

## **Professor and Director of the Lund Social Sciences Methods Centre**

Individual evaluation of applicants

Professor Susie Scott

### **Non-ranked shortlist**

#### **Professor Anne Laure Humbert**

Professor Humbert is a Professor of Sociology at Gothenburg University, Sweden. Her research specialism is in the area of gender equality, in particular using intersectional theories to map patterns of gender-based violence across the EU. With this comparative approach, she observes such interesting phenomena as the 'Nordic Paradox', whereby rates of violence are higher in countries with greater gender equality. Professor Humbert works with quantitative data and statistical methods of analysis, using multi-level modelling and composite statistical indicators to measure and monitor progress in gender equality. This topic has great significance and impact for social and economic policy. It is likely to connect with the work of other researchers in the Faculty of Social Sciences and open the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration.

This candidate demonstrates an established position in her field, as evidenced by markers of external recognition at both national and international levels. She has been invited to give keynote speeches, lead expert meetings and attend parliamentary hearings with the European Commission, OECD and International Labour Organization. She has also served on an International Advisory Board at Uppsala University, to develop a new research environment on sexual corruption. Her research involves ongoing collaborations with United Nations agencies, such as the UN Development Programme and UN Women, and the ILO, to update their gender equality indexes. Professor Humbert has delivered training workshops funded by the EU/Horizon 2020 on advanced methodologies, such as intersectional multi-level modelling. She has also held Visiting Scholar positions in Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK. Her research has some outreach components that have led to knowledge exchange and transfer activities: for example, she created the 'UNISAFE' toolkit for policymakers in fifteen countries, to reduce gender-based violence in the higher education sector. She has held workshops with practitioners who validated the use of these tools, and consulted with businesses and civil society organisations.

Professor Humbert has proven success at securing external funding, having received a total grant income of 220 million SEK since 2015. This has been awarded by major funding bodies through extremely competitive schemes, such as EU Horizon 2020 and the Swedish Research Council. She has been both Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator on these projects, indicating a capacity to work cooperatively in different roles and positions within large research teams.

It is difficult to assess this candidate's publication record as she has not listed all of the items on her CV. However, the articles that she has submitted appear in top quality, reputable and high impact journals with a global reach, such as *Social Politics, Theory and Society, Violence Against Women, PLOS ONE, and Social Indicators Research*. She reports that her work has received over 1700 citations and she has an H-index of 23. The pieces she submitted demonstrate a sophisticated, theoretically informed knowledge of her subject area, as well as methodological competences in statistical data analysis. These include a mixture of multi-authored refereed journal articles and (I think) sole-authored book chapters.

Professor Humbert shows relevant experience of leadership, management and administration. At Oxford Brookes University in the UK, she was Director of the Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice from 2018-2024, where her responsibilities included setting strategic goals, building collaborative networks and mentoring early career researchers. She also worked as a scientific coordinator for a project, 'CASPER'. Professor Humbert was also a founding member of the Centre for Violence Studies at Örebro University, Sweden from 2017-2023, where she helped to establish their research agenda. She has organised panels at international conferences and symposia in Europe, and has managed geographically dispersed teams of researchers in multi-institutional and multi-national consortia. However, she does not appear to have held any administrative roles at local levels (department or faculty) and so it is not clear whether she is familiar with the more mundane, everyday, routine practices of running an organisation on the ground

In terms of teaching, Professor Humbert displays very good credentials, with a PGCertHE qualification from pedagogic training in higher education; she is also a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She has supervised four doctoral students to completion and mentored seven postdoctoral researchers. She has taught relevant modules in quantitative methods and statistics, as applied to the disciplines of business and management. However, she shows limited teaching experience beyond this, having only convened one undergraduate module, and does not appear to have taught at all levels of the degree structure. She also has not taught outside of her specialism on general social theory modules or other topic areas, and so it is not clear whether she would be able to contribute more broadly to her department's curriculum.

Another limitation is that she does not provide any evidence of skills and experience in qualitative methods, either from her own research or from teaching.

Overall, this candidate presents a highly impressive research profile and demonstrates excellent skills of leadership and management. However, there may be some limitations in terms of methodological range, knowledge of qualitative approaches and potential contributions to teaching in her home department. She also does not articulate a clear vision for the Methods Centre with goals, aims and objectives, and so it is unclear in which direction she might wish to steer the research environment.

### **Professor Basak Bilecen**

Professor Bilecen is currently a Professor of Sociology at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands. Her research is in the field of migration studies, and she specialises in the experiences of Turkish migrants living in the Netherlands, exploring feelings of loneliness and isolation. Methodologically, she has competences in both quantitative and qualitative approaches, often using mixed methods research designs. She has particular skills in social network analysis and statistical predictors of wellbeing. Professor Bilecen's research is likely to be of interest to colleagues in the social sciences, as she addresses issues and dimensions of migration that hold wider relevance, such as gender dynamics, ageing and care workers. This suggests that she could make a valuable contribution to the research environments of the Methods Centre, Department of Sociology and Faculty of Social Sciences.

Professor Bilecen has received international recognition, as demonstrated by a large number of invited talks and one expert keynote presentation in countries such as Germany, Turkey, the UK and Japan. She has also presented at major international conferences in Europe and the USA. In 2024, she was awarded the International Diversity Guest Professorship position at the University of Bamberg. Professor Bilecen has an impressive track record of securing external funding, which began with in her early career as student scholarships. Here, she has been successful in competitive international schemes with major funding bodies, such as the Science and Technology Council of Turkey. Her grants have been for large amounts of up to 1.2 million Euros. She has been the Principal Investigator (PI) on many of these research projects, which demonstrates initiative and leadership. She has also been awarded some prestigious postdoctoral fellowships, including her currently held position as Rosalind Franklin Fellow, funded by the EU. Previously, Professor Bilecen also contributed to collaborative proposal writing as a Senior Research. At present, she is in the process of applying for an ERC Advanced Grant to create a new network theory of loneliness in three countries.

Professor Bilecen has an impressive track record of publications, including three books (one sole-authored research monograph and two co-edited handbooks on migration) and several refereed journal articles. These have been published in high ranking journals, such as the *Journal of Ethnicity and Migration Studies*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and *International Migration*. She has also written numerous book chapters, working papers, book reviews and other publications. These are both sole- and multi-authored. Reading her submitted pieces, I was struck by the clear and accessible style of her writing, for example as she explains the method of social network analysis and its application to the study of migration.

Professor Bilecen has demonstrated excellent skills of leadership. As PI on her large scale, mixed methods study ('Do migrants in Europe age well?'), she mentored a team of six doctoral and postdoctoral junior colleagues in four countries. She organised a whole conference in Spain, on the topic of 'Older migrants and methodological challenges', and has led sessions at various other conferences. She is due to be the next Head of Department of Sociology at the University of Groningen in autumn 2025.

In terms of teaching and supervision, Professor Bilecen has a great deal of experience at all levels of study. She previously held faculty positions as Assistant and Associate Professor, and so will be familiar with the responsibilities of course convening, teaching delivery, marking and assessment, and student feedback. At the University of Groningen, she has taught modules on *Qualitative Research Methods*, *Social and Institutional Change*, and *Solidarity and Social Contexts*. Previous to this, at Beiefeld University in Germany, she taught modules on research methods, including *Qualitative Methods in Migration Research* and *Social Network Analysis* as well as other modules on the sociology of migration and inequalities. She has supervised BA, MA and PhD theses, including three doctoral students supervised to completion.

