

PhD Scholarship in Middle Eastern Archaeology at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen (UCPH)

The Section for Ancient Culture Studies at Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies invites applications for a three-year PhD scholarship starting from 1 January 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter.

The position is offered within the framework of the *Networks Before Agriculture: Social Interaction in Epipalaeolithic and Neolithic Jordan* project and will focus on the geological sourcing of inorganic raw materials. The project is funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark and led by Professor Tobias Richter.

Introduction

The PhD programme is a study programme which aims at training PhD Fellows at an international level to undertake research, development, knowledge dissemination and teaching assignments. The main emphasis is on PhD students organising and conducting their own research project (under supervision). The programme includes the drafting of a PhD thesis which the student must defend at a public defence. The standard duration of the PhD programme is three years of full-time studies, which equals 180 ECTS.

A PhD degree opens a range of career opportunities in academia and elsewhere. As well as writing a thesis, PhD students work in active research environments in Denmark and abroad. They contribute to the academic environment, take research training courses, and convey the results of their research in teaching, at academic conferences and to the general public.

The PhD Fellow will work in the interdisciplinary Ancient Culture Studies section, which consists of Assyriology, Middle Eastern Archaeology, Egyptology, and Mesoamerican Studies (<https://ccrs.ku.dk/research/ancientcultures/>).

The section focuses on the world's earliest complex societies in the Middle East and Mesoamerica and the lasting legacies of their ideas. Our research and teaching span combines ancient languages and archaeology to understand some of the most significant transformations in our collective past, including the rise of villages and cities, the emergence of writing and religion, and the development of technology, craftsmanship, political power, and social inequality. Our researchers study both ancient texts and material culture, as well as the context of these past legacies in the present.

The Project

The *Networks Before Agriculture: Social Interaction in Epipalaeolithic and Neolithic Jordan* project focuses on reconstructing the emergence and development of socio-material networks during the Final Pleistocene and Early Holocene in the Levant and

how such networks contributed to the spread of the Neolithic way of life. The project applies an innovative combination of geological, material culture and computer-based methods to reconstruct how people exchanged raw materials and shared knowledge during the transition from foraging to farming in southwest Asia. Drawing on materials from the Qa' Shubayqa in eastern Jordan the project will test different models of prehistoric social interaction and will provide new insights into how social networks arose and developed.

The PhD fellow will conduct thin-section optical analysis, XRD, and SEM/EDX analysis of inorganic raw materials from Epipalaeolithic and Neolithic sites in the Qa' Shubayqa to trace sources of raw materials in the region. The role will involve conducting primary data collection and analysis using these methods, fieldwork in Jordan, teaching in the department, presenting at scientific meetings, and co-organizing an international workshop. The PhD fellow will collaborate with colleagues at the Globe Institute and the Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management at the University of Copenhagen, and the Department of Geology at the University of Jordan. All PhD fellows must complete a short secondment at another research institution as part of their degree program.

This role will suit applicants with a prior degree in geology who intend to transition into geoarchaeology or archaeologists who want to develop a specialism in geoarchaeological methods. Applicants should have relevant fieldwork experience and must be able to participate in fieldwork in Jordan. In addition, they should have well-developed writing and research skills, and be able to demonstrate research potential, for example through a strong Master's thesis, publications, or conference presentations. Prior knowledge and experience with applying geological methods for inorganic material characterization and in data analysis and visualization will be an advantage, as will experience with sample preparation techniques such as thin-sectioning or other laboratory-based mineral identification methods. Proficiency in relevant software for quantitative and spatial data analysis (e.g. R, Python, or GIS) is desirable. As the project draws on geological, material culture, and computational approaches, the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate an ability to work both independently and collaboratively within an interdisciplinary team. Familiarity with the Epipalaeolithic and Neolithic periods of western Asia, in particular the Levant, will also be useful, but is not essential.

Qualification Requirements

Applicants must have qualifications corresponding to master's level related to the subject area of the project, e.g. Middle/Near Eastern Archaeology, Prehistoric Archaeology, Geoarchaeology, Geology, or similar. If you have completed your education in Denmark, you must have a master's degree covered by the collective agreement for academics in the state sector.

