

# **NORDIC AMBITIONS**

THEATRE - MENTORSHIP - NETWORKS

# NORDIC AMBITIONS

Nordic Ambitions is a new mentorship program for theatre leaders in the Nordic region, initiated by Nordiskt Teaterledarråd in collaboration with The Nordic Culture Fund. The one-year program develops the participants' leadership skills and promotes Nordic networks between theatres.

Nordic Ambitions is coordinated by Nordiskt Teaterledarråd as a partner project between the Nordic employers' associations for the performing arts.

The creative industry of the performing arts is structured similarly in the Nordic countries. At the same time, there are also many things we can learn from each other. Nordic Ambitions recognises great potential in a method for leadership development based on a Nordic perspective and for a program specifically tailored for theatre.

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SVENSK SCENKONST

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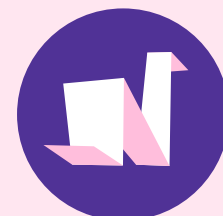
DANSK TEATER

## MAGNÚS GEIR ÞÓRÐARSON

ÞJÓÐLEIKHÚSIÐ, THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF ICELAND

## METTE HEDEGAARD

(NORDIC AMBITIONS COORDINATOR)  
DANSK TEATER



# MENTORSHIP TO CONNECT AND INSPIRE

When Homer wrote of Odysseus, who entrusted the care of his family to his youthful companion Mentor during the siege of Troy, little did he know he was creating a learning model for centuries to come. Mentor came to care for Odysseus' son Telemachus over a period of ten years, acting as his protector, teacher and friend. To this day, their relationship serves as inspiration for how knowledge, skills and values can be passed on from an experienced individual to a younger peer.

Theatre managers today are expected to navigate towards artistic excellence while successfully managing personnel and financially sound operations in a complex industry currently facing many challenges. Nordiskt Teaterledarråd launched the mentorship program Nordic Ambitions to build leadership and professional networks for Nordic theatre. We believe that good mentorship provides support for the demanding managerial tasks at hand. We want to enable mutual learning and shared experiences that all participants can benefit from in their work.

By forming mentor pairs from different countries, we also want to create new cross-border contacts. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about working conditions, organisational culture and sector structures in another Nordic country. It may also be liberating to share difficult professional issues with peers from a geographically distant region.

It is our hope that Nordic Ambitions will help strengthen both the personal leadership of participants as well as encourage future Nordic cooperation between theatre organisations.

**NORDISKT TEATERLEDARRÅD – NTLR**





Foto: Caroline Roka

# THE NORDIC CULTURE FUND - SUPPORTING NORDIC INITIATIVES

The Nordic Culture Fund, established in 1966, supports cultural cooperation between the Nordic countries and is a catalyst for art and cultural life in the region and beyond. Since 2020, we have partnered with a number of initiatives that foster new knowledge and seek to develop the cultural policy in the Nordic countries.

We believe in people connecting – even more so now that recent major global and social events have distanced us from one another. We believe that art and culture are without borders and that in times of upheaval, when nations close in upon themselves, art can act as a focal point connecting us and bridging gaps.

Nordic Ambitions is shaping the future of the performing arts by connecting and supporting theatre professionals. The program creates a platform for meaningful networks and collaboration across the Nordic region. We are delighted to support the Nordic Ambitions initiative and its second year. After all, it is perfectly aligned with our own objectives.

We look forward to a year of encounters, exchanges and experiences!

**MARIA MEDIAAS JØRSTAD**  
DIRECTOR, THE NORDIC CULTURE FUND



Photo: Johanna Welander

# PROGRAM OUTLINE 2024–2025

## Program objectives

Nordic Ambition is a forum for leadership development aimed at theatre leaders in the Nordics. The program connects mentees with mentors, hosts leadership seminars and facilitates development and knowledge exchange.

## Mentorship

Mentoring builds on the model of experience and support being shared from established professionals to younger peers. In the Nordic Ambitions program, participants also benefit from networking with other pairs.

Mentees are selected based on open call applications and matched with a mentor from another Nordic country, selected to fit the mentee's profile. The selection committee also looks to the overall dynamics and diversity of the group as a whole.

