

Instituttets/senterets vurdering

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| Prosjekttittel: | Narrating the North: Sámi and National Minority Media Practices and Performances during Revitalization, Resilience and Reconciliation |
| Strategisk forankring | <p>Prosjektet er forankret i «Drivkraft i nord», spesielt under kunnskapsområdet «Samfunnsutvikling og demokratisering» hvor det pekes på at: «Det er avgjørende for samfunnsutvikling og demokratisering at hele befolkningen inkluderes gjennom utdanning, arbeid, innflytelse og tilhørighet.» Her er media viktige aktører.</p> <p>Under kunnskapsområde Helse, velferd og livskvalitet trekkes samisk språk, kultur og livskvalitet fram. Prosjektet støtter også opp om dette målet i UiT sin strategi, samt at det også dekker FNs bærekraftsmål om bærekraftige samfunn.</p> <p>Prosjektet støtter opp under HSLs mål om at fakultetets fagmiljø skal delta og være aktiv i forskning som angår de globale samfunnsutfordringene (HSL-strategi «Mennesker og samfunn i arktisk») hvor urbefolknings perspektivet er særlig relevant. HSL har i sin handlingsplan et særlig fokus på samiske forhold.</p> <p>Prosjektet er også i tråd med instituttets strategi i forhold til å fremme kunnskap om kvenske og samiske perspektiver.</p> |
| Gjennomstrømming (navn på fullførte dr.gradskandidater) | IRNs kandidater har ikke kommet så langt i phd-løpet ennå. Nettopp gjennomført midtveisevaluering for en kandidat og skal gjennomføre for to andre i løpet av semesteret. |
| Forankring i fagmiljø | Søknaden er forankret i forskningsgruppa Narrating the Post Colonial North (nivå 2) som har høy kompetanse innenfor tematikken. Søknaden utfyller allerede eksisterende faglige perspektiver og peker på noen nye. |
| Rekrutteringsgrunnlag | Antas at det vil være et godt søkergrunnlag. Interessen for tidligere utlyste stipendiatstillinger har vært god. |
| Kvalitet på søknaden (herunder evaluering av prosjekt/fagmiljø) | Søknaden er gjennomarbeidet og peker på et tematisk område som forskningsmessig er lite belyst, men som det er viktig å utvikle kunnskap om. IRN har en sterk forskningsgruppe – Narrating the Post Colonial North (nivå 2) som prosjektet vil være koblet til. Forskningsgruppen og fagmiljøene ved IRN har over år utviklet kompetanse innenfor områdene prosjektet søker å belyse. IRN har 5 phd-stillinger med faglige koblinger til denne søknaden. Det nyskapende i søknaden er koblingen mot media og mediafag. |
| Forslag til veileder(e) | |

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| | Professor Trine Kvidal-Røvik, Professor Britt Kramvig, Professor Kjell Olsen, førsteamanuensis Stine Sand |
| Instituttets rangering av søknaden | 1 av 2 |

Forskningsgruppa *Narrating the Postcolonial North: Travel, Writing, Performance*
Institutt for reiseliv og nordlige studier, Fakultetet for humaniora, samfunnsfag
og lærerutdanning, UiT Norges arktiske universitet

Innspill, stipendiatstilling PhD 2022: **Narrating the North: Sámi and National Minority Media Practices and Performances during Revitalization, Resilience and Reconciliation**

As a meeting place for different ethnic groups and cultures, Northern Norwegian societies have always been multi-cultural. However, Kvens and Sámis have been on the receiving end of long-lasting and determined policies, which aimed to make the cultural heterogeneous population linguistically and culturally Norwegian, silencing the histories of Sámi people and minorities such as the Kvens. In 2017, the Norwegian parliament approved the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, with the aim of looking into historic abuses against Norway's Sámi and Kven minorities. This can be seen as part of supporting national processes regarding the strengthening of Indigenous and national minority resilience and (re)vitalization.

