



**DANMARKS FRIE
FORSKNINGSFOND**
INDEPENDENT RESEARCH
FUND DENMARK

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2025**

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INDEPENDENT RESEARCH FUND DENMARK

PROVIDES funding through open competition to promote original, researcher-driven ideas in Danish research.

ADVISES the Minister for Education and Research, the Government and the Danish Parliament.

FUNDED researcher-initiated and groundbreaking research ideas with DKK 2.1 billion in 2025.

OF THIS, approximately DKK 783 million was AWARDED in 2025 to politically determined themes, including: "Strengthened clinical and independent research" and "Green research".



**DANMARKS FRIE
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INDEPENDENT RESEARCH
FUND DENMARK

Number
of grants

525

Amount
awarded

2.1 mia. kr.

Number of
applications

4,553

Amount
applied

19.4 mia. kr.

Success rate,
applications

12%

Success rate,
amount

11%

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH IS THE FOUNDATION: 525 NEW IDEAS SUPPORTED IN 2025

The Independent Research Fund Denmark works to promote quality, innovation and independence in Danish research. In 2025, the Fund supported 525 new ideas with total funding of DKK 2.1 billion. All of these ideas stem from researchers' curiosity and academic ambition. These independent, researcher-driven ideas are crucial, both for research itself and for society's ability to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing world. Without the freedom to explore, we risk finding only what we have already planned to look for. Independent, bottom-up researcher-driven research across all scientific disciplines, from the humanities to the technical sciences, is essential.

TRUST IN IDEAS

In autumn 2025, the Fund therefore welcomed the government's strategic priorities for research and innovation 2026–2029. The strategy reflects key long-term priorities within the green transition, security and life sciences, while also recognising the importance of foundational, researcher-driven research across all major scientific disciplines.

The 2026 research reserve also includes targeted funding for independent research, including the Sapere Aude programme, which supports particularly talented researchers, The Inge Lehmann Pro-

gramme, which promotes diversity, as well as increased funding for the Fund's other instruments and both new and established politically determined themes. I regard these initiatives as a clear expression of confidence in researchers' own ideas and in the principle that independent research is indispensable. Without it, we lose the ability to create the unexpected: the insights and breakthroughs that may later form the foundation for entirely new fields of research and industries.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH – IN DENMARK AND GLOBALLY

Independent research is international by nature. It develops through Nordic, European and global collaboration. We are making strong progress in strengthening and establishing partnerships within the Horizon programmes, NordForsk and with other valued partners. We can also see that half of the Fund's 2025 Sapere Aude grant recipients have backgrounds from outside Denmark, clearly demonstrating how much Danish research benefits from openness. Danish research simply would not be the same without exchange with the wider world.

It was a pleasure to contribute to a successful Danish Presidency of the EU during the second half of 2025, during which the Fund,

among other things, participated in a conference on experiences from implementing the principles underlying the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA). In this connection, it was announced that a Danish CoARA National Chapter had been established, for which DFF serves as co-chair together with the Villum Foundation and Aalborg University. The work on the Fund's assessment processes and CV template became firmly established in 2025 and will continue in 2026, including through bias training and revised assessment criteria reflecting the CoARA principles and the Fund's objectives.

Without the freedom to explore, we risk finding only what we have already planned to look for.

PRESSURE AND PRIORITISATION

Over a number of years, the Fund has experienced a significant increase in the number of applications, and 2025 was yet another record year, with a very high num-

ber of applications and intensified competition. Unfortunately, this means that many high-quality projects must be rejected. This sustained pressure has formed the background to a long-term effort to revise the Fund's legislative framework.

The new Act was adopted at the end of 2025 and provides better opportunities to ensure a more sustainable application process. Among other things, the Fund will in future be able to limit the number of applications an individual researcher may submit and the number of active grants a researcher may hold. At the Fund, we greatly appreciate that these needs have been addressed through the legislative amendment introduced at political level. It is hoped that the amendment will also mean that the research community spends less time on applications that have no realistic prospect of receiving funding and more time on research itself.

At the same time, the Fund's secretariat continues to operate with a high level of professionalism and efficiency, from June 2025 onwards with improved facilities at WoodHub, the Danish state's new office hub in Odense. The secretariat is also affected by the requirements imposed by the government work programme. Against this background, the Board of Directors has

decided to prioritise the Fund's resources more sharply. This includes, among other things, a reduction in the number of funding instruments and a more targeted use of external assessment.

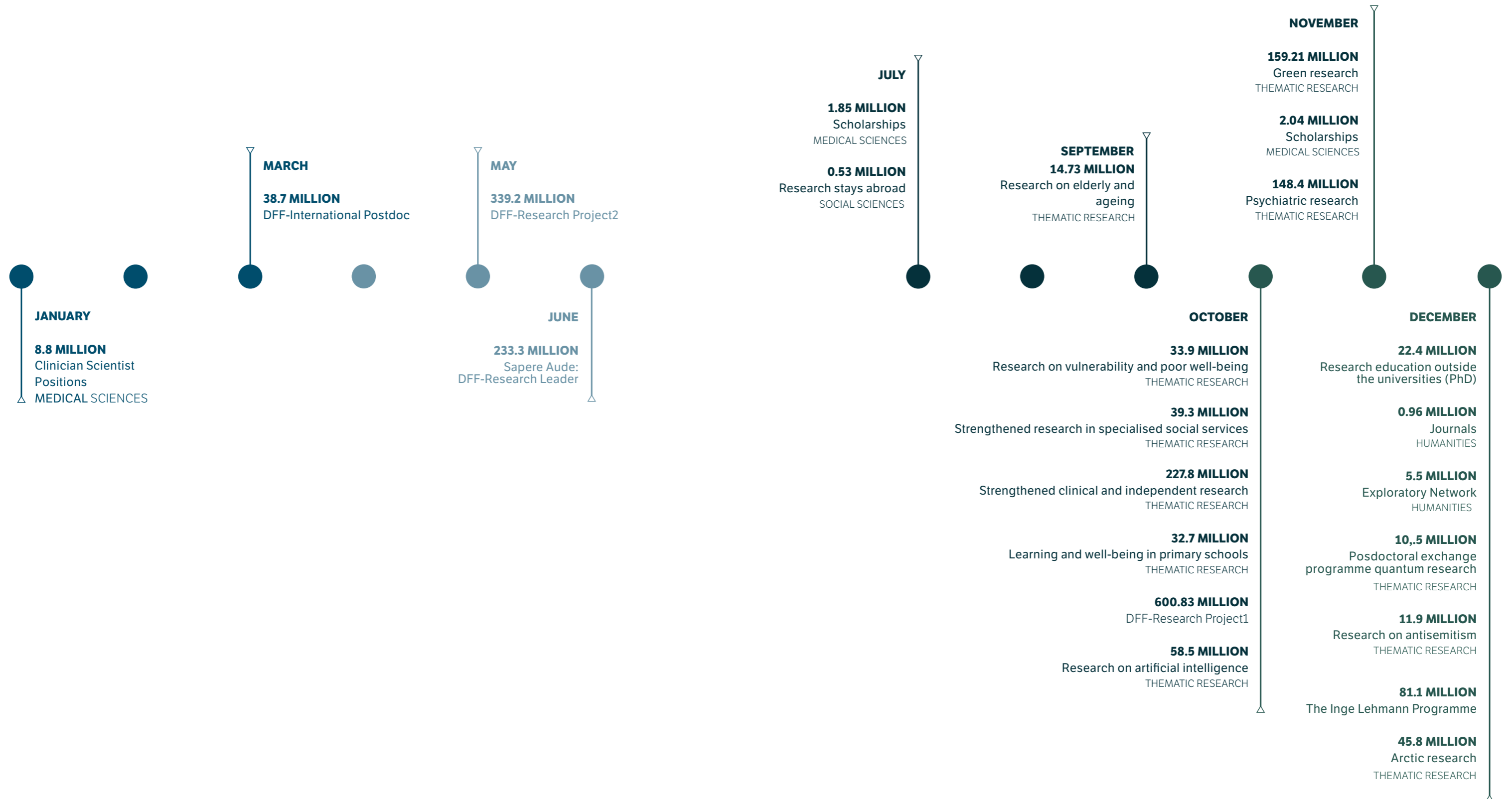
Thank you to everyone who contributed to the advancement of independent research in 2025. My hope is that the political focus on academic freedom will continue in 2026, and that opportunities for researchers to obtain support for their own original ideas will continue to be strengthened, so that we gain even more ideas we did not foresee; ideas that surprise, challenge and at times even unsettle us — for the benefit of society and all of us.



S. Serritzlew
Professor Søren Serritzlew
Chair of the Board

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the advancement of independent research in 2025. My hope is that the political focus on academic freedom will continue in 2026, and that opportunities for researchers to obtain support for their own original ideas will continue to be strengthened.

GRANT AWARDS IN 2025



STRENGTHENING EUROPE THROUGH INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

The future of independent research from a Danish, Nordic and European perspective was debated at the research conference in November 2025. It became clear that Europe's strength depends not only on investment in strategic technological fields, but also on creativity, curiosity and courage – the qualities that characterise independent research.

The conference brought together stakeholders from across the research system and focused on independent research as a cornerstone of a strong and resilient Europe. The Chair of Independent Research Fund Denmark, Søren Serritzlew, welcomed participants and emphasised in his opening remarks that independent research is crucial to society's ability to understand and respond to change in a rapidly moving world. "Precisely because independent research creates space for ideas that cannot be predicted or programmed, it contributes both to scientific quality, societal resilience and Europe's ability to remain open, knowledge-based and democratic", he said, among other things, in his opening address.

In a subsequent discussion with Søren Serritzlew on the future of European research, the Minister for Higher Education and Science, Christina Egelund, highlighted the need for long-term strategic priorities within critical technologies such as quantum, space and AI research, combined with increased independent research and innova-

tion funding for high-risk research and entrepreneurship. She also emphasised that academic freedom and democratic values must continue to form the foundation of European research and innovation.

LITERARY INSPIRATION, TALENTED RESEARCHERS AND THE DANISH IMPACT OF THE DRAGHI REPORT

A different perspective was introduced by author Peter Adolphsen, who, through an essay on yet-to-be-invented inventions, unthought thoughts and sudden insights, drew connections between art and research. Both the author and the researcher, he pointed out, search for what has not yet been articulated and must have the courage to explore and challenge their own ignorance.



Lively debate among the panel on stage about the significance of the Draghi Report for the future Danish research landscape.

These themes were carried forward in the panel debate entitled "What does the Draghi report mean for the future of the Danish research landscape?" The panel consisted of Professor Andreas Hougaard Laustsen-Kiel from DTU, Chair of Universities Denmark Brian Bech Nielsen, spokesperson for the Young Academy Kristina Bakkær Simonsen, Vice-Chair of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters Mette Birkedal Bruun, and author Peter Adolphsen. The debate covered a wide range of topics, and participants from the audience also actively joined the discussion.

As a celebratory highlight, the morning concluded with a tribute to the researchers who received a Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader grant in 2025. The grants are awarded to talented early-career researchers from across the scientific landscape who have delivered world-class research within their respective fields. The tribute underlined the Fund's long-term focus on strengthening independent research driven by researchers with academic courage and original ideas capable of advancing Danish world-class research, even in a changing world.

There was both lively debate and attentive listening as participants themselves discussed the challenges and opportunities facing research in Denmark.



ROYAL PARTICIPATION IN CELEBRATION OF ORIGINAL RESEARCH

The Fund's patron, Her Majesty also took part when three of this year's Sapere Aude recipients presented insights into their research, ranging from hormonal physiology with therapeutic potential, to language technology and trust in artificial intelligence, and new approaches to mentalisation among expectant parents. The presentations demonstrated both academic breadth and curiosity-driven research at a high international level.

The keynote address of the day was delivered by Mari Sundli Tveit, Chief Executive of the Research Council of Norway and President of Science Europe, who focused on whether there is a distinct Nordic response to the recommendations of the Draghi Report. Among other things, she pointed out that, in a global competitive environment, we should safeguard and prioritise shared Nordic strengths such as trust, quality and research freedom.

“That is why Independent Research Fund Denmark exists: to support ideas that cannot be predicted or programmed — ideas that surprise, challenge and sometimes even unsettle us”.

Søren Serritzlew in his opening address at the conference.



The Fund's patron, Her Majesty the Queen, attended the conference and presented the Original Idea of the Year award.



Minister for Higher Education and Science Christina Egelund shared her views on the future of European research.

RESEARCH INTO HISTORICAL ESCAPE ATTEMPTS WON ORIGINAL IDEA OF THE YEAR

The conference culminated in the presentation of the Original Idea of the Year award, which was presented by the Fund's patron, Her Majesty the Queen, together with the Chair of the Board of Directors, Søren Serritzlew, and Lone Koefoed Hansen, Chair of the Humanities Research Council. The award was presented to historian Johan Heinsen from Aalborg University, whose research focuses on historical attempts to escape from the state and employers.

Modern people constantly leave traces of themselves behind, and today it is almost impossible to disappear from the gaze of the state and society. But this was not always the case. Using artificial intelligence, Johan Heinsen identifies people who, during the period

1750–1850, attempted to escape military service, imprisonment or exploitative employers, and traces their paths through life. Heinsen's project “Run Away: Coercion and Autonomy c. 1800”, explores how social control was both enforced and challenged during the period in which the Danish state was taking shape — and what the fact that people could disappear in the past can tell us about the present day in which we live. It was precisely for this reason that the project was highlighted as particularly original.

Through professional discussion, reflection and celebration of original ideas and talented researchers, the conference painted a vivid picture of how independent and curiosity-driven research across all scientific disciplines forms the foundation for new knowledge, technology and insight. These are the very things that enable us to

respond to changes in the world, both now and in the future.

“How can we understand what a state is and does by examining the strategies people used to escape from it? By combining humanities-based analysis with new digital methods, the project investigates the traces people left behind precisely through their attempts to disappear”.

Lone Koefoed Hansen in her speech presenting the Original Idea of the Year award.

ORIGINAL IDEA OF THE YEAR

WHEN YOU COULD DISAPPEAR



With the help of artificial intelligence, it is now possible to trace Danes who fled from the state or their employers in the 18th and 19th centuries far more effectively than ever before. This opens up entirely new perspectives for understanding the Danish state and its development. The research project – and the mind behind it, Johan Heinsen – was named Original Idea of the Year 2025 by Independent Research Fund Denmark.

In the late summer of 1773, a man in his mid-twenties was working on a farm in Slagslunde in North Zealand. He had just arrived in the area, and he found it easy to find work, for he was good with his scythe.

The man's name was Henrik Eilers, he was born in Sweden and ran away from the Swedish army. At least that's what he told the inhabitants of Slagslunde.

Johan Heinsen, professor at the Department of Politics and Society at Aalborg University, knows the story of Henrik Eilers very well. With the

help of technology, Johan Heinsen uses completely new methods to create a picture of how the runaways of the time fled and tried to create a new life for themselves. Specifically, in the period 1750 to 1850.

The research is awarded as Original Idea of the Year 2024 by Independent Research Fund Denmark.

"As modern people, we know that we can't just disappear. If people break out of a prison today, for example, they are almost always found again. But at the beginning of the period that I am investigating, it is actually

possible to disappear on Danish soil and become someone else. And when the period ends in 1850, it has become almost impossible," explains Johan Heinsen, adding:

"So it is during this period that the modern state that we live in today is created. And by that I mean the state where our legal identity kind of binds us, so we can't just wander off. The idea of trying to see what people do when they run away is to try to find out how that development takes place."

