![AHO – Arkitektur- og designhøgskolen i Oslo / The Oslo School of Architecture and Design]

Application: Funds for research stimulation and cooperation

'Digital Sjølråderett' (*Digital self-determination and -governance*) - A conference about exploring a Nordic model for digital societal development through design, planning and policy

Main applicant: The Digital Urban Living research group / Assoc. Prof. Einar Sneve Martinussen (IDE) and Assoc. Prof. Jonny Aspen (IUL)

Collaborative partners (researchers, institutes or external partners):

Institute of Design

Institute of Urbanism and Landscape

Digital Urban Living Researchers:

Assoc. Prof. Einar Sneve Martinussen (IDE / Project leader)

Assoc. Prof. Jonny Aspen (IUL)

Assoc. Prof. Jørn Knutsen (IDE)

Prof. Peter Hemmersam (IUL)

Prof. Andrew Morrison (IDE)

PhD Candidate Kai Reaver (IDE+IUL)

External project network of affiliated partners include IxDA Oslo, Urban Sharing (Oslo Bysykkel) #Ruter, Oslo Kommune, Rodeo, TØI, Arup Digital Studio, Ericsson Strategic Design etc.

Name of project/ Project idea: 'Digital Sjølråderett' (Digital self-determination and -governance) - A conference exploring a Nordic model for digital societal development through design, planning and policy.

Stipulated period (from/to - month/year) April 2019

Abstract (attach project description if possible):

'Digital Sjølråderett' means the right for digital self-determination and -governance. This specific application is for a one-day conference about exploring a Nordic model for digital societal development where issues of design, architecture and planning as well as issues of governance and policy are seen as interrelated and co-determined. The conference aims at lifting up the issue of digitalisation of cities and societies as a field of possibilities and challenges, that should be subject for research- and interdisciplinary-led examination and critique. An overall aim of the conference is to show the importance of design and urbanism perspectives in informing, challenging and critiquing the scope of possibilities for digital policy and politics. Furthermore, the we argue that designing for a Nordic model of digitalisation should set at its centre the imperative of thorough discussion of values: ethics, diversity, democracy, social and cultural integration.

The following questions must be answered:

Will the project idea support AHOs strategic goals within research, education and societal engagement? If yes, elaborate:

In general the project will meets AHO's general strategic goal (cf. AHO *Strategi 2020*) of developing research based knowledge that can contribute to solve major societal challenges (p. 3) as well as communicate with a wider public (p. 6). Furthermore, the project meets the strategic goal of developing AHO into a leading Nordic research environment within areas given priority (p. 5); research on issues of digitalisation is a major priority at both IDE and UL. And, not the least, the project meets AHOs strategic aim of building research that is both interdisciplinary (p. 5) and allows for collaboration between institutes and research centers.

Will the project idea stimulate research activities, events and project development between institutes? If yes, elaborate:

The Digital Urban Living research group is a project that has been grown across IUL and IDE over the last 10 years. One of the main aims for the project is to lift interdisciplinary issues around design, urbanism and digitalisation. Digital self-determination and -governance in the Nordic context is an emerging issue that the research-network have identified as an important interdisciplinary challenge where our disciplines can make valuable contribution to national discourse, innovation and critique. This conference project will work towards integrating and consolidating interdisciplinary perspectives across the involved institutes, AHO in general, and build connections between the digital and the urban sectors in Norway.

Will the project idea contribute to building research culture across AHO? If yes, elaborate:

As interdisciplinary collaboration between two institutes, as public discourse, as societal engagement through research, the project will contribute to strengthen research cultures and exchange across AHO.

Will the project idea support representation of AHO in national and international research venues, networks or organisations? If yes, elaborate:

The project will make AHO's position within research on issues of digital cities and urbanism visible towards a wider national and Nordic/international public, both within sectors of research, governance and policy, and tech and design industries.

Are you applying for support for research impact and dissemination outside funded projects? (in formally qualifying arenas including forms of peer review and research applications). This includes dissemination after the end of external funding for projects.

If yes elaborate.

The Digital urban living group has p.t. no external funding, but this is something we continually are working towards. The research group is now preparing to develop a research proposal for funding under NordForsk's Smart City programme.

Are you applying for 'extraordinary' research project development funding?(e.g. Horizon 2020, EU-funding, SFF, SFU, SFI, other)

No, not specifically for this project.

Budget. (Can be attached or elaborated here)

A key issue concerning the budget is that it does not cover things that should be on the ordinary strategic budgets of the institutes/centers.

Budget must be specified and be realistic

3 international speakers: 30.000,-

3-5 local / national speakers: 20.000,-

2 x coffee (120 participants):   8.000,-

Lunch (120 participants):   12.000,-

Marketing: 5.000,-

Sum: 75.000,-

* Given the topic of the conference, we plan to make it a conference free of charge.