Professor Bilecen has undertaken various administrative roles and responsibilities, including being Chair and Coordinator of the Dutch Association for Migration Research. She has sat on the editorial board for the *European Journal of Higher Education*. She has also served as a member of an institutional ethical review board and various academic promotion committees.

The only possible areas of limitation are, firstly, that Professor Bilecen does not articulate a clear and strong vision for the Methods Centre – what is distinctive about her style of leadership or the direction she wishes to steer towards? Secondly, she does not say much about community engagement, media communication and knowledge transfer beyond the academy. Nevertheless, Professor Bilecen is an excellent candidate who is highly impressive.

**Professor Lorraine van Blerk**

Professor van Blerk is a Professor of Human Geography at the University of Dundee, UK. Her research area is children's geographies and geospatial understandings, which she has investigated using qualitative, participatory methods. Here, she shows methodological innovation, as she has designed creative research tools suitable for working with young people, such as online story maps. She has used other qualitative methods in her research, for example she conducted an ethnographic longitudinal study of African children who are living on the streets. At the same time, she has competence in quantitative methods, having used large scale social surveys and remote sensing techniques. Professor van Blerk's research is impactful and policy-relevant, as it concerns children's welfare, youth poverty and modern slavery. This is evidenced by the knowledge exchange and transfer activities that she produced from her 'Growing up on the street' project, such as a conference on 'Ending violence against children' and a report to the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. This project also formed the basis on an ESRC impact case study, which is an important and prestigious indicator in the UK's REF (Research Excellence Framework) assessment exercise.

Beyond the academy, Professor van Blerk has presented her research to citizens and stakeholders, such as schoolchildren, public donors and government policymakers. She has engaged in collaborative partnerships and expert consultancy work with organisations such as the OHCHR (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), an all-party parliamentary group on street children and human rights, and a child protection foundation. She worked with UNICEF as a policy advisor on refugee youth and humanitarian missions in Uganda and Jordan. Her research provided a platform for young people's voices to directly influence the 2017 UN General Comment on Children in Street Situations, and thus has had a real world impact.

Professor van Blerk's prestige and standing is indicated by many markers of external recognition. She holds three high status Fellowship positions, as a Fellow of Academy of Social Sciences (FACSS), Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS) and a Fellow of the Association of American Geographers. She is also an Honorary Professor at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. She was invited to give a keynote plenary lecture at the Royal Geographical Society annual conference in 2024, and has given other invited guest seminars at international universities.

A strength of this application is the carefully considered set of ideas, hopes and ambitions for the Methods Centre. Professor van Blerk pledges to create a hub of interdisciplinary and innovative practice and expertise, envisaging Lund to become a world-leading centre for social science research methods. This will be achieved through a democratic and egalitarian approach of facilitative leadership: the candidate expresses a spirit of openness, curiosity and reflexivity, a willingness to share knowledge through research collaborations, and a commitment to the

principles of social justice. Professor van Blerk intends to expand the global reach of the Methods Centre by drawing on her “*firm foundation of strong networks and... excellent working relations*” with international colleagues. She explains how she sees her research agenda fitting with the research environment at Lund, for example by making links with the Centre for Sustainability Studies.

Professor van Blerk has an impressive track record of securing external funding, to a total value of £7 million. She has been both Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator on several projects, with grants from major funding bodies on competitive schemes. These include the UKRI/ESRC, the UKRI-NRFR-NFR-Consortium, UK Space Agency/GCRF; Scottish Funding Council/GCRF, StreetInvest/Backstage Trust, DFID, Porticus, the Oak Foundation, the YMCA and the Nuffield Foundation. Following the success of her ethnographic longitudinal study of street children in Africa (‘Growing up on the streets’, 2012-2021), she recently secured additional funding from the ESRC to build on further phases (2023-2025). She is also a member of the ESRC peer review college and has reviewed applications to the ESRC Future Leaders programme.

Similarly, Professor van Blerk demonstrates a strong and consistent track record of publications, listing over 100 items. These included five books and numerous peer-reviewed articles in high ranking journals within her disciplines of Geography and Children’s Studies. These include *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* and *Children’s Geographies*. However, it should be noted that most, if not all, of these appear to be multi-authored rather than sole-authored. I enjoyed reading her work, as she writes in an engaging style, discussing the challenges of using creative methods in research with children. She was the Editor of the journal *Children’s Geographies* from 2016-2020.

In terms of senior management and leadership, Professor van Blerk has much relevant experience. Most notably, she is Assistant Vice Principal (Research) at the University of Dundee, providing advice on the institution’s research strategy for the REF, especially through impact case studies and developing the ‘people, culture and environment’ strand. She prides herself on “*delivering on research priorities for enhancing academic excellence and reputation*”, while fostering interdisciplinary dialogue across the social sciences. In this role, she also supports the Vice Principal and Dean in general planning and decision-making at institutional level. Previously, she has also served as an Associate Dean during a period of restructuring, as Director of the Institute for Social Science Research, and as Associate Director of a cross-Scotland centre for excellence on families and relationships, hosted at the University of Edinburgh.

Professor van Blerk has considerable experience of supervising and examining at postgraduate level. She has supervised nine doctoral students through to completion and was invited to be the External Examiner on several PhD viva examinations internationally, in the UK, across Europe and in Australia. She has also served as External Examiner of MSc and MRes

programmes at UK universities. She has received pedagogical training in the form of a PGCertHE qualification at the University of Brunel. However, there is no undergraduate or Master's level teaching mentioned on her CV and cover letter, so perhaps she lacks experience in this regard. She also does not seem to have taught social research methods. Nevertheless, Professor van Blerk is an excellent candidate who seems well qualified for the post.

### **Professor Matteo Magnani**

Professor Magnani is a Professor of Data Science at Uppsala University, Sweden. He specialises in the research methods of computational data analysis, multi-layer social network analysis and the mathematical modelling of social systems. In particular, he uses meta-data and AI-based techniques for studying online human communication. His PhD explored meta-model data management. He leads an EU-funded research group, 'Infolab', which develops models, algorithms and software tools for measuring these patterns and trends. Professor Magnani locates his research within the discipline of sociology, but it also relates to political science and communication studies. His research is likely to be of interest to colleagues across the Faculty of Social Sciences, as it relates to issues of wider relevance, such as how information spreads in digital social media and patterns of user engagement. Here, he sets out some directions for future research, such as exploring online discourse about climate change, information campaigns on visual social media (e.g. TikTok) and modelling cyber-security information systems.

Professor Magnani's work has had a demonstrated impact on the field of ICT, digital methods and data science. For example, he developed a software package for multi-layer social network analysis that has been downloaded 60,000 times, and one of his referees says that he was "*instrumental in the development of the area*". This model has been applied to the real world domain of tourism, where his 'Skyline' tool (using the multi-layer technique with multidimensional paths and multi-criteria queries) has been used for mapping hotel locations in holiday resorts, for the purpose of booking systems. He has also gained international recognition through his research collaborations with partners in Italy, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Japan.

With a total amount of 50 million SEK in grant capture, Professor Magnani shows success in securing external funding. He has received awards from major international bodies, such as the EU Horizon 2020 programme, which funded his 'Infolab' research group. He is the Principal Investigator on this project. For his other research studies in political science, concerning of visual communication and digital information spreading, he has received funding from other

sources including the A14 Research Initiative (which co-established a cross-faculty social science laboratory at Uppsala University), CIRCUS, FORTE and WASP-HE.