With thousands of newspaper advertisements, court documents and other material about the runaways of the time, research will try to map escapes. Where do you fail? What can you succeed with depending on who you are? What difference does it make whether you have money on hand or something to sell?

ESCAPED SERVANTS AND APPRENTICES WERE WANTED IN THE NEWSPAPER

In 1773 in Slagslunde, the locals saw no reason to report Henrik Eilers. The weight of his crime was not really transferred across the border. More importantly, he had offered to work, and his labor was needed.

The farmer Jens Nielsen was quick to hire Henrik Eilers. He worked and lived as part of Jens Nielsen's household for a year and a half, before another farmer took over him in a position as kind of an overseer with simple management tasks during the work in the field.

Five selected groups of people are particularly under scrutiny in Johan Heinsen's research. Namely, soldiers, convicts, servants, apprentices and tenant farmers.

Common to all of them is that data has only been created about them when they have been captured or wanted in connection with an escape.

Servants and apprentices, for example, were wanted to a large extent in the newspaper in the latter half of the 1700s. It was a time when there were not yet many police, so the newspaper became an important tool.

"Sometimes we can see that it is the same person who is wanted over and over again. Sometimes the wanted per-

son also responds back. There are examples of wanted people placing an ad where they say something like I had the right to run away because I was beaten by my master. Or that they deny having stolen something that they have been accused of," says Johan Heinsen.

In total, Johan Heinsen's research group has succeeded in finding approximately 10,000 newspaper ads about runaways from the period.

DIGITISING IMAGES FROM MICROFILM USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

In June 1776, Henrik Eiler's master asked him to take a carriage and drive the approximately 30 kilometers to Copenhagen with some firewood. After delivering the goods at the capital's port, he began his journey home, but never reached the city gates.

At a square called Kultorvet, he was discovered by Ole Svendsen, a man from the small coastal village of Rungsted, north of Copenhagen. He knew Eilers, but not like Henrik Eilers. He had probably known him since he was only a child. Henrik Eilers was not Swedish. He was born and raised in Rungsted. His real name was Bertel Henriksen.

Obtaining data for historical research is usually a huge task. One of the things that makes Johan Heinsen's research project original is that it rests on modern techniques.

In collaboration with three colleagues, he has helped develop artificial intelligence that in a very short time is able to re-digitise, for example, the newspapers that the Royal Danish Library has already made easily accessible by photographing them and making them searchable on the internet using the library's Mediestream.

However, the artificial intelligence is much better at recognizing the words on the newspaper pages, with 95 percent accuracy, and so far, more than half a million newspaper pages have been re-digitised. Which makes it much easier to search for specific words or phrases in the large amounts of text.

"The newspapers are fantastic because they are an everyday medium. But they have not been used very much because the material has been so difficult to access for several reasons. For example, because it was originally digitised from older microfilm, which reproduces the text in low-resolution images," explains Johan Heinsen.

OUR OWN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STATE WAS CREATED AROUND THE YEAR 1800

The name Bertel Henriksen brought disgrace with it. He was a former peasant who had been sentenced to life as a convict labourer for the state. On his back were the scars from the public flogging he had received before he was chained and put in the so-called slave garb worn by convicts.

The convicts came from all sectors, but were forced to do manual work in connection with the construction and maintenance of military infrastructure. They wore chains all the time, primarily as a way to identify them if they ran. Now, in 1776, Bertel Henriksen was put in a new set of chains.

When Johan Heinsen looks at an account of an escape, he breaks it down into actions as part of his research. For example, it is an action if he can read in an interrogation that a soldier has left his uniform in a ditch during his escape. Or if he meets a stranger and asks for bread.

In this way, it becomes possible to form an impression of what actually made an escape possible in the period between 1750 and 1850.

In this way, Johan Heinsen hopes that the three-year research project, which is scheduled to run until the end of 2027, can create a new image of the state of Denmark.

"I would like to gain a new understanding of what it is that shapes the Danish state. When you have looked at the Danish state during this period, you have usually looked a lot at the legislation. This is understandable, because it has been easily accessible. But we can see that the legislation does not bind equally everywhere. The way you should act is valid if you are close enough to the state power. That is, out to Roskilde in the west and down to Køge in the south," he says and continues:

"But outside the state power, we can see, for example, that even though it is illegal to help a beggar, people do it anyway, especially in the countryside. And if you are a fisherman, you are not allowed to ferry a stranger across. But there are some contexts where people do it anyway, and we can see that there is an economy in it. So we want to find out how this reality arises."

THE THIRD SET OF CHAINS

Back in Copenhagen Slavery, Bertel Henriksen waited two years. He saw fellow inmates come and go while keeping a low profile. Because flight was so common and because he had committed no further crimes during the flight, it was eventually forgotten.

He succeeded in obtaining a forged passport, and on 9 August 1778 Bertel Henriksen again managed to escape. With the passport, he looked at his chances and returned to Slagslunde. Here he engaged his former employer Jens Nielsen, who hired him again, just as he had done when he was still Henrik Eilers. But at the end of August, perhaps when the workload after the harvest began to lighten, Jens Nielsen and another man apprehended Bertel Henriksen and handed him over. Perhaps Nielsen had known all along that Henriksen had not escaped legally, and that the passport was fake.

Bertel Henriksen was put in a third set of chains. They were his last. Ten years later, he died of illness in prison, about 40 years old.

In the present, Johan Lund Heinsen looks forward to uncovering as many aspects as possible of the runaways of the time.

Denmark's geography, for example, also left its own mark on the state in the latter half of the 1700s and the first half of the 1800s. Not least Little Belt, Great Belt and the Sound presented special challenges for runners. In addition, there were a number of upheavals during the period, such as population growth, urbanisation and deforestation, which among other things could make it more difficult to hide in the landscape.

"The period stands for the creation of the state in which we live today. We cannot disappear and we cannot become someone else. That reality has become completely

natural to us, but it hasn't always been. The relationship we have with the state today is created here," Johan Heinsen emphasises.

"But outside the state power, we can see, for example, that even though it is illegal to help a beggar, people do it anyway, especially in the countryside. And if you are a fisherman, you are not allowed to ferry a stranger across. But there are some contexts where people do it anyway, and we can see that there is an economy in it. So we want to find out how this reality arises."



Her Majesty the Queen presented the award to Johan Heinsen at the fund's research conference in her capacity as patron of Independent Research Fund Denmark.

ABOUT JOHAN HEINSEN

Johan Heinsen grew up in Skagen as the son of a school teacher and a dock worker. He currently lives in the Aarhus suburb of Egå with his girlfriend and two children.

He is a professor and research group leader in social history at the Department of Politics and Society at Aalborg University, where he also graduated.

In his spare time, Johan Heinsen plays guitar and likes to watch basketball at night while coding data.

ABOUT THE ORIGINAL IDEA OF THE YEAR AWARD

The award is given to a researcher who, in the past year, has put forward a great research idea that demonstrates a high degree of originality – whether that be in its subject choice, approach or methodology.

2026 marked the sixth year that the fund awarded this prize for the best original idea of the year. The prize consists of an artwork. Independent Research Fund Denmark's fundamental idea behind the award is to celebrate original thinking that is crucial to promoting Danish research.

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH FUND DENMARK'S REASONING FOR THE AWARD

The idea is as original as it is compelling: The project is an excellent example of the revolution currently taking place in the humanities through the use of digital methods. It offers an original approach to writing history by asking new questions that highlight the breakthroughs occurring in digital humanities, as well as a theme – social control – that remains highly relevant today.

HOW DO WE ENSURE THAT ETHICS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE GO HAND IN HAND IN PUBLIC HEALTHCARE?

GRANT 2025 | DFF-Thematic: **Artificial Intelligens**, Anne Gerdes, University of Southern Denmark

Public healthcare can achieve high efficiency by using artificial intelligence. But it creates a great need to deal with the ethical problems that go with it. A new research project will help promote ethically responsible use and development of artificial intelligence.

Artificial intelligence, AI, is already part of everyday life in public healthcare, where it can relieve healthcare professionals and help improve diagnostics and treatment. However, technological advances also pose ethical challenges.

Therefore, it is important to prepare thoroughly before artificial intelligence is used. A new research project will investigate how artificial intelligence affects healthcare practice. There is a special focus on ethics.

"Society will benefit from the research because the project provides knowledge about how we can promote ethically responsible development and use of artificial intelligence within Danish public healthcare," says Anne Gerdes, Professor at the Department of Design, Media and Educational Science at the University of Southern Denmark (SDU) and leader of the Center for AI Ethics.

PLACING PATIENTS AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS FIRST

The research project consists of three interrelated parts. The first part examines patients' values and perspectives on artificial intelligence. The second part looks at how the responsibility and professional judgment of healthcare professionals are affected when artificial intelligence is in play. The third part focuses on how AI systems can be developed ethically and responsibly.

The patient perspective is based on breast cancer screenings that are offered to all women in Denmark over the age of 50.

From the end of 2025, artificial intelligence will become a regular part of the screening process in the Region of Southern Denmark, where the research project will be carried out. Previously, two imaging specialists had to review screening images, and in the future, AI will be involved in the process together with the doctors.

The research project will investigate how this technological development is experienced and understood from the patients' perspective.

Here, a PhD student will explore ethical questions and interview screened women about their concerns regarding AI assessment.

"The patients' voices must be included. Their perspectives contribute to AI being developed and implemented in a fair and responsible manner in public healthcare," Anne Gerdes elaborates.

But AI can also have consequences for healthcare professionals' clinical judgment.

"If you outsource many normal images to an AI algorithm, it may become difficult in the long run for radiologists to see enough images to maintain their skills," says Anne Gerdes.

Therefore, the second part of the project addresses what AI means for healthcare professionals. This part of the project is also linked to existing research projects that explore the potential of AI technology for X-ray diagnostics at Odense University Hospital (OUH).

"AI can improve workflows for the benefit of patients and staff. But when AI is introduced, accountability and professional judgment must still remain paramount," Anne Gerdes emphasizes.

WANTS TO EMBRACE BOTH AI DEVELOPERS AND CLINICIANS

The third and final part of the project builds on the results from the previous parts and aims to promote the development of tools that can support the responsible development of AI systems.

Here, the PhD student will investigate how to develop guidelines and tools so that they can support interdisciplinary teams of clinicians and AI developers during the development of AI solutions that are professionally robust and ethically sound.

It also draws on an AI tool developed under the leadership of doctor and PhD student Frederik Duedahl.

"I hope that we can create a good insight into the ethical issues that exist in connection with artificial intelligence in Danish public healthcare. And that we gain knowledge about how guidelines and tools to proactively develop ethically responsible artificial intelligence can be produced so that they support interdisciplinary teams as much as possible," says Anne Gerdes and continues:

"Because that is one of the big hurdles. There are a lot of tools for responsible development of AI systems, but they often have to be used in interdisciplinary teams, where clinicians and computer scientists have different insights into the field. The challenge is to get common ground."

So, the hope is to improve the tools available for responsible development of AI systems so that they support the development work in the best possible way.

In addition to Anne Gerdes, the project group consists of Benjamin Schnack Rasmussen, Clinical Research Manager at the Centre for Clinical Artificial Intelligence at SDU, and doctor and PhD student Frederik Duedahl.

INTRUMENT
DFF-Thematic Research

POLITICAL THEME
Artificial intelligens

RECIPIENT
Anne Gerdes

INSTITUTION
University of Southern Denmark

PROJECT
Responsible Artificial Intelligence
in Danish Healthcare

GRANT
3.694.554 kr.



WHAT HAS 'FLORA DANICA' MEANT FOR DENMARK AS A NATION?

GRANT 2025 | Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader, Christoffer Basse Eriksen, Aarhus University

The publication of a series of volumes featuring pictures of the nation's plants may seem like an uncontroversial enterprise. But in the 1700s and 1800s, it was an innovative manifestation of what should be understood as Danish. A research project will show us how.

Flora Danica'. For most Danes, these two words are probably associated with the prestigious and quite expensive tableware from Royal Copenhagen.

In fact, however, the tableware was created on the basis of a book also called 'Flora Danica', which was published in the years 1761 to 1883 supported by the Danish state.

"The volumes simply consisted of drawings of plants that were printed and hand-coloured, and which were then circulated both internally in Denmark in the various parishes and dioceses. But also around Europe to different people to whom it was believed that such a gift would serve different strategic purposes," says Christoffer Basse Eriksen, postdoc at the Centre for Science Studies at Aarhus University.

With a Sapere Aude grant from Independent Research Fund Denmark as support, he will now begin to investigate what role 'Flora Danica' played in relation to the assertion of Denmark's sovereignty over the kingdom's territories.

"The primary thing that the project examines is the history of publication. What can we find out about the scientific processes that created the work? How did the work of botanical collection take place? Which kinds of book printing and artistic techniques were involved in drawing, engraving and printing these works? And how did this change over the 120 years?," Christoffer Basse Eriksen elaborates.

In addition, he and the two other members of the research group, a PhD student and a postdoc, will visit various Northern European libraries. Here they will conduct a census. This means that they examine the libraries' physical copies of the books.

"The reason why we want to do a census is that we want to identify individual copies of the 'Flora Danica', where

we can see some traces of historical use. That is, we want to see who has owned these books and how they have been read and used. We may be able to see this by looking at marginalia notes, ownership details or other details. We will investigate whether these copies have been coloured in Copenhagen and then shipped to their destination, or whether they have been hand-coloured later. So, we will try to look at what kind of spaces the 'Flora Danica' volumes were able to enter, what kind of people have used them, and for what purposes," Christoffer Basse Eriksen describes.

STARTED AS AN ATTEMPT TO MARKET COPENHAGEN

When the work of creating 'Flora Danica' began in the 1750s, Frederik V was king of Denmark. He was a very party-loving king, so in reality it was his ministers, headed by Adam Gottlob Moltke, who made most of the important decisions in the country.

"What is quite unique about 'Flora Danica' is that it was initiated as part of an attempt to turn Copenhagen into a European capital. In other words, to make it a cultural city, which Copenhagen was not at the time," says Christoffer Basse Eriksen and continues:

"At the same time, it was an attempt by the king and his advisers to establish that it was the state that had authority over knowledge practices in Denmark and knowledge about nature. Therefore, it was also important to publish 'Flora Danica' as a magnificent work and show that the king had the resources and intellectual capacity to present himself as an enlightened monarch."

OVER TIME, THERE WAS A GREATER FOCUS ON SCIENCE

'Flora Danica' was produced as a series of booklets, and over time the nature of the work changed. Christoffer Basse Eriksen therefore divides the research into three parts in the form of the early, the middle and the final period of 'Flora Danica's' creation.

In the middle period, the work was inspired by the Swedish naturalist Carolus Linnaeus. He is known as the man who took the initiative for all species to have a scientific name, consisting of a genus name followed by a species name, for example Homo sapiens.

This means that there was an extra focus on science during this period.

In the early 1800s, there were particularly large disputes in Europe. The Napoleonic Wars led to the loss of Norway, and perhaps 'Flora Danica' helped to maintain Denmark's foothold in Iceland. In any case, the focus was on including the Icelandic flora. The first six volumes of 'Flora Danica' were even sent to the English naturalist and statesman Joseph Banks.

