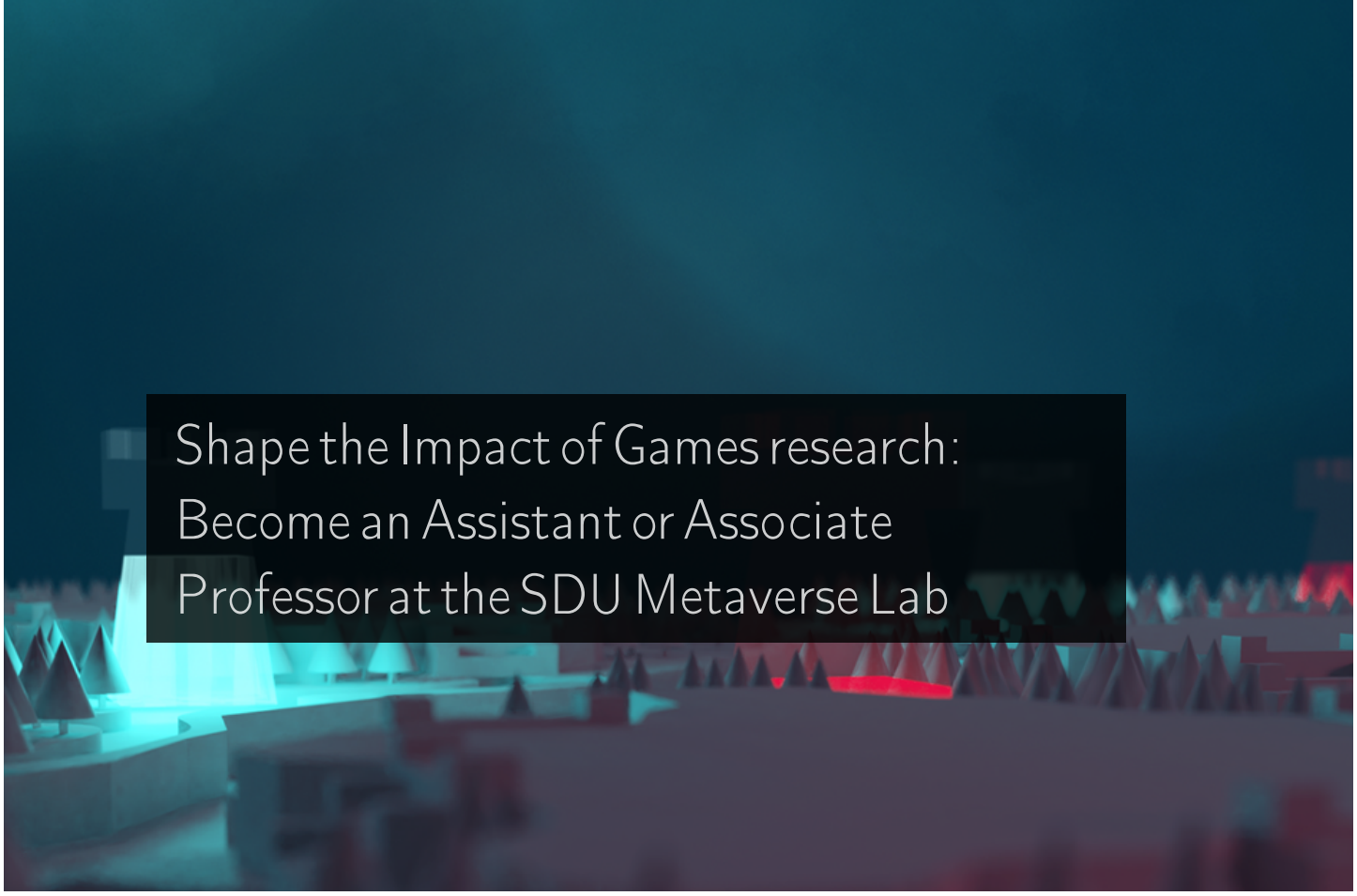


Shape the Impact of Games research: Become an Assistant or Associate Professor at the SDU Metaverse Lab

SDU METAVERSE LAB

The SDU Metaverse Lab is seeking a new colleague to join our team. Our focus is on the interface of technology and people, working across domains to create experiences and technologies that enable people to shape and engage with the future. We seek a new colleague to support the strengths of the lab across all forms of interactive technologies, while unlocking new opportunities to provide societal benefit through cutting-edge technical research.

