

**Centre for Critical Heritage Studies
Small Grants Scheme
Final Report**

Project: UK-Nordic Mobility Network

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Award: £2000.00

Project dates: 1/11/2019 to 30/6/2021

Summary: (200-250 words):

On 18-19 March 2021, UCL hosted a two-day online conference which explored how mobility has affected the identities of the UK and the Nordic region from the nineteenth century onwards. The conference, which counted 30 contributors from 6 academic institutions (UCL, Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies, the University of Eastern Finland, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Iceland, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute of Foreign Languages) and 8 non-academic organisations (DELT, Norvik Press, The Anglo-Norse Society, The Danish Church in London, The Finnish Institute, The Linnean Society, The Representation of the Faroes in London, SELTA), explored mobility through four strands: Teaching and Learning; Living and Imagining Brexit and Migration; Publishing and Translation; UK-Nordic Representations. Each strand was explored through a panel made up of different types of contributions, ranging from traditional academic papers to explorative or experience-based presentations. In addition to these four panels, the conference included:

- a panel discussion on Societies and Communities, during which representatives from five different organisations and institutions promoting research and cultural contacts between the UK and its Nordic neighbours discussed the changing role of research and (multi)cultural heritage societies based in London;
- the launch of the online exhibition Nordic Fragments (nordicfragments.org), where historical items from UCL Collections are combined with modern-day digital objects in order to explore stories of Anglo-Nordic connections from the nineteenth century onward.

Details of achievements against objectives:

The conference contributions as well as the discussions were distinctively Nordic in their scope, as they included research and reflections on all the Nordic countries including the Faroe Islands and Greenland. The conference was attended by between 30 and 37 members of the audience in the course of the two days. The exhibition Nordic Fragments has so far had 170 unique visitors (with 1257 views in total). This is ahead of sending out two newsletter posts in July in order to publicise it further.

Given the data provided above, we believe that the main aim of the conference – which was that of encouraging collaboration and discussion between the academy, heritage communities and non-academic audiences (both the migrant communities at the centre of the project and the wider societies of which they are part) – was successfully achieved.

Future dissemination plans:

Contributions to three Newsletters on the event and exhibition are being planned (SELCS, UCL Culture and The British Council).

Following the event, we are taking the first steps towards setting up the UK-Nordic Mobility Network, a consortium of universities and organisations in the UK and Nordic countries mapping the movements of people, ideas and texts between the UK and the Nordic countries and reflecting on the construction and preservation of individual, national and multinational identities in these regions. During a follow-up which took place on 5 May 2021 representatives from the different institutions represented at the conference considered the feasibility of a publication, discussed the role of a prospective Network and identified suitable funding opportunities to support its establishment. At the meeting the following points were agreed:

- The revival and expansion of the NRN (the Nordic Research Network) which we now hope will become the UK's Nordic Studies subject association, thus taking the place of what used to be called the British Association of Scandinavian Studies. We will be looking at applying for Networking funding to expand this and set it up with its new broader remit;
- The publication of a jointly written academic paper on UK-Nordic mobility, reflecting and theorising the concept of mobility based on the papers and discussions from the conference and beyond. In addition to the project leaders, three other academics representing three different universities in the UK, Iceland and Finland will co-author the article;
- The preparation of a broader joint research grant proposal expanding on the topic of UK-Nordic Mobility and Migration in 2021/2022.

Any income from other sources:

No