"But especially after the loss of Schleswig-Holstein in 1864, 'Flora Danica' became the framework for studies of local flora in Denmark, where the purpose was to identify the overlooked Danish species. Here, 'Flora Danica' became part of a project of botanical nationalism, where botanists tried to determine all the native species in Denmark based on the idea that there was something special about Danish nature," explains Christoffer Basse Eriksen.

FOCUS ON HOW EUROPE'S STATES BECAME POWERFUL

Although Flora Danica is well known in Denmark, the work is still more or less unknown within international research on the history of science. Christoffer Basse Eriksen hopes that the four-year project can change that.

"The fact that the work is the result of 120 years of continuous botanical work is quite unique. And the fact that it is state-subsidised is also quite special in the period," he says, and emphasizes that from the same period there is, among others, a 'Flora Svecica', a 'Flora Graeca' and a 'Flora Batava' to describe the plants in Sweden, Greece and the Netherlands, respectively.

The link to the present is also clear.

"For various reasons, the time is ripe for us to consider the importance of internal territories in European history and how territorial claims and political sovereignty have been made. For many years, the history of science has been concerned with the global, for example how plant knowledge has come into being by virtue of colonial and impe-

rial networks. I would like to use these methods to investigate how the consolidation of the European nation states took place," says Christoffer Basse Eriksen, adding:

"Here in Denmark, the conversation about what Danish nature really is also enormously pertinent. We are once again talking about what it means to use the land and how we want to divide our territory. This project takes part in that conversation by examining the time when the state began to be able to change the ideas about the landscape and the ideas about the territory through science. 'Flora Danica' plays a part in that story."

'Flora Danica' depicts the species in high detail, highlighting their distinctive features. Shown here are the insect magnet devil's-bit scabious, mousetail commonly found along damp roadsides, common hedgehog fungus growing in coniferous and deciduous forests, and clawed seaweed thriving in the sea.

Photos: The Royal Danish Library



INTRUMENT

Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader

RECIPIENT

Christoffer Basse Eriksen

INSTITUTION

Aarhus University

PROJECT

Sovereign Flowers: Flora Danica and the Emergence of the National Flora, 1750–1900

GRANT

6.173.444 kr.

RARE METAL IS AN OBSTACLE TO USING HYDROGEN AS FUEL FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION

GRANT 2025 | Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader, Rebecca Katharina Pittkowski, University of Copenhagen

When water is split, it can become an easily accessible source of hydrogen. However, there is a need for the process to proceed as efficiently as possible, and for as long as possible. Iridium helps with this, but since it is also a rare element, a research project will look at whether it is possible to use less of it.

Science has known about the possibility of splitting water into oxygen and hydrogen for more than 200 years. In modern times, water as a source of hydrogen, can become important as part of the green transition, where hydrogen can play a role in transforming the chemical industry into a sustainable industry.

»Especially if you use renewable energy for it. Then you have electricity from renewable sources and water to produce hydrogen, and it can then be used to produce a lot of other chemicals. For example, sustainable fuels or fertiliser,« explains Rebecca Pittkowski, assistant professor at the Department of Chemistry at University of Copenhagen.

However, there are various reasons why the splitting of water into oxygen and hydrogen does not yet play a major role in the green transition. One of them is that the process requires a catalyst, and the best known is iridium oxide. But iridium is also one of the rarest elements on the planet. Can we find a way to use less of it?

That is what Rebecca Pittkowski plans to investigate. She has received a Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant from Independent Research Fund Denmark to support her work.

TAKING AN X-RAY OF THE PROCESS

Iridium's key role is that the metal ensures stability in the process. So, if you use less iridium, the catalyst is no longer robust enough. This means that the process uses more and more electrical power and that the hydrogen production cannot be guaranteed over a sufficiently long period of time.

Therefore, Rebecca Pittkowski will literally take an X-ray image of the process. So, as the process progresses, it will be irradiated with high-energy X-rays to provide a nuanced picture of what is going on at a microscopic and atomic level.

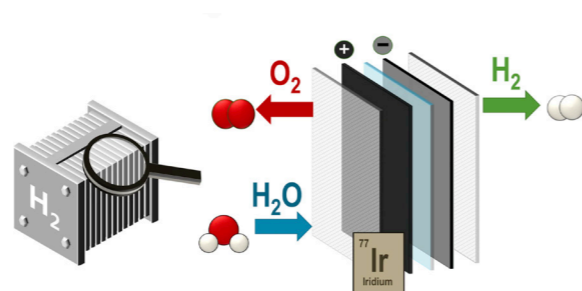
Here, she and the rest of the project group, which will consist of two PhD students, will work with the center for electron acceleration that Lund University in Sweden has at its disposal, named MAX IV.

INSIGHTS MAY ALSO BE USED FOR OTHER TYPES OF CATALYSIS ALL IN ALL, THE PROJECT WILL EXTEND OVER FOUR YEARS.

All in all, the project will extend over four years.

"I hope that by then we will have found a catalyst in which we use much less iridium than is needed right now. It can be a major contribution to the green transition," says Rebecca Pittkowski, adding:

"I would also like to understand the processes that lead us to have less efficiency through the use of the catalyst, so that the splitting of water becomes less efficient. That is, a real in-depth understanding of the stability or instability of catalyst materials. Then you can also look at some other reactions than just water splitting and see how we can combine the different X-ray characterization methods and use it to understand catalysis."



A proton exchange membrane (PEM) electrolyzer contains a stack of membrane electrode assemblies. In each unit there is a positive and negative electrode (anode and cathode), which is separated by the polymer membrane. At the anode, water is converted into oxygen. The protons (H+) migrate through the membrane, and hydrogen is then produced at the cathode.

The most complex step in this process, which also requires the most electricity, is the development of oxygen. A catalyst of iridium oxide is used to speed up this process.

INTRUMENT

Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader

RECIPIENT

Rebecca Katharina Pittkowski

INSTITUTION

University of Copenhagen

PROJECT

Stability of water electrolysis catalysts – StabileCat

GRANT

3.694.554 kr.

FACTS: IRIDIUM IS THE KEY

The actual splitting of the water takes place in a chamber, usually referred to as a cell, which is divided into two parts, separated by a membrane. Electricity is applied to the water in the cell so that oxygen is released in one half and hydrogen in the other.

In order to be able to split water into oxygen and hydrogen, a catalyst is needed that stabilizes the process and reduces the need for electric current as much as possible.

Today, iridium oxide is considered to be the best catalyst. However, since iridium is a rare metal, only about seven tonnes of it is produced per year worldwide. In comparison, it will take about 2.5 tonnes of iridium in Denmark alone to achieve our strategy in this area until 2030, known as the Power-to-X strategy.

CAN OUR INNER VOICE BOTH PROVIDE MOTIVATION AND LEAD TO DEPRESSION?

GRANT 2025 | DFF-Research Project2, Mikkel Wallentin, Aarhus University

An inner voice is for most people an important and inevitable life partner. For some, it does not exist at all. A new research project will delve into the role of the inner voice in our lives and health.

Are you talking to yourself inside your head? The vast majority of us do. In fact, we spend an average of 25 per cent of our waking hours talking to ourselves.

But what role does our inner voice actually play? And what is the consequence for those who experience that they have no inner voice?

"My starting point is that the brain exists to adapt the organism to the environment in which it lives. If you don't have the opportunity to change your behavior, there's no reason to have a brain. Our inner speech is created by the brain and therefore presumably has both a cause and an effect. It's just extremely difficult to investigate, because inner speech is part of our consciousness," says Mikkel Wallentin, professor at the School of Communication and Culture – Cognitive Science at Aarhus University.

With support from Independent Research Fund Denmark, he will try to gain greater insight into our inner voice and its meaning. The tools will be a combination of questionnaires, brain scans and practical exercises, where test subjects will test how the inner voice affects their behaviour.

CAN BOTH HURT AND DO GOOD

Our inner voice can do both good and evil, explains Mikkel Wallentin. If we tell ourselves that things will go badly, it can contribute to psychiatric disorders.

Conversely, the inner voice can also help us stay focused. For example, if we need to solve a task or perform.

"That is exciting and magical in itself, because it requires me and I to be two different people. When we talk to ourselves, we talk to ourselves as if we were someone else. And we link this to the theory we have underneath this whole project, which is that our mind and our brain and our cognitive system consist of different levels that communicate with each other," says Mikkel Wallentin.

The first part of the research project focuses on questionnaire surveys. Here, 1,000 English speakers will be asked questions about their inner voice using an internet-based platform. This means that the participants can theoretically sit anywhere in the world, although the aim is to reach people who have English as their mother tongue.



When researchers measure whether the change in a person's heart rate is due to the inner voice or not, they need to measure whether the change in heart rate is actually due to physical movements. Therefore, it may be necessary to measure separately whether a person is moving. In the picture, this is the task that the sensors, marked with green arrows, solve.

Photo: Mikkel Wallentin

In addition, 300 students at Aarhus University will be presented with a Danish version of the questionnaire. From this group, the plan is to continue working with the university students who, based on the questionnaire survey, seem to have the least and most inner voice, respectively.

The research project is scheduled to last for four years, and two junior researchers will be attached. One is Johanne Krog Nedergaard, a postdoc at the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics at University of Copenhagen. She has many years of experience working with the inner voice and especially people who do not have an inner voice, known as anendophasia.

Among the 300 university students, the research group will continue to work with the 50 who are estimated to use their inner voice the most and the 50 who use it the least.

They will go through scans and their physiology will be examined. This is done, for example, by seeing if the inner voice can change a person's heart rate. If the inner voice can cause stress, it can lead to an unhealthy negative spiral.

CAN HELP PEOPLE WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS IN THE LONG TERM

Physiology can also be studied by looking at the value of the inner voice as a motivating factor. For example, if you are assigned to solve a boring task, such as pressing a button every time a cross appears on the screen you have been set to stare at.

If your inner voice can keep your focus, you should be able to react fairly quick.

"I would like to know if those who say they have no inner voice cannot actually talk to themselves, or if they just do not do it," says Mikkel Wallentin about his hopes for the overall project.

At the same time, he wants to help map the importance of the inner voice for our well-being.

"If we can understand the importance of the inner voice for psychiatric disorders in the long term, we will be able to treat psychiatric disorders differently from person to person. We already know that psychiatric disorders are extremely heterogeneous, so my depression is not the same as another person's depression on all parameters. If we can tell the difference between people's inner speech preferences, we will also be better able to help," Mikkel Wallentin emphasizes.

Finally, he has a tip if you feel that your inner voice is getting a little too much space: Count to 100 inside your head, it blocks your inner voice.

INTRUMENT
DFF-Research Project2

RECIPIENT
Mikkel Wallentin

INSTITUTION
Aarhus University

PROJECT
IN•SPE: Inner speech frequency and valence

GRANT
6.191.942 kr.

HOW DOES EXTREME WEATHER AFFECT OUR BEHAVIOUR?

GRANT 2025 | DFF-Research Project1, Vedran Sekara, IT-Universitetet i København

When the climate changes, we change our behaviour, but science is still unsure of exactly how. A new research project will try to map how we change our movement patterns under extreme weather conditions created by climate change.

The climate is changing. Researchers find it difficult to say exactly how much, when and how, but it is certain that we will all have to adapt to it. But how do we actually react when the climate suddenly changes, as we are already experiencing today?

We don't know much about this, but a new research project will, with support from Independent Research Fund Denmark, try to look at a central topic. Namely, how extreme weather affects how we move around and try to create knowledge that can be used in future climate scenarios.

"We want to empirically understand how people change their behaviour so that we can build statistical models that can give us insight into how we behave, so that we are ready to deal with the even more extreme climate changes of the future. In this way, we would like to try to give politicians data-driven methods to predict what will happen to our behaviour if the temperature rises by two, three or five degrees," says Vedran Sekara, Associate Professor at the IT University of Copenhagen, who is leading the research, and adds:

"We want to find out how the extreme conditions affect different demographics. That is, mobility in relation to age, gender, whether you are rich or poor, or live in an urban or rural areas."

USING ANONYMISED GPS DATA FROM MOBILE PHONES

In order to be able to follow patterns in the movements of entire societies across the globe, the researchers will make use of anonymised and privacy preserving GPS information from mobile phones.

The GPS information is compared to weather data that is publicly available for the entire globe.

"We want to get a picture of how people behave normally. We would like to compare this with if there is a heat wave and it gets two, five or 10 degrees warmer. How does our behaviour change then?," says Vedran Sekara.

"We don't expect it to be a linear change, but a little more complex behaviour. For example, if the temperature changes so that it becomes one degree warmer. The fact that it will be one degree warmer from 20 to 21 degrees may affect more people going to the beach. Whereas a change from 30 to 31 degrees might make people spend less time outside because it's getting too hot."

Although the research meets all the rules to protect people's privacy, there are certain local restrictions that come into play. In Denmark, for example, the data protection rules are so strict that researchers find it difficult to obtain detailed data.

Instead, data from countries such as the United States, Italy and India are used. This also ensures that the researches can understand the cultural components of behaviour change, and test the generalisability of findings.

THE GOAL IS TO EQUIP DECISION-MAKERS

The research project is planned to extend over three and a half years. In addition to Vedran Sekara himself, a PhD student will be associated with the project, and the research will be conducted in collaboration with behavioural scientists from Copenhagen Business School (CBS) and Leuphana University in Germany.

In addition to the goal of equipping decision-makers, Vedran Sekara hopes that the research can be used to evaluate the attempts to change people's behaviour that have already taken place.

