



Call for Papers

Nordic Labour Internationalism in the 20th Century

17–18 January 2026, University of Oslo, Norway

Global challenges loom large for the future of Nordic labour movements. Labour parties must address international or borderless issues like migration, climate change, and weakening security alignments, all while contesting with populist movements for voters and attention. Trade unions meanwhile confront a labour market reconfigured by (de)industrialization, European integration, and globalized trade. To appraise where this present situation may lead, it is necessary to reflect on previous responses. How have Nordic labour movements interacted with international challenges and developments in the past?

We invite participants to revisit and resituate Nordic labour internationalism in the 20th century. Nordic labour movements actively contributed to shaping geopolitical landscapes and global trade, at times supporting, moderating, or challenging economic and political orders under different geopolitical hegemonies. We encourage participants to explore the strands of internationalist thought in Nordic labour movements, as well as Nordic activity in international and transnational arenas. Of special interest are papers involving trade unions, labour parties, and leftwing activists from one or more Nordic countries, including both top leaders and the rank-and-file, with the goal of understanding how workers' movements influenced and interacted with broad international trends.

- How and why did Nordic labour movements engage with the broader world, and what were the tangible results of this activity?
- Did Nordic labour internationalism contribute to international tensions and conflict, or durable cooperation and solutions to international challenges?
- To what extent did traditions for international engagement develop in the Nordic labour movements?

The workshop will take a multilevel approach, from the translocal trade union to the international organization, and invites perspectives both from inside and outside the Nordic region to explore different scales and forms of international engagement. This includes diplomacy, aid and solidarity, propaganda, policy and ideational transfer, activity in international organizations, and migration responses. By bringing together



scholarship in such areas, the workshop will constitute an arena for exploring varieties and common characteristics within Nordic labour internationalism and for reflecting on its prospects for the future.

Submission of abstracts

Please submit an abstract of maximum 300 words and a short bio by the 31st of August 2025. Participants chosen for the workshop will have the opportunity to present papers and receive individualized comments from a senior researcher. The goal of the workshop is to draft articles for a special issue in an international journal. Emerging scholars are especially encouraged to apply.

The workshop will take place on the 17th and 18th of January 2026 at the University of Oslo. Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered by the workshop organizers, as will lunch and dinner.

Abstracts can be delivered by email to Byron Rom-Jensen at byronr@iakh.uio.no and Eirik Wig Sundvall at e.w.sundvall@iakh.uio.no.