

## Application for one of the three PhD stipends at IFIKK

### 1. Name of research group: Practical Philosophy Working Group (PPWG).

PPWG consists of philosophers working in practical philosophy and is centered at IFIKK.

The main goal of PPWG is to create a productive working environment for research in practical philosophy, to facilitate funding applications, and to organize regular seminars, workshops, and conferences. PPWG will secure that the philosophical competence and international contacts developed at the Moral Agency branch of CSMN persists at IFIKK after the center closes down in July 2017.

The core group of PPWG consists of the permanent staff of IFIKK working in practical philosophy: Christel Fricke, Reidar Maliks, Alejandra Mancilla (starting January 2017), Tove Pettersen, Øyvind Rabbås, Anna Smajdor, Caj Strandberg, Franco Trivigno, and Arne Johan Vetlesen. PPWG includes in addition a number of other researchers with relevant competence. For further information about PPWG, including a complete list of its members, please visit:

<http://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/forskning/prosjekter/forskergruppe-praktisk-filosofi/index.html>

**2. HumEval and HFR:s criteria.** It should be evident from point 3 below that the group fulfils NRF:s criteria for conducting research at a high international level.

### 3. Reasons why PPWG should be granted one of the PhD stipends.

There are strong reasons to think that PPWG will offer an excellent research environment for a PhD student:

*Wide competence.* PPWG works within all of the main fields of practical philosophy: ethics (applied ethics, normative ethics, metaethics, and moral psychology), history of ethics, political and legal philosophy, feminist philosophy, and aesthetics.

*Special competence.* In addition to representing broad competence in practical philosophy, PPWG has unique competence within certain significant subfields: 1. History of ethics and political philosophy, in particular ancient ethics, the sentimentalist tradition (especially David Hume and Adam Smith), and Immanuel Kant; 2. Responding to wrongdoing (resentment, blame, forgiveness, and punishment); 3. Practical reason and rationality; 4. Intersection between applied ethics and political philosophy, especially from a feminist perspective; and 5. Medical ethics. Furthermore, the fact that members of PPWG work from both historical and contemporary perspectives means that the group constitutes a distinct research competence which is exceptional in a Scandinavian context. Consequently, PPWG will offer a PhD student both great breadth and unique depth.

*Active research group.* Members of PPWG regularly publish in international, high-ranked, journals and at prominent international publishing houses. (For details, please see HumEval 2.2.) Moreover, they fulfil without doubt NRF:s other requirements on a research group, such as participations in international conferences, co-authorship with international researchers, and management of externally funded projects. This means that a PhD student at PPWG will acquire fundamental academic skills – how to publish, write a research proposal, present at conferences, write referee reports, etc. – as natural part of her or his education.

*International and national networks.* One important legacy of the Moral Agency branch of CSMN carried over to PPWG is an international network including prominent philosophers such as Alison

Jaggar and Peter Railton. Moreover, IFIKK has succeeded to attract Julia Annas and Carla Bagnoli in positions as Professor II. All these researchers are world leading in their fields and work at highly ranked universities. Another important legacy is the national network represented by The Ethics Programme (Etikkprogrammet) hosted by UiO in 2002-2012. Many of the researchers at the programme now hold major positions at Norwegian universities and other influential parts of Norwegian society. Together, these two legacies give a PhD student access to important contacts both within academic philosophy and the public life of Norway.

*PPS (Practical Philosophy Seminar).* PPWG runs the Practical Philosophy Seminar (PPS) which is open to everyone interested practical philosophy. PPS is a read-in-advance seminar – everyone attending the seminar reads the text in advance so as to give high-quality comments – with the explicit aim to improve texts rather than deliver criticism. This means that a PhD student can get friendly feedback from a number of colleagues and not merely from supervisors, which usually is the case.

*Conferences and workshops.* PPWG will regularly organize conferences and workshops within different fields of practical philosophy to which internationally and nationally renowned philosophers will be invited. A PhD student will be encouraged to suggest topics for these events and make them an arena for presenting her or his work to a broader audience. A larger conference in practical philosophy will be organized annually.

*Research applications.* An important aspect of PPWG:s activities is its involvement in various research applications. Recently, Ole Martin Moen received a four-year grant for the project “What should not be bought and sold?”. Carla Bagnoli has submitted a large application, “Norms, Emotions, and Time”, to ERC, involving philosophers from prestigious European universities and members PPWG. Christel Fricke and Caj Strandberg have, together with Andreas Brekke Carlsson, applied for a project entitled “Holding the Ignorant Responsible” at NFR. Moral Agency will support two short term research positions for developing projects for external funding. Eline Busck Gundersen and Cathrine Felix, who have accepted these positions, will together with Fricke and Strandberg work out applications primarily intended for NFR. Moral Agency will also support two short term pre-PhD stipends for developing projects for PhD fellowship applications. Moreover, PPWG has the aim of developing research proposals that involve a number of its members and employ its unique historical-contemporary competence indicated earlier.

*Supervision.* The members of PPWG belonging to the permanent staff of IFIKK have competence to supervise PhD theses within the main areas of practical philosophy and in particular the subfields mentioned above.

*Gender.* It is a well-established fact that women are underrepresented in academic philosophy, including at IFIKK. However, it seems generally to be the case that more women are interested and work in practical philosophy than other areas of philosophy (see e.g. <http://faculty.ucr.edu/~eschwitz/SchwitzAbs/WomenInPhil.htm>). Thus, a PhD stipend in practical philosophy might serve to rectify gender imbalance in philosophy.

#### **4. Suggestions of description of areas to be mentioned in advertisement of the position**

“Preference may be given to applicants working in the following areas: History of ethics and political philosophy (in particular ancient ethics and European Enlightenment); Responding to wrongdoing (resentment, blame, forgiveness, and punishment); Practical reason and rationality; Intersection between applied ethics and political philosophy, especially from a feminist perspective; Medical ethics.”