

## **The Department of Design has a vacancy for a PhD candidate within the field of Design for Sustainability and/or Health.**

*(This is an extended version of the vacancy description with reference number 186438 available at [jobbnorge.no](https://jobbnorge.no) (which has a word count limit), and meant to provide more insight into what is expected in this project. The description available on [jobbnorge.no](https://jobbnorge.no) is included in this version, and therefore this version can be used as main reference).*

### **About the department**

NTNU's Department of Design is part of the Faculty of Architecture and Design, which also incorporates the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art. The department has staff both in Trondheim and Gjøvik, and offers design programs in fields such as industrial design, graphic design, interaction design, service design and web development. The department's strategic research areas include design for sustainability and health, and interaction design, and our doctoral program has resulted in doctoral degrees in topics such as design for the circular economy, industrial implementation of design for sustainability, design for sustainable behaviour and practices and design for healthcare. The department has a strong tradition in applying participatory design as research method. It is also interested in practice-based research and artistic research as research methods that can inform and complement scientific research, and wishes to integrate such research methods in its portfolio of activities and experiences.

### **About the vacancy**

The Department of Design has a vacancy for a PhD candidate within the field of Design for Sustainability. More specifically, the candidate will investigate to what extent narratives on sustainability play a role in the successful adoption of sustainable practices on the individual, household, firm and/or society level. Narratives are in this context to be understood as:

- identifiable ways of presenting or understanding sustainability aspects related to consumption of products and services, or in general, including behaviour, practice and lifestyle consequences of different forms of consumption
- that reflect and promote a particular, possibly subjective, point of view or set of values.

Narratives include debates on cultural meaning and shape and affect perceptions of those who participate in them and are exposed to them. Examples of sustainability and health narratives that have emerged are for example related to 'flyskam', food waste and smoking, though we see that suppliers and consumers of air travel and food (as well as the media) have responded differently in terms of accepting and transferring responsibility, expressing urgency and envisioning appropriate solutions. We see that there is rarely one common narrative among stakeholders; often different, potentially contradicting narratives co-exist which may live a symbiotic life, but may also be counterproductive towards securing sustainable and healthy behaviour, practices and lifestyles. In other (possibly more taboo prone) areas, new or more salient narratives may be required to establish more sustainable, responsible or healthy attitudes and lifestyles. Examples may include certain diseases, handicaps, gender-related issues or life choices. It is hypothesized, and therefore a starting point for this research, that a joint understanding of, and agreement on issues like

- urgencies (e.g. how important are needs for individual and societal changes),
- solution space (e.g. what is reasonable to expect or possible to imagine as interventions), and
- responsibility (who will reasonably need to make an effort)

may be required to bring together different stakeholders that present the supply and demand side of consumption, in order to establish sustainable and healthy lifestyles.

### **Research questions**

The PhD candidate will contribute to the understanding and development of sustainability narratives, by addressing the main research questions: Can sustainability narratives be designed? And if so, how and by whom?

Keywords for the research project are sustainability, circularity, social and industry narratives, speculative design, critical design, design activism, design fiction, social media, fake news, taboos, shame and praise, opinion makers, participatory approaches. Developing ways to assess the impact of narratives will also be in focus.

The following sub research questions are likely to be addressed:

- What definition of sustainability narrative can be operationalized within a design context?
- What are the scientific and non-scientific fields that this research can draw upon?
- How can it be determined when a narrative is emerging, under development, or in place?
- Which stakeholders participate in sustainability narrative, can they be designed or initiated (or do they just emerge), and can they be owned?
- Who is/are/can/should be the narrator(s) in a sustainability narrative? Are there, or is there a minimum critical number of, participants that are required?
- When do narratives get established based upon consensus, or discourse?
- What is the role of social media and, for example, fake news?

### **Research methods:**

The PhD candidate is expected to consider the following research methods:

- Interdisciplinary literature review
- Speculative design, critical design, design activism and design fiction may be relevant approaches for the design of sustainability narratives.
- Artistic research is explicitly addressed in this research as well, and co-supervision by the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art is confirmed.

Furthermore, it is likely that the forefront of research (or rather the exploration of this topic) takes place just as much in academic as non-academic circles and channels. Design practitioners, opinion makers, artists and social media experts likely all contribute to both creation and studying narratives, and therefore their modes of inquiry and creation will be relevant for this project.

### **Degree:**

Though the project is essentially scientific research, elements of design practice and artistic research can be explicitly addressed, and co-supervision by the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art is confirmed. The successful applicant will enroll in the Faculty's doctoral program in Design and conduct scientific research. In the case of an exceptional candidate with a strong wish to enroll in the Faculty's doctoral program for artistic research, this may be considered as well, under certain conditions.

