

About being a researcher contact for a junior researcher

About Projekt Forskerspírer (The Junior Researchers Project)

The Junior Researchers Project is a Danish project for Danish students in the upper-secondary education programmes. The project gives talented students an opportunity to immerse themselves in a certain subject and prepare a short, written proposal for a research project, with the support of a researcher.

The project has been running since 1998. It is financed by The Ministry of Children and Education and The Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education. The University of Copenhagen oversees the day-to-day coordination of the project while Aarhus University is a close collaborator.

The Junior Researchers Project covers every possible research area. The areas are classified into four categories: Humanities (HUM), Social Sciences (SAMF), Natural Sciences (NAT) and Health and Medical Sciences (SUND). The project takes the form of a competition with a winner in each category. The winner is awarded 20.000 DKK which may be spend conducting the project described. Every year approximately 150 students from all of Denmark participate in the project.

The student's research projects

The junior researcher is asked to prepare a research design (a synopsis) on approximately 5 pages (2.500 words). In the synopsis the project's thesis should be described using different academic arguments, describing the chosen method, theory, literature, empirical data and process.

What is expected of the researcher?

Every junior researcher is to find a researcher contact within their field who can give advice during the process from around May/June until the hand-in by the end of October. A researcher contact gives advice on literature, different angles from which the junior researcher can approach the project's theme, narrowing down the thesis, etc. The contact between researcher and junior researcher usually comprises one personal meeting and a couple of e-mails and telephone calls. The exact procedure depends on what the researcher and the junior researcher agree on. Thus, it can be beneficial for the involved parties to match their expectations. It is usually a giving experience to be a researcher contact to a highly motivated student who may end up pursuing a career as a researcher one day.

The student also has a coordinator (a teacher) at their school, who helps the student in the day-to-day process, initiates meetings and provide them with the necessary practical information.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact The Junior Researchers Project-team at the University of Copenhagen by e-mail: forskerspírer@adm.ku.dk.