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Ref. 17/03159-19

Date: 09.04.2018

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Guidelines for employment in the positions of research assistant, PhD fellow and postdoctoral fellow at Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences

(Please note that the English translation is for information purposes only. For all legal purposes, the original guidelines in Norwegian are the authoritative version).

Adopted by INN University's Board in a meeting held on 13.03.2018

1) Scope

The Guidelines for employment in the positions of research assistant, PhD fellow and postdoctoral fellow have been prepared on the basis of the Regulations concerning terms and conditions of employment for the posts of postdoctoral research fellow, research fellow, research assistant and resident (hereinafter referred to as "the Regulations"), laid down by the Ministry of Education and Research pursuant to § 6-4 of the Act relating to universities and university colleges (hereinafter referred to as the Act). The Guidelines also take into consideration amendments to the Regulations concerning terms and conditions of employment for the posts of postdoctoral research fellow, research fellow, research assistant and resident, published in Lovdata on 04.01.2018.

In addition to the Guidelines, general rules apply for vacancy announcements and appointments, etc. as stipulated in the Government Employees Act and INN University's Personnel Regulations.

The Guidelines cover

- The position of research assistant
- The position of PhD fellow funded by the Ministry of Education and Research or the Research Council of Norway or other external funding sources
- The position of research fellow in artistic development work [within The Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP)]
- The position of postdoctoral fellow

PhD fellows who have been admitted to one of INN University's doctoral programmes but who do not have an employment relationship with INN University are not covered by the Guidelines. INN University employees who have been admitted to a doctoral programme in their ordinary position are not covered by the Guidelines. For The Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP), separate regulations adopted by the programme board on 08.09.2008 apply.

The process of awarding/distributing PhD fellow and postdoctoral positions is done according to designated regulations.

2) Appointing authority / nominating authority

- a) Delegation of appointing authority is determined by a decision of INN University's Board in case 67/17 and is reproduced in INN University's delegation regulations.
- b) Delegation of the nominating authority is determined by a decision of INN University's Board in case 67/17 and is reproduced in INN University's delegation regulations.

3) Purpose of the positions

- a) The position of PhD fellow and of research assistant is defined as an *educational position*
- b) The position of research assistant may be used for purposes as formulated in the Regulations. In addition, employment in a position as a research assistant can be used for the purpose of qualifying promising candidates for a PhD position / admission to a doctoral programme.
- c) A position as a PhD fellow has as its purpose the completion of research education up to a doctoral degree, cf. §1-3 (1) of the Regulations.
- d) A position as a research fellow in artistic development work within The Norwegian Artistic Research Programme aims to lead to artistic competence at a level equivalent to associate professor, cf. §1-3 (2) of the Regulations.
- e) A position as a postdoctoral fellow has as its main goal qualifying the candidate for work in top scientific positions, cf. §1-2 (1) of the Regulations.

4) Announcement of vacant positions

- a) The appointing body decides regarding the announcement of positions as a research assistant, PhD fellow and postdoctoral fellow.
- b) The nominating authority submits a request for notice regarding the announcement to the appointing body. The request must contain an assessment of competence needs and requirements and an account of the financial basis for the position.

- c) The positions shall be announced publicly in accordance with applicable regulations and INN University's personnel regulations.
- d) Positions as a PhD fellow and postdoctoral fellow shall, as a general rule, be announced internationally, in English.
- e) Exemptions from international announcements must be justified. The appointing body shall decide whether there are grounds for exemption from international announcement.
- f) The appointment committee decides whether the position is to be advertised with requirements for competence in the Norwegian / a Scandinavian language.
- g) In special cases, the requirement for public announcement may be waived, e.g. for employment as a research assistant for up to 6 months or employment related to externally funded projects. The appointing body decides whether there are grounds for exemption from public announcement.

5) Terms of employment

a) General terms

- i) The Regulations concerning terms and conditions of employment for the posts of post-doctoral research fellow, research fellow, research assistant and resident state general terms of employment for the various job categories, including competence requirements.
- ii) A research assistant, PhD fellow and postdoctoral fellow are employed on a fixed-term basis, cf. § 1-1 of the Regulations.
- iii) In addition, the terms of employment are defined in these Guidelines.
- iv) Appointment is executed according to the qualification principle, cf. §3 of the Government Employees Act §3. The nominating authority nominates the most suitable candidates for the position, in ranked order, after an overall assessment of all information that has emerged throughout the entire recruitment process, including professional assessment, interview, reference interview and any other methods used to map the applicant's qualifications (including personal suitability).
- v) A requirement for Norwegian / Scandinavian language competence must be justified.
- vi) An interview and reference check must be conducted for all nominated candidates. Exemptions from reference checks can be made where the candidate is well known to the nominating authority from similar work tasks.
- vii) The employee representative shall be given the opportunity to participate in the interview

viii) The recommendation document regarding nomination shall account for the assessments on which the recommendation is based.

b) Research assistant

- i) The candidate must, as a general rule, have completed a master's degree or completed a corresponding education of a scope that qualifies for admission to a doctoral degree programme.
- ii) Appointment as a research assistant may not be offered to persons who have previously been employed in a PhD position or have acquired equivalent competence, cf. §1-4 of the Regulations.
- iii) A research assistant may be employed temporarily on the basis of §9 of the Government Employees Act and for a maximum duration of 2 years, cf. § 1-4 (2) of the Regulations.

