

Postdoctoral Position in Play in Old Norse Culture

Department of Scandinavian Studies and Experience Economy within the School of Communication and Culture at Aarhus University invites applications for a postdoctoral position in Old Norse studies and cultural history. The position is affiliated with the research project 'Vikings Playing. Changing Perceptions and Memories of the Past' funded by AUFF NOVA.

The postdoctoral researcher position is a full time and 1-year fixed-term position. The position begins on 01 February 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter. The School of Communication and Culture is committed to diversity and encourages all qualified applicants to apply regardless of their personal background.

Project

The project investigates the role and function of adult play in ancient Scandinavian worldviews, mindset and behaviour and examines play and playful attitudes as vehicles for sociocultural transformations, innovation and development. The project considers play as a cultural asset that is tightly entangled with values, politics and societal institutions. The project approaches the past by textual means, and the source material consists of Old Norse texts of various genres. The working language of the project is English.

The successful applicant will be responsible for making case analyses in the work package Play, Ceremony and Ritual. You will be expected to investigate play in the context of religious ritual, magic and spirituality and to consider aspects of gender and social status. The postdoctoral researcher will be expected to publish the results in English-language articles, at a panel at the Medieval Congress in Leeds in July 2026 and in other dissemination activities.

Qualifications

Applicants must have a PhD degree or must document equivalent qualifications in a relevant field related to Old Norse studies, for instance, literary studies, history, or history of religions. Applicants must be able to document, relevant to the position:

- an internationally oriented research profile within Old Norse studies and cultural history as documented by a PhD dissertation and/or research publications
- competences in Old Norse language and knowledge of Old Norse textual history
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills, in order to engage productively both within the research team and with external organisations and institutions
- experience in the self-directed management of research projects

Furthermore, it will be considered an advantage if applicants can document

- a track record of research publications of a high international standard commensurate with the length of the applicant's academic career
- experience of participation in national and international research networks
- time spent abroad working at one or more internationally recognised research institutions.

Finally, applicants are asked to provide a proposal for research to be undertaken within the stated framework of the research project (max. 1-2 pages).

Please note that although the application process can be completed on the Aarhus University system without uploading publications, applications that do not include uploaded publications (maximum two) will not be considered.

Although the Aarhus University application system includes an option to upload letters of recommendation, please do not include letters of recommendation or references with the application. Applicants who are invited to an interview may be asked to provide references.

Work environment

Active participation in the daily life of the department is a high priority, and we emphasise the importance of good working relationships, both among colleagues and with our students. To maintain and develop the department's excellent teaching and research environment, the successful applicant is expected to be present at the department daily.

Application Deadline:
01 September 2025

Faculty:
Faculty of Arts

Institute/Faculty:
School of
Communication and
Culture

Academic contact person:
Pernille Hermann
Lektor
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Vacant positions:
1

Hours per week:
37

Number of months:
12

Expected date of accession:
01/02/2026

We respect the balance between work and private life and strive to create a work environment in which that balance can be maintained. You can read more about [family and work-life balance](#) in Denmark.

Aarhus University also offers a [Junior Researcher Development Programme](#) targeted at career development for postdoctoral researchers at AU.

International applicants

International applicants are encouraged to read about the [attractive working conditions](#) and other 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 wide variety of services for international researchers and accompanying families, including a [relocation service](#) and an [AU Expat Partner Programme](#). You can also find information about the [taxation aspects of international researchers' employment by AU](#).

The department

The place of employment is the Department of Scandinavian Studies and Experience Economy, Jens Chr. Skous Vej 2, 8000 Aarhus C, Denmark

Prospective applicants are invited to view the [department's website](#).

School of Communication and Culture

The school is a part of the Faculty of Arts. You will find information about the school and its [research programmes](#), [departments](#), and diverse activities on its [website](#).

Contact

For further information about the position, please contact the principal investigator (PI), Pernille Hermann, Head of the Department of Scandinavian Studies and Experience Economy, e-mail: norph@cc.au.dk.

If you need help uploading your application or have questions about the recruitment process, please contact Arts HR support by e-mail: hsi@au.dk.

Qualification requirements

Applicants should hold a PhD or equivalent academic qualifications.

Formalities

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

- Appointment 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 complete list of published works, copies of degree certificates and examples of academic production (**mandatory, but no more than two 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. 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

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/