



PHD FELLOWSHIP IN ECONOMICS AND OUTDOOR TOURISM



RESEARCH PROJECT VIMAS

Institute of Social, Economic and Humanities Research (HESPI) at Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (ViA) invites applicants for a fully funded PhD fellowship in carrying out research on challenges and solutions of financing public goods related to outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism from a natural, cultural, social, behavioural and/ or economical perspective. The project is part of the research project VIMAS (Visitor monitoring and management in protected and recreational areas: new challenges, novel solutions for the Anthropocene) which is financed by the European Union's MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS, Doctoral Networks (DN), Call: HORIZON-MSCA-2022-DN-01-01. VIMAS will 1) develop new, effective monitoring combining digital and traditional methods, 2) explore how better monitoring contributes to increase social and economic benefits and reduce unwanted environmental impacts, and 3) develop new, multidimensional governance-relevant indicators, based on collaborative and participatory principles.

The VIMAS consortium consists of seven full partners in six European countries, together with 14 academic and non-academic associated partners. A total of 10 PhD candidates will be engaged in the project. The PhD fellow at ViA will be embedded in the network across the Nordic region with the nine other doctoral candidates in the VIMAS project. Common training schools and temporary change of study location (secondments) will be arranged and conducted. For a general description of the VIMAS project and the description of all PhD positions, please visit the VIMAS project website: www.nmbu.no/en/research/projects/vimas

Applicants are made aware that an application for a PhD fellowship at ViA is at the same time an application for the admission to a joint PhD programme in Economics and Business at the institution.



PHD PROJECT

In the framework of the PhD project on Challenges and solutions of financing public goods related to outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism, the PhD fellow is expected to 1) identify and evaluate diverse existing funding models for common goods related to outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism identified in literature and strategy documents, and by using a case study approach 2) examine diverse funding sources and mechanisms and assess their feasibility, and 3) assess their applicability by evaluating trade-off between the identified economic and societal benefits and inputs/investments on outdoor recreation at the regional level. The candidate will also assess management and funding of public goods in the light of the common right of access.

Start date is (expected to be) between 1 May and 1 June 2024 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Main Supervisor: Professor Agita Līviņa, agita.livina@va.lv



COMPETENCES OF APPLICANTS

We are looking for a candidate within the field(s) of sustainable tourism and public finances. Applicants can have a background in economics and business, tourism, geography, environmental sciences, nature management, or similar.

A successful applicant must meet the conditions required for admission to a PhD programme at ViA. The applicant must have an academically relevant education corresponding to a three-year BSc and two-year MSc, with a learning outcome corresponding to the descriptions in the Latvian Qualification Framework, second cycle (relevant to the EU qualification framework). The applicant must have a documented strong academic background from previous studies and be able to document proficiency in both written and oral English.

Please note that according to the MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS (MSCA), Doctoral Networks' mobility rules, PhD fellows must not have resided or carried out their main activity (e.g., work, studies) in Latvia for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before their recruitment date.

The following experiences and skills should be emphasized:

- Experience with mixed research methods;
- GIS; geodata; spatial analytics;
- Modelling techniques;
- Engagement of local community, social sciences.

Additional competences:

- Applicants that are not native English speakers and their previous education has not been in English must provide a proof of their English language proficiency as established through an internationally recognized qualification system (at least B2 level);
- Good communication and writing skills;
- The candidate should be a good team player as well as being able to work independently, efficiently and with dedication;
- Candidates with a solid understanding and ability to use the Latvian language will be regarded favourably;
- The candidate should be highly motivated and show interest and enthusiasm towards the PhD project.

The PhD fellow should be prepared to spend short periods abroad during secondments to partner institutions within the VIMAS consortium.



TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Employment as a PhD fellow is full time and for maximum three years. It is subject to a three-month probationary period according to the national legislation.

Employment is conditional upon your successful enrolment as a PhD student at the PhD programme in Economics and Business at the Institute of Social, Economic and Humanities Research, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences. This requires submission and acceptance of an application for a specific project formulated by the applicant.