Media have a key role in the development of historical narratives, nationbuilding, self-articulation, and empowerment. A colonial past is not just about historiography, it is also about contemporary communities and how performances are played out, and enabled via different media platforms and among media users and audiences. Media provide a potential means through which to challenge established discourses through memory contestation, de-colonization dynamics, and public debate. It can also be a means through which to explore relations to Indigenous pasts and futures. We are currently experiencing a media-infused change in thinking, which, by facilitating processes of self-articulation and empowerment, is poised to have a major impact on Sámi youth and the futures of their broader transnational communities. Examples are television shows with Sámi artists such as Ella Marie H. Isaksen and Keiino, and Sámi films that are screened worldwide. Sámi filmmakers also participate in transnational projects in increasing degree. The attention generated via media representations of Sámi culture has been used by the tourism industry, for instance with products and destinations in Sápmi explicitly connecting themselves to Disney's *Frozen* movies. While the national Kven minority is less visible in mediated public discourse, key Kven institutions are calling for visibility, acknowledging the role media arenas can play in revitalization processes.

Minority and Indigenous youth actively and creatively use new media platforms. These uses can change processes of sociality, networking, and power relations vis à vis the majority society, including existing media institutions. However, empirical research investigating how digital technology impacts Indigenous peoples and the implications for Sámi society, is lacking. Little is known about how the use of contemporary media may contribute to the polarization, reconciliation or unification of interethnic relations, or to the development of social cohesion. Media can enable minorities to speak up and create counter narratives challenging existing stereotypes and advancing vernacular perspectives in the public sphere. Indigenous and minority people exploit affordances of new digital media, for example by developing language resources, and arenas for self-expression and activism. Considering this, we need to understand how media matter in terms of developing new narrative paths to deal with the past. Simultaneously, media provide arenas and channels for sharing and expressing racist and hateful rhetorics. The recent Folkehelseundersøkelsen in Troms og Finnmark, shows that both Kven and Sámi people have experienced discrimination.¹ One extreme form of such articulations is cyberhate, the communication of messages and information that are racist, bigotist or extremist (Blaya, 2019). Cyberhate usually targets communities rather than individuals and can negatively impact social cohesion and democracy, but there is a lack of research exploring these experiences and their consequences for processes of self-articulation and empowerment in Indigenous and minority communities in Norway.

¹https://fido.nrk.no/a638cb7368b1ee2631e368cf24b8e9023bd15439e595e90697f07b43cf369a4e/Rapport_Troms_Finnmark_SSHF_redigert_april2020.pdf

The proposed PhD will speak to such problematic aspects of communication, and address a gap in understandings of how contemporary media facilitate processes of identity formation, language use, memory work, cultural resilience, and interethnic relations in the North. Drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives, for instance from Indigenous and minority media studies and critical theory, the PhD-project will shed new light on media institutions, media producers and audiences when it comes to addressing troubled pasts and on-going processes of self-articulation and empowerment. Furthermore, the PhD will explore the role of media narratives and anticolonial transformations, including positive and negative aspects of the potential for self-articulation in new media environments.

Articulations in contemporary media take many forms, and include film and journalism produced by established media institutions, music videos produced by Indigenous and minority artists, and interpretations, remixes and mashups of this same content produced in platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat. As articulations, these forms of content can be considered temporary units of discursive elements grounded in power relations and reflecting different discursive positions (Slack, 1996). Analyses of these expressions must therefore pay attention to the power struggles, negotiations, and tensions they reflect. The results from the PhD will be important to the Sámi parliament's development of a Sámi media policy, and the Norwegian government's further development of policies to fulfil national obligations concerning Indigenous and national minority rights, including the development of legislation regarding freedom of expression and hate speech.

Strategic Grounding

With the proposed PhD, we aim to strengthen **Sámi perspectives** in our research and education, in alignment with the **HSL strategy** and **årshjul**. According to this strategy, the faculty will especially commit to leading research environments. This PhD will strengthen our department and research group, as we aim to be in the **forefront of Sámi media studies**. The proposed PhD is also part of the HSL Faculty's overarching alignment with UN's Sustainable Development goals, specifically in terms of sustainable societies. It relates to UiT's *Drivkraft i Nord Strategy*, in particular the **community development and democratisation**-area, where society development and democratization rely on *inclusion of the entire population through involvement and belonging*, processes for which media are pivotal. Also, the PhD will address *diversity in the context of social development*, as well as *societal and cultural changes* stemming from globalization and technological development. The project will contribute to understandings of *collaboration and potential conflicts in the North* and help build *culture and identity*. The PhD relates to the area **Health, welfare and quality of life** when it comes to *Sámi language, culture and quality of life*.

