

Job and competency profile



AALBORG
UNIVERSITY

Director

Institute for Advanced Study in
Problem Based Learning

April 2026

**muus
mann**

Aalborg University – what you get

Aalborg University offers a wide range of educations characterised by engaging and innovative learning approaches based on the University's educational principles of problem- and project-based learning (PBL), which constitute the [AAU model](#).

PBL is Aalborg University's pedagogical model. It promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, strong employability for graduates, and a focus on entrepreneurship. The model is internationally recognised and attracts considerable interest from universities, researchers, and students in Denmark and abroad. The study form emphasises project work grounded in authentic problems, learner participation, and collaboration.

The learning model is based on the idea that students learn best by actively applying theory- and research-based knowledge in their work on real-world challenges. At the same time, the model supports the development of students' communication and collaboration skills, and students learn to work analytically and with a focus on results. Many students also have opportunities during their studies to collaborate with external partners to solve professional challenges.

About the Institute for Advanced Study in Problem Based Learning

When the Institute was established on January 1st 2022, the Institute for Advanced Study in Problem Based Learning (IAS PBL) was an ambition – now, in 2026, it is not only a reality, but as a cross-faculty unit it has also built bridges and created synergy between AAU's different research environments within problem-based learning.

IAS PBL has strengthened PBL collaboration across AAU and further developed the AAU model through practice-oriented research and strong research environments within PBL, learning, pedagogy, and didactics. The Institute has brought together researchers and professors across faculties and strengthened the link between PBL research and pedagogical competence development – benefiting both students and professors.

IAS PBL is a matrix organisation consisting of a secretariat with six permanent employees as well as seconded researchers from across AAU. The research groups affiliated with IAS PBL are: [the UNESCO Centre for PBL](#) within the technical and natural sciences; [HEALTH-PBL](#) within the medical area; [SHARE-PBL](#) and [Kild](#) within the social sciences and humanities. In addition, [Learning Lab](#) provides university pedagogical competence development at AAU.

You can read much more about IAS PBL on the Institute's [website](#).

The organisation

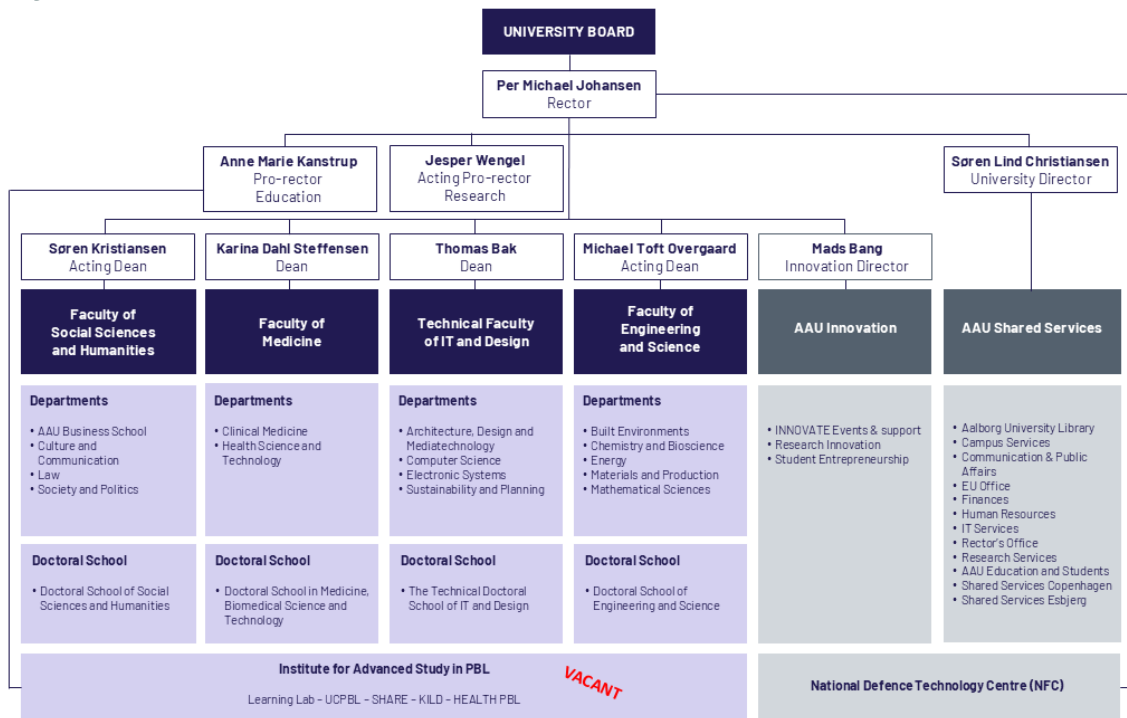
AAU's Board is the University's highest authority. The Board safeguards AAU's interests as an educational and research institution and lays down guidelines for its organisation, long-term activities, and development. The University's day-to-day management is handled by the Rectorate, consisting of the Rector, two Pro-Rectors, and the University Director. Together with the Deans and the Innovation Director, they constitute AAU's executive management.

The University's research and education activities are organised into four faculties, each led by a Dean. The faculties' academic environments are divided into departments.

