

# Roskilde University

## Department of Social Sciences and Business

### Research strategy

#### 2017-2020

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#### Vision

The Department of Social Sciences and Business conducts interdisciplinary, collaborative and socially engaged research based on political science, economics, anthropology, business studies, sociology, legal studies, and development studies. *The department's researchers put emphasis on research methodologies and they share a commitment to understanding society and businesses in diverse contexts of change and global engagement. Hence, the research focuses on innovation, societal challenges, collaborations and conflicts at the local, national, regional, and international level and from a public, private and civil sector perspective.*

The department's research revolves around studies of administration; behavioural public policy; capitalist transformation, citizenship; childhood and youth; comparative politics; ethics; ethnicity; entrepreneurship; EU/global governance; finance; gender relations; humanitarian interventions; human resources; innovation in the public and private sectors; interactive forms of governance; international aid flows; international security; labour; law and religion; local, national, and global inequalities; migration; organisation and leadership; political discourses and decision-making; political parties; processes of economic transformation; public policy; public-private partnerships, social justice; state formation, state-society relations; the future of the welfare state; tourism; and urbanisation.

Our **vision** is to become an **important social science and business department that produces research at the highest international level that feeds into our educational programmes, while simultaneously leveraging our research to impact social, economic and political change**. Thus, we reinforce the principles of openness that were central to the establishment of Roskilde University. Simultaneously, the department substantiates high quality education at all levels, which is essential to develop the necessary skills, competencies and knowledge among RUC students to match the needs of the labour market.

In order to fulfil its vision, the department builds its *international research profile* via participation in international research collaborations, recruitment of international researchers, engagement in strategic partnerships, promotion of joint degree programmes and student and staff mobility. Equally important is the *collaboration with private and public entities* outside the university. Only through long-term partnerships with key stakeholders, we are able to share our knowledge and ultimately affect practices and decision-making. This collaboration is also of utmost importance to increase the relevance of our research for the teaching programmes. Finally, the department stresses the importance of continuously *attracting new PhD students*, who think rigorously and understand and appreciate the craft of research, into our Doctoral School of Social Sciences and Business.

With the aim of producing research at the highest international level that is of relevance to our key stakeholders, the department stresses the importance of *research with a double impact*, i.e. we aim at publishing in the highest-ranking international journals and the top publishing houses in the field, while simultaneously making sure that key results are made available to a wider audience via local publishing houses and outlets, via community debates, and through direct engagement with our stakeholders. Research requires *funding*. Therefore, we put emphasis on facilitating the entire process of attracting external research grants – all the way from the initial match-making, over the formulation of the research application, to the post-award phase.

All of this is only possible if the department is a *pleasant workplace* for researchers, administrative personnel and students alike. We therefore aim to create a good working environment, characterised by an informal tone and a low level of hierarchy, both within the department and between the departments and the central administration.

## Research profile

Our **mission** is to *produce first-class social science and business research and to leverage this research to impact practices and decision-making among our key stakeholders in the public, private and civil sector.*

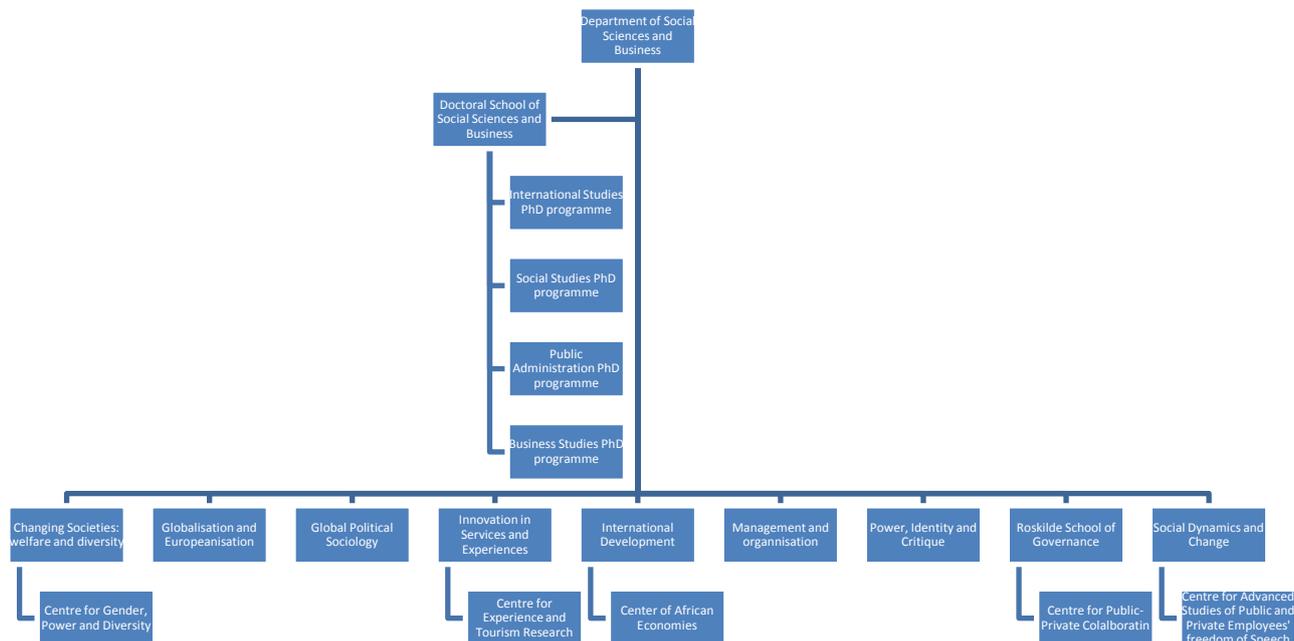
The department seeks to fulfil this mission by reaching the following **secondary goals**:

