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Open Letter to Members of the Nordic Council regarding the NSU

It has come to my attention that the Nordic Summer University will no longer receive funding from the Nordic Council. In my capacity as research advisor at the Scientific Research Center of the Slovene Academy of Science, and professor at the European Graduate School, I must express my concern and surprise regarding this decision.

I had the pleasure of experiencing the activities and qualities of the NSU myself in July 2007, when I was invited as a keynote speaker to the summer session in Sweden. With no prior knowledge about the NSU, it was extremely enriching to observe and take part in their singular modes of learning and working in practice. The NSU has by now a long and venerable tradition of creating stimulating academic exchanges on many, often transversal levels of knowledge, its development of networks amongst people and universities in the Nordic region as well as more broadly.

It would be a great loss and an incomprehensible decision to close down the NSU, an organization that to us represents a viable model for the actual and much needed revitalization of academic disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. This comprises both academic practices and future connections between universities and surrounding societies, since the work that is taking place in the NSU, due to its specific Nordic perspective, serves as an example and a role model for upcoming developments within the academic world in general. It is counterproductive to remove support for the NSU, which should rather be awarded a key role in current developments where a Nordic tradition, in continuous regeneration is of great value to the surrounding countries as well as globally.

Professor Alenka Zupančič

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