Professor Magnani's publications are grounded in research methods, showcasing the modelling techniques that he and his colleagues have developed for social network analysis. He has published one co-authored book and several co-authored refereed journal articles. It is possibly a concern that he is usually the second or third author of these pieces, rather than being the lead author. On the other hand, this may reflect a generosity of spirit: some of his co-authors are postgraduate and postdoctoral students whom he has mentored, and so he may have encouraged them to be first authors to support their career development. Some of his publications report on teaching and pedagogical issues, as well as research, which also suggests a genuine commitment to encouraging junior scholars.

This candidate shows evidence of leadership in various ways. As Director of the Infolab at Uppsala University, he manages a team of two assistant professors, one postdoctoral researcher and six doctoral students. He has also served as Director of Undergraduate Studies, showing administrative leadership in overseeing a range of taught programmes. He has organised conferences and symposia within his field of expertise, namely computational science and multi-layer social network analysis. He is a Board member of the Centre for Digital Humanities and Social Sciences at Uppsala University, and is Editor of *Network Science*, a journal on data science and AI.

In terms of teaching experience, Professor Magnani has an impressive range of skills and competences. He has taught at all levels of the degree programmes, supervised one doctoral student to completion and mentored five postdoctoral fellows. The modules he has led are about research methods, albeit limited to his specialist areas: for example, *Introduction to Computational Social Science* (BA) and *Mining of Social Data* (MA). He has also designed three new modules, and led the development of an International Masters degree in Data Science. Perhaps a limitation is that his methodological expertise is all on the quantitative side: he does not mention any experience of researching or teaching with qualitative methods.

Nevertheless, Professor Magnani takes teaching very seriously and is deeply committed to this side of the job. He has undergone training courses on pedagogic leadership, inclusive teaching, supervision, assessment grading and feedback. He presents a pedagogical philosophy based on Vygotskyian, constructivist principles of student-centred, practice-based learning, mentioning creative and innovative ideas for classroom activities such as the 'think-share-pair' technique, interactive clickers and laboratory-style group discussions. He describes his energetic, enthusiastic teaching style, which motivates and engages learners. The success of this approach is evidenced by positive student feedback. Professor Magnani received a Distinguished

University Teacher Award from Uppsala University, as well as the Pedagogical Prize from Uppsala students' union.

### **Professor Mikael Persson**

Professor Persson is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg. His work explores political behaviour, public opinion and political representation, as well as research design. He has methodological expertise in advanced quantitative methods, including large scale surveys, comparative studies, measurement techniques, secondary data and statistical analysis. He has refined models of economic and political behaviour and improved casual inference measures used in observational studies. He applies these skills in his research on electoral behaviour and policy responsiveness; his studies have examined the factors affecting voter turnout at elections, public participation and voter apathy, European parliamentary processes and egalitarian reforms. These topics are likely to be of interest and relevance to colleagues in the Methods Centre and across the Faculty of Social Science, as they relate to wider social, political and cultural issues. His research has interdisciplinary reach to economics, sociology, philosophy and education. This suggests that he would make a welcome contribution to the research environment at Lund.

Professor Persson has an established position within his field and has developed the area through international research collaborations. He has worked with external partners, such as the Swedish Institute for Educational Research and the Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy (IFAU), conducting policy-oriented research that has influenced policy debates. Professor Persson has also established an international research network, the Nordic Political Behaviour Workshop, showing a commitment to research at the global regional level. He sees this network as an international hub for political behaviour research, and plans to develop this through the Methods Centre. He sees his research as bridging methodological divides and fostering collaboration.

This candidate demonstrates international recognition through various markers of prestige. Within his field, he has won competitive prizes and awards, including the best paper published in the *Swedish Journal of Political Science* (2012) and the best paper presented at the Swedish Political Science conference (2008). He has been a Visiting Researcher to the USA twice (LA and Pasadena, CA) and served as an external evaluator of faculty appointment and promotion applications at the Universities of Lund, Copenhagen and Flanders. Between 2009-2011, he received methods training from the well-reputed Essex Summer School in Data Analysis (UK) and European winter schools in comparative electoral analysis. He is an active participant in international conferences across Europe and in the USA.

In terms of grant income, Professor Persson has generated a total of 24.3 million SEK since 2013. For a large proportion of this (15.3 million SEK), he was the main applicant and project leader. He has had a high rate of success at securing external funding from major bodies, such as research councils and Swedish organisations. For example, he is currently the Principal Investigator (PI) on the 2026 Swedish National Election Study, PI on the Swedish part of an ERC Advanced Grant project ('How politicians evaluate public opinion') and PI on a 3-year Swedish Research Council project ('Debtors as voters: how does rising household debt impact political behaviour?'). He has also previously been a Co-Investigator on a Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Science) project and a FORTE project.

Professor Persson shows an impressive track record of publications. These include two books (one a sole-authored monograph based on his PhD thesis and the other a joint-authored introductory textbook) and 38 refereed articles in high quality international journals, including the *European Journal of Political Research*, *American Political Science Review*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of European Public Policy*, *Electoral Studies*. However, it should be noted that most of these papers are multi-authored. He has also published 12 book chapters and has other works in progress. Reading his work, I appreciated his clear and direct writing style; the structure of his argument unfolds logically and he is skilled at the exposition of ideas. He contextualises his research within contemporary policy debates, communicating its relevance to the reader.

Professor Persson demonstrates evidence of leadership and management through institutional administration and directorships. He is Head of the Gothenburg University research group of elections, public opinion and political behaviour. Between 2018-2024 he was Vice (Deputy) Head of the Department for Political Science at GU, where he was responsible for steering its research development strategy and for overseeing the PhD programme in political science. He has undertaken leadership training courses at GU, including 'Research Leadership Initiative' (which covered grant writing, leading project activities, leading teams) and 'Curious on Leadership' (university administration). He is also experienced at conference organisation, through which he has fostered international collaborations through research networks. For example, he was co-founder and co-organiser of the Annual Nordic Political Behaviour Workshop and was the main organiser and section head of the Swedish Political Science Association annual conference. He has served on GU search committees and consultative assemblies to assess doctoral student applications. He is on the editorial board of three journals.

Professor Persson has wide-ranging teaching experience, across all levels of the university degree structure. He has been a lecturer on twelve different modules at GU between 2007-present. He also has a relevant career background as a schoolteacher. A key strength is that

Professor Persson has taught research methods, as well as his subject area. The modules he has led include *Advanced Quantitative Methods*, *Research Methods in Political Science*, and *Research Design*. He has supervised seven doctoral students to completion and served as external examiner for PhD viva examinations at other Swedish universities. He has also supervised BA and MA theses. He has undergone pedagogical training in teaching and learning in higher education, and has been active in curriculum development and course design. He describes his pedagogical philosophy as being grounded in classroom activities and hands-on practical experience, with the intention of stimulating critical thinking and engagement with real world political issues. He endeavours to deliver research-led teaching, by integrating theoretical material into group discussions.

Finally, this candidate demonstrates excellent engagement with knowledge exchange and transfer in the wider community. His research has involved collaboration with non-academic stakeholders, such as policymaking institutions, research institutes, government agencies and civil society organisations. He has also communicated his research findings to audiences of citizens, through public lectures and media outreach. For example, he has been interviewed on Sveriges Radio and cited in the Swedish newspapers *Dagens Nyheter* and *Aftonbladet*. His research seems to have shaped public understandings of political processes, such as voting and elections, and to have had an impact on evidence-based policymaking. Professor Persson has served on Consultation and Advisory committees, providing expert opinion and contributing to the development of government reports.