1 The SDU Metaverse Lab

The Metaverse Lab is an interdisciplinary research, academic, and impact-generating organisation. Unconstrained by disciplines, the Metaverse Lab sees engineers, scientists, designers, artists, and practitioners focusing on creating experiences and technologies that enable people to shape and engage with the future. In the Metaverse Lab, staff and students work together with companies and organisations on projects across disciplines in an environment designed for collaboration and technology transfer. Our research is motivated by a single aim: delivering science and technology for the benefit of society at scale. Within the broad interdisciplinary space of the Metaverse Lab, our work converges on three interconnected themes.

In *Human–AI Interaction*, we develop AI systems that work with and alongside people — from multi-agent logistics and swarm control in hospital settings to adaptive AI decision-making, affective computing for emotion-aware support systems, and AI-driven game environments including game twins: lightweight interactive counterparts of real-world processes designed to explain complex ideas, lower barriers to entry, and build awareness and resilience.

In *Digital and Technical Literacy*, we investigate how children, students, and educators can be better prepared for the digital transformation of the labour market — through STEM education programmes, teaching materials for primary and secondary schools, teacher training in emerging technologies, and AI-powered educational tools.

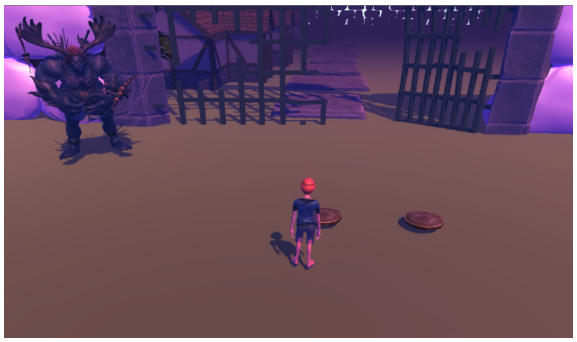
In *Health and Wellbeing Technology*, we build computational methods that improve how healthcare is delivered and experienced — including AI systems for capturing and structuring clinical conversations,

Apply here!

causal AI for medical interventions, and game-based approaches to therapeutics and diagnostics.

Across all three themes, we work closely with industry, healthcare, defence, and public-sector partners to ensure our research translates into real-world impact.

Our faculty leads the Game Development and Learning Technologies Bachelor's degree, as well as the Interactive Technologies and Games MSc programme, working with students, visitors, and our many partner companies and organizations. Our students form the crucial front-end engineering link between back-end engineering and the actual users of information systems, with deep technical expertise and design skills who can ensure systems are useful and impactful – and ready for the future. Our alumni have gone on to share their unique skills and competencies across the Creative Industries and beyond.



The degree comprises a 3-year BSc plus a joint MSc programme with the Software Engineering section at the same institute. At its heart, the programme is a technical software engineering degree, but with a heavy emphasis on front-end design and thinking. The degree covers a diverse range of situations with an emphasis on game design and game development, including AI fundamentals and advanced techniques, VR/XR, web programming, hardware and robotics, learning technologies, and advanced interaction technologies. We place a heavy emphasis on semester projects in teams and integrate these projects directly into our courses. The degree is taught primarily in English. Some courses can be taught in Danish if the lecturer speaks Danish and there are no native-English speaking students in the class in question.

2 Organisation

The SDU Metaverse Lab is part of the Faculty of Engineering and the Maersk Mc-Kinney Moller Institute at the University of Southern Denmark.

2.1 The University of Southern Denmark

The University of Southern Denmark is one of the youngest universities in Denmark, founded in 1966. The university is founded around the goal of providing the right knowledge and the right time to support society. The university targets major, complex societal problems of a cross-disciplinary nature, such as climate, welfare, health, and technology, tackling these in collaborations across faculties.

2.2 The Faculty of Engineering

The Faculty of Engineering is driven by the urge to create value for and with society, by curiosity, and by the will to attain that which only a few could imagine would be possible. Through research, education, and collaboration, it is the ambition of the faculty to nurture talent, address challenges, create possibilities, and promote sustainable development. The faculty is strongly engaged with national and international industry and organisations and covers a range of technical domains defined within 18 research areas.

Apply here!

