GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

AIAS-SCIENCE DIPLOMACY FELLOWSHIPS 2026-2027

AARHUS UNIVERSITY

AIAS
AARHUS INSTITUTE
OF ADVANCED STUDIES

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Content

AIAS-Science Diplomacy Fellowships 2025/2026

1 The AIAS-Science Diplomacy Fellowship Programme (AIAS-SD Fellowship)

Interdisciplinary research collaboration and innovative ideas are prerequisites for tackling joint societal challenges. The complexity of global challenges, such as climate changes, pandemics, and technological advancements, demands an integrated approach to international collaborations, where science plays an important role. Science diplomacy, operating at the intersections of scientific collaboration, foreign policy and changing global world orders, increasingly emphasizes not only expert-driven science but also broader societal engagement in research. Such approaches help ensure that scientific efforts consider the diverse concerns and values of different populations, making them more inclusive and relevant to societal needs. As a result, science diplomacy is becoming increasingly important for fostering cooperation and bridging understanding between institutions, countries and regions.

With the **AIAS Science Diplomacy Theme Group fellowship**, AIAS aims to continue to advance and consolidate the research-based focus and knowledge of the interdisciplinary relatedness of science diplomacy as an impactful factor across research fields. Examining case studies of science diplomacy efforts, such as global health initiatives, international digital humanities projects, transnational social science research, securitization and international relations or international space exploration offer valuable lessons for addressing future crises. In addition, it is increasingly important to assess how current and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and quantum computing can be both a tool for diplomatic engagement and a source of competition.

The AIAS- Science Diplomacy Theme Group Fellowship intends to help advance the knowledge and importance of science diplomacy as a relevant theme for all academic fields at Aarhus University and internationally.

About AIAS

Curiosity-driven and independent research for excellent scholars worldwide and across all research disciplines is the hallmark of Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS). As an 'Institute for Advanced Study', AIAS brings researchers together across disciplines, seniority and nationality. AIAS offers fellowships for excellent researchers from all core academic disciplines to pursue cutting-edge research projects for the benefit of society and humankind in optimal research conditions. The daily encounter with the diverse research disciplines at AIAS provides fellows with fresh and different insights and perspectives on their own research, leading to new and unexpected research questions and ideas.

An AIAS-SD fellowship gives the possibility to explore the methodologies and approaches taken in other scientific disciplines, thus making cross-disciplinary inspiration and initiatives possible. Read more on: www.aias.au.dk

1.1 The Fellowship Programme

The purpose of the theme-based fellowship programme is to engage an interdisciplinary and international group of excellent researchers with projects that advance the research-based focus and knowledge of the interdisciplinary relatedness of science diplomacy as an impactful factor across research fields. Projects may investigate topics such as global health initiatives, international

space exploration, emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and quantum computing to mention a few, or any other theme that offers valuable lessons for addressing future crises.
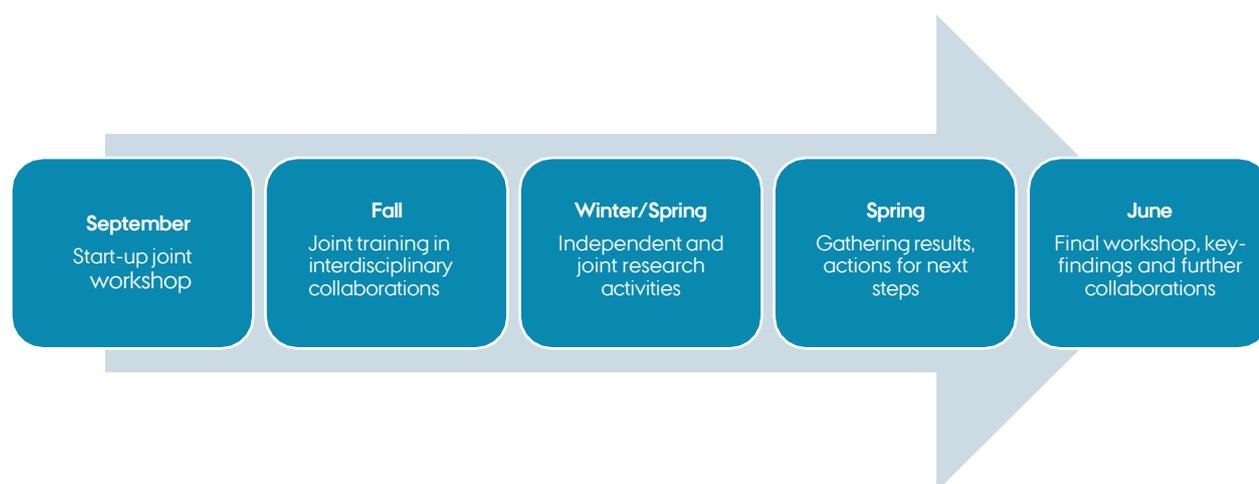
Applications are individual but up to four selected fellows will work together with each other, a group-leader from Aarhus University and other relevant researchers at Aarhus University, during the ten months.