### **Professor Per Becker**

Professor Becker is a Professor of Risk and Sustainability at Lund University. He locates himself within the disciplines of sociology and environmental sciences, and has had an interdisciplinary education with degree qualifications in engineering, politics and sociology. He also has a career background of working for the Swedish and Norwegian rescue services. His research focuses on issues of safety, security and sustainability: in particular, the governance of flood risk management and mitigation in local municipal administrations. He has methodological expertise in both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and tends to use mixed methods research designs. For example, he is experienced in techniques as diverse as interviewing, visual analysis and computational social network modelling. Having such a wide repertoire suggests that he would be a collegial and inclusive facilitator of methodological innovation. He is keen to develop shared competences in technologically-informed visual methods, and this is part of his vision for the Methods Centre.

At the theoretical and conceptual level, too, Professor Becker's work promises to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, at both national and international levels. His research explores issues of risk management and governance in terms of systemic interactions between the environment and society, and he takes a scientific, solution-focused approach to real world problems. This suggests that he would make valuable contributions to the research culture of the Methods Centre. Being based at Lund, he already collaborates with colleagues within and between faculties, and he identifies feasible ways of building upon and expanding this. For example, he plans to pursue international partnerships with the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) in the UK and the Leibniz-Institut in Germany. The topic areas of his research have global reach and relevance: for example, how states coordinate their responses to environmental risk, disaster and crisis, and how they develop responsible systems of risk management (e.g. for wildfires, floods and pandemics). Professor Becker has received external recognition in the form of being offered Visiting Research Fellow positions in the UK, Fiji and South Africa, and being invited to serve as an external assessor of faculty recruitment appointments in Sweden.

A key strength of Professor Becker's application is that he articulates a clear vision for the Methods Centre. He identifies three strands of future research development that he would like to accomplish, and offers concrete plans for each. First, collaboration in the era of environmental 'polycrisis' (here he plans to establish a research group using quantitative and qualitative methods). Second, studying social influences on individual motivation (for environmental sustainability in liberal democracies). Third, to study underlying social processes of the evolution of scientific fields (where his visual and computational modelling techniques would be useful).

Professor Becker demonstrates an impressive track record of securing external funding, with a total amount of 286 million SEK. Of this, 12.6 million SEK came from grants on which he was the Principal Investigator (PI), 73 million SEK as a Co-Investigator, 36 million SEK as a named researcher and 8.75 million SEK as an additional grant writer. He has also taken managerial roles on funded projects of 154 million SEK, and in his early career, assisted as a junior researcher. This wide breadth of experience suggests that he has a comprehensive knowledge of the multifaceted components of successful projects, an adeptness at coordinating the various practical activities involved, and an understanding of the interactional dynamics of leading, participating and cooperating in staff research teams. His funding was awarded by a range of organisations, including LTH Strategic Funds, Stiftelsen Landshövning donation/memorial funds, Swedish Armed Forces, FORCE, and Lund University.

The publications record of Professor Becker is equally impressive. He lists over 90 items, including two research monograph books, 50 peer-reviewed journal articles, 8 book chapters

and 30 conference papers. His sole-authored monograph *Sustainability Science: Managing Risk and Resilience for Sustainable Development* (2023) provides a comprehensive and accessible discussion of topics for a public audience, including global risks and disasters, climate change, planetary boundaries, and human societal evolution. This book has been widely cited and is influential in his field. Professor Becker's journal articles are both sole- and multi-authored, and they appear in high quality international journals, such as the *Policy Studies Journal*, *Social Networks*, *Ecology and Society*, and the *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*. He has also published in leading regional journals, which may have a greater impact on policy and practice: for example, the *Asian Journal of Environment and Disaster Management*. Reading his work, I appreciated his engaging and accessible writing style, complemented (in the case of his *Sustainability Science* textbook) by visual graphics that make ideas easier to understand. Meanwhile, his articles are well-informed by comprehensive literature reviews and grounded in theoretical debates.

Professor Becker shows skills of leadership and management in several ways. He has established new research groups, centres and programmes, such as two Lund teams studying disaster/risk management and climate change. In 2011, the Vice Chancellor of Lund University appointed him as director of a 'triple helix' collaboration between the university, government and industry. This newly created 'Training Regions Research Centre' had the goal of promoting the safety, security and sustainability of cities and regions. Professor Becker has been a co-leader or member of various interdisciplinary groups on policy entrepreneurship and environmental governance. He has served on the steering committees and advisory groups of global agencies for disaster risk reduction, such as the Global Resource Observatory, has engaged in scientific quality assurance processes for a Swedish governmental council, and was a reference expert to the Swedish National Audit Office.

In terms of teaching and supervision, Professor Becker's experience has been mostly at postgraduate level; there is very limited evidence of undergraduate teaching in his portfolio (2 hours per year as a guest lecturer at the University of Glasgow). Nevertheless, at Masters level, he teaches highly relevant modules on social research methods, including *Research Methodology and Methods*, alongside other modules in his specialist area. He has experience of curriculum design through developing a Masters programme in disaster management. Professor Becker has undergone pedagogic training in higher education teaching and learning, as well as supervision, and has supervised nine doctoral students to completion. He was awarded the status of Excellent Teaching Practitioner (ETP) by Lund University in 2009. Professor Becker describes his teaching philosophy as being student-centred, reflexive, inspiring and adaptive, as he seeks to include students with diverse learning styles, as well as those who may be hesitant or reluctant to engage. He draws upon Greenwood & Levin's (2007) five principles of pedagogic practice and aims to impart pragmatically useful, real world knowledge.

Beyond academia, Professor Becker has received training in humanitarian action with UNICEF, the UN, the Swedish Red Cross and national rescue services. He engages in third sector knowledge exchange and transfer activities through media communications in television, radio and print journalism. He is community-oriented, expressing an attitude of curiosity, creativity and outward-looking optimism, enjoying the cross-fertilisation of idea between colleagues. He intended to apply this to his vision of the Methods Centre, by *“fostering a culture of collaboration, shared responsibility and long term thinking.”* He is concerned with the wellbeing of his staff, and hopes to cultivate a personable, collegial atmosphere of productive interactions.

### **Professor Philip Goldin**

Professor Goldin is a Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Davis, USA. He was previously a research scientist at Stanford University and has recently (2022-2024) worked at Lund University as a Visiting Scholar in the Department of Psychology. His research is on the neuroscience of mental health, particularly anxiety and substance abuse, and he measures brain-behaviour correlates of emotional processes. Focusing on emotional reactivity and emotional regulation, he explores psychosocial strategies and interventions that people can use to manage their mental health: for example, cognitive reappraisal, emotional acceptance, attention regulation, compassion meditation, and mindfulness-based stress reduction. Here, he draws upon Buddhist principles of empathy, compassion and mindfulness, and this unusual combination of neuroscience and spirituality offers a refreshing and original synthesis of ideas. Professor Goldin uses fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) to technically measure brain activity, alongside a range of social research methods, both qualitative and quantitative. These include longitudinal analysis, experiments, clinical interventions and autobiographical interviews.

This research topic is likely to be of interest and relevance to other colleagues in the Faculty of Social Science. It relates to contemporary debates around mental health, wellbeing, the rise of eastern philosophies in the west, and critiques of neoliberal notions of individual responsibility. It also raises important cultural questions about secularisation, governmentality and public health. As such, there is great potential for interdisciplinary collaboration with scholars at Lund, and Professor Goldin’s participation could enhance the research environment. He shows a willingness to do this, having previously contributed to collaborative projects at UC Davis and other US universities.