2.3 The Maersk Mc-Kinney Moller Institute

The Maersk Mc-Kinney Moller Institute is an internationally recognized research institute and the large robotics research center in Europe. With a diverse strong focus on robotics, drone technology, interactive technologies, artificial intelligence, Industry 4.0, software, health, and energy informatics, the institute has maintained a leading position for over two decades. The culture of the institute emphasizes curiosity, ambition, and sustainable development. The institute values collaboration, innovation, and talent nurturing. Research at the Maersk institute often involves partnerships with external companies and institutions, driving solutions for the future. The Institute is the critical driver behind making the host city of Odense the largest robotics hub in Europe, with over 125 companies situated in this peaceful rural town in the middle of Denmark.

3 About the Positions

We are looking for people who can generate real-world positive impact at scale, and contribute to our core research themes, as well as develop and teach subjects in our undergraduate and graduate courses, and secure funding to further support the lab's growth.

The successful candidate will be actively engaged with the latest technological and methodological developments in their area of research and demonstrate a well-developed teaching philosophy. You will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the SDU Metaverse Lab.

The purpose of this position is to contribute to our mission of creating the technological solutions of the future that support the meeting between people and technology. You will be expected to bring your expertise to our team, helping us meet our future skill requirements and enabling further growth of the group.

The Metaverse Lab has a strong focus on societal benefit and collaboration with external stakeholders, such as the industry. Our research is characterized by being purpose-led R&D. We strive to have a very direct impact, working across the technology level readiness chain. We provide excellent support for your work and a highly flexible environment. Our lab and SDU offer numerous opportunities for professional development. You will have the chance to influence the direction of our lab, improve on our teaching degree, and explore your areas of interest. You are expected to take on leadership roles within our lab and lead research projects.

We are a small and agile team and are looking for colleagues who are motivated and not afraid to think outside the box to get results. As a team in growth, this position provides an excellent opportunity to put your imprint on the lab and further your career. We have immense respect for each other, and we recognise that as a supportive team, everything is easier.

4 Selection Criteria

The SDU Metaverse Lab is notably interested in strengthening its capabilities within Technical Human-Computer Interaction and Human-AI Interaction in a broad sense within the disciplines covered by the lab, as well as within Data Science and Behavioral Analytics.

- Human-Computer/AI Interaction: proficiency in empirical research methods, experimental approaches, and the design/development of interactive technologies aimed to be deployed at scale. UX and UI design are also of interest.
- Data science: proficiency in data analysis, statistical modelling, ML, and visualization. We utilize data for a wide array of contexts, from ultra-large-scale analysis of user behavior in online and real-world environments, AI agent behavior, to analysis of social media and health data.
- Artificial intelligence: for example, familiarity with applying AI (e.g., machine learning, neural networks, etc.) to solve complex problems across the Creative Industries, health technologies and contexts, education, training, behavioral analytics, robotics, etc.

We encourage all qualified candidates who resonate with our mission and can contribute to our community in unique ways to apply. We look forward to welcoming new colleagues to our team who will help us shape the future of interaction technologies for entertainment and societal benefit.

4.1 Key Responsibilities

Specific duties may include:

4.1.1 Research and scholarship

- Publishing research findings in peer-reviewed journals, presenting at conferences, and participating in academic discussions.
- Undertake excellent research that is aligned with the Metaverse Lab's research priorities and that produces high-quality outcomes.

Apply here!

- Connect with the professional community and lead and influence your profession and discipline.
- Securing Funding: applying for grants to acquire funding to further accelerate your research and the lab's development. Pursue opportunities for external research funding, collaborate on, and initiate grant applications.

4.1.2 Academic leadership

- Administrative Contributions: participating in faculty and departmental meetings. Contributing to decision-making processes, proposing improvements, and collaborating on program development.
- Networking and Industry Interaction: attending academic events, conferences, and seminars. Networking with other researchers and industry professionals to stay informed about the latest trends and research opportunities. Engage with industry, government, and the community to advance research impact.
- Contribute to SDU's research culture through internal and external collaborations, including those with international partners.
- Implement and administer SDU policy within the Metaverse Lab with respect to equitable access to education and workplace health and safety.

4.1.3 Teaching and educational leadership

- Facilitate excellence in the Metaverse Lab's undergraduate and postgraduate courses through the development and delivery of innovative teaching methods and materials.
- Developing and Delivering Course Material: You are expected to create, refine, and teach course content, curricula, and syllabi. This also includes conducting exams and grading.
- Education Development: contribute to curriculum development, program assessment, and strategic planning.
- Supervision and Guidance: guiding and mentoring Bachelor and Master students as they work on their theses and projects. Also advising students on your courses to help them navigate the course.
- Prepare and deliver physical and virtual lectures and seminars for effective learning outcomes.
- Provide real-world learning and assessment.
- Supervise postgraduate and other students' research projects.