Furthermore, the **Norwegian Government** recently underscored the importance of working against racism, discrimination and prejudice, and as part of this focusing on the need to address hate speech.² Media research situated in communities at the core of long-lasting assimilating and marginalizing policies, has a lot to offer in terms of understanding more about such processes. Also, the proposed PhD is developed in line with the **Department of Tourism and Northern Studies' strategic emphasis** on contributing to culture and identity production processes in the North, focusing specifically on *Kven and Sámi perspectives*.

The PhD will be part of the research group *Narrating the Postcolonial North: Travel, Writing, Performance (NPN)*, ranked as one of UiT's HSL **top-level research groups**. NPN has a long history of research on cultural and ecologically sustainable development related to media, tourism, and new interaction practices in the Arctic and explores **interdisciplinarity** and **new academic and mediatory practices** in research. Key members in the group have backgrounds from media work and several of the scholars have high expertise in media studies, film, communication and cultural research. NPN is involved in **several relevant international and national research projects** to which the PhD candidate will be given access, such as: *ARCTISEN-Culturally Sensitive Tourism in the Arctic* (Northern Periphery, Arctic Programme); *Oktá: Kunst og friksjonsfylte fellesskap i Sápmi*

² <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/atte-millioner-kroner-til-ny-tilskuddsordning-mot-rasisme-diskriminering-og-hatefulle-ytringer/id2830724/>

(Kulturrådet/Nordisk kulturfond); *Mediated Arctic Geographies* (Academy of Finland); *IMMKven: Contemporary kven articulations in fields of family, museum, and culture industry* (NRC); *Sami entrepreneurs and research collaborations* (RFF Nord), *TRUCOM: Forventninger, sannhet og forsoning en demokratisk velferdsstat* (NRC), and *Čatnat: Forskning med og for innovasjon i samisk reiseliv og kreative næringer* (RFF Nord). Several PhD-projects in the department deal with Sámi and/or Kven narratives and cultural representations.

We anticipate **the proposed PhD will recruit well**. Our social science and humanities-based profile attracts scholars from a wide range of fields, f.ex. media studies, Indigenous studies, history, film, sociology, socio-linguistics, and culture. Potential applicants might come from Sámi Allaskuvla's master in *Indigenous Journalism*³, master in *Medie- og dokumentasjonsvitenskap* (UiT), *Journalistikk* (Nord University), as well as from our own master in *Tourism Studies* and from other countries. Both our last PhD-position calls generated more than 20 applications, the majority of whom were qualified.

The research group consists of **experienced researchers** and has a high publishing rate.⁴ Members create exhibits as well as produce film and other media content. Its steering group consists of four professors and one associate professor. Prof. Kjell Olsen is research group leader. The group provides a **strong arena for a PhD candidate**. Our connections to other institutions and networks from past, ongoing, and in-planning research projects represent resources for our PhD fellows. While the Department of Tourism and Northern Studies has not been allowed to recruit PhD candidates until 2018 (when we became part of HSL-faculty), the research group has extensive PhD-supervision and teaching experience, and current PhD-students have good progress. Professor Britt Kramvig is our **experienced PhD-coordinator**. We work systematically to **support our PhD students and junior members in the research group**, for instance by organizing seminars streams in the philosophy of social science, to support young scholars in their process of theoretical and methodological positioning. PhD-students in our department have initiated a **PhD-network**, and the research group connects and supports the PhD-network in several ways. Also, the research group emphasizes continuous academic development. Several steering group members have completed the UiT Pedagogical Training, the CBS Research leadership course, and the UiT PhD supervision course.

We work in **supervision teams** of at least two. We strive to put together supervision teams based on specific PhD project descriptions and candidate profiles, and several of us are relevant, available, and interested in supervising a potential candidate in minority and Indigenous media practices and performances: Professor Trine Kvidal-Røvik, Professor Stine Sand, Professor Britt Kramvig, and Professor Kjell Olsen.

³ Associate Prof. Stine Sand is Professor II at Sámi Allaskuvla's master in *Indigenous Journalism*.

⁴ Scientific publications in the last five years: 66 (2020: 14; 2019: 9; 2018: 10; 2017: 18; 2016: 15). For an overview of publications, films, exhibits and activities, visit the research group web page: https://en.uit.no/forskning/forskningsgrupper/sub?p_document_id=409092&sub_id=561734