For example, in some places in the United States, people are asked to stay at home or schools are closed when the



INTRUMENT
DFF-Research Project1

RECIPIENT
Vedran Sekara

INSTITUTION
Aarhus University

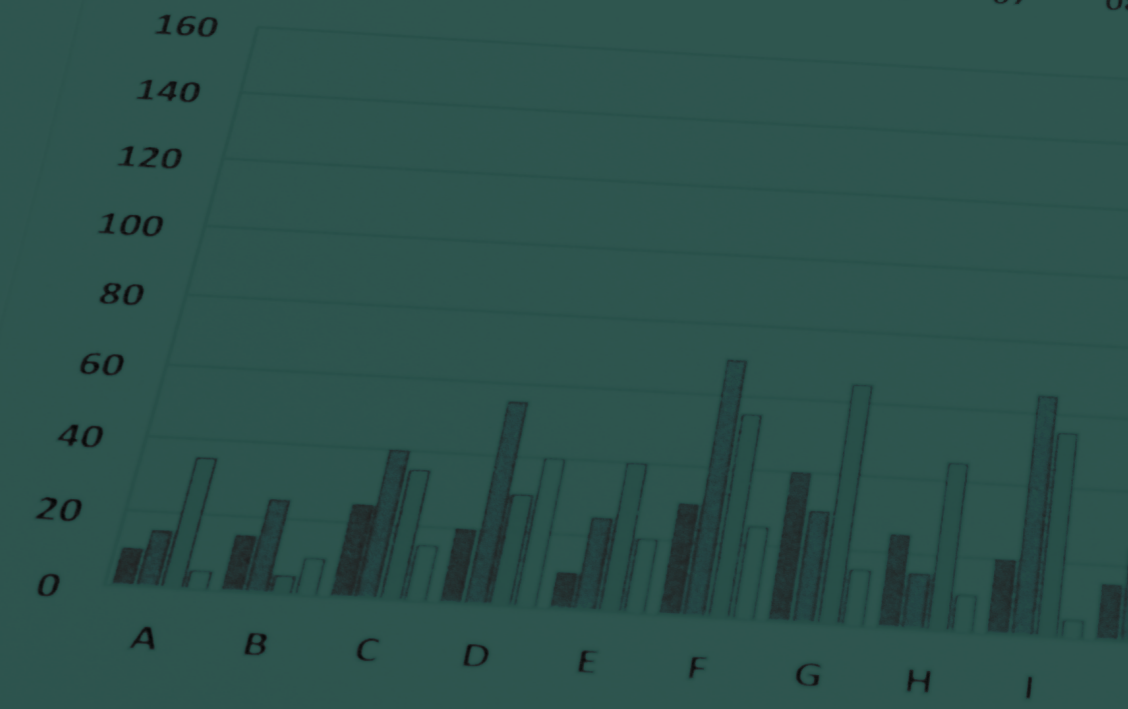
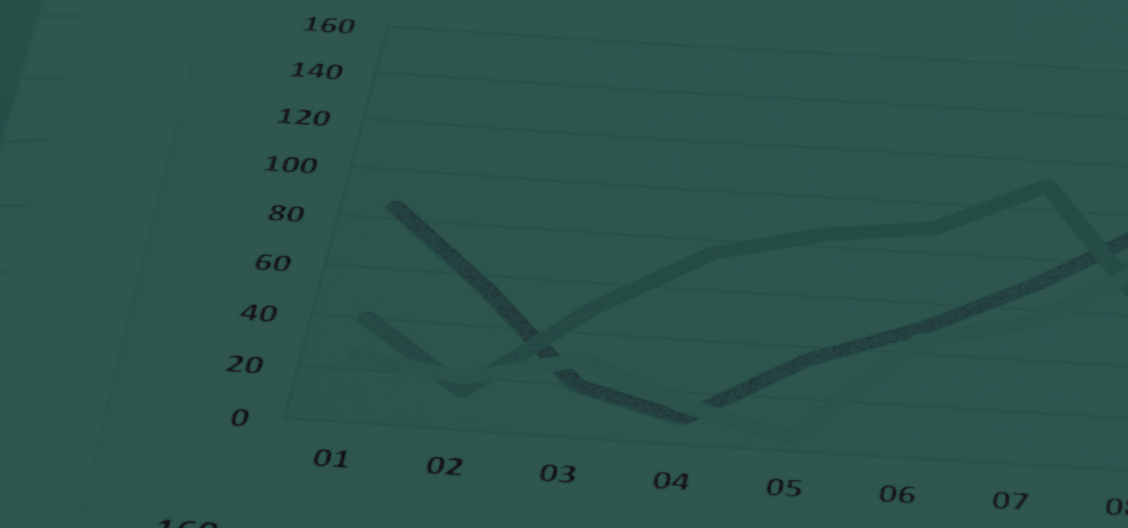
PROJECT
ClimateAdapt: Human adaptability to climate change

GRANT
3.125.883 kr.

authorities assess that the weather will be too hot. The question is what the positive and negative sides of it are, and whether it makes people stay indoors at all.

"We want to give politicians some tools that they can use when it is time for next month to be 10 degrees warmer than usual. So they know how it affects our behaviour and how society will react," Vedran Sekara concludes.

THE FUND IN FIGURES

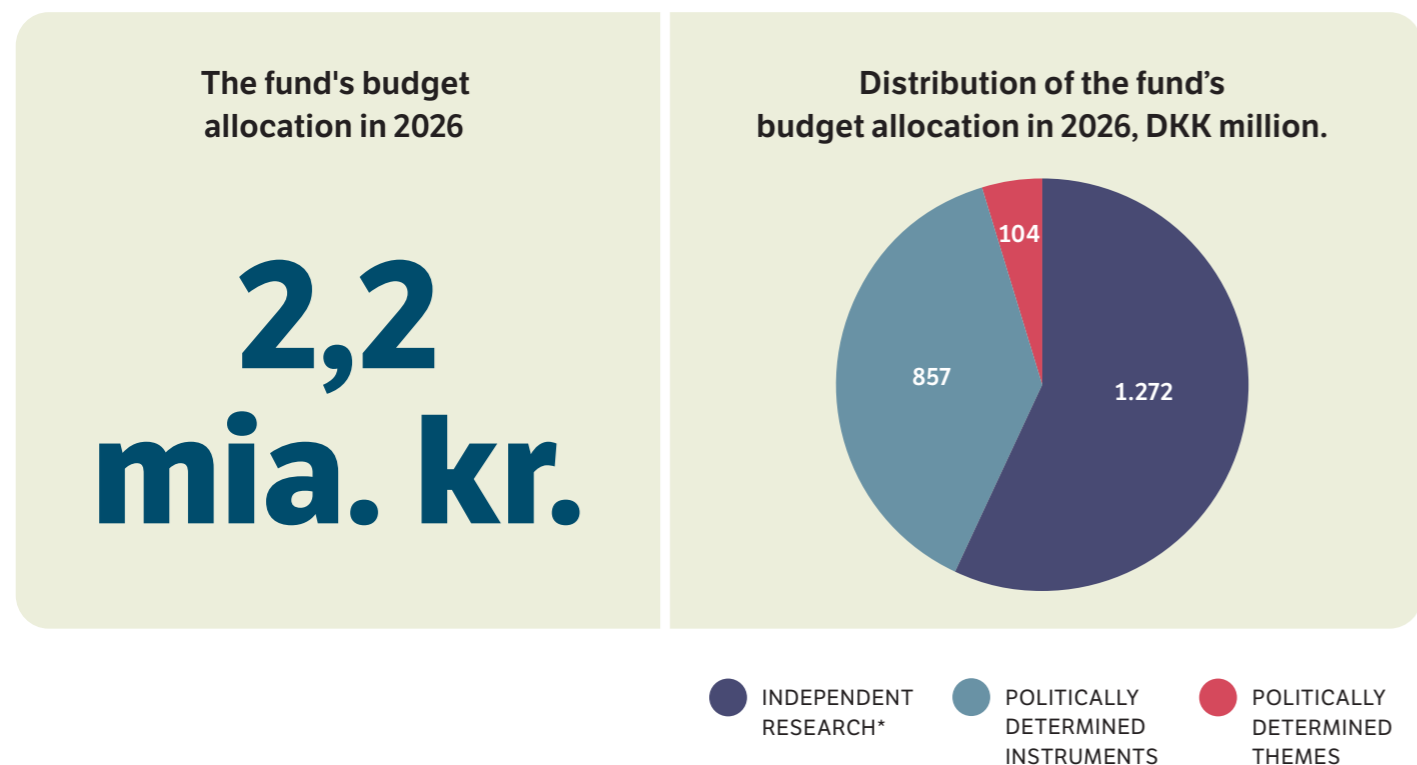


THE FUND'S BUDGET ALLOCATION 2026

Independent Research Fund Denmark's investments in independent, groundbreaking research are financed through the annual national budget. In 2026, the Fund received a total allocation of DKK 2.2 billion. Of this amount, DKK 1,272 million consists of independent funding, DKK 104 million consists of politically determined funding instruments, and DKK 857 million has been allocated to politically determined themes.

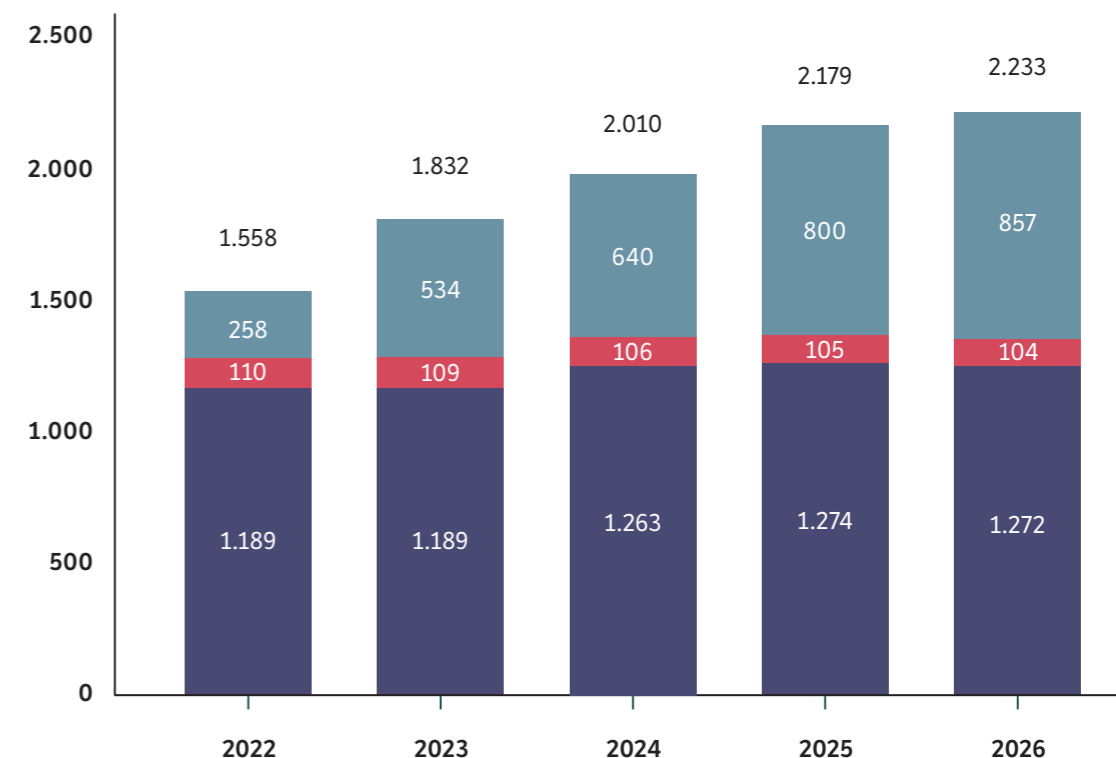
The politically determined funding instruments are "The Inge Lehmann Programme" and "Non-University Research Education", while the politically determined themes in 2026 include, among others, "Strengthened Clinical and Independent Research", "Artificial Intelligence", and "Ageing Research and Dementia".

The independent funding refers to funding allocated by the Fund to independent and curiosity-driven research across all themes and major scientific disciplines.



BUDGET ALLOCATION IN THE PERIOD 2022-2026

DKK MILLION PL-26**



- **INDEPENDENT RESEARCH***
 the fund allocates to independent and curiosity-driven research within all themes and primary scientific disciplines.
- **POLITICALLY DETERMINED INSTRUMENTS**
 are the specific instruments determined at the political level.
- **POLITICALLY DETERMINED THEMES**
 cover funding allocated to specific thematic areas in accordance with the agreements on the distribution of the research reserve.

*Herunder Sapere Aude: DFF-Forskningsleder

*Herunder Sapere Aude: DFF-Forskningsleder

**Pris- og lønindeks

WHO ALLOCATES THE FUNDS?

Independent Research Fund Denmark is organised into five disciplinary research councils, which allocate the Fund's independent funding.

In addition, there is DFF | The Cross-Council Committee, which consists of the Chairs of each of the five disciplinary research councils. The committee allocates the Fund's politically determined funding instruments as well as cross-disciplinary applications involving methods and academic fields that span more than one disciplinary research council.

See pages 48–55 for details of the members of the different councils.

In 2025, the Board of Directors established eight thematic committees with a total of 115 members, which allocated funding for politically determined themes. The thematic committees are established on an ad hoc basis and are automatically dissolved once the thematic grants have been allocated.



ALLOCATION OF RESEARCH GRANTS IN THE PERIOD 2022-2025

GRANTING BODY, CURRENT PRICE LEVELS, DKK MILLION	2022	2023	2024	2025
Independent funds				
DFF Cross-Council Committee	30.5	34.7	35.0	30.4
DFF Humanities	157.0	177.6	182.9	188.4
DFF Natural Sciences	265.9	268.3	287.5	284.4
DFF Social Sciences	121.4	141.6	152.0	156.0
DFF Medical Sciences	220.9	245.4	263.1	258.7
DFF Technology and Production	279.6	266.5	291.3	313.7
Total	1,075.3	1,134.0	1,211.7	1,231.6
Politically determined instruments*				
DFF Cross-Council Committee	13.4	8.9	1.4	3.6
DFF Humanities	20.6	19.6	22.6	25.5
DFF Natural Sciences	16.9	16.2	16.5	17.0
DFF Social Sciences	16.8	18.3	21.6	12.4
DFF Medical Sciences	21.1	23.8	22.9	20.4
DFF Technology and Production	14.4	15.7	24.7	24.6
Total	103.2	102.6	109.5	103.5
Politically determined themes**				
Clinical research	127.3	198.1	206.5	227.8
Green research	107.0	99.4	135.2	159.2
Psychiatry research	-	97.7	97.6	148.4
Artificial intelligence	-	-	-	58.5
Arctic research	-	-	44.8	45.8
Specialised social services	-	-	-	39.3
Vulnerable children and young people, and mental wellbeing	-	34.1	34.1	33.9
Learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education	-	24.2	24.6	32.8
Ageing research	-	-	29.0	14.7
Antisemitism	-	-	-	11.9
Quantum research	-	-	-	10.5
Loneliness	-	-	19.7	-
Stronger research environments for vocational education and training	-	19.7	18.6	-
Total	234.3	473.2	610.0	782.8
Total	1,412.8	1,709.8	1,931.2	2,117.9

*Politically determined funding instruments include funding allocated to The Inge Lehmann Programme and Non-University Research Education.

**In some cases, the thematic titles in the table have been consolidated and harmonised across years in order to provide a more coherent overview, for example the designation "Vulnerable children and young people and mental wellbeing". They therefore do not necessarily reflect the exact wording of the individual themes set out in the agreements on the distribution of the research reserve.

Applications for Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader and Non-University Research Education are initially assessed by the disciplinary research councils, but the final funding decision is made by the cross-disciplinary council.

The overview of the Fund's disbursement amounts includes reallocations of unused funds that the Fund receives as repayments from projects that have previously been awarded grants. As a result, the amount allocated may be higher than the amount provided through the national budget. During the period 2022–2025, approximately DKK 66 million was allocated annually through the national budget to Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader, while in 2025 the Board of Directors prioritised DKK 156.2 million of the Fund's independent funding for the instrument.

THE FUND'S APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS

Independent Research Fund Denmark received 4,553 applications in 2025, requesting a total of DKK 19.4 billion.