4.2 Key Selection Criteria

Please note that the key selection criteria are similar across the Assistant and Associate levels, but Associate-level candidates will have a few additional points to address (a more comprehensive version of the criteria).

4.2.1 Research and Research Leadership

Guiding information: From the point of view of research and partnerships, we are looking for applicants with a strong research trajectory and a documented ability to collaborate across disciplines and with a diverse set of stakeholders. In terms of specific domains of inquiry, there is substantial flexibility as the SDU Metaverse Lab works across fields, but applicants should have an overall focus on interaction and technology.

- Doctoral qualification in a discipline relevant to the research and teaching needs of the SDU Metaverse Lab.
- High impact and high-quality research and research leadership Demonstrated research distinction at the national level with demonstrated research impact. Associate professor: internationally recognised research track record.
- Proven ability to sustain and grow your research through external funding Demonstrated capacity in attracting and managing external research income through competitive grants and/or industry collaboration. Associate professor: Additionally, sustain and grow research groups and centres through the attraction of external funding and collaborations.
- Demonstrated success in establishing and maintaining collaborations. Proven ability to attract and maintain industry partnerships and funding for impact-driven research. Proven ability to engage with relevant networks across academia, industry, and 3rd sector (e.g., public sector, charities) Associate professor: evidence of demonstrated strategic leadership in a large organisational unit or University-wide initiative and effective membership of a management team that developed and achieved shared goals and objectives.
- Demonstrated high level of interpersonal, communication, and negotiating skills, including the ability to consult with senior executives, and external bodies, produce executive reports,

and negotiate agreed directions, outcomes, and targets within a collaborative environment.

- Demonstrated highly developed interpersonal skills and the ability to contribute to a dynamic, high-performance, and collaborative academic culture. We kindly request addressing the points below as part of this key selection criteria: *Collaborative Spirit:* Ability to collaborate with colleagues, advise teaching assistants, and tackle several administrative tasks. *Student-Centric:* Dedication to mentoring students, supervising their work, and fostering their academic growth. *Innovative Mindset:* Passion for creating the technological solutions of the future that support the meeting between man and technology. *Interdisciplinary Approach:* Comfortable working in an interdisciplinary environment, collaborating with engineers, scientists, designers, artists, and practitioners.

4.2.2 Teaching selection criteria

Guiding information: From the point of view of teaching skills and experience, we are looking for someone that support and expands on the HCI skills of our students, including empirical research methods and the relationship between HCI and design, development, and AI, notably on the BSc level. We are also looking for candidates with an enthusiasm for shaping new courses and impacting the programme itself, taking an active part in developing the GDLT programme.

As such, the candidate should have experience along the following:

- Demonstrated experience planning, running, and evaluating tertiary-level courses in topics of relevance to the Game Development and Learning Technologies programme (BSc and MSc).
- Demonstrated understanding and experience in using contemporary and emerging digital approaches, methods, and tools in research, teaching, or industry practice in the relevant area(s).
- Experience in attracting and supervising higher degree by research candidates to maximise research performance. Assistant professor: MSc candidates. Associate professor: PhD candidates.
- Associate professor: Demonstrated ability to lead improvement of academic standards, including implementing best practice teaching strategies and dissemination of innovative educational practices. Additionally, demonstrated ability to manage tertiary-level program/s and lead program reviews.

5 Location

These positions are primarily located at SDU's Odense campus and you are expected to be regularly present on campus to facilitate student interaction, etc. Remote work is, however, common when there is no critical need to be on location, subject to local Danish regulations and rules. The University of Southern Denmark (SDU) is a thriving institution located in the vibrant city of Odense, Denmark's third-largest city. SDU is home to more than 27,000 students, with nearly 20% international.

Odense is a city rich in history and culture, known for its close associations with the famous fairytale writer Hans Christian Andersen. It is also known for its expansive robotics industry, and despite being a rural city, it has a high technology footprint. It offers a high quality of life, and Denmark's healthcare system is world-class, providing universal access and high-quality care. The country's public holidays offer a work-life balance, contributing to Denmark's reputation as one of the happiest countries in the world.