Fellows will receive training in interdisciplinary dialogue and are expected to contribute, via their research agenda, to the theme group and the larger community of AIAS.

An AIAS-SD fellowship provides fellows with the possibility of collaborating and sharing knowledge with other researchers with an interdisciplinary approach to research within the selected group, in the multidisciplinary and international environment of excellence at AIAS, and Aarhus University.

This offers the individual fellow a unique opportunity to focus on developing the research, while also interacting and collaborating with researchers with different perspectives within the same research theme. To ensure a collegial and collaborative approach among the group, the fellowship will begin with a joint workshop hosted at AIAS or a remote location.

During the fellowship, several joint research activities will be organized depending on the needs and interests of the fellows. The fellowship will end in June with a joint workshop to discuss key findings and ideas for further collaborations and research projects. The AIAS-SD fellows must be based in Aarhus and situated physically in the AIAS building in order to participate in the academic life of AIAS.

| **September** Start-up joint workshop | **Fall** Joint training in interdisciplinary collaborations | **Winter/Spring** Independent and joint research activities | **Spring** Gathering results, actions for next steps | **June** Final workshop, key-findings and further collaborations |

2 When, how and what to apply for

2.1 Who can apply
The programme's target group is **talented researchers with an interdisciplinary research profile and interest in the theme of the call**. Researchers from **all nationalities and research disciplines** within the scope of the call are eligible to apply.

2.2 Duration of the fellowship

The duration of a fellowship is **ten months**. The fellowship period should be consecutive, and therefore it is not possible to split up the fellowship period into smaller parts. **The fellowship starts 1 September 2026 and ends 30 June 2027.**

2.3 Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply for the AIAS-SD programme two conditions apply:

1) Academic eligibility: Applicants must hold a PhD degree at the time of the application deadline.

2) Application eligibility: The application must be complete and comprehensive and contain all mandatory documents. All mandatory documents must meet the requirements listed below, including page limitations and necessary content.

All applications are screened and will be rejected if one or both conditions are not met.

3 Application system, application requirements and content

Below is an overview of the content needed in the application template, and the flow in the online application system 'GrantOne' The template is divided into three parts in the application system:

1) **Applicant**
2) **Application**
3) **Consent**

3.1 Applicant

The following information about **the applicant** should be provided:

- Name (as stated in your passport)
- Address
- Postal code
- City
- Country
- Email
- Phone number
- Date of birth
- Gender (for statistical purposes only)
- Nationality

The following information about the **Home institution** should be provided:
- Home institution (name and country of current or most recent employment)
- Department

Academic title

Date of completed PhD:
- Year of completed PhD: When selecting the year of completed PhD in the application system, the year must be identical with the date stated on the diploma.
- Upload the PhD diploma. The diploma must be written in the Latin alphabet. If not, a certified translated copy in English must also be attached. (Mandatory upload, file unloaded in Pdf.)

CV:

- CV and publication list: a maximum of ten pages. The CV must describe your personal background, education and career until now; and a selected list of your recent publications and/or publications in relation to the theme (Mandatory upload, file uploaded in Pdf.)

3.2 Application

Area of research

Please select your **main area of research**. The areas are compatible with the faculties of Aarhus University:

- Natural Sciences
- Technical Sciences
- Health & Medical Sciences
- Business & Social Sciences
- Arts & Humanities

A second main area of research

If your research is in more than one main area, please select a second main area of research, if applicable.

Project title (Max 100 characters in textbox)
The title should provide the reader with a general idea of what the project is about.

Short abstract (Max 600 characters in textbox)
The abstract should provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the proposal and the motivation and approach to the theme. This summary will be used as the short description of the proposal in the evaluation process when communicating with the reviewers. It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain any confidential information.

