

CV – URSULA PLESNER

I have an interdisciplinary background (communication, sociology, Science and Technology Studies), and have studied digital technologies from all these perspectives before joining IOA. Combining these with insights from organization studies have resulted in a sustained focus on the organizational implications of digitalization.

My research is within the area of organization and digitalization, roughly pursuing three paths: 1) Investigating how digital technologies afford organizational changes, 2) Studying and theorizing the (invisible) work to make digital technologies work, and 3) Examining the digital transformation of the public sector on an organizational level.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2022-: Promotion track Associate Professor, Department of Organization, Copenhagen Business School

2012-2022: Associate Professor, Department of Organization, Copenhagen Business School

2009-2012: Assistant Professor, Department of Organization, Copenhagen Business School

2006-2009: PhD Fellow, Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies, Roskilde University

2002-2005: Maternity leave x 2 (1.11.2002-1.2.2005)

2001-2006: External lecturer, CBS and Roskilde University

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

2009: PhD from the Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies, Roskilde University

2001: MA in Sociology, New School for Social Research, New York

2001: MA in Communication (cand.com.), Roskilde University

1997: BA in Psychology and Communication, Roskilde University

RESEARCH AREAS

Digitalization and organizational change

- Digitalization and changing work tasks
- Invisible work in digitalized organizations
- Digitalization and changes in public sector organizations

PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL ARTICLES, PEER REVIEWED:

- Plesner, U. (2026) 'Media Review: The Work to make AI work' in *Organization Studies*
- Meier, F., Justesen, L. & Plesner, U. (2025) 'Leadership Work in an AI Development Project: How topicalizing takes part in the production of direction' in *Leadership* 21(4)
- Jørring, L., Justesen, L. & Plesner, U. (2025) 'Tensions in Time-saving Technologies: Adjusting Work Rhythms in the Digitalized Public Sector Frontline'. *Government Information Quarterly* 42(3)
- Justesen, L. & Plesner, U. (2024a) 'Angry Citizens and Black Belt Employees: Cascading classifications of and around a predictive algorithm' in *Valuation Studies* 11(1)
- Justesen, L. & Plesner, U. (2024b) 'From Sequence to Simultaneity: Tonalities and Organizational Change in Digitalized organizations' in *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 37(2)
- Justesen, L. & Plesner, U. (2024c) 'Invisible Digi-work: Compensating, Connecting and Cleaning in Digitalized Organizations' in *Organization Theory* 5(1)
- Plesner, U. & Justesen, L. (2023) 'Digitalize and deny: Pluralistic collective ignorance in an algorithmic profiling project' in *ephemera – theory and politics in organization* 23(1)
- Justesen, L. & Plesner, U. (2023) 'Visibility Management: New Managerial Work in Digitalized Organizations' in *M@an@gement* 26(3)
- Plesner, U. & Justesen, L. (2022) 'The Double Darkness of Digitalization: Shaping Digital-ready legislation to reshape the conditions for Public-Sector Digitalization in *Science, Technology and Human Values* 47 (1).
- Winkler, T, Krogh, S., Plesner, U., Justesen, L. & Jensen, T.B. (2020) 'A Real 'Killer' Application?: Organization-system Misfits of the Danish Health Platform' in *Proceedings of the 41st International Conference on Information Systems(ICIS)*.
- Gulbrandsen, I.T., Raviola, E. & Plesner, U. (2020): 'New media and strategy research: towards a relational agency approach' in *International Journal of Management Reviews* 22(1), 33.52.
- Plesner, U., L. Justesen & C. Glerup 2018: 'The Transformation of Work in Digitized Public Sector Organizations' in *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 31(5), 1176-1190.
- Husted, E. & Plesner, U. 2017: 'Spaces of open-source politics: Physical and digital conditions for political organization' in *Organization* 24(5), 648-670

Plesner, U. & Raviola, E. 2016: 'Digital Technologies and a Changing Profession: New Management Devices, Practices and Power Relations in News Work' in *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 29(7), 1044-1065.

Plesner, U. & Gulbrandsen, I.T. 2015: 'Strategy and New Media: A research agenda' in *Strategic Organization*, 13(2), 153-162.

Plesner, U. & Horst, M. 2013: 'Before Stabilization: Communication and non-standardization of 3D models in the building industry' in *Information, Communication and Society*, 13(2), 153-162.

Plesner, U. & Horst, M. 2012: 'Selling the Selling Point: How Innovation Communication creates Users of Virtual Worlds Architecture' in *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 18(1), 49-70.