The PhD candidate will be supervised by Prof. Casper Boks with co-supervision from Prof. Florian Schneider, and is expected to work from Gløshaugen campus in Trondheim. Formally the PhD candidate will report to the Head of Department, Dr. Ole Andreas Alsos.

The 100% position will be fully funded for 3 years. If relevant, the successful applicant may be given the option of a 4 year contract which in that case includes one year of department duties, which are likely to include design education in our design curricula, and/or contributions to other externally funded projects.

### **Required selection criteria**

The PhD-position's main objective is to qualify for work in research positions. The qualification requirement is that you have completed a master's degree or second degree (equivalent to 120 credits) with a strong academic background in design or another relevant field, or equivalent education with a grade of B or better in terms of [NTNU's grading scale](#). If you do not have letter grades from previous studies, you must have an equally good academic foundation. If you are unable to meet these criteria you may be considered only if you can document that you are particularly suitable for education leading to a PhD degree.

The appointment is to be made in accordance with the regulations in force concerning State Employees and Civil Servants and [national guidelines for appointment as PhD, post doctor and research assistant](#).

### Required selection criteria

- A master degree in Design, or another field deemed relevant for the position
- A documented theoretical and practical understanding of the topics and design methods mentioned in the elaborated version of this announcement ([www.ntnu.no/design](http://www.ntnu.no/design))
- Excellent communication skills in English, both written and spoken
- The ability to be creative and work and think in a cross-disciplinary manner

Candidates are required to include a **motivation letter** (1-2 A4) and a **project proposal** (2-3 A4) in their application. The proposal should reflect the applicant's interpretation of the information provided in the elaborate version of this announcement (provided on our website) into a 3-year PhD research project of manageable proportions and reflect his or her personal interest, experience and ambitions.

### Preferred selection criteria

- Experience with design research, design practice, architectural practice and/or visual arts beyond work done during your degree
- Communication skills in a Scandinavian language, both written and spoken
- An existing national or international professional network

### **Personal characteristics we look for:**

- Ability to contribute to the department with new knowledge and perspectives
- Ability to cooperate in interdisciplinary teams, as well as work independently
- Ability to network professionally and disseminate research

### **We offer**

- A rare opportunity to engage in cross-disciplinary research in this field, and shape, to some extent, a research project to fit your own interest and ability
- An existing international network of relevant scientists, designers and artists

- An open and inclusive work environment with dedicated colleagues
- Favourable terms in the [Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund](#)
- [Employee benefits](#)

### Salary and conditions

PhD candidates are remunerated in code 1017, and are normally remunerated at gross from NOK 479 600 per annum before tax, depending on qualifications and seniority. From the salary, 2% is deducted as a contribution to the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund.

The engagement is to be made in accordance with the regulations in force concerning State Employees and Civil Servants, and the acts relating to Control of the Export of Strategic Goods, Services and Technology. Candidates who by assessment of the application and attachment are seen to conflict with the criteria in the latter law will be prohibited from recruitment to NTNU. After the appointment you must assume that there may be changes in the area of work.

### About the application

The application and supporting documentation to be used as the basis for the assessment must be in English.

Publications and other scientific work must follow the application. Please note that applications are only evaluated based on the information available on the application deadline. You should ensure that your application shows clearly how your skills and experience meet the criteria which are set out above.

Joint works will be considered. If it is difficult to identify your contribution to joint works, you must attach a brief description of your participation.

### General information

#### [Working at NTNU](#)

A good work environment is characterized by diversity. We encourage qualified candidates to apply, regardless of their gender, functional capacity or cultural background.

**The city of Trondheim is a modern European city with a rich cultural scene. Trondheim is the innovation capital of Norway with a population of 200,000.** The Norwegian welfare state, including healthcare, schools, kindergartens and overall equality, is probably the best of its kind in the world. Professional subsidized day-care for children is easily available. Furthermore, Trondheim offers great opportunities for education (including international schools) and possibilities to enjoy nature, culture and family life and has low crime rates and clean air quality.

NTNU is committed to following evaluation criteria for research quality according to [The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment - DORA](#).

As an employee at NTNU, you must at all times adhere to the changes that the development in the subject entails and the organizational changes that are adopted.

Information Act (Offentleglova), your name, age, position and municipality may be made public even if you have requested not to have your name entered on the list of applicants.

If you have any questions about the position, please contact Prof. Casper Boks, preferably via email: [casper.boks@ntnu.no](mailto:casper.boks@ntnu.no).

Please submit your application electronically via [jobbnorge.no](http://jobbnorge.no) with your CV, diplomas and certificates. Applications submitted elsewhere will not be considered. Diploma Supplement is required to attach for European Master Diplomas outside Norway. Chinese applicants are required to provide confirmation of Master Diploma from [China Credentials Verification \(CHSI\)](#).

If you are invited for interview you must include certified copies of transcripts and reference letters.

**Application deadline: 24.05.2020**