Why AIAS and Aarhus University (Max 1000 characters, in textbox)
Describe why the project should be carried out at AIAS and AU and the added value of the interdisciplinary AIAS environment. Established collaborations at Aarhus University are not a requirement, but such collaborations are in many cases helpful for a successful fellowship. Please state your connections (if not established then who you envision as collaborators) and plans for collaborations with AU staff concerning the theme (this is also relevant if you already are employed at AU).

Project description (Max three pages, including references, mandatory upload in pdf)
The project description should give the reader a clear and comprehensive understanding of the specific research project in relation to the theme. **Applications must have a detailed project description**. The project description should be a clear, convincing and compelling account of the proposed research theme and include:

- Own research agenda and experience in relation to the specified theme and interdisciplinary research.
- Description of method/theoretical approach.
- Motivation, vision and contribution towards development of the theme in an interdisciplinary group.

- Considerations of expected research impact/outcome of the fellowship.

Please make sure that all the requested information is included in the application, and that the mandatory files are uploaded. **If the requirements are not met, the application will be rejected.**

Length and formatting guideline: Applicants must keep the project description in maximum three pages, including references. Recommended formatting: font size 11–12 pt and minimum 2 cm margins. Applications exceeding the page limit will be rejected.

4   Assessment and selection

4.1   Assessment criteria
The fellowship applications will be assessed based on the evaluation criteria below:

- Scientific excellence of the project description (quality and relevance of the research plan).
- Interdisciplinary consideration of motivation and contribution to the theme.
- The potential of the applicant to reach the expected outcome and impact.
- Match and combination of the applicant as part of a collaborative group.

4.2   Review and selection panel
After the application deadline, applications will be subject to an eligibility screening. A review and selection panel will evaluate each eligible proposal and make the final selection. The review and selection panel is an internal Aarhus University panel, consisting of Aarhus University experts covering a broad range of disciples, the SD-theme group leader, and the AIAS management.

5   The fellowship
The following is included in a fellowship:

- A full salary equivalent to the Danish wage levels and based on individual merits and seniority.
- The journey to Aarhus (economy class only – upon prior approval by AIAS).
- A standard computer, office supplies, etc.

6   Timeline
- Opening of call: 19 November 2025
- Deadline for applications: 3 February 2026 at 12.00 (noon) CET.
- Evaluation and selection period: February-March 2026.
- Applicants will receive answers: March 2026.
- Fellowships begin: 1 September 2026.

7   Working at AIAS and in Denmark

7.1   Employment conditions

The AIAS-SD Fellows will be recruited in accordance with the collective agreement for state-employed academics. Terms of pay and employment are regulated by the collective agreement for state-employed academics. For successful applicants who are already employed at Aarhus University, terms of the fellowship is contingent of a negotiation with the relevant head of department.

The Aarhus University work conditions will allow both female and male researchers to combine family and work, children and career.

- 37-hour work week (full-time – part-time is not possible)
- Contribution to a pension fund
- 5 (+1) weeks paid holiday annually
- Salary paid during illness
- If you have a sick child, you are entitled to stay at home with your child under the age of 18 on the first two days of illness with full salary

Foreign employees are covered by the same rules and regulations as Danish employees and are therefore covered by the Danish social security system and entitled to social security benefits. Social security in Denmark is tax-funded, i.e. as a fellow you will not have to pay health insurance contributions or long-term healthcare insurance. Danish taxes are high. However, more attractive and special taxation rules (known as "The researcher taxation rule") apply to most foreign researchers. The HR Department at Aarhus University and the Danish tax authorities will be able to advise foreign researchers whether they qualify for the special tax rate for foreign researchers. See more information here: HR (au.dk)

7.2   Relocation service at AIAS

In addition to covering the travel costs, the AIAS-SD fellows can expect assistance with practical and logistical matters that may arise from pre-arrival to post-departure. AIAS has dedicated relocation employees who, in collaboration with the International Academic Staff Services at Aarhus University, will be of assistance in solving matters regarding visa applications, relocation, accommodation, language courses, spouse support, childcare options, finding schools for accompanying children, etc.

More information about Denmark can be found on www.workindenmark.dk - a public organization that offers practical information and general advice on all issues related to working in Denmark.

8   Contact

For additional information regarding the application process or the AIAS-SD programme in general, please feel welcome to contact:

Programme Manager, Helle Villekold at helle@aias.au.dk

The programme has received funding from the Aarhus University Research Foundation (AUFF) and Aarhus University. For further information about AIAS, please visit www.aias.au.dk.