DKK 2.1

MILLION IN AWARDED FUNDING

DKK 19.4

MILLION IN REQUESTED FUNDING

525

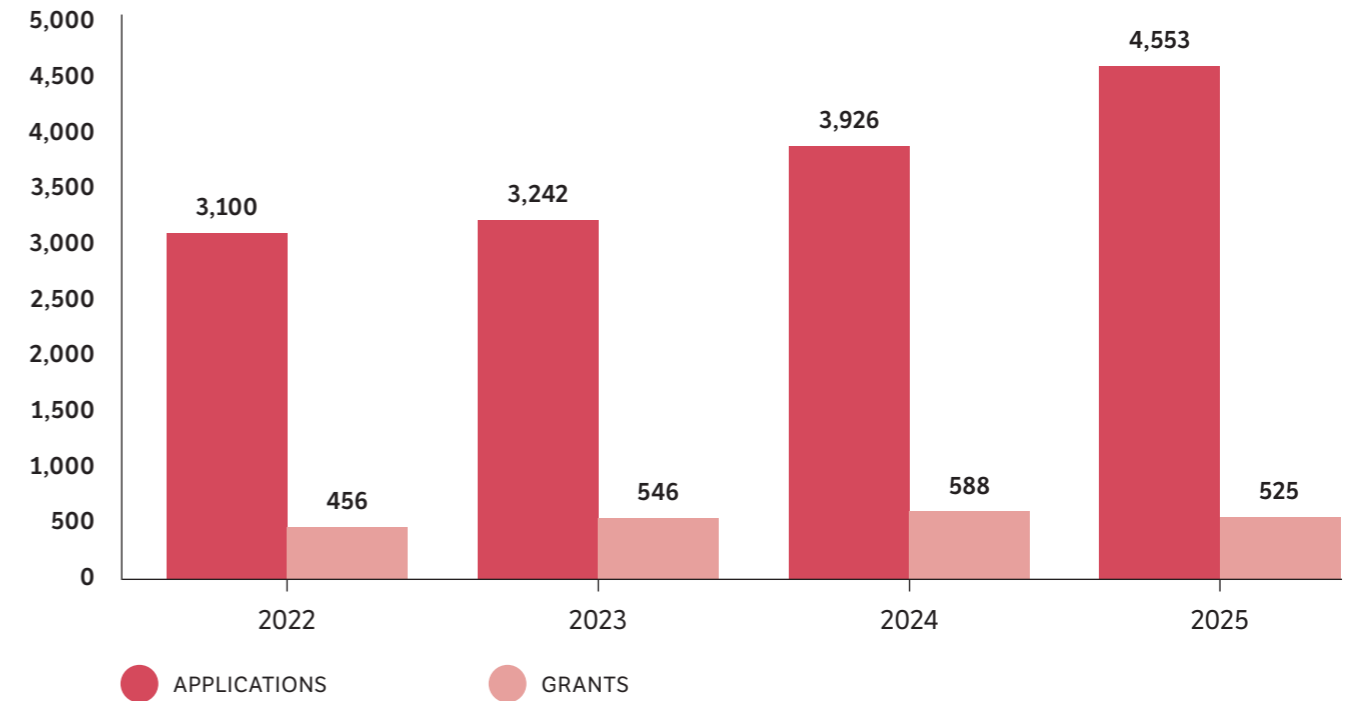
GRANTS FOR NEW PROJECTS

4,553

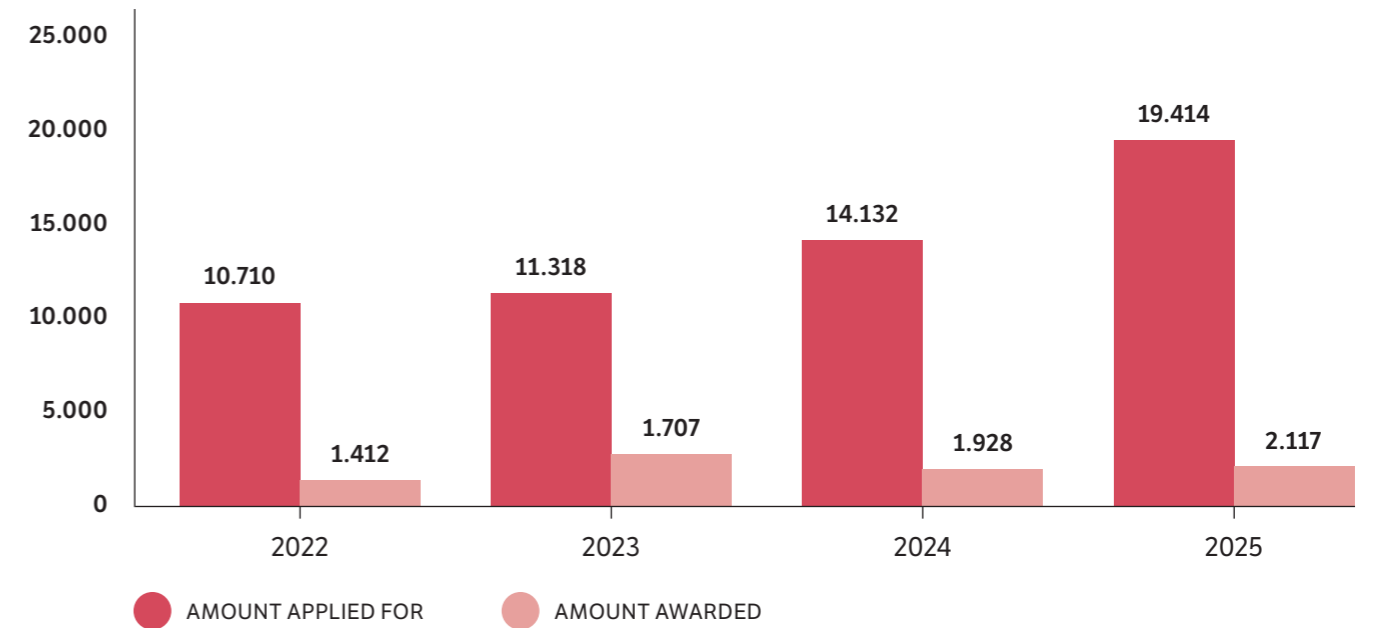
APPLICATIONS

APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS 2022-2025

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS



AMOUNT APPLIED FOR AND AMOUNT AWARDED, DKK MILLION, CURRENT PRICE LEVELS



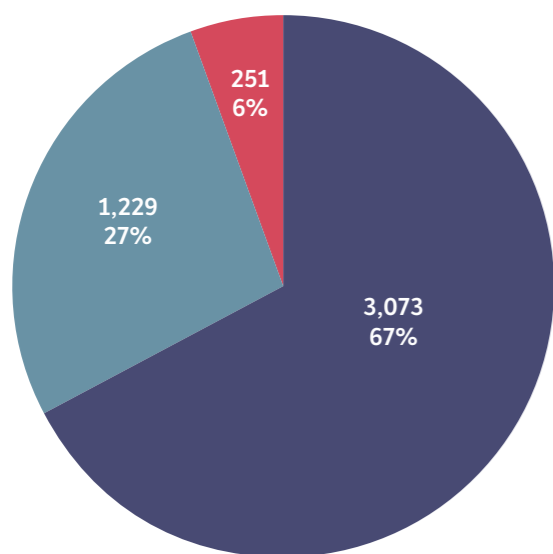
APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS ALLOCATED BY THE FUND'S FUNDING INSTRUMENTS

In 2025, Independent Research Fund Denmark allocated a range of different funding instruments and thematic programmes through the disciplinary research councils and the thematic committees.

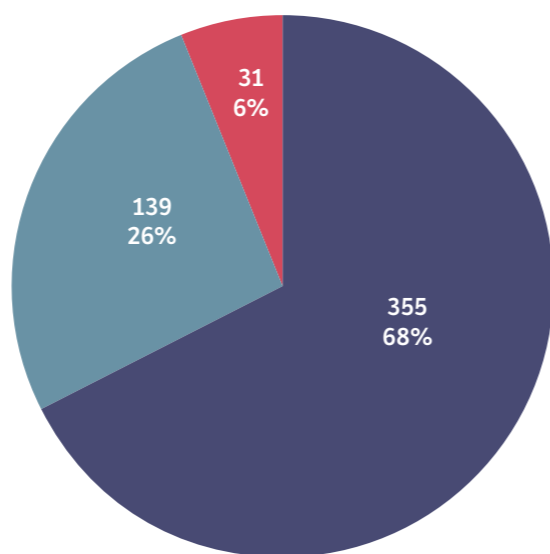
The independent funding is not restricted to specific academic fields, and the Fund receives applications across all major scientific disciplines, covering topics ranging from climate-friendly building materials using bacteria and fungi to children's health and wellbeing.

For the politically determined funding instruments and politically determined themes, frameworks for the funding are established through the national budget and the research reserve, including, for example, the themes that applications must address. These frameworks are determined annually in connection with negotiations and adoption of the national budget and agreements on the distribution of the research reserve.

DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICATIONS IN 2025



DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS IN 2025



● INDEPENDENT FUNDS*
 ● POLITICALLY DETERMINED THEMES
 ● POLITICALLY DETERMINED FUNDING INSTRUMENTS**

*Including Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader
 **Politically determined funding instruments include funding allocated to The Inge Lehmann Programme and Non-University Research Education.

APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS ALLOCATED BY INDEPENDENT FUNDING, POLITICALLY DETERMINED FUNDING INSTRUMENTS AND POLITICALLY DETERMINED THEMES, 2022–2025

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Applications	Grants	Applications	Grants	Applications	Grants	Applications	Grants
Independent funds								
DFF-Research Project1	1,177	167	1,133	198	1,563	198	1,802	197
DFF-Research Project2	519	56	419	54	591	56	566	56
Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant	356	40	348	39	336	38	354	39
DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant	99	16	71	13	109	17	148	18
Scholarships Medical Sciences	69	20	60	21	67	18	113	22
Exploratory Network Humanities	17	4	18	9	25	8	37	7
Shared Positions Medical Sciences	26	9	25	9	25	7	33	6
Journals Humanities	10	5	11	6	12	6	14	8
Research stays abroad Social Sciences	24	5	24	8	13	4	6	2
Total, independent funds	2,297	322	2,109	357	2,741	352	3,073	355
Politically determined instruments								
The Inge Lehmann Programme	211	29	178	28	180	29	206	23
Non-University Research Education	49	10	42	9	43	9	45	8
Total, politically determined funding instruments	260	39	220	37	223	38	251	31
Politically determined themes								
Green research	338	38	354	32	333	43	415	23
Clinical research	205	57	295	62	247	66	325	47
Psychiatry research	-	-	167	35	140	35	165	29
Artificial intelligence	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	9
Arctic research	-	-	-	-	75	12	51	7
Vulnerable children & young people, and mental wellbeing	-	-	63	10	61	11	49	5
Learning & wellbeing in primary secondary education schools	-	-	18	7	26	8	37	5
Ageing research	-	-	-	-	43	9	29	3
Specialised social services	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	5
Quantum research	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	5
Antisemitism	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1
Loneliness	-	-	-	-	21	8	-	-
Stronger research environments for vocational education & training	-	-	16	6	16	6	-	-
Total, politically determined themes	543	95	913	152	962	198	1,229	139
Total	3,100	456	3,242	546	3,926	588	4,553	525

APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS FOR THE RESEARCH COUNCILS

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Applica-tions	Grants	Applica-tions	Grants	Applica-tions	Grants	Applica-tions	Grants
DFF Cross-Council Committee*								
DFF-Research Project1	16	2	23	3	34	3	36	4
DFF-Research Project2	18	3	19	2	21	2	22	3
DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant	3	-	6	1	6	2	4	-
Non-University Research Education (PhD)*	7	3	4	1	2	1	1	-
The Inge Lehmann Programme	13	2	10	2	6	-	5	1
Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant*	21	1	20	2	9	2	14	-
Total	78	11	82	11	78	10	82	8
DFF Humanities								
DFF-Research Project1	106	11	85	11	174	17	196	21
DFF-Research Project2	124	13	103	15	98	13	110	12
DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant	29	4	16	4	18	3	25	3
Exploratory Network Humanities	17	4	18	9	25	8	37	7
Non-University Research Education (PhD)*	23	4	20	4	17	3	22	5
The Inge Lehmann Programme	37	5	25	3	30	5	29	3
Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant*	45	6	55	7	45	6	43	6
Journals Humanities	10	5	11	6	12	6	14	8
Total	391	52	333	59	419	61	476	65
DFF Natural Sciences								
DFF-Research Project1	290	47	262	58	337	54	383	51
DFF-Research Project2	93	10	75	7	82	7	74	7
DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant	22	3	13	2	31	4	43	9
Non-University Research Education (PhD)*	5	1	3	1	2	1	5	1
The Inge Lehmann Programme	30	5	22	5	22	5	29	4
Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant*	104	12	89	10	85	12	97	13
Total	544	78	464	83	559	83	631	85

* Please note that applications for Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader and Non-University Research Education are initially assessed by the disciplinary research councils. The final funding decision is made by DFF | The Cross-Council Committee.

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Applica-tions	Grants	Applica-tions	Grants	Applica-tions	Grants	Applica-tions	Grants
DFF Social Sciences								
DFF-Research Project1	144	14	133	17	187	20	219	22
DFF-Research Project2	82	8	79	10	104	9	89	9
DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant	19	3	10	1	24	3	27	4
Non-University Research Education*	6	1	6	1	14	2	9	1
International Research Stay Social Sciences	24	5	24	8	13	4	6	2
The Inge Lehmann Programme	42	5	34	5	34	5	31	3
Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant*	45	5	48	5	57	5	41	4
Total	362	41	334	47	433	48	422	45
DFF Medical Sciences								
Clinician Scientist Positions Medical Sciences	26	9	25	9	25	7	33	6
DFF-Research Project1	339	54	369	66	462	67	585	59
DFF-Research Project2	72	7	48	5	90	5	77	5
DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant	8	2	14	2	16	2	19	3
Non-University Research Education (PhD)*	8	1	8	2	7	1	6	-
The Inge Lehmann Programme	58	7	60	8	57	7	58	6
Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant*	55	5	63	7	53	5	64	7
Pre-graduate Scholarships Medical Sciences	69	20	60	21	67	18	113	22
Total	635	105	647	120	777	112	955	108
DFF Technology and Production								
DFF-Research Project1	282	39	261	43	369	36	383	40
DFF-Research Project2	130	15	95	15	196	20	194	20
DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant	18	4	12	3	14	3	40	5
Non-University Research Education (PhD)*	-	-	1	-	1	1	2	1
The Inge Lehmann Programme	31	5	27	5	31	7	54	6
Sapere Aude: DFF-Starting Grant*	86	11	73	8	87	8	95	9
Total	547	74	469	74	698	75	768	81

APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS FOR POLITICALLY DETERMINED THEMES

