



The Institute of Czech Literature of the Czech Academy of Sciences announces a public tender to fill the following position:

Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Literary Communication and Popular Culture (Literature and Society Laboratory)

The emerging “Literature and Society Laboratory” at The Institute of Czech Literature is looking to appoint a Postdoctoral Researcher Literary Theory, Sociology of Literature, Cultural Sociology, or related disciplines focused on the research of literature and society for the interdisciplinary project “The Sociology of Literature Revisited: Towards Epistemological Symmetry within Literature-and-Society Research.”

Job description:

In the first phase of the project, the Postdoctoral Researcher will be responsible for one of the five theoretical segments according to their area of expertise (see the Project description below). In the second phase, the Postdoctoral Researcher will be responsible for the case study of literary communication related to the language they are proficient in. The case study involves close reading of novels as well as the research of literary production and reception, including focus groups and interviews with readers, study in libraries and archives, study of reading journals, etc., according to the needs of the project and the candidate’s professional training.

The functioning of the Lab demands each member to intensively participate on a daily basis, which includes:

- At least part-time in-person work at the research facility in Brno or Prague.
- Participation in weekly team meetings.
- Participation in intensive two-day workshops every six weeks.
- Collective participation at conferences, colloquiums, roundtables, etc., according to the needs of the project.

The Postdoctoral Researcher will also write co-authored research papers and book chapters with PhD students.

Minimum requirements:

- Candidates must hold a recent PhD degree that is awarded within the previous 7 years in one of the relevant disciplines by an accredited international research facility/university.
- Candidates must be knowledgeable in literary theory, the sociology of literature, cultural sociology, or other related disciplines that are concerned with the relationship between literary and social phenomena. The knowledge of more than one field (e.g., literary theory and the sociology of literature) is preferable. Willingness to learn from relevant related fields is required.
- Candidates are required to have fluent language skills in English. Furthermore, the Postdoctoral Researcher will be responsible for the case study of literary communication concerning a novel originally written in a language different from Czech, English, Serbian, and Slovenian. Therefore, they must be proficient in this language.
- Candidates should have very good knowledge of a literary field related to their case study.
- Candidates must be highly proficient in academic writing.
- Candidates should be open to learning new paradigms and doing collaborative research across disciplines.
- Experience in interdisciplinary teamwork is welcome, but not necessary.

We offer:

- The context of the largest workplace in the field of scholarly Czech literary studies
- 25 days of vacation + 3 days of sick leave
- Allowance for meals and allowance from the Social Fund (supplementary pension insurance)
- Language courses
- Discounts on books at the Academia bookstore
- Flexible working conditions, including the possibility of working from home (anywhere within the Czech Republic)
- The opportunity to apply for official accommodation in the facilities of the Czech Academy of Sciences
- The opportunity of placing preschool-age children in children's groups at the Czech Academy of Sciences

Working conditions:

- We prefer full-time: 40 hours/week
- Starting date is 1 April 2024
- Employment contract for a fixed period to December 2028
- The work should be carried out in the territory of the Czech Republic

Applications to be sent to kariera@ucl.cas.cz must include:

- CV (max 3 pages)

- A cover letter (max 1 page) with a brief introduction of the candidate's research interests and an explanation of how the candidate fits within the project.
- Two writing samples that are most relevant to the research project (papers, dissertation chapters, manuscripts...)
- A draft of a research design (max 500 words) that focuses on a case of literary communication concerning a novel that was originally written in other language than Czech, English, Serbian, and Slovenian. The selection of the time frame is not restricted but should be navigated by the accessibility of the field, research data, and a compelling case. The research design can be based on any relevant theoretical approaches and employ any qualitative methods (not computational or statistical methods alone). The case should be selected according to its social relevance and theoretical-analytical potential. The draft should demonstrate the candidate's ability of creative and theoretical thinking.

Application deadline: February 29, 2024

The selection procedure will take place in two rounds. The ICL of the CAS reserves the right to invite only selected candidates to a personal interview and to choose not to select any candidate.

Contact:

Mgr. Jan Váňa, Ph.D.

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By responding to this ad or by sending your CV and other personal materials to the Institute of Czech Literature of the Czech Academy of Sciences, you give your consent to the processing of your personal data in accordance with the General Regulation on the Protection of Personal Data 2016/679 (GDPR). This consent can be revoked in writing at any time after the selection process has been completed.

Project description

The Postdoctoral Researcher will become a full-time member of the interdisciplinary *Literature and Society Lab*. The project team consists of five literary theorists and sociologists who are responsible for five research streams within the project. In the first phase (2024-2025), the Lab will conduct a metatheoretical analysis of how the relationship between literature and society has been studied throughout the history of literary theory, sociology, and related disciplines. Each team member is responsible for a segment of approaches according to their professional expertise. In the second phase (2026-2028), the Lab will design a theoretical and methodological model for studying

literary communication that combines micro- and macro-perspectives to account for literary production, reception, internal textual structure, and their interconnectedness, thus granting literature and society equal valence in the analysis. The model will be developed in parallel with five case studies of literary communication concerning five novels from diverse historical, regional, and cultural backgrounds. Four case studies include four novels written in Czech, English, Serbian, and Slovenian and published in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The fifth case study will be designed and coordinated by the Postdoctoral Researcher, concerning a novel written in a language different from the above-stated. Each team member will be responsible for one case study, but the analyses of case studies will be conducted by the entire team.

The teamwork is characterized by the overarching metaphor of a laboratory, which reflects the close cooperation and shared epistemic culture of team members. Instead of a simple division of labor between disciplines, the Lab creates a stable environment to define the mutual sense of Kuhnian “normal science” anew on a collective basis. It is therefore essential that all team members keep their epistemological positions transparent to overcome the implicit and taken-for-granted barriers between various treatments of the literature-society link bound to different research fields.