Plesner, U. 2012: 'The Performativity of 'Media Logic' in the Mass Mediation of Science' in *Public Understanding of Science* 21(6), 674-688

Plesner, U. 2011: 'Studying sideways – displacing the problem of power in research interviews with sociologists and journalists' in *Qualitative Inquiry* 17(7), 471-482.

Liboriussen, B. & Plesner, U. 2011: 'Imagining Technicities : ICT Taste and Skill as Elements in the Configuration of Virtual Worlds Architecture. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society*, 9(2), 81-93

Plesner, U. 2009: An Actor-Network Perspective on Changing Work Practices: Communication technologies as actants in newswork. *Journalism - Theory, Practice & Criticism*, 10(5), 604-626.

BOOKS

Justesen, L. & **Plesner, U.** (2025) *Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde*. Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Plesner, U. & Husted, E. (2022) *L'Organizzazione digitale*, El Mulino

Plesner, U. & Husted, E. (2019) *Digital Organizing – revisiting themes in organization studies*, Palgrave Macmillan/Red Globe

Plesner, U. & Phillips, L. (eds.) (2013) *Researching Virtual Worlds – Methodologies for Studying Emergent Practices*, Routledge.

Plesner, U. (2009) *Disassembling the Mass Mediation of Research – A study of the construction of texts, relations and positions in the communication of social science*. Ph.D. dissertation, Roskilde University.

BOOK CHAPTERS, PEER REVIEWED

Plesner, U. & Husted, E. (forthcoming) 'Digitalisering' i *Klassisk og moderne organisationsteori*. (Eds.) S. Vikkelsø & P. Kjær. Hans Reitzels Forlag

Plesner, U. (forthcoming) 'Digitally Layered Borders – And the work to make them work' in (Eds.) E. Raviola, M. Arvidsson & B. Rolandsson: *Borders, surveillance and technologies: The Nordics*. Bristol: Bristol University Press

Plesner, U. & Rolandsson, B. (forthcoming) Retrofitting digital border infrastructures: Digital layers as reactions to crisis claims in (Eds.) E. Raviola, M. Arvidsson & B. Rolandsson: *Borders, surveillance and technologies: The Nordics*. Bristol: Bristol University Press

Plesner, U. & Justesen, L. (2025) 'Making organizations algorithm-ready: Algorithmic organizing through techno-organizational scripts' in *Algorithmic Organizing, Research in the Sociology of Organizations* (eds.), Vern L. Glaser, Christine Moser, Deborah A. Anderson, P. Devereaux Jennings

Husted, E. & **Plesner, U.** (2021) 'Et eklektisk blik på politisk organisering: Diskursteori, materiel semiotik og affektteori' i *Eklektiske analysestrategier* (eds. Husted, E. & Pors, J.G.). Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur

Justesen, L., **Plesner, U.** & Glerup, C. (2020) Arbejdets forandring i digitaliserede offentlige organisationer i *Digitalisering i offentlig forvaltning* (eds. J. Hundebøl, A.S. Pors, & L.H. Sørensen), Frederiksberg, Samfundslitteratur.

Plesner, U. & Justesen, L. (2020) 'Managerial Work with Digitalization: A multi-sited approach to Data and Data-driven Management in Practice in *The Routledge Companion to Anthropology and Business*, Routledge (eds. Fayard & Mir)

Plesner, U. (2020) 'Reassembling cultural journalism in the digital age' in *Technology and creativity: new frontiers for creative industries*, Palgrave Macmillan (eds. J. Strandgaard, B. Slavich, & M. Khaire)

Plesner, U. (2013) 'Introduction: Approaching the study of virtual worlds' in *Researching Virtual Worlds – Methodologies for Studying Emergent Practices* (eds. U. Plesner & L. Phillips). New York: Routledge, 1-15.

Plesner, U. (2013) 'Virtual Worlds as Emerging Cyber-Hybrids: Accounting for the Travel between Research Sites with Actor-Network-Theory' in *Researching Virtual Worlds – Methodologies for Studying Emergent Practices* (eds. U. Plesner & L. Phillips). New York: Routledge, 16-33.

Plesner, U. (2013) 'Building Networks with Vague Intentions: A Vocabulary of Enrolment and Negotiations in Collaborative Research Practice' in *Knowledge and Power in Collaborative Research: A Reflexive Approach*. (eds.) L. Phillips; M. Kristiansen; M. Vehviläinen; E. Gunnarsson. New York: Routledge, 236-254.

