



AIAS Off-Site Seminar for AIAS Fellows, 1-2 October 2026

“Playing the Long Game: Interdisciplinary Research, Collaboration and Valuing Research”

General aims:

- To reflect on interdisciplinary research as a long-term investment in yourself as a researcher
- To share experiences with interdisciplinarity
- To socialise with colleagues and get to know more about their research in a beautiful and remote part of Denmark

Abstract

As a fellow at AIAS, you arrive with your own research project and your own disciplinary tradition. But the fellowship offers something beyond that; the chance to let your thinking be disrupted and enriched by encounters with researchers who ask fundamentally different questions and work in entirely different ways. One key aspect of being an AIAS fellow is to stay open to new inputs, allow unexpected connections to form, and let your research evolve in directions you did not anticipate when you applied. Interdisciplinary experience shapes not just what you produce, but who you become as a researcher.

This raises a broader question: what do we value in interdisciplinary research? Traditional metrics such as publications, citations and grant income rarely capture the slow, generative work that happens when researchers from different disciplines truly engage with one another. How do we bridge different methodologies and cultures? And what motivates researchers to pursue unlikely collaborations and new ideas?

These are some of the questions this year's seminar sets out to explore. On the first day of the seminar, four short talks will open the conversation, each drawing on their own experience of interdisciplinary work, touching on different stages of collaboration, and on how research can create value that goes beyond traditional measures of output. The talks are designed to spark conversation and set the stage for group discussions and a walk-and-talk session, where fellows can exchange experiences of both the benefits and challenges of working across disciplines.

The second day centres on a hands-on workshop offering fellows the opportunity to actively explore the dynamics, opportunities, and challenges of interdisciplinary collaboration. Building on the themes raised on the first day, the workshop invites fellows to examine how interdisciplinary ideas emerge and how shared understanding develops across disciplinary boundaries and moving from reflection to direct experience.

Programme

DAY 1: Thursday 1 October

08:00 - 10:30	Transportation by bus from AIAS to Dybbøl Mill
10:30 - 11:30	Guided tour of Dybbøl Mill Dybbøl Mill is one of Denmark's most important national monuments. Standing on a hill near Sønderborg, it became a symbol of Danish resilience during the Second Schleswig War in 1864. Please bring proper footwear for this walk.
11:30 - 12:00	Transportation from Dybbøl Mill and arrival at Sandbjerg Manor
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:00 - 13:20	'Playing the long game and the power of interdisciplinary connections' By Andreas Roepstorff Andreas will share some reflections on how interdisciplinary collaboration and long-term thinking can shape both research and research careers. He will talk about why it can be worthwhile to invest time and energy in collaborations that may not produce immediate results, but which can open up new perspectives, networks, and research trajectories over time.
13:20-13:40	'Infrastructures and Rhythms of Interdisciplinary Work' By Rachel Fishberg In her talk Rachel will reflect on how thinking and working interdisciplinarily is shaped not only by researchers' desire to collaborate, but also by the infrastructures that underpin collaborative thinking and the rhythms of academic work. Drawing on examples from her research, Rachel will discuss how these aspects shape the time and space researchers have available to work interdisciplinarily, and how productive possibilities can emerge both through continuity within academic rhythms and through disruption to the familiar rhythms of academic life. Rachel Fishberg is an AIAS-Science Diplomacy fellow (2025-2027) and a postdoctoral research fellow at the Danish Centre for Studies on Research and Research Policy (CFA), Aarhus University.
13:40-14:00	'From First Conversations to Shared Understanding in Interdisciplinary collaborations' By Ruben Pauwels

Ruben will talk about the early stages of interdisciplinary collaboration and how researchers from different backgrounds can develop a shared language, align expectations, and establish common goals. Building on experiences from interdisciplinary research environments, Ruben will discuss practical approaches to developing trust, identifying differences in assumptions and terminology, and creating a foundation for productive collaboration.

Ruben Pauwels is a former AIAS-COFUND (2020-2023) and is now an AIAS Associate fellow (2025-2027) and an associate professor at the department of Dentistry and Oral Health at Aarhus University.

14:00 -14:15

Short break

14:15 - 14:35

'Building Interdisciplinary Collaboration Across Methods, Perspectives, and Cultures'

By Janne Flora

Interdisciplinary collaboration often necessitates bringing together researchers with different methods, perspectives, languages, and academic cultures. Drawing on concrete examples from interdisciplinary projects in Greenland, Janne Flora reflects on the opportunities and challenges that arise when people with diverse backgrounds work together. The talk will explore the role of communication in bridging differences, building mutual understanding, and creating productive collaborations. Through practical examples, Janne will share lessons learned from both successful and challenging collaborations, highlighting how navigating differences can lead to new insights, stronger partnerships, and more impactful research.

Janne Flora is an AIAS Associate fellow (2025-2027) and an associate professor at the Department of Anthropology at Aarhus University.

14:40 -15:45

Introduction to markmaking, combined coffee break and discussion based on the presentations in groups/walk and talk

15:45 -16:15

Individual reflection and markmaking. We will transition back to the shared space through some individual reflection time and a markmaking exercise.

16:15 -16:30

Discussion and wrap-up moderated

By Mette Terp Højbye

Mette Terp Højbye is an AIAS Associate fellow (2025-2027) and a professor at Professor, Department of Clinical Medicine at the Interacting Minds Centre (IMC).

16:30 -18:30

Free time and check in

18:30

Drinks and dinner



DAY 2: Friday 2 October

08:00 - 09:00	Check out of rooms (Main building, reception) and breakfast You are welcome to explore the beautiful surroundings at Sandbjerg before breakfast, so bring running shoes, swimsuits or practical footwear, if you are up for it!
09:00 - 10:00	‘Exploring interdisciplinarity - a hands-on workshop’ By Federica Cavaletti, Andreas Roepstorff, Rachel Fishberg and Bruna Neves de Freitas Federica and Andreas will introduce "Stone Sensing", which is a collaborative hands-on activity that uses direct, embodied engagement with physical objects, i.e. stones, as a way of accessing and articulating different modes of knowing and perceiving. Fellows will be divided into groups and are invited to play with the stones to start the interdisciplinary dialogue. This will be followed by an interdisciplinary translation exercise facilitated by Rachel and Bruna. Each fellow will present a research question, problem, or short abstract from their own work, which colleagues from entirely different disciplinary traditions will reimagine from their own perspectives. Together, they will explore how the problem might be reframed, what assumptions or overlooked dimensions might be revealed, and what becomes less visible in translation. The exercise will conclude with participants identifying any productive friction, new questions, approaches, or potential collaborations they might carry forward. Federica Cavaletti is an AIAS-AUFF fellow (2025-2027) and a tenure track researcher at the Department of Promotion of Human Sciences and Quality of Life, Università Telematica San Raffaele Roma, Italy. Bruna Neves de Freitas is a former AIAS-AUFF fellow (2024-2026) and is now a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Dentistry and Oral Health at Aarhus University.
10:00 - 10:15	Coffee break
10:15 - 11:45	Continuation of: ‘Exploring interdisciplinarity - a hands-on workshop’
11:45-12:00	Wrap up
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch
12:45	Bus departure from Sandbjerg to AIAS
Approx. 16:00	Arrival at AIAS