Professor Goldin’s research has had a demonstrated impact on his field, with real world effects on industry that have gained external recognition. He has served as a scientific advisor to Silicon Valley start-ups and major companies, including Google, in relation to the application of his

models to digital platforms. This includes smartphone-delivered therapeutic interventions for depression and anxiety, virtual reality meditation training for stress reduction in schoolchildren, and compassion interventions. At Google, he was the founder and developer of 'Search Inside Yourself', a mindfulness-based emotional intelligence training programme for employees, which has since been rolled out for use across the world. He also created 'Augment Me', a machine learning neuroscience and virtual reality tool for self-monitoring mental health and practising mindfulness-based emotional intelligence. Professor Goldin has engaged in scientific consultancy work with Swedish companies, such as Innergi, which is in Lund. Here, he provided neuroscience-informed, evidence-based education and training using digital platforms to deliver mental health wellbeing strategies into the workplace.

In terms of grant income, Professor Goldin has had success throughout his career. He is currently a Co-Investigator on four different projects with awards ranging from \$25,000 – 75,000 USD. His clinical research on neuro-imaging was funded by the NIH, while he has also secured funding from smaller charitable organisations and memorial foundations, such as the Varela Grant, Stupski Foundation and Tan Teo Charitable Foundation, and from UC Davis internal schemes. He does not appear to have received any large grants from research councils, nor to have been a Principal Investigator on a major project.

Professor Goldin shows an impressive track record of publications, with over 100 items listed and a high rate of citation (H-index 62). Many of his articles are multi-authored, but I believe this is conventional for the discipline of psychology. The articles appear in reputable journals with an international scope, such as the *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, *Biological Psychiatry*, *PLOS One*, *Psychology and Psychotherapy*, *Brain and Cognition* and the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*. He has also written book chapters and contributed to two Training Instructors' Manuals on compassion cultivation and climate resilience. I was unable to read any samples of his publications as they were not submitted with his application, but he did provide some helpful summaries of their main arguments.

This candidate demonstrates solid skills of leadership and senior management. He is currently Chair of the Faculty Executive Committee for the School of Nursing at UC Davis, where he heads a team of 60 staff. At Stanford University, he was Director of a laboratory of Clinically Applied Affective Neuroscience in the Department of Psychology for ten years. He is Co-Director of the Climate Resilience Initiative, which provides training to staff and students across the University of California campuses, where he is also Programme Development and Research Collaborator at the Center for Climate Health and Equity. Professor Goldin is also Chair of the Faculty Personnel Committee, with responsibilities for staff hiring, recruitment and promotion. He is on the editorial board of three psychology journals and is a grant application reviewer for the NIH.

Professor Goldin has excellent teaching experience, having taught at all levels of the degree structure and contributed to curriculum design. He created and developed a new graduate course on *Research Methods and Evidence-Based Practice* at UC Davis, where he also teaches *Leadership Skills in Healthcare*, *Mindfulness-Based Emotional Intelligence*, and *Technology and Innovation in Health Care*. At Rutgers University, he taught modules on *Abnormal Psychology*, the *Psychology of Sleep*, and *Western & Buddhist Psychology*. During his time as a Visiting Scholar at Lund, he delivered modules on the *Psychology of Sustainability/Climate Change*, *Artificial Intelligence*, and the *Science of Psychedelics*. Meanwhile in terms of supervision, Professor Goldin has served as a Masters dissertation advisor and served on both PhD and MA thesis committees. He has supervised eleven doctoral students through to completion, and mentored two postdoctoral research fellows. His pedagogic philosophy is inclusive and supportive, particularly in terms of engaging non-traditional learners and non-native speakers in an English language university. He takes care to provide clear explanations and prepare interesting teaching aids, such as visual graphics to demonstrate patterns of brain activity.

Professor Goldin seems to have a gentle and collegial approach, underpinned by the Buddhist principles of empathy, listening, compassion and support. This suggests that he would be a welcome presence in the Methods Centre, and in the Faculty more broadly. He explains that he values collaborative forms of learning and sharing ideas with colleagues, developing insights together and helping each other to excel.

### **Professor Stina Bergman Blix**

Professor Bergman Blix is a Professor of Sociology at Uppsala University, Sweden. She was previously Docent at Stockholm University. She has a career background in drama, having worked in her youth as a theatre director's assistant. Her research area is the sociology of emotions, particularly as they are performed in institutional and organisational settings and managed in professional working life. Focusing on two distinct empirical contexts – law courts and theatrical stage acting – she explores the paradoxical idea of 'rational emotion' by studying social interaction and everyday encounters at the micro-level. She shows originality, creativity and innovation through her independent thought, for example by developing Hastrup's concept of 'double agency' to understand the performative arts of habituating, decoupling and transitioning between states of self-consciousness. To analyse these phenomena, she uses symbolic interactionist and dramaturgical theories, together with qualitative methods such as ethnographic observation and interviews.

Professor Bergman Blix expresses a commitment to methodological advancement, aiming to develop analytical tools that link social theory to real world practices and lived experience. She

is particularly interested in the situational framing of emotion through ritualised forms of interaction, exploring subjectivity through an interpretive epistemology. Her conceptualisation of ideas shows novelty and freshness: for example, by comparing ostensibly polar opposite cases (lawyers and actors) to find shared analytical features, she illustrates the dramatic technique of 'perspective by incongruity'. Professor Bergman Blix also demonstrates an adeptness at thinking creatively with, adapting to and innovating around established research methods: for example during the Covid-19 lockdown, she conducted a digital autoethnography by observing online press conferences. She is also attentive to the role of researchers' emotions in social research, particularly with qualitative methods, and has written about the challenges of navigating fieldwork and relations with participants, where emotional dissonance and reflexivity may come into play.

This candidate articulates a clear vision for the Methods Centre, offering realistic plans and suggestions. Her overall aim is to develop and consolidate methodological synergies across interdisciplinary boundaries, through the cross-fertilisation of ideas and sharing of good practice. She intends to pursue methodological advancement by crossing two types of boundary: the divide between qualitative and quantitative (by sharing competences and developing mixed methods designs) and the barriers between academic disciplines (by encouraging conversation and dialogue between the social sciences, arts, humanities and natural sciences). She believes that social problems can be formulated in a pluralistic way, allowing new ways of seeing and fresh insights. For example, one idea she has is to diversify modes of dissemination and output, by encouraging the use of oral and visual as well as textual formats. This could help to communicate research findings to wider, public audiences and improve accessibility.

Professor Bergman Blix has received external recognition at both national and international levels. She was a Visiting Professor at the universities of Bologna, Italy (2025), Graz, Austria (2025) and the LSE, UK (2024), and previously worked as a Research Fellow at SCORE, Stockholm University. She has been invited to give the keynote address to the ESA research methods conference in Germany (2024), and various lectures and seminars across Europe, the USA and Australia. Additionally, she has presented at 40 conferences.

Professor Bergman Blix demonstrates success in applying for and securing funds from external bodies, including some large organisations, research councils and major competitive schemes. She has won large amounts, ranging from 2-6 million SEK. Professor Bergman Blix was awarded an ERC Starting Grant as Principal Investigator on 'JUST EMOTIONS', an international comparative project about decision-making in law courts in Sweden, Italy, the UK and USA. This lasted seven years (2018-2025) and involved a mixed method research design. She has also been awarded three grants from the Swedish Research Council (two as PI, one as Co-I),

including a notably influential study on 'Emotions in Court' in collaboration with Åsa Wettergren from Gothenburg University. Even in her early career, Professor Bergman Blix held a prestigious SRC FORTE postdoctoral fellowship.