- We aim to enhance the quality and international impact of its research by increasing the number of publications in journals and books published by publishers of high importance to our field of research.
- We seek to attract more external research funding - internationally as well as nationally.
- We will use the time-limited professorship with special responsibilities (MSO) to 1) attract and retain promising scholars as well as to 2) develop areas of strategic interest to the department.
- We intend to improve the double impact of the research conducted at the department by engaging actively in research collaboration with stakeholders from the state, business and civil society.
- We plan to continue a high level of activity in the Danish and international press.

The primary organisational unit for research at the department is the research group. All academic members of staff (from PhD students to full professors) must be a member of a research group. The group is the principal building block for research activities at the department. The department also expects all external lecturers to belong to a research group within the department and, to the extent possible, to participate in its activities. A research group leader, whose main responsibility is to facilitate research among the group members, leads each research group. The research group is the loci for academic quality control and the development of new ideas. The aim is to foster collaboration between researchers – within the group as well as outside it.

In addition to the research groups, the department is the home of five research centres, all of which are approved by the university management and are based on external funding only, a research network and a Doctoral school currently encompassing four PhD programmes (see below).

**Figure 1: Research organisation**



As of January 2017, the department has the following nine research groups:

- **Changing Societies: Welfare and Diversity**, which analyses how new forms of governance and regulation affect the welfare state and influence the labour market, social integration, and gender equality.
- **Globalisation and Europeanisation**, which examines challenges and opportunities facing European integration and the EU's global position in light of the resurgence of old powers, the rise of new powers and the return of nationalism.
- **Global Political Sociology**, which seeks to further our understanding of politics and formal and informal governance through the study of contemporary political dynamics across the globe.
- **Innovation in Services and Experiences**, which examines how innovation and entrepreneurship can be used to understand development problems in enterprises, society and the economy.
- **International Development**, which investigates local, national and global inequalities and development challenges and successes in Asia and Africa.
- **Management and Organisation**, which seeks to enhance our understanding of management and organisational processes through studies of financing and marketing, organisation & leadership, human relations, public relations, communication, legitimation, ethics and responsibility.
- **Power, Identity and Critique**, which seeks to cast light on contemporary social, political and economic changes through discussions of how neo-liberalism, populism, and multiculturalism affect political discourses and decision-making.
- **Roskilde School of Governance**, which analyses how the dynamics of control, competition and cooperation affect public policy and governance structures across different sectors in Europe.

- **Social Dynamics and Change**, which studies the dynamics of social justice, social change, and social institutions in order to enhance our understanding of inequality, diversity, power and identity within our societies.

The five research centres are as follows:

- **Centre for Advanced Studies of Public and Private Employees' Freedom of Speech**, which provides a platform for interdisciplinary collaboration and research on self-censorship among public and private employees.
- **Center of African Economies**, which brings together four large-scale, externally funded research projects to further our understanding of capitalist transformation, the distribution of economic benefits, and linkages between economic regulation and state formation in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Centre for Experience and Tourism Research**, which brings together researchers from the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences to expand our knowledge of tourism and the experience economy.
- **Centre for Gender, Power and Diversity**, which conducts research on gendered and intersectional dynamics in order to further our understanding of local and global economic, political, cultural, and social changes and challenges.
- **Centre for Research on Public-Private Collaboration**, which brings together researchers from 20 Danish and international universities to assess the effects of specific forms of public-private interaction, such as contracting out, public-private partnerships, procurement, and privatisation.

The department is also the home of the **Forum for Africa Research**, which brings together African researchers from across the various departments at RUC and a **research management committee**, which gives advice to the Head of Department on research-related issues of strategic importance. The research management committee is made up of representatives from each research group (the research group leader), the doctoral school leader, and is chaired by the Head of Department.

## Research quality

While focus in the Danish university landscape is increasingly on expanding research output by increasing the number of publications, we also pay attention to *increasing the quality and impact of its research*. Publishing in the leading journals, book series and publishing houses is a primary concern for the department. To some extent, the Danish bibliometric research indicator (BFI) correlates with internationally recognised measures of research impact (e.g. WoS & Scopus). Hence, the department's focus on quality will automatically lead to an increase in BFI 2 publications relative to BFI 1 publications.