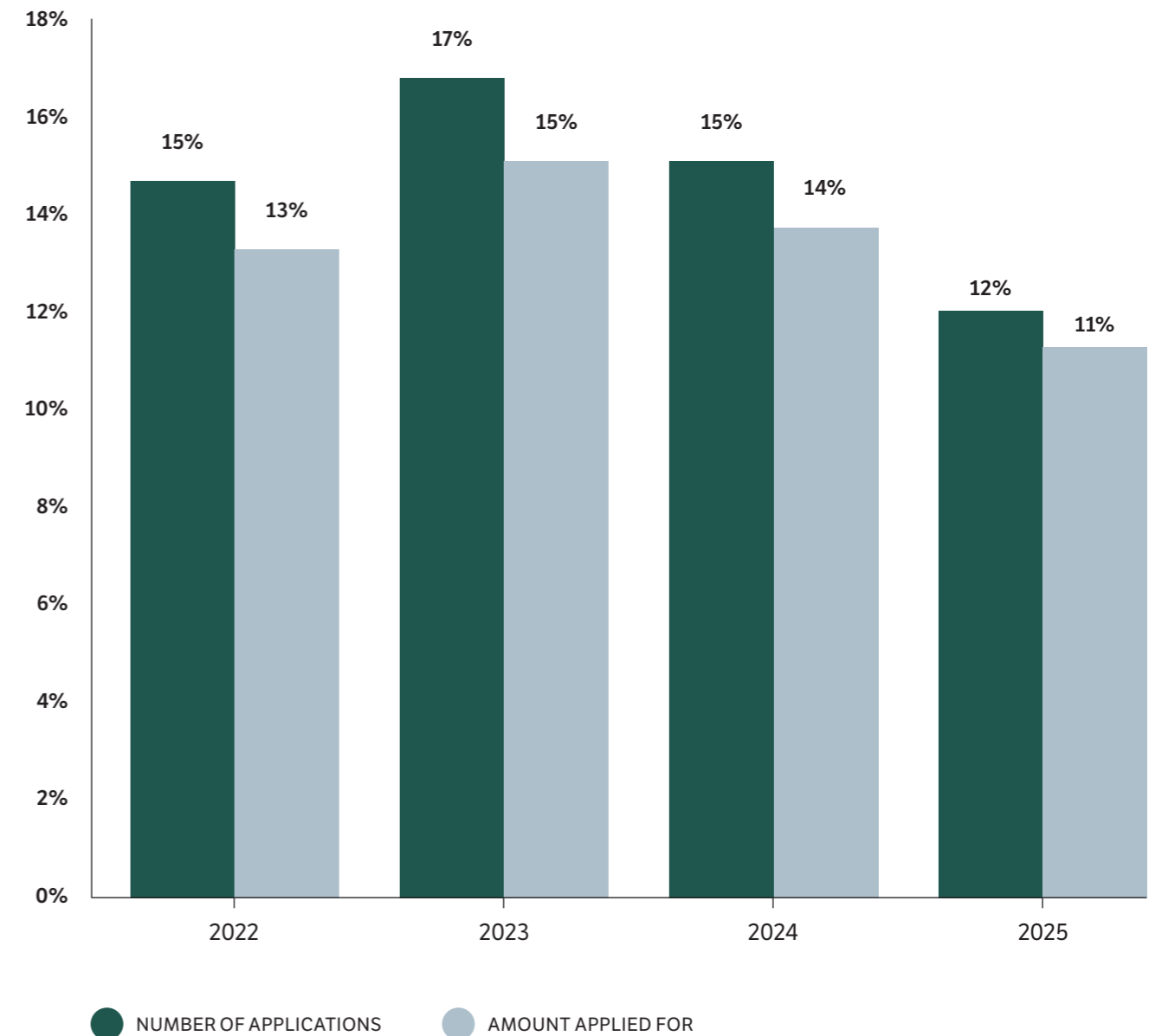
Political theme	2022		2024		2024		2025	
	Appli-cations	Grants	Appli-cations	Grants	Appli-cations	Grants	Appli-cations	Grants
Green research	338	38	354	32	333	43	415	23
Clinical research	205	57	295	62	247	66	325	47
Psychiatry research	-	-	167	35	140	35	165	29
Artificial intelligence	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	9
Arctic research	-	-	-	-	75	12	51	7
Vulnerable children & young people, and mental wellbeing	-	-	63	10	61	11	49	5
Learning & wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education	-	-	18	7	26	8	37	5
Ageing research	-	-	-	-	43	9	29	3
Specialised social services	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	5
Quantum research	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	5
Antisemitism	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1
Loneliness	-	-	-	-	21	8	-	-
Stronger research environments for vocational education & training	-	-	16	6	16	6	-	-
Total	543	95	897	146	962	198	1,229	139

SUCCESS RATES

The Fund's success rates depend on the amount of funding allocated by the Fund and the number of applications received.

In 2025, approximately 12% of the applications received by the Fund were awarded funding.

SUCCESS RATES



SUCCESS RATES IN THE RESEARCH COUNCILS AND FOR POLITICALLY DETERMINED THEMES

SUCCESS RATES BASED ON AMOUNT APPLIED FOR

Research councils	2022	2023	2024	2025
DFF Cross-Council Committee	13%	13%	11%	10%
DFF Humanities	12%	14%	13%	12%
DFF Natural Sciences	13%	16%	14%	12%
DFF Social Sciences	11%	13%	10%	10%
DFF Medical Sciences	14%	15%	13%	10%
DFF Technology and Production	13%	15%	10%	10%

Note: DFF | Humanities and DFF | Natural Sciences also allocated thematic funding in 2025. These are not included here.

Political theme	2022	2023	2024	2025
Green research	11%	9%	13%	6%
Clinical research	28%	21%	28%	14%
Psychiatry research	-	19%	24%	18%
Artificial intelligence	-	-	-	7%
Arctic research	-	-	15%	14%
Vulnerable children and young people, and mental wellbeing	-	15%	18%	11%
Learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education	-	37%	26%	14%
Ageing research	-	-	22%	9%
Specialised social services	-	-	-	29%
Antisemitism	-	-	-	21%
Quantum research	-	-	-	51%
Loneliness	-	-	33%	-
Stronger research environments for vocational education and training	-	37%	35%	-

SUCCESS RATES BASED ON NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS

Research councils	2022	2023	2024	2025
DFF Cross-Council Committee	14%	13%	13%	10%
DFF Humanities	13%	18%	15%	14%
DFF Natural Sciences	14%	18%	15%	13%
DFF Social Sciences	11%	14%	11%	11%
DFF Medical Sciences	17%	19%	14%	11%
DFF Technology and Production	14%	16%	11%	11%

Note: DFF | Humanities and DFF | Natural Sciences also allocated thematic funding in 2025. These are not included here.

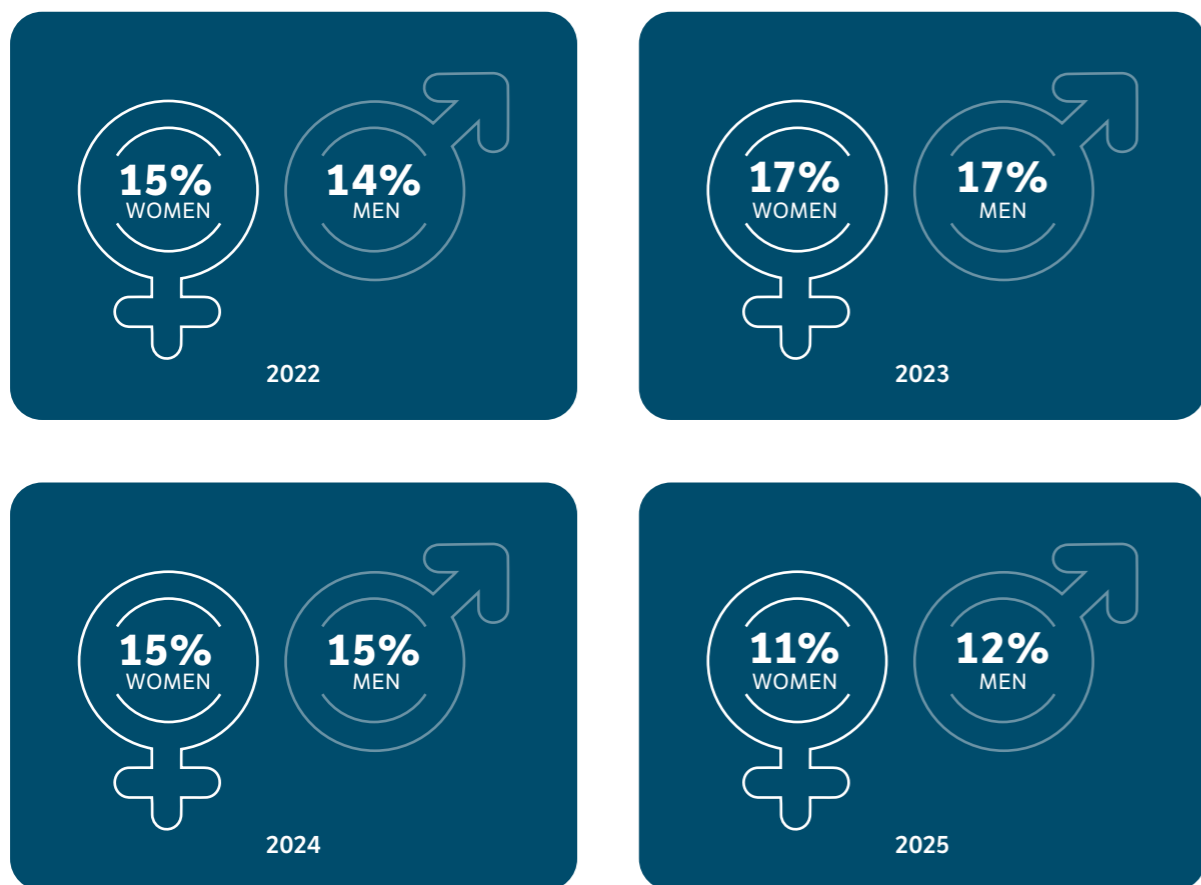
Political theme	2022	2023	2024	2025
Green research	11%	9%	13%	6%
Clinical research	28%	21%	27%	14%
Psychiatry research	-	21%	25%	18%
Artificial intelligence	-	-	-	7%
Arctic research	-	-	16%	14%
Vulnerable children and young people, and mental wellbeing	-	16%	18%	10%
Learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education	-	39%	31%	14%
Ageing research	-	-	21%	10%
Specialised social services	-	-	-	29%
Antisemitism	-	-	-	50%
Quantum research	-	-	-	17%
Loneliness	-	-	38%	-
Stronger research environments for vocational education and training	-	38%	38%	-

SUCCESS RATES BY GENDER

Women and men must have equal opportunities to obtain funding from the Fund. The Fund therefore continuously monitors the success rates of women and men.

Overall, the figures show that women and men have equally good opportunities to obtain funding.

SUCCESS RATES (NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS) BY GENDER



Figureerne medtager alle virkemidler, som er udmøntet i perioden.

Research councils	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂
DFF Cross-Council Committee*	16%	13%	13%	14%	21%	5%	12%	8%
DFF Humanities	13%	13%	19%	17%	13%	17%	14%	14%
DFF Natural Sciences	14%	14%	18%	18%	12%	16%	12%	13%
DFF Social Sciences	13%	10%	14%	14%	10%	12%	10%	11%
DFF Medical Sciences	14%	18%	17%	20%	13%	16%	10%	12%
DFF Technology and Production	13%	14%	15%	16%	14%	10%	11%	10%

Note: DFF | Humanities and DFF | Natural Sciences also allocated thematic funding in 2025. These are not included here.

Political theme	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂
Green research	17%	9%	8%	9%	12%	13%	5%	6%
Clinical research	27%	29%	18%	23%	28%	26%	15%	14%
Clinical research	-	-	-	-	-	-	11%	6%
Psychiatry research	-	-	21%	21%	28%	20%	11%	27%
Arctic research	-	-	-	-	19%	13%	14%	14%
Learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education	-	-	58%	0%	27%	33%	14%	13%
Vulnerable children and young people, and mental wellbeing	-	-	22%	0%	25%	5%	14%	0%
Quantum research	-	-	-	-	-	-	50%	50%
Ageing research	-	-	-	-	19%	25%	14%	0%
Specialised social services	-	-	-	-	-	-	27%	33%
Antisemitism	-	-	-	-	-	-	33%	0%
Stronger research environments for vocational education and training	-	-	43%	33%	36%	40%	-	-
Loneliness	-	-	-	-	29%	57%	-	-

APPLICANT PHD AGE

An important element in building a sustainable and strong research and knowledge ecosystem is helping to create the best possible conditions for supporting talented researchers at all stages of their careers.

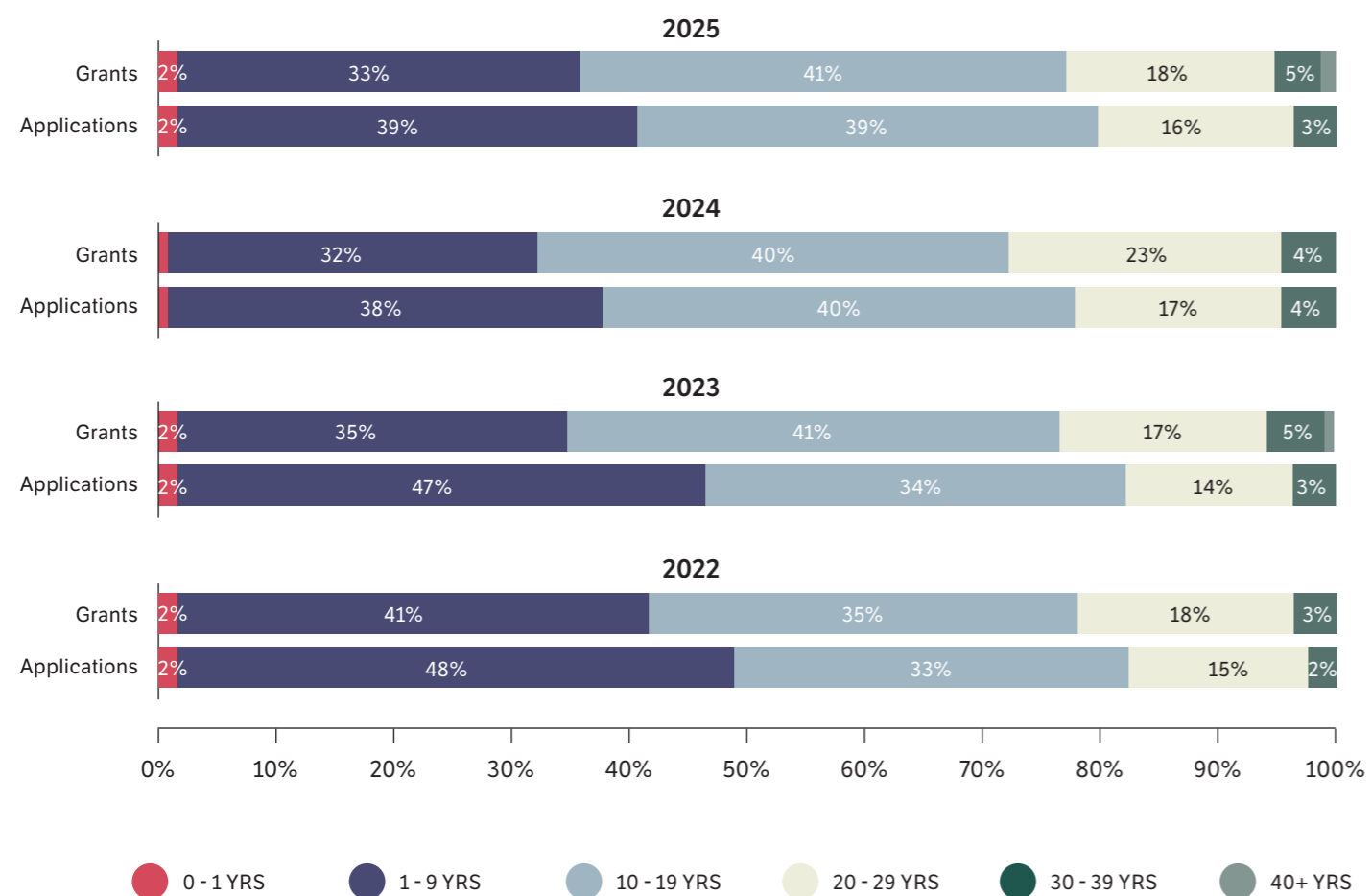
Independent Research Fund Denmark does this, among other things, through funding instruments such as the DFF-International Postdoctoral Grant, which is aimed at researchers at an early stage of their careers, while the Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader instrument is aimed at emerging research leaders with a PhD age of 3–8 years.

DFF-Research Project2 instrument is aimed at more experienced researchers with a PhD age of 8 years or more.

DFF-Research Project1 is the instrument that receives the largest number of applications each year. Up to and including 2025, there has been no PhD age requirement.

This variation in PhD age requirements means that the Fund receives applications both from researchers at the beginning of their research careers and from more established researchers.