This candidate displays an impressive, steady and consistent track record of publications, including both sole- and co-authored pieces. Her contributions here are noteworthy as she is skilful at thinking creatively, introducing new concepts and advancing theoretical debates. For example, her article about theatrical stage actors used Goffman's dramaturgical perspective to modify the notion of 'double agency'. She has written three research-based books (one sole-authored, two co-authored) and has another book manuscript in preparation. She has published 20 refereed articles in top quality journals with international reach, including *Qualitative Research*, *Acta Sociologica*, *Symbolic Interaction*, *Journal of Law and Society*, *Frontiers in Sociology*, *Emotions and Society*, *Emotion Review* and *Professions and Professionalism*. She also has other publications in the form of book chapters, reviews and working papers. Reading Professor Bergman Blix's submitted pieces, I was struck by her fresh and insightful way of thinking and imaginative conceptualisation. She is skilful at explaining complex theoretical ideas in an accessible and engaging way that prompts critical reflection and lends itself to interdisciplinary dialogue. For example, her co-authored book *Rational Anger* explains to sociologists how law courts routinely proceed, and showing the role of anger in the legal process. The chapter titles are humorous and memorable, intriguing the reader with alliterative phrases like 'nagging narratives', 'timely temper' and 'reputable rage'. Her article on emotion regulation in performative occupations combines dramaturgical metaphors with theories of empathic attunement, balance and flow.

Leadership and management skills are evident in this application. As PI on her ERC project, Professor Bergman Blix led a large research team of eight junior and six senior staff. She is also the founder and coordinator of a research group called 'Emotion-justice-interaction' in the Sociology department at Uppsala, and coordinator of the ESA Emotion Research Network. She has experience of organising and hosting research events, such as the JustEmotion symposium and the Law & Emotions workshop. Professor Bergman Blix has undergone formal training in university leadership and management. Other administrative roles she has held at Uppsala include membership of the Professors' Committee, the faculty promotions and recruitment board, and departmental committees for gender equality, examinations and student misconduct. Professor Bergman Blix is also Editor-in-Chief of the journal she founded, *Frontiers Emotion Sociology*, and is on the editorial boards of several journals.

Professor Bergman Blix is also committed to the mentorship of junior colleagues, supporting their career development and continuing to foster strong working relationships. For example, she invited her former postdoctoral fellow, Nina Törnqvist, to co-author the *Rational Anger*

book, and they have applied for a research grant together. The method of digital autoethnography that she designed was an innovative adaption to support her PhD students with their fieldwork during the stressful period of lockdown.

In terms of teaching experience, Professor Bergman Blix has taught at all levels of the degree programme, delivering modules on both sociological theory and social research methods. These include *Introduction to Sociology*, *Sociological Theory*, *Sociological Analysis I, II and III*, *Identity and Culture*, *Qualitative Methods* and *Ethics in Social Science*. She therefore demonstrates deep familiarity with, and fluency in communicating knowledge of, a range of research methods. Professor Bergman Blix has supervised three doctoral students to completion and mentored one postdoctoral fellow, as well as supervising eighteen BA and nine MA theses, and has served as external examiner (thesis opponent) for postgraduate students. She also has experience of curriculum development, having designed some new modules for the PhD programme in *Contemporary Theory* and *Ethics in Social Science*. Professor Bergman Blix's approach to teaching is informed by her background in theatre, as she thrives upon lively classroom activities and animated discussions. At the same time, her pedagogic philosophy is fair and inclusive; she is sensitively attuned to different learning styles and needs, for example with neurodivergent students.

Finally, Professor Bergman Blix has shown keen engagement with knowledge exchange activities in the community, reaching public audiences beyond the academy. She has given popular science presentations and inspirational seminars at music and drama colleges, spoken at district courts and written blog articles. She has been interviewed by the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, for which she also wrote a reflection piece about her method of digital autoethnography. Overall, this candidate seems excellent and outstanding.

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## Remaining candidates

### **Dr Barry Ness**

Dr Ness is a Senior Lecturer (Docent) and Director of the Centre for Sustainability Studies at Lund University (LUCSUS). His research area is sustainability science, ecology and environmental issues. Dr Ness shows excellent skills and knowledge of a wide range of research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, which he describes as descriptive-analytical. These include case studies, surveys, interviews and systems modelling. He also sees the potential for research methods to be transgressive in driving social change, and suggests some exciting innovations that have been used in his field, such as living labs, design thinking and transition studies. This suggests that he could offer a fresh, creative and innovative approach to developing the Methods centre in an open-minded way. His aims for the centre include expanding its repertoire to include on the one hand, more qualitative participatory methods and action research, and on the other hand, more quantitative techniques of computational modelling, Big Data and AI, and geospatial mapping.

It is difficult to assess Dr Ness's level of success in acquiring research funding, as his CV lists a combined section on 'Grants and project participation'. He seems to have mainly worked as a researcher on these projects, or to have led regional strands and work packages on grants that were presumably held by other people, although perhaps he was a Co-Investigator? However, he does mention one funding scheme, the Linnaeus Grant, which financed a research centre of excellence on sustainability at Lund University. He also reports that he served as Director of a project on Urban Futures for Skåne Local Interaction Platform (2017), which involved overseeing twelve research projects. I am not sure whether he wrote these funding bids and/or was the Principal Investigator. Nevertheless, in these roles and others, Dr Ness had had experience of leadership and management. As Director of LUCSUS, he heads a team of 60 staff. He has also served on steering groups at Lund and Malmö universities. I cannot see any evidence of international impact and external recognition.

Dr Ness shows very good teaching experience and credentials. As Docent at Lund, he won an Excellent Teaching Practitioner award, and has a wide repertoire of experience in leading relevant modules on research methods. These include participatory methods, systems analysis and dynamic modelling, research ethics, and multi-scale/level analysis. He has supervised two doctoral students to completion. Dr Ness has also served as a course coordinator for various modules at all levels of the degree structure, indicating a sound understanding of curriculum design. He recently (2025) undertook a training course on 'Methods Teaching in Social Science',

which would be helpful for developing the centre. Dr Ness practices a transformative pedagogy through innovative techniques, such as a world café, gallery walks and mock conferences.

### **Professor Fernand Gobet**

Professor Gobet is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Roehampton and Professorial Research Fellow at the LSE, both in the UK. His research is in the area of cognitive and developmental psychology, where he uses brain imaging and computational modelling techniques to study processes of memory, learning, risk assessment, decision making, pattern recognition and problem solving. More broadly, he is interested in organisational behaviour and AI systems. He has a background in chess playing, and has researched this in terms of the cognitive processes mentioned above. He is interested in how domains of expert knowledge are constructed, in games, science, sport and business. Professor Gobet sees his research as interdisciplinary, bridging the realms of psychology, education, neuroscience, computer science, philosophy and linguistics. He has some clearly articulated planned projects and ideas for funding bids, such as modelling mathematical proficiency, studying linguistic vocabulary and syntactic structures, talent and giftedness, and cognitive skill transfer between domains. These could contribute to the research environment of the Methods Centre, although they seem to be individual rather than collaborative ideas.

