

Centre for Urban Network Evolutions

UrbNet Open Audition 2015

Call for papers for

13th and 14th April 2015

Aarhus University, Denmark

The Danish National Research Foundation's Centre of Excellence Centre for Urban Network Evolutions invites potential PhD candidates for the first round of the centre's annual "Open Audition" seminars. The seminar is an occasion for eminent young researchers to set the agenda for research into the evolution of urbanism and urban networks from the Hellenistic Period to the Middle Ages, and to participate in one of Europe's most groundbreaking archaeological research initiatives of this decade.

The "Open Audition" is a two-day event with short papers, discussion of research ideas and introduction to the centre's work and team. The seminar will serve as a platform to develop international networks between junior and senior scholars working in the fields connected with the centre's areas of expertise. Furthermore, it is an opportunity for researchers with an interest in the work of the centre – and potentially in becoming part of the centre – to meet current and future centre staff and discuss research ideas.

The centre, which was opened on 30th January 2015, is based at Aarhus University, Institute for Culture and Society. It aims to develop research that will offer comparison of the archaeology of urbanism from Medieval Northern Europe to the Ancient Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean World and determine how, and to what extent, past urban networks catalyzed societal and environmental expansions and crises in the past. The centre is a firmly based humanities centre, which work in close connection with natural sciences.

Over the next years, the centre will be recruiting a number of junior and senior researchers. This call is for prospective PhD candidates. After the "Open Audition" open calls for applications for positions at the centre will be advertised.

UrbNet aims to advance the understanding of the historical process of urban evolution by developing archaeology's ability to characterize the scale and pace of events and processes. A series of recently developed scientific techniques afford unique potential for archaeology to refine the precision of dates, contexts and provenance ascribed to excavated materials. These will here be integrated to form a new "High Definition" approach to the study of global and interregional dynamics. The provenance of materials is clarified through the application of chemical, isotopic and biomolecular analysis of organic and inorganic materials. The characterization of contexts is augmented by the application of soil chemistry, analysis of ecofacts and micromorphology; this is then used to reconstruct high precision chronologies through increasingly sophisticated statistical modelling of radiocarbon dating, and other fast-developing methods such as optically stimulated luminescence.

We are looking to integrate projects into the centre's work, which intersect questions and problems concerning urban development and networks, based firmly in the humanities, but which do so through the integration of methods from natural sciences. Projects should align with the core agendas of the centre to examine the phenomenon of urbanism in a new light, by letting humanities be informed by the rapidly developing techniques in the natural sciences. The centre's work focusses on the regions from Northern Europe over the Levant to the East Coast of Africa. It involves empirical material from a number of existing excavation projects as well as working on material already excavated and on theoretical and methodological issues; however, individual projects may also issue from other bodies of data.

Applications to participate in the event are welcomed from prospective PhD candidates and should consist of a CV as well as paper title and abstract (max. 1000 words) relating to this, and which takes into consideration the ideas and concepts which the centre works with. The Centre core group will select a total of 12 proposals to be presented at the Open Auditions.

The centre budget will cover accommodation for two nights and will host a dinner for the participants. In exceptional cases, funding may be extended towards the costs for travel as well if a special case can be argued.

The centre is headed by centre leader Rubina Raja, professor MSO of Classical Archaeology and vice-centre leader Søren Sindbæk, professor MSO of Medieval Archaeology. Furthermore the centre consists of an interdisciplinary core-group.

More information about the centre can be found on www.urbnet.au.dk

The event will take place at Aarhus University, Campus Moesgaard. It will commence on 13th April in the morning and will end on 14th April in the late afternoon.

The deadline for submission of applications to participate in the "Open Audition" is 15th March 2015.

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