TOTAL APPLICATION SUM **75.000,-**

Date: ___1.10.2018_____

Signature main applicant: _____*eiror s. krotinnyser*_____

Project description:

'Digital Sjølråderett' (*Digital self-determination and -governance***) - A conference about exploring a Nordic model for digital societal development through design, planning and policy**

Abstract: 'Digital Sjølråderett' means the right for digital self-determination and -governance. This specific application is for a one-day conference about exploring a Nordic model for digital societal development where issues of design, architecture and planning as well as issues of governance and policy are seen as interrelated and co-determined. The conference aims at lifting up the issue of digitalisation of cities and societies as a field of possibilities and challenges, that should be subject for research- and interdisciplinary-led examination and critique. An overall aim of the conference is to show the importance of design and urbanism perspectives in informing, challenging and critiquing the scope of possibilities for digital policy and politics. Furthermore, the we argue that designing for a Nordic model of digitalisation should set at its centre the imperative of thorough discussion of values: ethics, diversity, democracy, social and cultural integration.

The Digital Urban Living research group is an interdisciplinary research network organized as a collaboration between AHO's Institute of Design (IDE) and the Institute of Urbanism and Landscape (IUL) (http://www.oculs.no/projects/digital-urban-living/news/). The network also includes external partners from across both the digital and urban sector in Norway and internationally. The research group studies how digital technologies and media affect issues of urban liveability, sustainability, design and governance, and how new ways of designing digital urban services can be used as strategies for urban and societal development (Hemmersam, Aspen, Martinussen & Knutsen, 2017).

One overall perspective of the Digital Urban Living research project is that digitalisation of urban cultures, businesses and public services represents not only new problems and challenges, but also a range of new possibilities for disciplines of design, architecture and urban planning. One important concern in this respect has to do with what we have termed 'digital sjølråderett', or digital self-determination, meaning the challenges of developing self-determination and national governance over central features of digital development and policy in times of over-national pressures and constraints. This is especially apparent in the global technology industry's dominance when it comes to both the development of digital services as well as in creating parameters for public discourses on digitalisation. Over the last decade the Digital Urban Living project has examined and critiqued how the actors of the global technology sector have influenced urban development through strategies of 'smart cities' and 'smart urbanism', now we are witnessing how similar kinds of technology-driven perspectives are making ever more strong marks on major sectors of society and the public sphere. Emerging new forms of legislation, such as EU's GDPR, can be seen as efforts to counteract the effects of globalised digitalisation, yet many such frameworks largely seem to follow the same technology-ontologies as propagated by Silicon Valley.

All such developments seem to delimit the space for digital self-determination and -governance at local and national levels. In a Nordic context 'sjølråderett' implies both the right to self-determination and -governance, *and* the importance of creating a societal framework for what we might call value- and community-led development and envisioning within all major processes of digitalization. Norway's recent modern history has, to counteract centralisation, put great emphasis local governance and decentralisation as means to strengthen both community and individual rights. This has been aided by policies for urban and regional development, as well as through the general development of public services.

Drawing on the framing of 'sjølråderett' in the Nordics, the overarching purpose of this conference is to place *digital* self-determination and -governance on the agenda in a national context. Furthermore, the conference aims to accentuate digitalisation as a holistic field of politics and policy that is in need of interdisciplinary and research-informed examination and critique. The aim of the conference is to establish a way of seeing digitalisation in perspective of long-term societal planning and self-governance, thus transcending more hegemonic technology-centered discourses on management and efficiency.

This also means exploring a Nordic model for digital societal development where issues of design, architecture and planning as well as issues of governance and policy are seen as interrelated and

co-determined. Furthermore, we argue that a Nordic model should set at its centre the imperative of thorough discussion of values: ethics, diversity, democracy, social and cultural integration. Thus we claim that research has a twofold role to play, combining criticism, understanding and theory with more explorative approaches into design and innovation outside more conventional market-led and short-term initiatives and strategies. An overall aim of the conference is to show the importance of design and urbanism perspectives in informing, challenging and critiquing the scope of possibilities for digital policy and politics.

On this background we are applying for funding to organize an interdisciplinary one-day national conference here at AHO titled **''Digital Sjølråderett'** (*Digital self-determination and -governance*) - **Exploring a Nordic model for digital societal development through design, planning and policy**. The conference programme will be based on presenters from the extended Digital Urban Living research network, the growing Norwegian tech and design industries, actors from the smart city sector, as well as digital research institutions and centers. We plan to invite three international speakers. The conference is targeted towards network-building across urban and digital as well as governance and policy sectors. Thus the conference will extend the research group's earlier Digital City events (2013, 2016) that successfully brought together urban and digital sectors.

Further outcomes: Based on, and as a follow-up of the conference, we plan to write up: 1) a peer-reviewed article on the topic of 'Digital Sjølråderett' (*Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*); and 2) a debate book about digital self-determination and -governance in Norway (for Manifest Forlag or a similar discourse-oriented publisher).

Additional funding will be applied for from Fritt Ord for publishing an accompanying conference-pamphlet and from the digital design/development organisation IxDA. Additional is reliant on basic funding being in place, therefore this application is crucial for realizing this project.

References:

Hemmersam, P., Aspen, J., Martinussen, E., & Knutsen, J. 2017. 'Challenges of the 'Urban Digital': Addressing interdisciplinarity and power in the planning and design of the digital city'. In Oslo. *NORDES 2017 - 7th Nordic Design Research Conference*: 15.06.2017–17.06.2017. Available: http://www.nordes.org/nordes2017/assets/full_papers/nordes17a-sub1046-cam-i26_ASPEN_v2.pdf