Further information for international applicants about entering and working in Denmark can be found with the SDU International Office here. You may also visit Work in Denmark Work in Denmark for additional information.

Please contact the SDU International Office for any questions related to international relocations to Denmark, living in Denmark, etc.

6 Contact Information

For questions about the positions, please contact Head of the SDU Metaverse Lab, Professor Anders Drachen.

7 Practical Information

If you experience technical problems, please contact our email support.

Apply here!

7.1 Conditions of Employment

7.1.1 Assistant professor

Appointment as assistant professor is temporary and for an initial 3-year period, with the possibility of extension depending on performance and funding.

Employment as an assistant professor requires scientific qualifications at the PhD level at the time of employment.

During employment, the assistant professor must complete the Lecturer Training Programme, unless similar prior training has been obtained and this is approved as a replacement for tertiary pedagogical competence.

7.1.2 Associate professor

Appointment as an associate professor is offered on a permanent basis.

Employment as an associate professor requires academic qualifications at the PhD level as well as scientific and teaching qualifications at a level achievable based on satisfactory completion of a period of employment as an assistant professor/researcher, but may be achievable by other means.

The starting date will be agreed with the successful candidate.

The successful applicant will be employed in accordance with the agreement between the Ministry of Finance and the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations. Further information on salary and taxation. Persons employed in the position may, based on a specific individual managerial assessment, be exempted from time registration, also known as a "self-organizer".

7.2 Assessment and selection process

Read more about the Assessment and selection process.

Applications will be assessed by an assessment committee. Shortlisting may be applied. Only shortlisted candidates will receive a written assessment. Read more about shortlisting at SDU.

Interviews and tests may be part of the process.

7.3 Application procedure

Applicants are advised to read the SDU information on how to apply and specific faculty information for application at the Faculty of Engineering.

The application must include (in English): (All attached files must be in Adobe PDF format):

- *Cover Letter*
- *Selection Criteria Statement:* Motivated application addressing the Selection Criteria
- *Curriculum vitae:* There is no set format, but please include as a minimum the following sections (as relevant): scientific focus areas, profile/biography summary, list of key impacts, educational history, professional experience (specific to the year, or if less than a year in duration, to the month), overview of grants and other sources of research funding, research awards, overview of professional activities, overview of invited talks and seminars, organizational memberships, workshops organized, examples of press and publicity, languages spoken/read.
- *Publications List:* A complete list of publications, indicating which publications are most relevant for the positions. Include a summary table of publications according to type on the front page.
- *Diplomas:* Copy of diplomas, including documentation of the MSc and PhD degree or equivalent (Danish and/or English).
- *Teaching portfolio:* Summary of experience in teaching and learning. Any format is acceptable, but you can find inspiration for structuring your teaching portfolio on the Faculty's teaching portfolio page (optional for Assistant Professor applicants).
- *Research vision and plan,* including an account of your own research and its impact, and a vision for future research stretching 3-5 years into the future. Include outlines of key grants you are hoping to apply for.
- *Publications for Assessment:* Up to three (3) scientific (*and no more than three*), peer-reviewed publications that the applicant wishes to be included in the assessment of their scientific qualifications. The publications should be selected based on relevance with the announced positions. Please note that one (1) PDF file must be attached for each publication. NOTE: If these chosen publications have been co-authored (i.e., if you are 2nd or later author), co-author statements detailing work distribution following international standards must be a part of this PDF.
- *Documentation of other qualifications with relevance to the positions.*
- *Reference letters/References* (as relevant).

Apply here!

7.4 Formalities

All documents must be in English and PDF format. CPR number (civil registration number) must be crossed out. All PDF-files must be unlocked, allow binding and may not be password protected. SUBMISSION GUIDE: Motivated application must be uploaded under 'Cover letter' (max. 5 MB), Curriculum Vitae must be uploaded under 'Resume' (max 5 MB). All other documents must be uploaded under 'Miscellaneous documents' (max 10 files with a maximum 50 MB per file).

The application deadline is August 1, 2026, at 11:59 PM/23:59 (CET/CEST)

The University of Southern Denmark wishes its staff to reflect the surrounding community and therefore encourages everyone, regardless of personal background, to apply for the position. SDU conducts research in critical technologies, which, due to the risk of unwanted knowledge transfer, is subject to a number of security measures. Therefore, based on information from open sources, background checks may be conducted on candidates for the position(s).

Apply here!