Plesner, U. (2012) 'When Citizens Matter in the Mass Mediation of Science: The Role of Imagined Audiences in Multidirectional Communication Processes' in *Citizen Voices: Performing Public Participation in Science and Environment Communication*. (eds.) L. Phillips; A. Carvalho; J. Doyle. Bristol: Intellect Ltd, 21-46

DANISH JOURNAL ARTICLES, PEER REVIEWED.

Røhl, U., **Plesner, U.** & Motzfeldt, H.M. (2025) 'Digitaliseringsklar lovgivning i Danmark: Når politiske ambitioner møder virkeligheden i *Nordisk Administrativ Tidsskrift* 102(1)

Plesner, U. & Justesen, L. (2018) 'Merproduktion af målbarhed: synlighed og nye ledelsesopgaver' i *Tidsskrift for Arbejdsliv* 20 (4), 109-115.

Justesen, L. & **Plesner, U.** (2018) 'Fra skøn til algoritme: Digitaliseringsklar lovgivning og automatisering af administrativ sagsbehandling' i *Tidsskrift for Arbejdsliv* 20 (3), 9-23.

GRANTS AND RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

2024: Received 5.266.066 kr. from Velux for the HUM-praxis project *Metoder til digital inklusion* (with the think tank Justitia and the Social Legal Aid Foundation in cross sectorial collaboration). Research management.

2021: Co-applicant for the Nordic project *Unpacking the contention between openness and security in the Nordic region: Digital public surveillance practices at three state borders*: 990.000 Euro from Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland (SLS). PI: Elena Raviola

2019: Received 5.843.617 kr. from the Independent Research Council for the collaborative project *Valuing Invisible Work: Efficiency ambitions and digitalization projects in practice* [with Lise Justesen]. Research management.

2019: Received 1.978.096 kr. from the SparNord Foundation for the PhD-project *Opening up disruption: a study of fintech in the Danish financial sector*. Research management.

2018-2024: Co-applicant for the CBS Digital Transformations BiS platform and director of the Digital Organization Cluster

2014-17: Head of the Scientific Committee planning the scientific program of the EGOS 2017

2010: Responsible for the CBS part of the strategic research project hosted by RUC, *Sense-making strategies and user-driven innovation in virtual worlds*, funded by the Danish Research Council

(grant no. 09-063261). Employment of research assistants, financial responsibility, production of journal articles and an anthology.

1999-2016: Travel grants and scholarships for New School for Social Research, University of California San Diego, and Stern Business School at New York University.

LEADERSHIP/ACTIVITIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL AREA (SELECTED)

2020-: PhD-coordinator at the Department of Organization (app. 25 PhD-fellows)

- Head of PhD-policy working group; drafting of career support policy, information material for PhDs, etc.
- Development of annual wheel of career support activities + organization of events (such as: The Art of Academic Reviewing; Crafting Articles – the genres and styles; How to approach the publication process; Teaching as a PhD; Methods problems in practice; Engaging with practice; Framing your PhD-contribution; Alumni-events)

COURSE COORDINATION AND TEACHING

Teaching in the PhD course Perspectives in Organizational Analysis (2024-)

Development, (teaching) and coordination of Organizing Digitalization, Cand merc SOL (2021-25)

Development and course coordination of Digitalization and Organization (BA in Business

Administration and Psychology), 2018-

Development, course coordination and teaching of Digitalization, Organization and Management (Master of Public Governance), 2019-

Teaching in Digitalisering, organisation og samfund, 2023- (Master in Management Development)

Master thesis supervision (Master of Public Governance), ongoing

PHD SUPERVISION

- Simone Harboe (2026-): Digital inclusion in the Danish welfare state
- Kenneth Nymand Pedersen (2026-): Digitalized Military Decision-Making in the Warfighting Brigade (collaboration established with the Royal Defence Academy) (primary supervisor)
- Oliver Kofoed Gottfredsen Ranneries (2025-): AI at work: Understanding Work and Core Service in Municipal AI adoption (secondary supervisor)
- Anna Maria Fjordbøge (2025-) The Danish courts – an organization on the brink of digitalization. Department of Communication, Copenhagen University (secondary supervisor)
- Simon Karlin (2023-) AI at Work: The Communicative Constitution of Artificial Intelligence Technologies at a large Danish pension company. Department of Communication and Arts, Roskilde University (secondary supervisor)
- Cecilie Kampmann (Graduated from IOA in 2025): Short of time: Organization, work and technology among the kinetic elite (Primary supervisor)
- Louise Jørring (Graduated from IOA in 2025): Digitalization and the Modification of Frontline Work: A Study of Frontline Workers' Pursuit of Meaningfulness (co-supervisor)
- Jack Jones (Graduated from IOA in 2023): Opening up disruption: a study of fintech in the Danish financial sector (Primary supervisor)