APPLICANTS' PHD AGE



PhD age indicates how long the applicant has held a PhD degree at the time of application. Periods of leave are not included in the calculation of PhD age. Due to rounding, totals in the tables may not add up exactly.



APPLICATIONS TO THE RESEARCH COUNCILS, BY PHD AGE

APPLICATIONS	0-1 yrs	1-9 yrs	10-19 yrs	20-29 yrs	30-39 yrs	40+ yrs	Total
2025							
DFF Cross-Council Committee	0%	46%	35%	14%	4%	1%	100%
DFF Humanities	3%	35%	44%	16%	2%	0%	100%
DFF Natural Sciences	3%	40%	31%	18%	7%	1%	100%
DFF Social Sciences	2%	45%	36%	14%	2%	0%	100%
DFF Medical Sciences	1%	37%	41%	17%	3%	1%	100%
DFF Technology and Production	2%	39%	36%	17%	4%	1%	100%

Note: DFF | Humanities and DFF | Natural Sciences also allocated thematic funding in 2025. These are not included here.

Grants	0-1 yrs	1-9 yrs	10-19 yrs	20-29 yrs	30-39 yrs	40+ yrs	Total
2025							
DFF Cross-Council Committee	0%	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%	100%
DFF Humanities	3%	33%	45%	12%	3%	3%	100%
DFF Natural Sciences	1%	36%	26%	27%	10%	0%	100%
DFF Social Sciences	5%	40%	45%	10%	0%	0%	100%
DFF Medical Sciences	2%	30%	40%	25%	3%	1%	100%
DFF Technology and Production	3%	29%	41%	20%	6%	1%	100%

Note: DFF | Humanities and DFF | Natural Sciences also allocated thematic funding in 2025. These are not included here.

APPLICATIONS TO POLITICALLY DETERMINED THEMES, BY PHD AGE

APPLICATIONS	0-1 yrs	1-9 yrs	10-19 yrs	20-29 yrs	30-39 yrs	40+ yrs	Total
2025							
Green research	1%	32%	45%	17%	4%	0%	100%
Clinical research	3%	36%	41%	18%	2%	0%	100%
Psychiatry research	1%	45%	40%	12%	2%	0%	100%
Artificial intelligence	3%	37%	45%	14%	1%	0%	100%
Arctic research	2%	29%	43%	14%	12%	0%	100%
Vulnerable children and young people, and mental wellbeing	2%	29%	53%	12%	4%	0%	100%
Learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education	0%	62%	32%	5%	0%	0%	100%
Ageing research	0%	43%	50%	7%	0%	0%	100%
Specialised social services	0%	35%	53%	12%	0%	0%	100%
Quantum research	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Antisemitism	0%	17%	50%	33%	0%	0%	100%

GRANTS	0-1 yrs	1-9 yrs	10-19 yrs	20-29 yrs	30-39 yrs	40+ yrs	Total
2025							
Green research	0%	17%	48%	17%	17%	0%	100%
Clinical research	2%	37%	56%	5%	0%	0%	100%
Psychiatry research	0%	50%	38%	8%	4%	0%	100%
Artificial intelligence	0%	22%	67%	11%	0%	0%	100%
Arctic research	0%	29%	43%	29%	0%	0%	100%
Vulnerable children and young people, and poor well-being	0%	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%	100%
Learning and well-being in primary school	0%	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Ageing research	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Specialised social services	0%	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Quantum research	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Antisemitism	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%

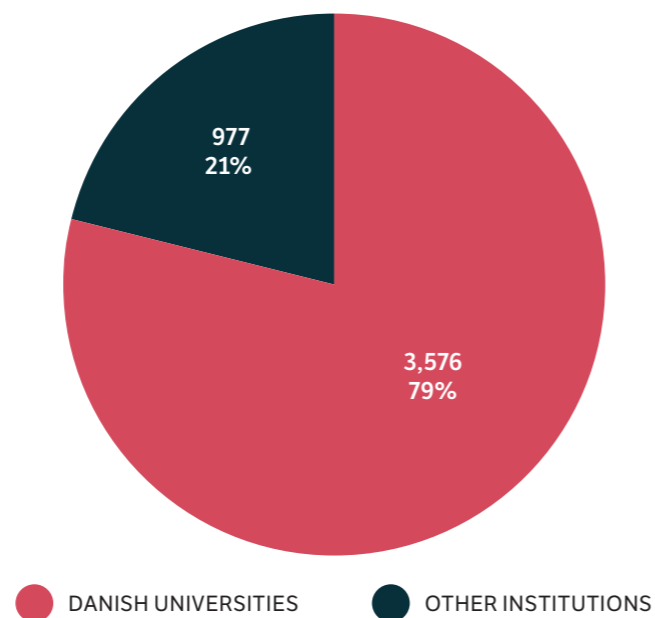
INSTITUTIONS

The majority of the applications received by Independent Research Fund Denmark are submitted by researchers from Danish universities.

In particular, large numbers of applications are submitted by researchers from the University of Copenhagen and Aarhus University, while the Fund receives fewer applications from the IT University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen Business School and Roskilde University.

Among applicants who are not employed at a university, the majority of applications are submitted by researchers employed within the regions. In this context, the regions include university hospitals, psychiatric research institutions and similar bodies.

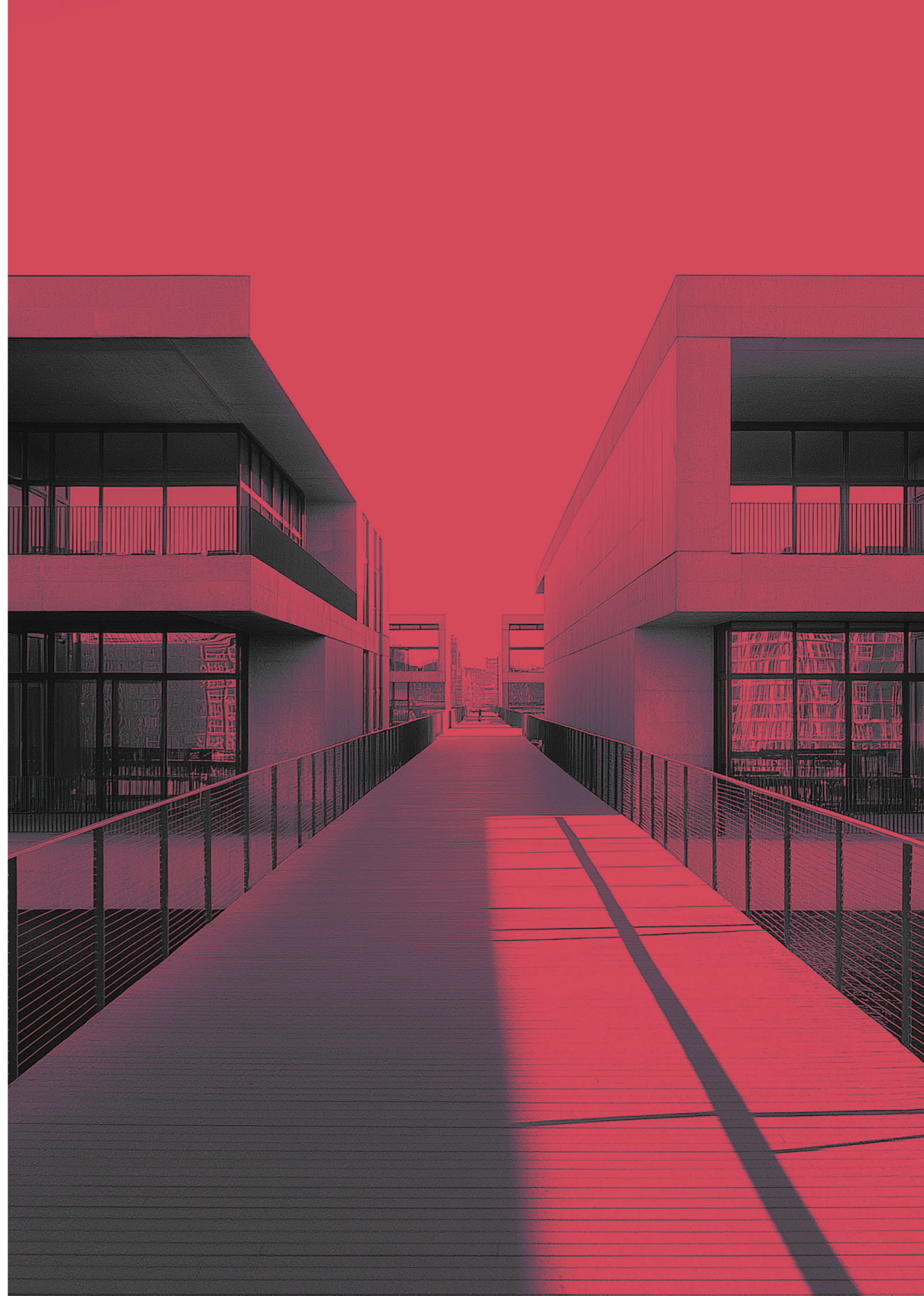
Applications from universities and other institutions



APPLICATIONS, GRANTS AND SUCCESS RATES FOR INSTITUTIONS

Institutioner	2023			2024			2025		
	Applications	Grants	Success rate	Applications	Grants	Success rate	Applications	Grants	Success rate
Danske universiteter									
University of Copenhagen	703	126	18%	847	138	16%	966	130	13%
Aarhus University	766	133	17%	910	158	17%	965	117	12%
Technical University of Denmark	368	57	15%	464	50	11%	566	56	10%
University of Southern Denmark	310	48	15%	383	49	13%	500	56	11%
Aalborg University	211	25	12%	280	29	10%	330	22	7%
Roskilde University	88	8	9%	122	17	14%	112	10	9%
Copenhagen Business School	70	6	9%	69	6	9%	90	6	7%
IT University of Copenhagen	37	4	11%	43	2	5%	47	6	13%
Other institutions									
The regions, including hospitals, etc.	462	95	21%	553	92	17%	669	73	11%
University colleges*	50	4	8%	49	8	16%	46	4	9%
Sector research institutions	21	8	38%	24	4	17%	45	3	7%
Other	156	32	21%	182	35	19%	217	42	19%

*Note: Including the Danish School of Media and Journalism
The category "Other" includes, for example, other Danish public institutions, private companies, foreign institutions and similar entities.



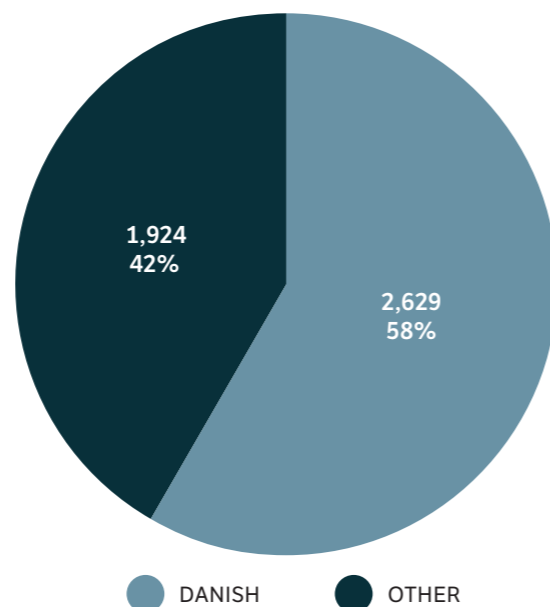
CITIZENSHIP

Among the 4,553 applications received by the Fund in 2025, just under 60% were submitted by Danish citizens.

In general, applications submitted by Danish citizens have a higher success rate than applications submitted by applicants with other citizenships.

In particular, researchers holding citizenship from Germany, China and Italy submit large numbers of applications to the Fund.

Applicants' citizenship in 2025



APPLICATIONS, GRANTS AND SUCCESS RATES BY NATIONALITY

Statsborgerskab	2023			2024			2025		
	Applications	Grants	Success rate	Applications	Grants	Success rate	Applications	Grants	Success rate
Denmark	1,938	386	20%	2,314	406	18%	2,629	349	13%
Germany	218	38	17%	255	26	10%	283	38	13%
China	101	8	8%	143	15	10%	174	10	6%
Italy	98	7	7%	108	6	6%	138	15	11%
USA	79	12	15%	80	14	18%	113	12	11%
Iran	60	4	7%	71	5	7%	104	5	5%
India	35	3	9%	56	5	9%	83	5	6%
Sweden	64	9	14%	72	13	18%	82	9	11%
United Kingdom	75	9	12%	89	14	16%	81	7	9%
Spain	42	4	10%	56	6	11%	56	7	13%
France	34	6	18%	46	9	20%	51	6	12%
Other	498	60	12%	636	69	11%	759	62	8%
Total	3,242	546	17%	3,926	588	15%	4,553	525	12%

The overview of "other citizenships" includes only the 10 citizenships that submitted the highest number of applications.



THE BOARD

The Board of Directors of Independent Research Fund Denmark provides the Fund's political and strategic direction and, together with the disciplinary research councils, delivers research-related advice to, among others, the Minister for Higher Education and Science, the Danish Parliament and the Government. The Board of Directors decides on the distribution of Independent Research Fund Denmark's funding between the disciplinary research councils but does not itself have authority to award grants.



The Board on 1 May 2025

From left to right: Gemma C. Solomon, Jørgen Frøkiær, Helle Kryger Aggerholm, Søren Serritzlew, Lasse Rosendahl, Ole Kirk, Klaus Petersen and Nanna Mik-Meyer.

SØREN SERRITZLEW (Chair)

Professor, Department of Political Science,
Aarhus University

JØRGEN FRØKIÆR (Deputy chair)

Professor and Head of Department, Department of Clinical Medicine,
Aarhus University

GEMMA C. SOLOMON

Professor, Kemisk institut, University of Copenhagen

HELLE KRYGER AGGERHOLM

Forsknings- og udviklingsdirektør, VIA University College

KLAUS PETERSEN

Professor and Centre Director, Department of Language, Culture, History and Communication,
Danish Institute for Advanced Study, University of Southern Denmark

LASSE ROSENDAHL

Professor, ph.d., Executive Director, Novo Nordisk Foundation CO₂ Research Center

METTE MARIE ROSENKILDE

Deputy Head of Department, Professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences,
University of Copenhagen

NANNA MIK-MEYER

Professor, ph.d., Copenhagen Business School

OLE KIRK

PhD, independent biotechnology consultant

THE RESEARCH COUNCILS

Independent Research Fund Denmark consists of a total of 84 members distributed across a Board of Directors and five disciplinary research councils: **Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Medical Sciences, and Technology and Production**. In addition, there is DFF | The Cross-Council Committee, which consists of the Chairs of each of the five disciplinary research councils.

In addition, the Fund has the Cross-Council Committee, which consists of the Chairs of the five disciplinary research councils.



From left to right: Robert Tranekær Klemmensen from DFF | Social Sciences, Lone Koefoed Hansen from DFF | Humanities, Peter Rossing from DFF | Medical Sciences, Susanne Brix Pedersen from DFF | Technology and Production, and Kirstine Berg-Sørensen from DFF | Natural Sciences.

DFF | Humanities (H)

The council covers the following main disciplines: Art history, architecture and design research, media studies, film studies, musicology, digital humanities, literary studies, theatre studies, philology, linguistics, communication studies, anthropology, ethnology, archaeology, history, philosophy, history of ideas and science, theology, religious studies, education, psychology, as well as other related humanities research areas, including library studies, museology and humanities aspects of sports science, public health science, urban planning and spatial planning.