This candidate has received external recognition at an international level, with invited talks and conference presentations across Europe, Australia and China. Professor Gobet has collaborated with scholars in other countries on funded projects, grant applications and journal articles. His track record of securing external funding is very impressive, with a total grant income of £15.6 million GBP. These awards have come from major funding bodies and research councils, such as the ESRC (13 grants!), Joseph Rowntree Foundation and European Research Council. From the latter, he currently holds an ERC Advanced Grant of 2.2 million Euros.

Professor Gobet is a prolific writer, with an impressively long list of publications and a high citation score (H-index 72). He has published eleven books, 170 referred journal articles and 100 conference papers, as well as various other book chapters, technical reports and book reviews. His articles have appeared in top journals of high quality in his discipline, including *Artificial Intelligence*, *Brain and Cognition*, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Cognition* and *Cognitive Psychology*. Two of his books are sole-authored, but the majority of his other publications are multi-authored. I believe this is conventional for the discipline of Psychology.

In terms of leadership and management experience, Professor Gobet has held many senior roles, including (at Brunel University, UK) Director of the Centre for the Study of Expertise, Deputy Head of School, Deputy Head of Dept, and Chair of the Social Sciences Research

Committee. At Roehampton, he is Bidding Lead, indicating a potential for helping other colleagues in the Faculty with their grant applications. He has also organised conference and workshop events in his subject area. For example, he has served on the programme committees of international conferences in the USA, UK and Switzerland. He was REF coordinator at the University of Liverpool and is a member of the ESRC peer review college.

Professor Gobet has a good level of teaching experience at all levels of the degree structure. He has taught undergraduate modules on cognitive psychology, individual differences, language and thought, mind and brain, psychology of expertise, small group projects, and qualitative research methods. He has also taught an MSc module on cognitive neuroscience. He has supervised sixteen doctoral students to completion and served as a PhD external examiner.

Professor Gobet demonstrates a commitment to knowledge exchange and transfer activities. He has published several pieces for non-academic and general public audiences, such as internet articles, *Psychology Today* blogs and *The Conversation* pieces. He is skilful and enthusiastic about communicating scientific knowledge to public audiences and engaging citizens in social science research.

Some possible areas of limitation in this application are firstly, a lack of demonstrated knowledge/use of qualitative methods, and secondly, there being no clearly articulated vision for the direction of the Methods Centre.

### **Professor Lars Coenen**

Professor Coenen is a Professor in Innovation and Sustainability Transitions, HVL Business School, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. His research area is human geography, which also connects to related fields of sustainability, transition studies, economics and urban planning. He specialises in studying the “*uneven geography of innovation*”, i.e. how different regions and cities across the world vary in their capacity to find creative solutions to geospatial problems. This seems very policy-relevant, as Professor Coenen engages critically with societal challenges such as climate change, the rise of AI, political polarisation and media commodification. Professor Coenen takes a methodologically pluralist approach to his research, using mixed methods designs, and this forms part of his vision for the Methods Centre. He says that he “*would thrive on the disciplinary heterogeneity*” of this research environment.

Professor Coenen has gained relevant experience in leadership and management. He is Research Team Leader at HVL Business School’s Mohn Centre for Innovation and Regional Development, where he heads a staff team of twenty members, leads a research group and directs a cross-faculty PhD programme. In his research group at Lund, CIRCLE, he led a team of

three PhD students and three postdoctoral fellows. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of NORSI (Nordic Research School in Innovation & Entrepreneurship).

There is some evidence of international collaboration and external recognition. Professor Coenen worked for one year at the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, designing an EU FP7 funding proposal for a large scale project to develop a spatial perspective on sustainability transitions, although this was unsuccessful. He has also been invited to give keynote speeches at international conferences on geography and environmental studies. Beyond academia, Professor Coenen has engaged with local government, public bodies and stakeholder citizens, for example as City of Melbourne Chair in Resilient Cities, he provided advice on urban transformations and policy development.

Professor Coenen has had a modest level of success in securing external funding. Although he has not been a Principal Investigator or led a major project, he has been a co-applicant on two successful bid to the Research Council Norway, earning a small proportion for his department. He also contributed to a Linnaeus Grant proposal to the Swedish Research Council, which funded his CIRCLE research group.

In terms of publications, Professor Coenen has contributed to several multi-authored articles that have appeared in reputable journals within his research area, such as the *Journal of Cleaner Production* and *Energy Research & Social Science*. He provides helpful summaries of how these articles have shaped the fields of urban sustainability transitions and environmental innovation. He does not appear to have produced any sole-authored publications.

Professor Coenen has taught at all levels. This includes BA modules on population, resources and the environment, business planning and venture capitalism; MA modules on sustainable innovation management, the economics of innovation, and small business economics; and the Skills School in PhD methods training. He has supervised eleven doctoral students to completion and he was Director of Studies for the MA programme at Lund University. Perhaps a limitation is that he has not taught any modules on research methods.

### **Dr Ola Hall**

Dr Hall is Associate Professor (Docent) and Head of the Department of Geography at Lund University, Sweden. His research uses Geographical Information Systems (GIS) such as aerial and satellite imagery, and predictive modelling, as mapping technologies to gather geospatial data on patterns of human activity. These digital tools allow the remote sensing of landscapes and track signs of inequality. For example, he has studied demographic trends of migration, mapped areas of poverty, crop yield gaps and night-time urban lighting. He led a major study of data-poor agricultural regions of Africa, which generated a large data set and produced tools and

resources (e.g. a remote sensing technique and visual poverty indicators). Dr Hall's research therefore has an interdisciplinary reach and a global impact. It is likely to hold interest for colleagues in other social science disciplines, such as economics, population studies and sustainability.

Dr Hall seems genuinely committed to and enthusiastic about methodological innovation and cultivating expertise. He demonstrates competence in a wide range of research methods beyond those mentioned above, such as surveys, interviews and photo elicitation. It is therefore likely that she would make a welcome addition to the Methods Centre and offer many valuable contributions to its research environment. His vision for the centre includes a long-term goal of integrating more visual data into social science research, to balance out the existing predominance of textual and numerical data sources. Dr Hall has also engaged in collaborative research activities that show external recognition, for example she was awarded a STINT scholarship to Montreal University, Canada and received an EU Erasmus mobility grant.

This candidate has had modest success at securing funding, with a total grant income of 20 million SEK. His projects have been national rather than international in scope, but nonetheless effective. He has been Principal Investigator on a Riksbankens Jubileumsfond project in Sweden, which used machine learning to examine local sustainable development, in collaboration with colleagues in mathematics. Recently (2025), he was a co-applicant on a successful bid for a six year programme to build an experimental knowledge laboratory for regional development and transformation.

In terms of publications, Dr Hall's work has appeared in several high quality, impactful journals with an international reach, including *International Development*, the *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, *Scientific Reports*, *World Development* and *Population and Environment*. The items that appear on his selected list are all multi-authored, but he has also written an influential textbook on GIS methods and cartography, which is widely used on taught courses in Swedish universities.

Dr Hall has relevant experience of leadership, management and administration, having been Head of Department for the past four years. This has given him a solid understanding of institutional structures and organisational operations – both at senior management level and on the ground amongst colleagues' everyday practices. This role also involved implementing strategic initiatives and fostering collaboration. Previously, he served as a Work Environment Officer at Lund University, overseeing employee health and safety, compliance with regulations and improving workplace conditions. He has also been Co-chair of the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing.

