Communication and Culture, the School of Culture and Society and the Danish School of Education. Each of these units has strong academic environments and forms the basis for interdisciplinary research and education.

The faculty's academic environments and degree programmes engage in international collaboration and share the common goal of contributing to the development of knowledge, welfare and culture in interaction with society.

Read more at [arts.au.dk/en](https://arts.au.dk/en)

*The application must be submitted via Aarhus University's recruitment system, which can be accessed under the job advertisement on Aarhus University's website.*

### **Aarhus University**

*Aarhus University is an academically diverse and research-intensive university with a strong commitment to high-quality research and education and the development of society nationally and globally. The university offers an inspiring research and teaching environment to its 38,000 students (FTEs) and 8,300 employees, and has an annual revenues of EUR 935 million. Learn more at [www.international.au.dk/](https://www.international.au.dk/)*