

# Rural Futures

A green bus stop shelter with a bench, set against a blue sky with white clouds and a field of golden-brown crops in the background.

Summer School

19-23 September 2022

Akademiezentrum Sankelmark



## Call for Applications from Scholars and Practitioners

---

Ideas and narratives about villages and ruralities are almost always located in the past and are subject to a distinct urban-rural dichotomy. In the dominating discourses, rural areas are generally backwards oriented and on the decline, and prosperity and progress only occur in urban areas. But those appearances are deceptive. Rural areas are changing drastically. They are diverse in their history, landscape and future outlooks.

The upcoming summer school on "Rural Futures" wants to question these dominant discourses and illuminate rural areas from within. The summer school will take place at the "Akademiezentrum Sankelmark" in the German-Danish border region. It is prolonging and continuing the idea of previous workshops "StadtLandZukunft", which took place in Homberg (Efze) in 2021 and "Modern Provinces", which took place on Fehmarn island in 2022.

We want to discuss new perspectives and approaches to the question what ruralities are and what they should become in the future. Therefore, we depart from the idea that people used to live and work with local resources. However, as a result from globalization, local societies and economies have become detached from the land, increasingly segregated and marginalised. These developments have led to a drastic increase in the polarisation between urban and rural areas, clearly visible in political preferences in many countries.

In some senses, the boundaries between the urban and the rural become blurry. The corona pandemic increased digitisation, creating new connections between urban and rural areas. More people work remotely and seek a home outside the city to pursue nature, self-realisation, and happiness. But beyond these romanticized discourses: what is the good life in the country and what factors are important for it to be created and maintained?

An event by



In cooperation with



KGL. DÄNISCHE  
BOTSCHAFT  
Berlin

For the past few decades, the idea of centralisation has dominated the political economic discourse. Nowadays, there is a noticeable shift in attention to rural areas and the landscape as a resource. In times of the climate crisis, we need to transform our way of living, how we produce food and energy, and transport goods and people while protecting the environment and biodiversity. Rural areas play a critical role in climate policy and the social-ecological transformation.

The overarching question is, do people in rural areas have the voice and the power to engage in the transformation to benefit from it or do rural areas serve different services and provide solutions for the centres? For the sake of rural development, small scale farms diminish in favor of heavily supported industrial farms, and huge windmill and solar parks are being constructed. But looking closely, local municipalities and economies hardly get any benefit, nor do they have the chance to resist those developments.

In this light, this summer school will address the question what can a sustainable rural future looks like? How can local societies and economies be reconnected to places? What makes rural areas worth living there? What can we learn from villages and the people living in them and how can these voices gain more power? What could be the discourses of a flourishing rural future?



An event by



In cooperation with





## How to apply for the summer school

---

The summer school on "Rural futures" seeks to involve transnational and interdisciplinary perspectives on addressing these questions. It aims to strengthen the network and cooperation between scholars, practitioners and local actors in Germany, Denmark and beyond. It will take place in the German-Danish border region and include project presentations, short lectures and guided tours as well as exchange with local actors.

### Target groups:

International scholars - doctoral candidates, recent postdocs, master's students in humanities and social sciences, architecture, urban and regional planning, economics. Scholars are invited to present papers on relevant aspects addressing rural futures.

Practitioners and activists - founders and entrepreneurs, architects, actors from urban and regional planning, administration, business development, NGOs, and local and regional politics.

The working language at the summer school is English. SDU can offer PhD students 3 ECTS for attending the summer school, given they have prepared and presented a paper and have been actively involved the whole time.

The summer school is being organized by the German ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius, the Centre of Rural Research of the University of Southern Denmark in Esbjerg, the Danish embassy in Berlin, the Europäische Akademie Schleswig-Holstein and Europe Direct Südschleswig.

### Applications are due June 30th, 2022:

Please submit your application by e-mail with a abstract for your intended presentation or a description of the personal, professional or academic interest in questions of the workshop and a CV.

Attendance of the summer school is **free**. The organisers will cover the accommodation and travel cost.

### Contact person:

Luis Rieken  
Project manager Research and Scholarship  
ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius  
Tel.: +49 40 41336 861  
E-Mail: [rieken@zeit-stiftung.de](mailto:rieken@zeit-stiftung.de)

An event by



In cooperation with

