JOB AND PERSONAL PROFILE FOR

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT AT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

We are looking for a visionary and motivating Head of Department who, together with the department’s employees, can ensure the continued development of the department at an international level and strengthen the impact of the academic fields on society.

The position is advertised and commences on 1 August 2024.

The Faculty of Science is one of the six faculties at the University of Copenhagen. In addition to the information provided in this job and personal profile, you can find information about the faculty and the department at www.science.ku.dk/english/ and www.plen.ku.dk/english/.

You can also read about the University of Copenhagen's 2030 strategy here.

If you have any questions regarding the position, you are welcome to contact Dean Katrine Krogh Andersen at phone number + 45 35 33 20 10.

Photos: PLEN
About the Department of Plant and Environmental Science

The Department of Plant and Environmental Science (PLEN) is one of a total of 12 departments at the Faculty of Science (SCIENCE) at the University of Copenhagen (KU). Here, research-based education, basic research, and applied research in biotechnology, agricultural, and environmental science are brought together from the molecular level to ecosystems. Our goal is to create important and internationally recognized research and education within each research area, while also strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration between fields. At PLEN, we contribute to solutions that are essential for the society’s and the world’s future. Through collaborations with companies, organizations, and authorities, our researchers, professionals, and students create value for partners and make their knowledge and expertise available for society’s decision-makers.

Research at PLEN

The research at PLEN is diverse and spans from gene to cultivation systems. The focus is on generating new knowledge relevant for achieving and maintaining sustainable food production, understanding, and influencing human impact on key environmental processes, and meeting society’s future needs for biobased products, including integration of plant breeding, biotechnology, and synthetic biology.

The research addresses aspects of plant, animal, and microorganism biology in laboratory systems, in natural environments and in cultivated ecosystems, aiming to understand the processes occurring at the molecular level as well as at organism and ecosystem levels. Therefore, PLEN’s scientific disciplines range from genetics and molecular biology to agricultural science and environmental science to ecology.
It is our vision to be internationally recognized as one of the primary centers for outstanding plant research. Additionally, we focus on further developing the scientific areas within the department’s three main scientific fields: biotechnology, agriculture, and the environment, and leveraging the synergies between these to develop new strategic research areas and optimize the portfolio of teaching.

The research at the department covers a wide range of critical topics in response to the challenges society faces. Therefore, PLEN aims to be an active partner in the green transition nationally and internationally. This is done in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals by providing the necessary solutions through interdisciplinary collaborations.

Research and teaching activities at PLEN are supported by a range of important infrastructures, including the Center for Advanced Bioimaging (CAB), mass spectrometry, technology-based platforms such as RAACE and CHIME, and phenotyping facilities. Our plant growth facilities, including advanced growth chambers and greenhouses, are centrally organized, and distributed at both Taastrup Campus and Frederiksberg Campus.

**Education at PLEN**

PLEN offers bachelor’s, master’s, and PhD programs within the department’s core disciplines: biotechnology, agriculture and environment. Additionally, the Department provides continuing and professional education as individual courses, master’s programs, and tailored company programs. In addition to our own bachelor’s and master’s programs, PLEN is involved in many of the programs offered at SCIENCE. In 2024, a new master’s program in biosolutions will be offered in Kalundborg in collaboration with the Department of Food Science.

Our bachelor’s and master’s programs are research-based and provide students with a deep understanding of complex biotechnological, agricultural, and environmental challenges, both locally and globally, and the necessary knowledge and skills to develop solutions to these challenges. Therefore, we prioritize practical elements in our teaching that support creativity and an innovative approach to the issues that require biobased solutions.

**The Department’s Organization**

With over 500 employees, PLEN is one of the largest departments at SCIENCE and KU. The majority of the department is located at the Frederiksberg campus. A research section is situated at the Taastrup campus, where experimental farms, greenhouses, and the Pometum are also located. The department has the special task of managing the operation, maintenance, and strategic development of plant growth facilities and KU’s plant collections at the Taastrup and Frederiksberg campuses, including the Landbohøjskolen Garden.

The department is organized into nine academic sections, each with its head of section, as well as an operations manager for Plant Facilities and Workshops. In the sections, there are a total of nearly 50 research groups, each with its research group leader. Additionally, PLEN hosts several cross-cutting initiatives such as the Copenhagen Plant Science Centre and the Green Solutions Center.

The department’s management team consists of the Head of Department, Vice Heads of Department for research and teaching, section leaders, the operations manager, and the Head of Administration. The Head of Administration leads the secretariat, which provides administrative management support, financial management and grant administration, administrative support in the field of
education, internal and external communication, and dissemination, as well as service and technical support for research and teaching activities.

There are good opportunities in the current funding landscape within PLEN's research areas. The substantial external funding strengthens research at the department but also imposes significant demands on both financial management and activity management. This also means that the department has a large proportion of temporary research staff.

An international research evaluation was conducted in 2023. The result was an assessment of four out of five, along with a series of recommendations for the department’s further development.

**Responsibilities and Tasks of the Head of Department**

The Head of Department must thrive in the intersection of research, education, innovation, communication, leadership, administration, and numerous research groups, fundamentally understanding the value of the department’s diverse academic, cultural, and generational breadth.

The Head of Department is responsible for developing the department. This is done in close collaboration with the department’s management and section leaders, involving the department’s Faculty Board and other employees. With their vision for the department, the Head of Department leads the strategic development of research and education while contributing to the implementation of KU’s policies and strategy. KU has recently presented a new strategy running until 2030, highlighting three ambitions for the coming years: KU aims to be the best place for the best ideas, be solution-oriented and innovative, and be a lifelong learning partner.

