

PhD Council announces PhD fellowships within educational research with a focus on primary and lower secondary school

Call 2025

The PhD Council calls for PhD proposals within educational research with a focus on primary and lower secondary school (folkeskolen)

In 2011, the Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation appointed a PhD Council to award PhD fellowships within educational research focusing on primary and lower secondary school. The council has a total of DKK 35 million available for PhD fellowships in 2025.

The PhD projects must focus on practice-relevant research for primary and lower secondary school with a view to improving learning outcomes for all pupils. The projects must be organised in collaboration with university colleges and universities. The PhD fellows must be able to teach at the university colleges and to engage in research and development in the educational field, both during and after their fellowship.

The PhD projects must include issues of particular interest to the Danish primary and lower secondary school. Projects which address current challenges facing the Danish primary and lower secondary school are welcomed.

The following themes, which can be used to frame projects, are highlighted as examples:

- The school and its surrounding environment
- Changes in school organisation
- The students in the school
- Vocational teachers in the school
- Subjects and didactics in the school
- Digital practices

Interdisciplinary applications and applications within other fields are also welcome.

The applications must demonstrate the connection between the research question on the one hand and the design and method on the other. Emphasis is placed on applications with a generally relevant research question and theoretical and methodological originality that engage critically with existing research. The PhD council encourages the use of quantitative methods when justified by the research question.

The PhD fellowships are expected to commence on 1 January 2026.

The offering of stipends is dependent on the economic scope in 2025 subject to the 2025 Finance Act, which is not passed until the end of 2024.

Objectives

The overall objective is to improve the learning outcome of all pupils in primary and lower secondary school and, in this way, their prerequisites for further education and employment. This can be achieved, for example, by strengthening subject-specific didactic knowledge and capacity and by improving educational and social-pedagogical competencies.

The goal of the specific initiative is to ensure a high-level academic foundation for the teaching programmes (the teacher-training programme and the social educator programme) at university colleges by educating PhD fellows who can teach at these colleges.

Evaluation criteria

- The research quality and feasibility of the project
- The relevance of the PhD project in relation to the overall objective of the PhD Council
- The PhD project's plan for making the project relevant to the field of practice and for transferring knowledge through education, dissemination or development activities.
- The PhD applicant's reflections on the ethical considerations particularly relevant to the project
- The academic basis of the project at the university and the university college
- The PhD applicant's qualifications

Who can apply?

Only named PhD applicants can apply. PhD projects and applications must be prepared in collaboration with at least one university college and one university. The university will be responsible for the PhD grant and for enrolling the PhD student in a graduate school. At the time of application, advance approval for the enrolment of the PhD student at a PhD school must have been obtained.

Affiliation with the university and university college

It must be clearly stated in the application that the PhD project is affiliated with both an active research environment at the university and an active knowledge and development environment at the university college. The application must also outline how the university and the university college will facilitate the necessary methodological approaches in the PhD project and how the knowledge transfer from the PhD project will take place.

Financial framework

The grant for each PhD fellowship may be a maximum of DKK 1.99 million for a three-year fellowship. This amount includes the PhD student's salary, travel expenses, the education subsidy and a 44% overhead.

In addition to the fellowships, it is possible to apply for a relatively small research grant, since the PhD project can be carried out in connection with a larger research project directly connected to the individual PhD project. It is also possible to apply for a relatively small amount of compensation for participating upper-secondary schools (or other institutions) that incur significant extra expenses as a result of the research project.

Application

The application must be submitted online via:

<https://phdraadetforuddannelsesforskning.grant.nu/profile/>

Access to the portal will be available on January 30th 2025, at the latest.

The appendix template and application guide can be downloaded from the website via:

www.phdraadetforuddannelsesforskning.dk

The deadline for applications is Wednesday 14th of May 2025 at 12.00 noon.

Applicants will receive an email as confirmation of receipt immediately after their application is received.

All submitted applications will be assessed by an international assessment committee, and applicants can expect to be notified of the committee's decision in November 2025.

Contact

Further information is available from the PhD Council:

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More information

The PhD Council is responsible for administering the grants. The council's secretariat function is located at Aarhus University. The PhD Council will hold information meetings for all interested parties in 2025: in Aarhus on January 27th at 1-3pm and in Copenhagen on February 4th at 1-3pm. The meetings will be in Danish only. More information about these meetings is available on the council's website:

www.phdraadetforuddannelsesforskning.dk

Learn more about the PhD Council and the Globalisation Pool for Research 2011-2012, which supports the awarding of PhD scholarships, by visiting the website: www.phdraadetforuddannelsesforskning.dk