In order to reach this aim, the department:

- supports attendance at recognised conferences with paper presentation and encourages researchers to organise panels at major international conferences.
- encourages international research collaboration and co-authorship to increase quality as well as impact.
- expects researchers to regularly publish in recognised scientific journals and publishing houses (cf. RUC's publication strategy).

- encourages its researchers to sit on editorial boards on recognised journal and book series.

The department expects research group leaders to continuously facilitate production of high quality research through planning of regular paper presentations, organisation of peer reviews of draft papers/new research ideas, thematic panel discussion planning, invitation of international guest researchers and the like.

## External research funding

External funding for research is essential in order to conduct research at the highest international level, create an innovative research environment, and support and attract promising research talents. Therefore, the department aims to *increase our ability to attract external research funding*.

In order to achieve this aim, the department works towards the following **intermediate goals**:

1. Encourage faculty members to apply for external research funding.
2. Expand research collaboration beyond traditional networks.
3. Develop the match-making process between a particular researcher/research network and specific grants/funds.
4. Strengthen the support for researchers who have received external grants.
5. Strengthen the internal quality assurance process for external grants.

Ad 1) While applying for external grants is an integral part of researchers' duties, not everybody is expected to raise funds for major research projects. Priority is given to larger private and public funds from national, international and European funds (EU funding) involving and boosting not only the present level of research, but also the number of externally funded PhDs and Postdocs. Viewing RUC and the department as professional businesses committed to maintaining a sound financial balance, priority is given to those grants that support this view. However, since it is also essential for the department to view funding opportunities as an integral part of a long-term career strategy for its researchers, compromises in this regard will naturally appear.

Ad 2) We believe that strong research collaboration internally and externally is one of the main paths forward, not only in increasing the quality of research and securing double impact, but also in creating the foundation for future funding. Therefore, the department aims at better utilising international networks of senior staff to increase the number of international applications. Moreover, we encourage collaboration across research groups within the department with the aim of submitting collaborative applications for external funding.

Ad 3) We will target private and public grants, national as well as international grants. The strategy will include match-making on an individual basis (one grant – one researcher), but also on a collective basis involving not only researchers, research groups and research centres across RUC, but also universities and research institutions in Denmark and abroad. Collaboration with the public, private and civil sectors is strongly encouraged.

Ad 4) While 'getting external grants' is obviously of great importance to the department, 'managing the grant' is equally important in order to produce interesting results of high quality. Therefore, we will work to improve its support to large-scale research projects.

Ad 5) All universities seek to increase external funding. Simultaneously, public funds for social science and business research are being reduced. Hence, it is of utmost importance that the quality of our applications constantly improve. This is achieved by improving the department's internal quality assurance procedures, while simultaneously relying on a well-functioning network and collaboration with RUC's administration and the other departments. The researchers, as well as the supporting administrative staff at the department, will therefore prioritise the knowledge-sharing and coordination necessary to increase the level of funding at the department as well as at RUC.

We recognise that although everyone should work towards increasing the quality of research and attracting more external funding for the department, some staff members may at times emphasise innovation in teaching and/or dissemination of research results to key stakeholders.

## **Strengthened research profile**

The department seeks to become a leading, socially engaged, interdisciplinary department for social science and business. This requires that we increase the double impact of our research, that we develop a coherent, forward-looking recruitment strategy, and that we benchmark our research vis-à-vis comparable research units nationally and internationally.

In order to reach these aims the department:

- will establish one or two new externally funded research centres that place the department on the Danish and international research landscape.
- will finalise a professorship strategy and associated professorship plan, linked to RUC's professorship policy, that will guide the identification of research focus areas and research talents.
- will, in the time-span of this research strategy, single out two subfields of research for external evaluation.
- will encourage researchers to write/contribute to textbooks to communicate our research to the next generation of researchers.
- will encourage and support research staff to sit in relevant public and private sector boards and committees.
- will support knowledge-sharing with the public, private and civil sectors.
- will encourage action research and research projects involving innovative forms of dialogue and participation with external actors.
- will support communication of research results to the wider public – in traditional media as well as via social media, networks, workshops and conferences.
- research staff have a responsibility to keep their RUC websites updated and to create an ORCID profile.
- recommends that all research staff establish a google scholar account and link to it from the RUC website.

## Doctoral School

The Doctoral School of Social Sciences & Business aims to produce leaders, researchers, policymakers and activists who will understand our current local and global challenges and will combine knowledge production with social action.

The Doctoral School is a large and active school with more than 50 affiliated PhD students and 30 supervising faculty members. The School provides PhD training and research within the interdisciplinary, international, and professional fields of social sciences and business. The Doctoral School is part of a large and dynamic community of researchers, who share a commitment to understanding society in diverse contexts of change and global engagement. Our interdisciplinary research perspectives are primarily based on the social sciences. Researchers come from all over the world and engage with topics that are geographically, theoretically and methodologically diverse.

All of our PhD students are expected to think rigorously, to understand and appreciate the craft of research, to demonstrate a commitment to intellectual quality and to produce high-quality scholarship that is societally engaged. We expect them to acquire research, publication and personal skills in order for them to be competitive and successful on the international job market.