The four faculties are:

- Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
- Faculty of Engineering and Science
- Faculty of Medicine
- Technical Faculty of IT and Design

Organisation chart



Strategy and leadership foundation

At AAU, we connect the global with the regional. We create knowledge for the world in close collaboration with private and public partners – and we translate international research into solutions. With “[Knowledge for the World 2026–2029](#)”, the executive management has set an ambitious strategy for the next three years at AAU. Based on Aalborg University’s [leadership principles](#), you as Director must contribute to delivering the strategy through continuous development and strengthening of PBL as the foundation for ensuring that our highly educated graduates have the competences to create positive change.

Reporting line and terms of employment

As Director of IAS PBL, you report to the Vice-Rector for Education and join the Strategic Education Council (DSUR). Appointment as Director is a fixed-term position for up to six years with the possibility of extension for up to three years, in accordance with the circular on fixed-term appointments and AAU’s fixed-term policy. An agreement may be made for a return position as Associate Professor or Professor upon the end of the fixed-term period.

The position is classified in salary grade 37. Salary and terms of employment are determined in accordance with the collective agreement for academics in the Danish state sector, including the protocol for employees in salary grades 35–42. It is possible to negotiate a qualification supplement.

Tasks – what you will do

Research leadership

As Director, you have overall responsibility for leading and developing IAS PBL as a cross-cutting unit at AAU. In doing so, you will play a key role, on the one hand, in driving and bringing together research in learning, university didactics, and PBL and, on the other hand, in ensuring that research is translated into competence development and the development of new teaching and assessment formats. With the AAU PBL model as your point of departure, you must contribute to the development of AAU's programmes and ensure the foundation for our continued delivery of graduates to the Danish and international labour markets.

The researchers seconded to IAS PBL are formally employed in their respective departments. As Director, you therefore do not have formal line management responsibility for the researchers; instead, you must be able to lead through your relationships with them and create results through an inspiring and motivating approach. You must be able to facilitate collaboration with the research group leaders and create strong frameworks and a sense of community among researchers who are, in their daily work, spread out across departments and faculties. You will hold annual researcher development dialogues (FUS) with the seconded researchers and ensure follow-up and alignment of expectations with the relevant researcher's Head of Department, who has the formal staff management responsibility.

New strategy

One of your first tasks will be to contribute to developing a new ambitious strategy for IAS PBL, which sets a clear direction and defines realistic goals for PBL at Aalborg University, aligned with AAU's overall strategy, Knowledge for the World. PBL is part of Aalborg University's DNA; it functions both as a major strategic asset in the University's internal development and as a strong brand that helps position AAU as a university with education and research at the highest level.

In particular, the rapid development within AI plays a major role in the University's strategy, and the widespread use of AI among the University's students calls for PBL to actively engage with the opportunities and challenges that AI presents for university didactics, teaching formats, and learning environments in the context of digitalisation and generative AI, both in the short and longer term.

Bridge-building

The researchers seconded to IAS PBL are seconded in consultation with the Heads of Department in the respective departments. You therefore have an important role in maintaining a clear collaboration model and thorough alignment of expectations with the Heads of Department to ensure the right match and commitment among the seconded researchers. This requires, among other things, that you as Director are visible and able to build bridges – not only to the departments, but also to the individual researchers.

You must be proactive, outward-looking, and able to reach out to the departments yourself, as well as communicate the significance of the research done at IAS PBL, create engagement around PBL, and motivate others to become part of IAS PBL. In addition, you must be able to navigate a funding model in which resources and research funding primarily sit within the departments, while IAS PBL supports the attraction of external funding through networking, relationship-building, and collaboration. You must help ensure outreach to relevant external stakeholders and the wider community with the aim of participating in international research projects and contribute to the recruitment of the most talented international researchers, professors, and students.

Knowledge sharing

IAS PBL and Learning Lab deliver teaching in AAU's university pedagogical programme and are therefore the first step in quality assurance and the dissemination of PBL among the University's academic staff. In addition, IAS PBL supports the University management with advice, analyses, and presentations related to cross-cutting education and learning initiatives for teachers. As Director, you must therefore continuously ensure further development of the university pedagogical programme and other competence development offerings based on contemporary research.

Profile – what we are looking for

We are looking for a passionate leader with a genuine commitment to educational pedagogy and the ability to spread enthusiasm for the field through an inclusive and motivating leadership style. A leader with an eye for talent development and the ability to cultivate attractive academic environments and create cohesion between subject-didactic groups.

Qualifications – academic and professional experience

We expect you to be an acknowledged researcher at least at Associate Professor level preferably with knowledge of PBL research. You have experience with educational pedagogy and didactics, preferably in connection with making use of the opportunities offered by new digital tools.

You have experience with research leadership and interdisciplinary work – preferably across faculties – and with acting competently in networks of academic specialists with the necessary authority, respect, and humility this requires. In addition, you have insight into the interaction between research and higher education and the surrounding society.