All mentors within the program are experienced theatre professionals currently active in the Nordic regions. The mentors receive relevant coaching before the program commences. If you are interested specifically in mentoring, please contact your local partner association.

## Fees and funding

There is no participation fee. Participants should however be prepared to cover their own travel costs. Remember to check with your employer if you may travel at your organisation's expense.

Nordic Ambitions has reserved travel subsidies to democratise participation from smaller theatres and remote locations. Partial subsidies may be granted to participants at the discretion of the organisers. Please specify your circumstances in the open call application if your attendance depends on subsidies.

## Program outline and participant commitment

Nordic Ambitions builds on personal contacts, group work and shared experiences. Before applying, make sure you are able to attend the network seminars and that you can commit to meeting your mentor regularly throughout the year.

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## Schedule

**FEBRUARY 1–21**..... Open call for mentees  
**MARCH** ..... Mentor pairs selected by organisers  
**MAY** ..... Coaching session for mentors  
**MAY 30–31** ..... Kick-off seminar, Copenhagen  
**NOVEMBER 26–27** ..... Network seminar, Oslo  
**FEBRUARY 25** ..... Online seminar  
**APRIL 28–29** ..... Closing seminar, Copenhagen

Mentor meetings are scheduled by the pairs themselves.

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## Location and language

The program includes three onsite network seminars and one online seminar. The mentor pairs meet for individual sessions online and are encouraged to meet also in each other's respective hometowns if possible.

The shared language of the program is English. All participants are encouraged to network also in their local languages. Special needs and accessibility requirements are registered in the application.

# OPEN CALL FEBRUARY 1-21

## Who can apply?

Nordic Ambitions is targeted at leaders with direct or overall responsibility for artistic programming, currently employed at one of the Nordiskt Teaterledarråd (NTLR) network's member theatres. You can be either new in your role as leader or more experienced. Most importantly, you have strong motivation to develop your leadership skills, broaden your horizons and expand your Nordic peer network. If you are not certain about your eligibility, please contact your regional contact for consultation.

## When is the open call?

The open call for the 2024–2025 program is from February 1–21 2024. A link to the online application form can be found on the regional Nordic Ambitions web pages.

## How to apply

You will find a link to the online application on the web page of your regional association from February 1. Send your application by midnight (CET) on February 21.

## Interested in mentoring?

Please contact your regional office if you are interested in joining the program as mentor.

## Criteria and selection of participants

Formal criteria include current employment as theatre leader at one of the network's member theatres and artistic responsibility.

Nordic Ambitions can facilitate a maximum of 10 mentorship pairs, which means that 1–2 mentees will be accepted from each country. NTLR has tied a pool of mentors to the program. After the open call for mentees closes, the council scans applications and matches pairs considered well suited for each other. The pairs will be matched so that mentor and mentee represent different countries.

NTLR reserves the right to select pairs which contribute to the overall dynamics of the group. We hope for an array of personal profiles, needs and backgrounds. All applicants will receive notice by the end of March.

## Save the dates

The program commences in Copenhagen with seminar, workshops and networking on May 30–31. The following seminar will be in Oslo on November 26–27. In spring 2025, an online seminar is scheduled for February 25 and the mentoring experience closes with a seminar in Copenhagen on April 28–29. Nordic Ambitions reserves the right to make changes in the program schedule.

## Following Nordic Ambitions from outside the program

Should you not be selected for Nordic Ambitions this time around, please follow the organizers' social media channels to stay updated on open events. We hope you will join our network!

# CONTACT

## **Nordic Ambitions program coordination**

Mette F. Hedegaard, network coordinator

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## **Suomen Teatterit – Finlands Teatrar**

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## **Svensk Scenkonst**

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## **Norsk teater-og orkesterforening**

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## **Dansk Teater**

[www.danskteater.org](http://www.danskteater.org)

Peter Mark Lundberg, director

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## **Þjóðleikhúsið, The National Theatre of Iceland**

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# NORDIC AMBITIONS

By

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svensk scenkonst



Suomen Teatterinjohtajaliitto  
Finlands Teatercheffsförbund

In collaboration with

NORDISK  
KULTURFOND