- Marie Larsen Ryberg (Graduated from MPP in 2020): Governing interdisciplinarity: Stakes and translations of interdisciplinarity in Danish high school education (Secondary supervisor)
- Lone Christensen (Graduated from MPP in 2019): En kvalificering af proceskonsulenters arbejde med strategi-implementering (Secondary supervisor)
- Emil Krastrup Husted (Graduated from IOA in 2017): There is always an alternative: A study of control and commitment in political organization (Primary supervisor)
- Andreas Kamstrup (Graduated from IOA in 2017): Crowdsourcing and the architectural competition (Primary supervisor)
- Jacob Brogaard-Kay (Graduated from IOA in 2015): Constituting Performance Management. A field study of a Pharmaceutical Company (Secondary supervisor)
- Mie Plotnikov (Graduated from IOA in 2015): Challenges of Collaborative Governance – An Organizational Discourse Study of Public Managers’ Struggles with Collaboration across the Daycare Area (Secondary supervisor)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

COLUMNS

- Digitaliseringsklar lovgivning er langt sværere end politikerne tror – også i en tid med AI. *Altinget* kronik (17.11.25)
- Hvem erstatter hvis arbejde? Automatiseringsdebatten vendt på hovedet. *Ingeniøren* synspunkt (24.10.25)
- Vi skal fjerne årsværk med AI – men den vil give os nye opgaver retur. *Berlingske* kronik (1.8.25)
- Blinde vinkler i den digitaliserede organization. *Mandag Morgen* klumme (30.1.25)
- Ledelse af digitale forandringer mellem sortsynet skepsis og hyperoptimisme. *Mandag Morgen* klumme (8.5.24)
- Det er nødvendigt, at ledere forlænger håbet, når AI-projekter ikke indfrier løfterne, *Børsen* klumme (20.12.23)
- Hvem tør sige stop til digital innovation? *Mandag Morgen* klumme (29.11.23)
- Virtuelt: Vi kan kommunikere professionelt i 3D, *Politiken* analyse (2012)
- Offentlig kommunikation og ledelse skal gå på tre ben – mindst, *Kommunen* analyse (2012)

PODCASTS

- Fra 30.000 til 34 – Når politiske AI-drømme rammer virkeligheden (Radar.dk/Peter Christian Bech-Nielsen, 29.8.25)
- Få det til at ske med Ursula Plesner og usynligt arbejde (Adfærdsledelse, produced by Henrik Dresbøl, 22.4.24)
- Digital gnidningsløshed og arbejdet bag (produced by Anders Kærulff, 3.5.21)
- ‘Work in progress’ on grade-free first year experiment (www.feedwork.dk)