Leadership and personal competences

In addition, we will emphasise the following leadership and personal competences:

Network-oriented

You naturally build and maintain a strong stakeholder network across faculties, departments, and external environments, and you actively open doors to new collaborations. You proactively cultivate relationships, identify areas for cooperation, and create trust and enthusiasm that spreads and sparks interest in IAS PBL. You understand how to navigate the University's structures and organisation, and you are able to connect opportunities, needs, and resources across units, ensuring that IAS PBL remains a natural collaboration partner and point of entry for PBL and learning initiatives.

Strategic

You think in terms of vision and can translate strategic markers into a clear direction, with realistic goals and an ability to prioritise tasks and resources so that we reach our objectives with confidence. You work in a knowledge- and evidence-based manner, focusing on ongoing follow-up so that initiatives can be adjusted and documented on a solid knowledge base. You have an eye for sound governance and can act on decisions, with a focus on maintaining a sustainable balance between the IAS PBL's operations, development, and long-term positioning – and with an understanding of IAS PBL's role in supporting the University's overall strategic direction.

Collaborative

You create results through co-creation in day-to-day operations and are able to bring different disciplines and academic environments together to work effectively. You are naturally comfortable in the role of facilitator and can lead meetings and processes so that roles, contributions, and decisions are clear, while ensuring progress through thorough alignment of expectations and follow-ups. You systematically share knowledge and invite managerial and professional sparring, and you handle disagreements with trust and respect so that collaboration remains constructive.

Communicative

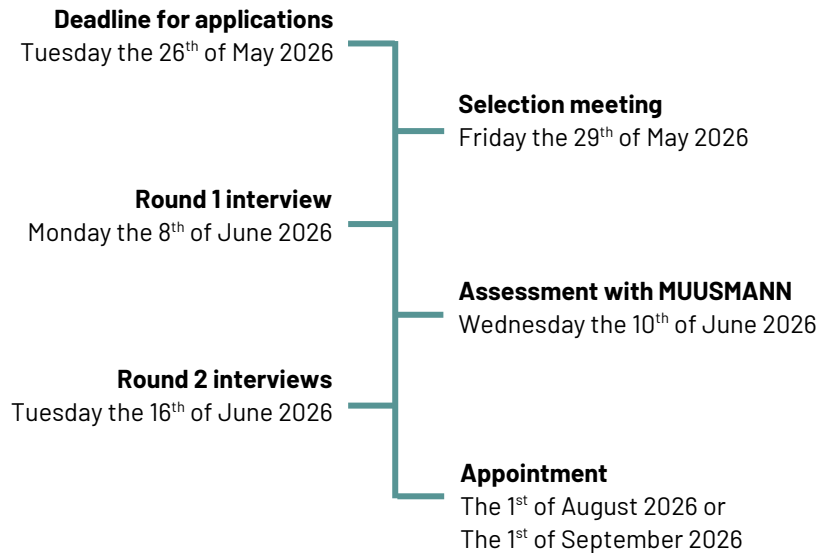
You have strong communication skills and can express messages, both in writing and orally, in Danish and English. You can communicate IAS PBL's knowledge and research opportunities so that its purpose is clear to different target groups, and you can translate complex professional points into concrete initiatives that can be applied in practice. You ensure a coherent and inspiring narrative and understanding of the key messages in PBL. In addition, you ensure clear alignment of expectations, helping to secure quality and engagement among the researchers at IAS PBL, the other departments, and collaboration partners.

About the recruitment process

You can apply for the position through MUUSMANN [here](#).

Timeline

The following process is planned for the recruitment. Applicants are asked to note the dates, as deviations from the schedule cannot be expected.



Assessment process and references

Between the two interview rounds, MUUSMANN will carry out an assessment process comprising:

- A personality test (NEO PI-3)
- A cognitive ability test (IST Screening – Intelligence Structure Test)
- A follow-up feedback conversation based on the above

Based on the assessment process, MUUSMANN will prepare a report containing:

- An assessment of your competences in relation to this job and competency profile
- An assessment of your leadership strengths and development areas in relation to the specific role
- A number of development points for you as a leader in the position

You will receive the report before the second interview round, and the appointment committee will also have the opportunity to read it prior to the interview.

In connection with the second interview round, you will be asked to prepare a response to a case, which you will present at the interview.

After the second interview round, we will also obtain references to validate information and assessments. We typically obtain three references, and this is always done by prior agreement with you.

Appointment committee

Pro-Rector for Education

Anne Marie Kanstrup

Vice Dean for Education at The Faculty of Medicine

Jeppe Emmersen

Head of Department at the Department of Chemistry and Bioscience

Kim Lambertsen

Head of Secretariat at IAS PBL

Christina Halkjær

Associate Professor at the Department of Culture and Communication

Maria Hvid Stenalt

Dean at the Technical Faculty of IT and Design

Thomas Bak

Vice Dean for Research at the Technical Faculty of IT and Design

Mikael Skov

Deputy Head of Department (Education) at the Department of Culture and Communication

Tom Nyvang

Associate Professor at the Department of Sustainability and Planning, UCPBL

Jette Holgaard

Further information

For further information, please feel free to contact:



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Jan Thomsen
Partner i MUUSMANN
Tlf.: 40 40 77 19

You can also read more about the University on [Aalborg University's website](#).