If you have completed your education outside of Denmark, you must either have a master's degree equivalent to a Danish master's degree (two years) or as minimum a bachelor's degree equivalent to a Danish bachelor's degree (three years) and be assessed as having professional qualifications at master's level.

If you have completed your education outside of Denmark, we will obtain an assessment of your education from the Danish Research Agency.

Applicants must possess skills in written and spoken academic English at a high level. If deemed necessary, the department may request that applicants document their English skills.

Application

Please submit your application online. To apply, please click on the "Apply now" icon at the bottom of this page. Applicants should clearly state whether they are applying for the Work Package 2 or 3 position. Your application must be written in English, and include the following attachments in either PDF or Word format:

- **Cover letter** (max. 3 pages)
- **CV**
- **Diplomas, transcripts and description of grading scale**
Please include the following documents: bachelor's and master's degree - diplomas and transcripts, description of grading scale. **Note:** *If your master's degree diploma is not available by the application deadline, please include your latest transcript of grades.*
- A short sample of written work, e.g. in the form of a published piece of work or extract from your MA dissertation.

Applicants holding a degree from a university where the working language is neither English nor a Scandinavian language must include translated versions of their diploma and transcripts, verified by the issuing university. The documents must be translated into English, Danish, Norwegian, or Swedish. In addition, an official description of the relevant grading scale (e.g. diploma supplement) must be included.

On the website of the PhD School, you can find more information about the attachments you need to include with your application: [PhD at the Faculty of Humanities](#).

Assessment Criteria

The following criteria are applied when assessing PhD applications:

- Research qualifications, as reflected in the attached CV and project description
- Competencies and knowledge of relevant fields of academic research

- Level (grades obtained) of bachelor and master's studies.

Salary and Terms of Employment

Terms of appointment and salary will be in accordance with an agreement between the Ministry of Finance and The Danish Confederation of Professional Associations (AC).

The salary range starts at approximately DKK 31,800 (EUR 4,200) + an 18.07 % pension contribution.

According to the agreement, the PhD Fellow is required to carry out tasks at the relevant department to an extent corresponding to 840 working hours (6 months) over the course of the three-year employment.

You can read more about employment as a PhD Fellow here: [Employment as a PhD student](#).

The Recruitment Process

Following the application deadline, the Head of Department will, on the advice of the appointment committee, select applicants for assessment. All applicants will be notified whether they have been shortlisted. The Head of Department will appoint an expert assessment committee to evaluate the shortlisted applications. The shortlisted applicants will be informed of the committee's composition. Each shortlisted applicant will be given the opportunity to comment on the committee's assessment before the appointment is finalised.

Enrolment

It is a prerequisite for employment that successful applicants enrol at the PhD School of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen. Follow the links below for further information: [PhD Programmes - Guide to studies and admission](#).

International Applicant?

The University of Copenhagen offers a broad variety of services for international researchers and accompanying families, including support before and during your relocation and career counselling to expat partners. Please find more information about our services at: [For international researchers at the University of Copenhagen](#).

An Equal Opportunity Workplace

The University of Copenhagen is committed in its pursuit of academic excellence to equality of opportunity and to creating an inclusive working environment and therefore encourages all qualified candidates to apply, regardless of personal background, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnicity etc. To learn more about our diverse workplace and our participation in the HRS4R HR Excellence in Research, please visit [HR Excellence in Research](#).

Contact Information

We encourage you first to consult our website, where most questions concerning the

recruitment process as well as the academic content and structure of the PhD programme are addressed:

[Structure of the PhD programme](#)

[Recruitment process.](#)

If you do not find the information you are looking for, you are welcome to contact HR Søndre at hr-soendre@adm.ku.dk. For specific questions about the role and project, please contact Tobias Richter at richter@hum.ku.dk. Please remember to state the ID number 211-2514/26-2H #2.

The deadline for applications is 15 September 2026 at 23:59 CEST.

Any applications or additional material submitted after the deadline will not be considered. However, changes may be made to the submitted application right up until the deadline.