TALKS

- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde, **Altinget og Mandag Morgens** netværk for offentlig ledelse (27.5.26)
- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde, **Altinget og Mandag Morgens** netværk for kunstig intelligens og dataetik (22.5.26)
- Når teknologi møder arbejde – hvem får det til at virke i fremtiden? Den kommunale AI-dag, **KL og Komponent** (9.12.25)
- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde, **HK Hovedstaden** (13.11.25)
- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde, **Rigsrevisionen** (7.11.25)
- Invisible work in the digitalized public sector – overlooked and undervalued daily practices, Digital Work Futures Research Lab Seminar, **Malmö University** (6.11.25)
- AI i det offentlige - 30.000 årsværk - vision eller vildfarelse? Paneldeltager, **Digital Tech Summit** (6.11.2025)
- Forskningsperspektiver på digitaliseringsklar lovgivning, **Digitaliseringsstyrelsen** (2.10.25)
- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde, AC-TAP-klubben, **CBS** (24.6.25)
- Usynligt arbejde I digitaliserede organisationer, **VIVE** (18.6.25)
- Data som organisatorisk ressource og udfordring: nye synligheder og usynligheder, **Foreningen af ledere af Sundhedsordringer** (17.3.25)
- Usynligt arbejde ved implementering af kunstig intelligens i den offentlige forvaltning, **Københavns Professionshøjskole** (31.10.24)
- Nye synligheder og usynligheder i digitaliserede organisationer, **Real Danias** bestyrelse (11.3.24)
- Digitalisering og AI i organisationer, **Gentofte Kommune** Masterclass for skolelederne (30.10.24)
- Digitalisering og organisering, High Performance Leadership, **CBS Executive Fonden** (20.6.24)
- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde, **ATP/Udbetaling Danmark** ledergruppe (24.10.24)
- Kunstig intelligens og usynligt arbejde, **Kommunale IT- og digitaliseringsansvarlige** (11.9.23)
- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde som organisatorisk udfordring, **LAB23 – arbejdsmiljøkonferencen** (12.10.23)
- AI-projekter i praksis – usynligt arbejde som ledelsesudfordring, Ledelseskonference **Region Sjælland** (12.6.23)
- Digitalisering og usynligt arbejde, Styregruppe for digital fremtid, **Haderslev Kommune** (4.1.23)
- Digitaliseringens usynlige merarbejde i offentlige organisationer, **HK** (14.9.21)
- Organisering i den digitale tidsalder 'Book a researcher' talks, **Zealand – Sjællands Erhvervsakademi; Administrations og Servicestyrelsen; Aarhus Universitets stabsledelse.** (26.4.21, 27.4.21, 28.4.21)
- Hvordan påvirker automatisering os? **Finansforbundet** (7.10.20)
- Digital Organizing – Revisiting themes in organization studies. Book talk: **Sheffield Hallam University** Digital Transformation Research Community (17.6.20)
- Digital organisering. Book talk: **NOCA/Network of Corporate Academics** (28.5.20)
- Digital Organizing – Revisiting themes in organization studies. Book talk: **Datalogisk Institut, Copenhagen University** (17.2.20)
- Automatisering og kunstig intelligens som organisatorisk udfordring. **Rigsarkivets konference: Dataetik og dokumentation** (6.11.19)
- 'Hvad sker der, når vi effektiviserer – alt det vi glemmer?' **Copenhagen University, Koncernøkonomi** (19.10.19)

- Fra skøn til algoritme ‘Book a researcher’ talks **Ministry for Research and Higher Education, Municipality of Copenhagen** (29.4.19, 30.4.19)
- Digitalisering – fra ressourcespild til meningsfuldt arbejde? **Danish Universities’** seminar for financial analysts (9.5.19)
- Digitalisering, kompensation og forandringsledelse (**CBS** ledersalon (9.5.19)
- Digitalisering som svar på velfærdsudfordringer, Koncernudvikling i **Syddjurs Kommune** (14.3.19)
- CBS Connect – Creating Sustainable Digital Transformations, **CBS** alumni event (10.10.18)
- Arbejdets forandring i digitaliserede offentlige organisationer. ‘Book a researcher’ talks **DJØF, Ministry for Research and Higher Education** (23.4.18, 25.4.18)

MEDIA INTERVIEWS/MENTIONS (SELECTED)

21 Søndag, TVA, P1 Morgen, P1 Orientering, P4 Sjælland Nyheder, Mandag Morgen: Feature interview, HK.dk, Kommunernes IT-magasin, Ingeniøren, Perspektiv, Altinget, Udbudsmedia.dk, dm.dk, Dknyt.dk, Ing.dk, Version2, Berlingske, DJØF-bladet, Akademikerbladet

OTHER TYPES OF IMPACT ACTIVITIES

- Workshop for practitioners: Hvordan leder digitalisering til usynligt arbejde? CBS (23.8.2024). With panel participants from HK, Region Sjælland and Justitia.
- Symposium: Digital gnidningsløshed og arbejdet bag – a full day event for researchers and practitioners at Kunsten – Aalborg Museum of Modern Art (4.10.21).
<https://www.cbs.dk/en/knowledge-society/areas/digital-transformations/events/symposium-digital-gnidningsloshed-arbejdet-bag>
- Research communication magazine: Digital gnidningsløshed og arbejdet bag (eds. Plesner, Justesen & Winthereik, 2021), available at
https://www.cbs.dk/files/cbs.dk/final_publication_digital_gnidningsloshed.pdf
- Medlem af tænketanken Danmark 3.0 i Dansk IT (2025)
- Advice to the Ministry of Education and Research, HK kommunal, DJØF, ATP/Udbetaling Danmark
- Contribution to the AI hub at CBS teach.dk
- Continuous feedback to case organizations