

Assistant Professor specialising in Environmental Humanities – Long-Term Perspectives

Strategic Context

The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology at Lund University are developing a strategic new research and teaching theme focusing on the Environmental Humanities, currently embedded in the Lund Environmental Humanities Hub, but likely to evolve into a more formalised unit. The EH Hub already operates as a platform for intra- and inter-faculty collaboration in research and teaching. The ‘signature’ feature of Environmental Humanities (EH) at Lund University is a focus on ‘Deep Time’ themes and questions, that is, deploying long-term perspectives to look further back into (pre)historical time scales, but also, via contemporary society, into the role of future imaginaries. Student cohorts have highlighted that exploring long-term perspectives are among the most insightful and integrative features of current EH taught courses. Looking beyond LU, the emphasis on long-term perspectives also equips Lund with a unique (inter)national profile that differs significantly from other centres of EH excellence. Given the current momentum, the Assistant Professor will expand on this strategic potential.

The Role and Responsibilities of the Assistant Professor

EH finds a natural home in the Joint Faculties because it employs unique humanities perspectives to examine the drivers of deeper sustainability and change in human-environment interactions. Given the focus on long-term perspectives, the position will be based at the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History but is also embedded into the strategic development of EH research across the faculty and wider university. The successful candidate will lead new EH initiatives, nurturing synergies in research and teaching. Within this inclusive EH academic environment, archaeology and ancient history have a core role in examining via specific empirical case-studies the diverse and contingent factors that drive fragility and resilience in past social-ecological systems when confronted by shocks and disasters, climate change, pandemics, conflicts, and social inequality. More generally, this interdisciplinary research offers uniquely long-term posthuman perspectives on ancient, recent and contemporary ecosystems, food-production systems, human-animal dependencies, health and well-being, exploring how these shape, and are shaped by, human action and historical tradition. The productive intersection between ancient history, archaeology, historical archaeology, and historical osteology, combined with the emerging field of contemporary archaeology, provides a strong empirical foundation for EH research. In turn, that research investigates how current ecological, environmental and cultural heritage can shape future imaginaries, which then bolster, constrain or undermine contemporary sustainability, whether economic, social, environmental or existential.

The successful candidate will join a dynamic outward-looking department with a thriving and highly internationalized research environment. Current departmental projects aligning with the EH theme are funded by the Swedish Research Councils and EU and include a new ERC Synergy project that examines the long-term demographic sustainability of societies that operate without reliance in intensive agriculture. In contributing to these strategic ambitions, the Assistant Professor in Environmental Humanities will strengthen Lund University's global leadership in sustainability research, launching path-breaking collaborations in research, teaching, internationalization and wider societal engagement.