The role of Head of Department also involves efforts to open doors, create networks, and represent the department and the faculty in various contexts within and outside KU. The Head of Department should promote and support collaboration across the department's academic areas, both in research and education.

Supported by the Head of Administration, the Head of Department is responsible for the department’s budget and resource allocation and for supporting initiatives related to attracting external funding nationally and internationally. The Head of Department has overall personnel responsibility for the department’s employees and their professional development, working to create an attractive work, research, and education environment through open and trusting dialogue with staff and students. Thus, the Head of Department also leads the department’s collaboration and work environment committees.

The Head of Department reports to the Dean of SCIENCE and, together with the Dean, Vice Deans, the Faculty Director, and other heads of department, forms part of the SCIENCE Leadership Team (SLT). In collaboration with the SLT, the Head of Department must contribute to developing the faculty's position as a leading research and educational institution in the natural and life sciences and ensure the implementation of the faculty's and university's strategies. The Head of Department must work with relevant councils and committees at the faculty to create the best framework for excellent research and education.

KU is in the process of developing a new administrative organization. It is expected that the Head of Department will contribute to the work on and subsequent implementation of the new common administrative organization. The administrative reform aims to ensure that KU’s administration as a whole is oriented towards the needs of employees, leaders, and students for administrative support.
and that it operates according to a common service culture. The administration should support well-being and development opportunities for employees and leaders in the administration while ensuring proximity and accessibility in the delivery of administrative services. The reform is expected to release resources in the order of DKK 300 million annually, which can be invested in strengthening research, education, and innovation at KU.

The Ideal Profile

We are looking for a Head of Department who, with their experiences and visions for the department as a whole, can identify with a subset of the following points. You:

- are motivated in the leadership role and have relevant experience as a research and personnel manager in a larger unit, preferably supplemented with a recognized leadership education.
- are an experienced and internationally recognized researcher at a minimum associate professor level within one of the department’s subject areas and have a broad understanding and interest in the department’s other subject areas.
- have documented experience as a successful teacher at university level and have contributed to the development of university education, as well as can navigate in the educational policy system.
- have a solid national and international network and are motivated by developing academic environments in interaction with the surrounding society and achieving results across departments, faculties, and universities.
- have good analytical skills, experience with negotiation, and with the financial management of larger units.
- can conduct strategic leadership and have an international outlook.
- are good at communicating visions and implementing decisions by involving employees and students in the development of the department.
- have achieved good results in attracting external funding from both national and international funding agencies.
- are proficient in English and Danish/Scandinavian at a high level.
- are visible, empathetic, motivating, and approachable, with high integrity.

You can read more about what we emphasize in our leaders in KU's leadership principles (Danish only).

About SCIENCE – Faculty of Science

SCIENCE is the largest scientific research and educational institution in Denmark with 4,000 employees and 9,681 full-time bachelor’s and master’s students distributed across 12 departments. The faculty has an annual budget of approximately 3 billion DKK. Through research, education, innovation and communication, SCIENCE aims to bring people together from universities, companies, public authorities, and other organizations to create, develop, and apply scientific knowledge at the highest level for the benefit of the society and industry.

SCIENCE collaborates nationally and internationally to address global challenges and the UN's sustainability goals. Our vision is for students, staff, and collaborators to perceive us as the world's
leading research and educational environment, across various fields, providing the best opportunities for solving both the national and global challenges we face.

The professional research and educational environments are primarily based on dedicated individuals who, with their diverse academic backgrounds, competencies, commitment, and job profiles, collectively shape and develop SCIENCE as a faculty at the absolute top of the international league. Lecturers, researchers, students, technical and administrative staff, and managers support each other with confidence and courage across disciplines and with an ever-increasing focus on diversity. A significant international outlook is of key importance to SCIENCE, and an inviting and inclusive culture paves the way for strong collaborations and supports the realisation of great potential. The foundation is the excellent research and high academic standards applied in appreciative collaborations – often across disciplines.

The values of diversity, an international outlook and respect for the individual’s unique contribution must be reflected in SCIENCE’s activities when we recruit students and employees. This is the case both in teaching and research, in our collaboration with the world around us and in all the faculty’s many tasks.

Terms and conditions of employment
Generally, the position of head of department will be on a fixed-term basis with a five-year period of employment and the possibility of an extension of up to three years. The appointment will be made in accordance with the collective agreement for academics employed by the state entered between the Ministry of Taxation and the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations (AC), as well as in accordance with the protocol covered by the collective agreement for academics employed by the state relating to heads of department and deans at universities.
For external applicants, academic assessment may be required in line with the executive order on university appointments.

The scope of any research and teaching activities will be negotiated and agreed with the Dean.

**Recruitment process**

The hiring committee consists of:

- Dean Katrine Krogh Andersen (chair)
- Associate Professor Dorte Bodin Dresbøll, PLEN
- Administrative staff member and laboratory technician Lisbeth Mikkelsen, PLEN
- Student Kristian Siig Hessel, Biotechnology, PLEN
- Head of Department Anna Haldrup, Department of Food Science
- Head of section Bjarne W. Strobel, PLEN

**The application deadline is Monday, 15 April 2024.** Applications must be received electronically via the [UCPH job portal](#).

The application must include:

- your CV
- a presentation in English (max. three pages) of your vision for PLEN, including the key elements of a strategy for the department’s development, organization and for the performance of the management task.

The identities of applicants will be kept completely confidential.

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