It is unclear how much relevant teaching experience Dr Hall has, how diverse the subject matter is, and at what levels he has delivered it. He just cites a total figure of 5000 hours since 2015. His portfolio mentions some modules within his subject area of Geography, but not beyond this, and he has not taught research methods. He does present a clear pedagogic philosophy, however, which conveys a commitment to principles of inclusivity, deep reflection and critical thinking. He draws upon constructivist approaches to design practical and experiential tasks of active learning through exploration, and strives to cultivate a dynamic, responsive and transformative classroom environment.

Please note that parts of this candidate's application (CV and portfolio subheadings) were presented in Swedish, and so it is possible that I missed some points in translation.

### **Professor Staffan Lindberg**

Professor Lindberg is a Professor of Political Science at Gothenburg University, Sweden. His research examines political behaviour in terms of democratic participation in voting and the power of elections as a mode of transition to democratic rule. He also explores global dimensions of these phenomena, observing cultural differences in how democracies develop, rise and fall. He focuses on the regions of Africa and Asia, but has also led a comparative project ('V-Dem'), gathering data on varieties of democracy in 42 countries. This work has received external recognition in the form of invited keynotes and presentations at international conferences on political science across Europe and the USA, and various prizes, awards and honours for his books and influential articles. Most notably, in Sweden he won the King's Medal for his contributions to political science.

This candidate displays a very impressive track record of success in securing external funding, having been awarded 56 grants over the course of his career (since 1998). He has been the Principal Investigator on the majority of these projects. They have been funded by some major bodies through competitive schemes, including the European Commission, National Research Council of Sweden, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has also received some smaller grants from the Mo Ibrahim foundation and Gothenburg University. The amounts are quite substantial, ranging up to 500,000 Euros and averaging \$200,000 USD.

Similarly, Professor Lindberg has developed an extensive and consistent track record of publications, presenting a long list of items. These include five books (one sole-authored and one co-authored monograph, and three co-edited collections) and several refereed articles in top quality international journals, including *International Political Science Review*, *American Political Science Review*, *Democratization*, *Political Analysis* and *International Studies Review*. He has also written numerous other publications, such as working papers, reviews and newsletters.

From his V-Dem project, he produced datasets and codebooks. However, it should be noted that the majority of these publications are multi-authored, and he is not the first named author on many pieces.

Professor Lindberg demonstrates excellent skills of leadership and management. He is the Founding Director of both DEMSCORE, a national research infrastructure, and of the V-Dem Institute, which is based upon his large scale project. Both of these are hosted by Gothenburg University. He has helped to organise conferences in his research area and chaired a panel at the American Political Science Association conference. He has served as a senior adviser to the International Law and Policy Institute and as an expert advisor to government agencies in Africa, in developing countries that were transitioning to democracy. At national level, he has sat on some steering committees and advisory boards for the Research Council of Sweden. He is also on the editorial boards of various politics journals.

In terms of teaching, Professor Lindberg has experience at all levels of the curriculum. He has taught modules on both his own subject area (political science) and research methods, at different universities. These modules include *Measuring and Explaining Democratization* (PG) and *Actors and Institutions in Democracies* (UG) at Gothenburg, *Qualitative Methods* (MA), and *Political Science Theory and Methods* (UG) at Lund, and *Comparative Qualitative and Mixed Methods* (MA) at Florida. He has supervised six doctoral students to completion and various BA and MA theses. He has also served as an external examiner of PhD viva defences.

Some possible areas of limitation here are firstly, that the applicant does not articulate a clear vision for the Methods Centre, secondly, that he does not have many sole-authored publications (which would be conventional for his discipline), and thirdly, that he does not say anything about fostering collegial, cooperative working relationships and facilitating a kind and supportive working environment.

### **Dr Tatiana Ryba**

Dr Ryba is a Docent of Cultural Sports Psychology at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Her research area is sports and exercise psychology and sports science, in particular the experiences of young athletes as they undergo training, coaching and education. She uses qualitative methods to study this, for example through longitudinal studies following the development of young people's career paths over the adolescent and early adulthood stages of the life course. However, she does not mention knowledge of quantitative methods. Theoretically, she draws upon intersectional, poststructuralist and post-qualitative modes of inquiry that de-centre the Euro-American perspective and invite diverse cultural voices into a critical conversation. This

approach may mean that her work strongly appeals to colleagues in the social sciences faculty. It also speaks to the EDI agenda that is important to university research environments.

Dr Ryla's research has had a demonstrated impact on the field, with an influence on policy and practice. This has gained her external recognition. For example, she has developed guidelines on cultural competence, cultural safety and social justice in the context of sports education and certification. She also produced a video for young athletes in education. She was awarded Fellowships of both the International Society of Sport Psychology and the Association for Applied Sport Psychology. Dr Ryla established 'cultural sport psychology' as a new hybrid research field, and was awarded the Wiley Prize for the most cited paper in 2020. She has also received other awards, honours and marks of prestige, such as being included in a list of the most eminent women researchers in sport and exercise psychology (2024). She has been invited to give fourteen keynote addresses at international conferences, and 23 other presentations. She has also been invited to teach qualitative methods in Europe and North America. Her research is embedded in scholarly networks and collaborative partnerships, such as the ISSP and Erasmus.

Between 2015-2018, Dr Ryla conducted a major, large scale funded study on which she was the Principal Investigator. This longitudinal, mixed methods project was called 'Winning in the long run: towards a psychological sustainability of dual careers', and it explored the implementation and psychosocial impact of new European Dual Career Guidelines, which aimed to build more inclusive environments for young athletes who are in both school education and sports training. It also engaged with EDI issues concerning pregnant and parenting athletes. Dr Ryla reports that this project involved *"transdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration with national and international stakeholders, promoted open science and the sharing of datasets and research materials, and encouraged science communication and publishing for professional communities"*.

Dr Ryla has made a number of successful grant applications, securing a total of 1.5 million Euros in external funding. They have been for sizeable sums of around 300,000 Euros each. She has been Principal Investigator on most, if not all, of these. The 'Winning in the long run' study was funded by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, while other projects were funded by the Danish Ministry of Culture, the European Commission and the EU Horizon 2020/Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellowship scheme.

This candidate has produced a long list of publications: 161 items, including 100 refereed journal articles. She has an H-index of 46. However, most of these publications are co- or multi-authored rather than sole-authored. She has edited or co-edited three books on sports psychology and has 22 book chapters in other edited collections. Her articles appear in top quality, international journals in her field: *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, *Sport in Society*,

*International Journal of Sport Psychology, and Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health.*

Dr Ryla has experience of teaching at all levels, including modules on research methods. At the University of Jyväskylä, she teaches *Qualitative Research I and II*, and previously at the University of British Columbia, Canada, she taught *Research Methods in Human Kinetics, Research Applications in Leisure and Sport Management*. At the University of Tennessee she taught modules on physical education. She has supervised four doctoral students to completion and mentored five postdoctoral fellows. She has been an external examiner of PhD and MA theses. Dr Ryla underwent pedagogic training at UBC and Vancouver universities, and also has a certificate in TACE (teaching academic content to non-native speakers).

In terms of management and leadership, Dr Ryla has served as Vice President of the International Society of Sport Psychology, chaired and helped to organise 34 symposia, has been an external assessor of recruitment at the Universities of Stirling (UK) and Southern Denmark, and sits on the editorial board of various sport and exercise psychology journals. However, she perhaps lacks experience of administrative roles 'on the ground' at department or faculty level, such as would be involved in the day-to-day running of the Methods Centre. She also does not mention any experience of leading staff teams, as her research projects have been individual. We do not get a sense of her interpersonal style and how she navigates the relational dimensions of collegial working life. Nevertheless, this is a strong candidate.