The salary of the position is based on the salary system of MSCA. The monthly salary is around 2580 EUR, including taxes, plus monthly expenditures for research networking, materials and a mobility allowance (EUR 600 per month). The mobility allowance covers the researcher's additional private mobility-related costs (e.g., travel and accommodation costs).



HOST INSTITUTION

The PhD fellow will be affiliated with the Institute of Social, Economic and Humanities Research (www.hespi.lv), (Spatial Research Lab), Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (www.va.lv) located in Valmiera (Latvia).

We offer creative working conditions in a dynamic and international research environment. The University is a member of the European University Alliance E³UDRES² (<https://eudres.eu/>), involved in Eco School Programme and running two UNESCO Chairs.



JOINT PHD STUDY PROGRAMME IN ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

To be eligible for the PhD programme in Economics and Business at the Institute of Social, Economic and Humanities Research, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, the candidate must have completed a degree programme, equivalent to a Latvian master's degree (180 ECTS/3 FTE BSc + 120 ECTS/2 FTE MSc) related to the subject area of the project, e.g., economy, business, nature management, social sciences, or similar. For information on the eligibility of the completed study programmes and other general information, see <https://va.lv/en/study-here/phd-degree/economics-and-business>

Responsibilities and tasks in the PhD programme:

- Conduct an independent research project under supervision and in cooperation with the VIMAS project;
- Complete PhD study courses;
- Participate in active research environments, including a stay at another relevant institution (secondment in Finland);
- Take part in teaching and knowledge dissemination activities;
- Write scientific papers aimed at high-impact journals;
- Write and defend a PhD thesis on the basis of your project;
- This may also include administrative tasks and other duties up to 20%.



APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The application including all attachments must be in English and submitted electronically by clicking on APPLY HERE below.

[APPLY HERE](https://va.dreamapply.com/) (<https://va.dreamapply.com/>)

Application documents include:

- Motivation letter (max. 1 page) stating why the applicant is interested in the specific PhD project, what the applicant has to offer in designing and executing the project, as well as what his/her expectations are for the doctoral studies;
- Research proposal (according to the provided form, max. 4 pages);
- Curriculum vitae (CV) including information about the education, experience, language skills and other skills relevant for the position;
- Original diplomas for the Bachelor of Science and Master of Science and transcript of records in the original language, including an authorized English translation if issued in another language than English or Latvian. If not completed, a certified/signed copy of a recent transcript of records or a written statement from the institution or the supervisor is accepted;
- Publication list with links to publications (if possible/relevant); full publications should be attached to the application only if not available online;
- Two reference letters including the contact information for the two referees;
- Copy of a valid passport;
- Confirmation certificate of English language proficiency as established through an internationally recognized qualification system (at least B2 level) issued in last five years for participants who are not native English speakers and whose previous education has not been in English.

Application deadline:

The deadline for applications is 19 March 2024, 23:59 (GMT +1). The application system does not accept submissions after the deadline. Applications that do not meet the abovementioned requirements will not be considered.



EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

After the deadline, a number of applicants that have met the admission requirements will be selected for the academic assessment by an unbiased expert assessor. You will be notified whether you will be passed for further assessment.

The assessor will assess the qualifications and experience of the shortlisted applicants with respect to the abovementioned research area, techniques, skills and other requirements. The assessor will conclude whether each applicant is qualified.

Interviews with the selected candidates are expected to be held during March 2024.

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Demonstrated motivation, interest and capacity in the field of the position described above (submitted motivation letter and research proposal). In scale from 1 to 10 (40%);
- Interview about the topic of the PhD project, knowledge and abilities that indicate readiness to conduct research at the PhD level. In scale from 1 to 10 (30%);
- Assessment of Master's Thesis. In scale from 1 to 10 (10%);
- Number of publications, participation in conferences, research projects in the last six years (1 point per activity; maximum is 10 points) (20%).



QUESTIONS

For specific information about the PhD fellowship, please contact the main supervisor, Professor Agita Līviņa, agita.livina@va.lv, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Cēsu Street 4, Valmiera, Latvia



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