c) PhD fellow

- i) There shall be an overview of the candidate's education that provides a basis for admission to the doctoral programme. The candidate must have completed an education that qualifies for admission to a doctoral degree programme – normally a master's degree (120 credits) or other equivalent education, cf. NOKUT's description of the Qualifications Framework's 2nd cycle.
- ii) There shall be a description of the research project that is intended to form the basis for the doctoral thesis, in a format that has, at any given time, been determined by the committee for the relevant PhD programme.
- iii) It is normally a condition that the average grade must be B or better for the master's degree education (or equivalent education). Calculation of the average grade shall be weighted with the credits for each course and for the master's thesis. If the nominating authority wishes to employ a candidate with a lower average, this must be academically justified.
- iv) An academic evaluation committee shall be appointed to assess the academic qualifications and quality in the project description. The academic evaluation committee shall consist of two members. Both members must have a doctorate / competence at associate professor level. The nominating authority may choose to appoint an external member. As far as possible, both genders shall be represented on the committee.

- v) The employment period and position content shall, as a general rule, follow the normal scheme, cf. § 1-3 of the Regulations. Employment with other durations must be specifically justified.
- vi) A shorter employment period can be agreed upon if the PhD fellow has already completed parts of the relevant research education programme or when other circumstances nevertheless indicate that the total time for the research education will be 3 years, cf. the Regulations.
- vii) Admission to a PhD fellow position presupposes, as a general rule, admission to a doctoral degree programme, cf. § 1-3 (8) of the Regulations. In the event of an exception, an explanation of the plan for admission and clarification of how this will count as part of the candidate's education must follow.
- viii) The final plan for doctoral education shall be contractually agreed upon and approved within three months of appointment, cf. § 1-3 (8) of the Regulations.

d) Research fellow in artistic development [within The Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP)]

- i) The candidate should have completed the highest available education in the field, normally a master's degree, cf. NOKUT's description of the Qualifications Framework's 2nd cycle. The institution may, after special consideration, approve other equivalent competence.
- ii) There shall be a description of the artistic development project that is intended to be completed during the fellowship period, including a description of the plan for documentation and reflection.
- iii) The candidate may not already possess competence at associate professor level within the relevant art subject upon appointment as this is at odds with the purpose of the position.
- iv) Professional competence assessment shall be made by 2-3 independent external parties with professional / artistic experience of a scope corresponding to a minimum of associate professor level, who shall each give their own individual assessment of the strength, potential and relevance of the research fellow's project.
- v) The employment period for research fellows in the programme for artistic development work is set at three years, cf. §1-3 (6) of the Regulations. An opportunity is given to extend this period to 4 years with 25% compulsory work if the institution finds it appropriate.

e) Postdoctoral fellow

- i) The candidate must be able to document being in possession of a doctoral degree or an equivalent scope of artistic production.
- ii) The candidate must present a description of the project for the qualification work, including a progress plan that shows how the project is intended to be completed within the employment period.
- iii) An academic evaluation committee shall be appointed. The composition of the committee shall follow requirements for the composition of an expert committee for associate professors, as set out in the Regulations. The dean shall appoint the committee.
- iv) The employment period for a postdoctoral fellow shall be a minimum of 2 years, a maximum of 4 years.
- v) Appointment in a position of postdoctoral fellow presupposes, as a general rule, that an approved plan for the qualification project is available at the time of appointment, and no later than 3 months after appointment.
- vi) In the case of employment beyond 2 years, the employer may impose compulsory work in the form of teaching or equivalent work, cf. §1-2 (4) of the Regulations. The scope of compulsory work must be determined in the plan for the implementation of the qualification project.
- vii) For employment as a postdoctoral fellow, it is a condition that the person in question possesses good English language skills, both orally and in writing.

6) Other terms

a) Leaves of absences and extensions

- i) Rights-based leave and valid absence beyond two weeks constitute the right to extension and are processed administratively.
- ii) In addition, short, valid, documented absences related to one's own or a child's illness can be summed up and, as a general rule, provide a basis for extending the employment period or alternatively reducing the compulsory work part, to the extent necessary to complete the doctoral thesis. The research fellow and the faculty shall jointly assess what will be most appropriate in each individual case. The dean is given decision-making authority to grant an extension.
- iii) In special cases, an extension may be granted for other matters that have hindered the research fellow's research progression. Such conditions may, for example, be special care burdens or unforeseen obstacles of a work-related nature that cannot be

blamed on the research fellow. A prerequisite for extension is that the research fellow will be able to complete the doctoral degree programme by the end of the extension period. The appointing body deals with such and other matters concerning desired changes in the employment relationship on the recommendation of the nominating authority.

b) Transition to another doctoral programme shall only take place by agreement with the employer.

c) Other terms of employment follow from the Regulations, the Government Employees Act and the relevant personnel policy and guidelines at INN University.

7) Termination

a) If an agreement on admission to a doctoral programme does not materialize within the agreed deadline, this may be a basis for the employer to terminate the employment contract.

b) Serious failure in progress, lack of reporting on progress or serious failure in the execution of compulsory work may constitute a basis for the employer to consider dismissal when the circumstances fall under the responsibility of the PhD fellow.

c) In other respects, the provisions of the Government Employees Act apply.