

# Postdoctoral position in the Research Unit for Robophilosophy and Integrative Social Robotics (RISR), at the Institute for Culture and Society, Aarhus University

The Research Unit for Robophilosophy and Integrative Social Robotics (RISR), School of Culture and Society, Faculty of Arts, Aarhus University invites applications for a 2-year fixed-term postdoctoral position in interaction design, with specialization on social/assistive robotics.

The appointment begins on October 1, 2025, or as soon as possible thereafter.

The university is keen for its staff to reflect the diversity of society and thus welcomes applications from all qualified applicants regardless of their personal background.

## Research context

The position is offered in the context of the research project “Enabling Social Interiors: Innovating Design in Assistive Robotics (DARE [Research Unit for Robophilosophy and Integrative Social Robotics](#))”. DARE is an interdisciplinary project in social (assistive) robotics where Humanities research is fully included: the project combines philosophical expertise (social ontology, social phenomenology, axiology, ethics), anthropological field research, and constructive design research. With focus on assistive robotics for independent living of older adults, the DARE project will investigate the complex interplay between the dynamics of value hierarchies (e.g., autonomy vs. dignity), self-conceptions in aging, and robot appearance. Drawing on these insights and recent design studies of shape-changing objects, we introduce a new design category, “enabling social interiors”, and investigate how it can support positive conceptions of aging. The project is relevant for the physical and kinematic design of social robots in general, since it investigates the contextual relationship between value experience, social cues in robotic movements, and acceptance of robots.

The relationship between ‘design spaces’ and user values currently constitutes an important research gap in assistive robotics. The DARE project will address this relationship by way of design-centered approach that draws on the unique conceptual and methodological resources of ISR (Integrative Social Robotics), a R&D paradigm for culturally sustainable social robotics as developed at the research unit RISR. (Background information on ISR is provided at the project’s webpage). DARE will also benefit from close collaborations with the ACUTE project ([link](#)) which explores the new design category of artifact inspired robots experimentally.

## The position

We are looking for an innovative young researcher with a disciplinary background in interaction design and a specialization in (social/assistive) robotics. The successful applicant will have both strong design and research skills, with a particular emphasis on qualitative research methods.

The applicant is expected to work productively in an interdisciplinary team. Other researchers of the DARE team will determine interactional profiles for value experience and sociality experiences. The postdoctoral researcher is expected to explore, by means of a constructive design approach using design probes and interviews, how the (physical and kinematic) design of robotic items can support these interactional profiles.

The successful applicant will work closely with the three lead researchers of the project, Professor Johanna Seibt (RISR, philosophy [Research Unit for Robophilosophy and Integrative Social Robotics](#)), Associate Professor Majken Kierkegaard Rasmussen (Digital Design, Interaction Design research program [Interaction Design](#)), and Docent Christina Vestergaard (VIA Research Center for Health and Society, Robophilosophy, anthropology). The place of work will be the interdisciplinary research unit RISR (Jens Chr. Skous Vej 7, Building 1467, 2nd floor), but the postdoctoral researcher will also have access to staff and facilities of the Department of Digital Design and Information Studies (DDINF), such as local prototyping facilities.

## Teaching, supervision, knowledge exchange

The position is primarily research-based, but it will also involve a small degree of teaching and supervision. To that end, the successful applicant will be expected to take part in the teaching activities of the research unit RISR, especially the supplementary subject Humanistic Technology Development [Tilvalget i Humanistisk teknologiudivikling](#). The successful applicant will be expected to teach in English or

**Application Deadline:**  
20 February 2025

**Faculty:**  
Faculty of Arts

**Institute/Faculty:**  
School of Culture and Society

**Academic contact person:**  
Johanna Seibt  
Professor  
[filseibt@cas.au.dk](mailto:filseibt@cas.au.dk)  
+4587162245

**Vacant positions:**  
1

**Hours per week:**  
37

**Number of months:**  
24

**Expected date of accession:**  
01/10/2025

Danish.

The successful applicant will be expected to exchange knowledge with various sectors of society and to contribute actively to public debate in areas related to the position.

#### Qualifications

Applicants for this position must hold a PhD degree in interaction design or equal qualifications.

Applicants should upload a full CV as well as a statement of motivation (1 page).

Applicants must document:

- a PhD degree in interaction design or equal qualifications
- an international research profile showing high academic productivity
- high proficiency in design (including prototyping) of robotic objects
- research background in HRI (social or assistive robotics)
- fluency in written and spoken English
- optional: experience with collaborative research in interdisciplinary research groups.

The research activities will be evaluated in relation to the actual research time. We therefore encourage applicants to specify any periods of leave they may have had without research activities (e.g. maternity/paternity leave), so we can subtract these periods from the span of their academic career when evaluating their productivity.

Please upload a maximum of two publications alongside your application.

Only submitted publications will be assessed; a list of publications is not sufficient. As a result, applications without submitted publications will not be assessed.

Professional references or recommendations should not be included. Applicants who are selected for an interview may be asked to provide professional references.

The application must be submitted in English.

For further information about the position, please contact [filseibt@cas.au.dk](mailto:filseibt@cas.au.dk).

For further information about the application procedure, please contact HR ([iks-hr-sag@au.dk](mailto:iks-hr-sag@au.dk)).

#### International applicants

International applicants are encouraged to check [Family and work-life balance in Denmark](#) and [Attractive working conditions](#) 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. Aarhus University offers a broad variety of services for international researchers and accompanying families, including a [Relocation Service for Postdocs - Aarhus University](#) and career counselling for expat partners. For information about taxation, see [Taxation aspects of international researchers' employment by AU](#)

#### The work environment

Read more about the international, interdisciplinary [Research Unit for Robophilosophy and Integrative Social Robotics](#).

For further information about the school, please see [School of Culture and Society - Aarhus University](#)

#### 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 700 academic staff members, 200 PhD students, 9,000 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](http://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/](http://www.international.au.dk/)*