Associate Professor Lone Koefoed Hansen (Chair)	Aarhus University
Professor Anders Engberg-Pedersen	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Ane Qvortrup	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Bo Poulsen	Aalborg University
Professor Dorthe Duncker	University of Copenhagen
Professor Klemens Kapel	University of Copenhagen
Professor Kirstine Rømer Thomsen	Aarhus University
Professor Mette Sandbye	University of Copenhagen
Professor Mikkel Bille	University of Copenhagen
Professor Nete Nørgaard Kristensen	University of Copenhagen
Associate Professor Ulla Schmidt	Aarhus University

DFF | Natural Sciences (NS)

The council covers research disciplines within the classical fields of astronomy, physics, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, molecular biology, biochemistry/biophysics, biology, geology, as well as the natural science aspects of geography.

Associate Professor Kirstine Berg-Sørensen (Chair)	Technical University of Denmark
Professor Anders Albrechtsen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Carsten Wiuf	University of Copenhagen
Professor Jacob Kongsted	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Johannes Overgaard	Aarhus University
Professor Karen Timmermann	Technical University of Denmark
Professor Kresten Lindorff-Larsen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Mette Burmølle	University of Copenhagen
Professor Mikael Bols	University of Copenhagen
Professor Nicolaj Krog Larsen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Shfaqat Abbas Khan	Technical University of Denmark
Professor Steen Lynge Hannestad	Aarhus University
Professor Tinna Ventrup Stevnsner	Aarhus University
Professor Torsten Nygård Kristensen	Aalborg University
Professor Aasa Feragen-Hauberg	Technical University of Denmark

DFF | Social Sciences (SS)

The council covers the following main disciplines: Economics, sociology, political science and legal studies, as well as the social science aspects of a number of cross-disciplinary themes (for example communication research, development studies, gender studies and cultural geography).

Professor Robert Tranekær Klemmensen (Chair)	Lund University
Professor Anne Skorkjær Binderkrantz	Aarhus University
Professor Carl-Johan Dalgaard	University of Copenhagen
Professor Christoph Grimpe	Copenhagen Business School
Senior Researcher Jens-Peter Thomsen	VIVE
Professor Lars Jakob Buur	Roskilde University
Associate Professor Lisbeth Funding La Cour	Copenhagen Business School
Professor Margaretha Järvinen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Maria Knoth Humlum	Aarhus University
Professor Mette Hartlev	University of Copenhagen
Senior Researcher Rens Van Munster	DIIS
Professor Signe Vikkelsø	Copenhagen Business School

DFF | Medical Sciences (MS)

The council covers research disciplines within all aspects of both basic and clinical research relating to human health and disease. The council therefore covers basic scientific aspects including, for example, molecular medicine and genetics, anatomy, medical physiology and biochemistry, medical microbiology, pharmacology and pharmaceuticals, disease models, as well as medical bioinformatics and systems biology. The clinical aspects include, among other things, medicine, surgery and psychiatry, odontology, assessment and diagnosis, and paramedicine, as well as examination and treatment, including nutrition, exercise and pharmaceuticals. The public health aspects include, among other things, prevention, healthcare services and epidemiological aspects.

Professor Peter Rossing (Chair)	University of Copenhagen/Steno Diabetes Center
Professor Bo Torben Porse	University of Copenhagen / Rigshospitalet
Associate Professor Charlotte Mehlin Sørensen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Christian Morberg Wejse	Aarhus University
Professor Claus Thorn Ekstrøm	University of Copenhagen / Capital Region of Denmark
Professor Ditte Caroline Andersen	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Jakob Balslev Sørensen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Karina Dalsgaard Sørensen	Aarhus University
Professor Marianne Skovsager Andersen	University of Southern Denmark / Odense University Hospital
Professor Michael Eriksen Benros	University of Copenhagen / Psychiatric Center Copenhagen
Professor Michael Hecht Olsen	University of Southern Denmark / Holbæk Hospital
Professor Michael Lisby	University of Copenhagen
Professor Nanna Brix Finnerup	Aarhus University
Professor Niels Jessen	University of Copenhagen / Steno Diabetes Center Aarhus
Professor Rune Hartmann	Aarhus University
Professor Signe Jespersgaard Borgquist	Aarhus University / Aarhus University Hospital
Clinical Professor Søren Paaske Johnsen	Aalborg University
Professor Trine Hyrup Mogensen	Aarhus University / Aarhus University Hospital

DFF | Technology and Production (TP)

The council covers the following main disciplines: Animal production, biotechnology, civil and structural engineering, electronics, energy engineering, food science, information technology, agricultural science, chemical engineering, communication technology, materials technology, mechanical and production engineering, medical engineering, micro- and nanotechnology, environmental technology, crop production, veterinary science, as well as the utilisation of natural resources and environmental protection.

Professor Susanne Brix Pedersen (Chair)	Technical University of Denmark
Professor Camilla Foged	University of Copenhagen
CTO Christian Vestergaard Poulsen	NKT Photonics A/S
Professor Dennis Sandris Nielsen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Dorthe Bomholdt Ravnsbæk	Aarhus University
Professor Elena Simona Radutoiu	Aarhus University
Professor Henrik Myhre Jensen	Aarhus University
Professor Horst-Günter Rubahn	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Krist Victor Bernard Gernaey	Technical University of Denmark
Professor Lars Stoumann Fosgrau Jensen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Michael Havbro Faber-Nielsen	Lusófona University
Senior Department Manager Mikael Rørdam Andersen	Novonesis A/S
Professor Morten Birkved	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Petar Popovski	Aalborg University
Professor Stephen Edward Rees	Aalborg University
Professor Susanne Bødker	Aarhus University
Professor Søren Alexandersen	Aarhus University
Professor Thomas Thymann	University of Copenhagen

DFF | Cross-Council Committee

DFF | The Cross-Council Committee consists of representatives from all five disciplinary research councils and coordinates the assessment procedure for applications positioned at the interface between the councils. The Cross-Council Committee also allocates funding for applications considered genuinely cross-disciplinary (see section 5.5), as well as for applications submitted to the funding instruments Sapere Aude: DFF-Research Leader and Non-University Research Education (PhD).

Lone Koefoed Hansen	Chair of DFF Humanities	Aarhus University
Kirstine Berg-Sørensen	Chair of DFF Natural Sciences	Technical University of Denmark
Robert Tranekær Klemmensen	Chair of DFF Social Sciences	Lund University
Peter Rossing	Chair of DFF Medical Sciences	University of Copenhagen/Steno Diabetes Center
Susanne Brix Pedersen	Chair of DFF Technology and Production	Technical University of Denmark

THEMATIC COMMITTEES

the Fund establishes thematic committees annually to allocate funding within politically determined themes such as “Research on Artificial Intelligence” and “Psychiatry Research”. In 2025, eight thematic committees allocated funding for politically determined themes. The thematic committees are established on an ad hoc basis and are automatically dissolved once the thematic grants have been allocated.

DFF | Thematic Committee
Arctic research – Climate change and sustainable Arctic communities

DFF | Thematic Committee
Research on Artificial Intelligence

DFF | Thematic Committee
Green research

DFF | Thematic Committee
Learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education

DFF | Thematic Committee
Psychiatric research

DFF | Thematic Committee
Strengthened research in specialised social services

DFF | Thematic Committee
Strengthened clinical and independent research

DFF | Thematic Committee
Ageing research, vulnerability and mental wellbeing issues

DFF | Thematic Committee – Research on Artificial Intelligence

The committee was established to allocate funding aimed at strengthening research on artificial intelligence, with a particular focus on the responsible development and application of the technology. The funding is also intended to strengthen research efforts in this field in Denmark, including early-stage foundational research, among other things with the aim of helping to shape the development of artificial intelligence.

Professor Ira Assent (Chair)	Aarhus University
Reader Belen Martin-Barragan	University of Edinburgh Business School
Professor Dagmar Kainmüller	Max Delbrück Center, Berlin Institute for Medical Systems Biology
Professor Ingvild Bode	University of Southern Denmark
Associate Professor Manuel Gomez Rodriguez	Max Planck Institute for Software Systems
Associate Professor Melih Kandemir	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Michael Kampffmeyer	The Arctic University of Norway
Professor Panagiotis Papapetrou	Stockholm University
Professor Rebecca Fiebrink	University of the Arts, London
Professor Scott Rettberg	The University of Bergen
Professor Tania Cerquitelli	Polytechnic University of Turin
Professor Thomas Bolander	Technical University of Denmark
Professor Aasa Feragen	Technical University of Denmark

DFF | Thematic Committee - Green research

The committee was established to allocate funding intended to support green, independent and curiosity-driven research, while also promoting researchers' own original ideas that may contribute to the green transition.

Professor Jan O. Jeppesen (Chair)	University of Southern Denmark
Research Director Christa Fittschen	University of Lille
Associate Professor Dingeman Wiertz	University College London
Professor Dolly Jørgensen	University of Stavanger
Professor Francesco Picchioni	University of Groningen
Professor Harpa Birgisdóttir	Aalborg University
Professor Jan Rossmeisl	University of Copenhagen
Professor Jens Stougaard	Aarhus University
BGS Director Karen Hanghøj	British Geological Survey
Professor Dr. Katharina Al-Shamery	Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg
Senior Researcher Kristine Belesova	Imperial College London
Professor MSO Lars Tønder	University of Copenhagen
Professor Lina Bertling Tjernberg	KTH Royal Institute of Technology
Professor Peter Balling	Aarhus University
Professor Peter Norman Sørensen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Dr Peter Palensky	Delft University of Technology
Professor Risto Kunelius	University of Helsinki
Professor Stig Uggerhøj Andersen	Aarhus University
Associate Professor Susanne Mossin	Technical University of Denmark

DFF | Thematic Committee – Learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education

The committee was set up to allocate funds aimed at strengthening practice-oriented research and generating new knowledge about learning and wellbeing in primary and lower secondary education. The funding is also intended to help to strengthen the knowledge base for teacher training by fostering closer the link between research, the content of teacher training and school practice.

Professor Ane Qvortrup (Chair)	University of Southern Denmark
Senior Researcher Anders Bakken	OsloMet
Associate Professor Bettina Buch	Absalon University College
Associate Professor Charlotte Krog Skott	Absalon University College
Associate Professor Christian Christrup Kjeldsen	Aarhus University
Associate Professor Lene Cicilie Storgaard	Copenhagen University of Applied Sciences
Associate Professor Linnea Boden	Stockholm University
Professor Marianne Simonsen	Aarhus University
Professor Niels Mikael Thastum	Aarhus University
Associate Professor Stig Toke Gissel	UCL Business Academy and University College

DFF | Thematic Committee - Psychiatric research

The committee was established to strengthen research in psychiatry and aims, among other things, to create better conditions for research into the prevention and treatment of mental disorders.

Professor Mikael Landén (Chair)	University of Gothenburg
Clinical Professor Anders Fink-Jensen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Andrew McQuillin	University College London (UCL)
Professor Arianna di Florio	Cardiff University
Professor Belinda Lennox	University of Oxford
Associate Professor Daniel Lindqvist	Lund University
Professor Dasha Nicholls	Imperial College London
Professor Emeritus Guy Goodwin	University of Oxford
Associate Professor Heidi Klakk Egebæk	UCL Business Academy and University College
Professor Katya Rubia	Kings College London
Clinical Professor Maj Vinberg	University of Copenhagen
Professor Paul Lichtenstein	The Karolinska Institute
Professor Pieter Hoekstra	University of Groningen
Professor Randi Starrfelt	University of Copenhagen

DFF | Strengthened research in specialised social services

The committee was established to allocate funding intended to strengthen practice-oriented research within specialised social services and to build capacity within the research field. The funding is also intended to contribute to increased knowledge of cost-effective interventions and prevention.

Professor Ulla-Karin Schön (Chair)	Stockholm University
Professor Aline Bütikofer	NHH Norwegian School of Economics
Associate Professor and Head of Research Cecilie Moesby-Jensen	Absalon University College
Professor Kathrine Vitus	VIVE
Professor Lars Plantin	Malmö University
Professor Lena Näre	University of Helsinki
Professor Marcus Knutagård	Malmö University
Professor Per Koren Solvang	OsloMet
Professor MSO Tea Torbenfeldt Bengtsson	VIVE
Professor Ylva Brännström Almquist	Stockholm University

DFF | Thematic Committee – Strengthened Clinical and Independent Research

The committee was established to allocate funding aimed at strengthening researchers' own ideas within patient-centred clinical and independent research. Among other things, the funding is intended to contribute to strengthened research into dementia, women's health conditions and health inequalities.

Professor Kaare Christensen (Chair)	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Aleksander Giwercman	Lund University
Professor Andrea Salonia	Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, Milano
Professor Anna Mia Ekström	Karolinska Institutet
Professor Anelli Sandbæk	Aarhus University
Professor Betsy Thom	Middlesex University
Professor Dorte Gyrd-Hansen	University of Southern Denmark
Klinisk professor Ellen Løkkegaard	University of Copenhagen
Professor Gunhild Waldemar	Rigshospitalet
Professor Jens Otto Lunde Jørgensen	Aarhus University
Professor Johanne Sommerchild Sundby	Universitetet i Oslo
Professor Karen la Cour	University of Southern Denmark
Lektor Kristina Tomra Nielsen	Professionshøjskolen UCN
Erhvervspostdoc Marie Jauffret-Roustide	Inserm
Professor Mats Jerkeman	Lund University
Forskningsleder og adjungeret professor Mette Kreutzfeldt	Københavns Professionshøjskole
Docent Mikkel Bek Clausen	Københavns Professionshøjskole
Professor Rikard Landberg	Chalmers University of Technology
Klinisk professor Selina Kikkenborg Berg	Rigshospitalet
Lektor Thomas Ahern	Larner College of Medicine, University of Vermont
Professor William Whiteley	The University of Edinburgh

DFF | Thematic Committee – Ageing Research, Vulnerability and Mental Wellbeing

The committee was established to allocate funding from the “Ageing Research” pool, which aims to support multidisciplinary and practice-oriented research into care and support for older people.

The committee was also established to allocate funding from the “Research into Vulnerability and Mental Wellbeing” pool, which aims to strengthen research, including practice-oriented research, into vulnerability among children and young people, as well as the wellbeing and mental wellbeing challenges of children and young people.

Professor Mattias Strandh <small>(Chair)</small>	Umeå University
Associate Professor Anita Haahr	VIA University College
Associate Professor Ann-Karina Henriksen	Copenhagen University of Applied Sciences
Associate Professor Gitte Wind	Copenhagen University of Applied Sciences
Consultant Grete Teilmann	Copenhagen University Hospital
Clinical Professor Kirsten Fonager	Aalborg University
Professor Morten Balle Hansen	UCL Business Academy and University College
Professor Nicolai Kristensen	VIVE
Professor Emerita Oddbjørg Skjær Ulvik	OsloMet
Professor Richard Oude Voshaar	University of Groningen
Associate Professor Silke Behrendt	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Søren Dalsgaard	Copenhagen University Hospital
Associate Professor Thomas Thyrring Engsig	University College UCN
Professor Vanessa Lawrence	Kings College London

DFF | Thematic Committee – Arctic research – Climate change and sustainable Arctic communities

The committee was set up to strengthen Arctic research. The funds are intended to contribute to sustainable development in the Arctic by promoting a better understanding of climate change and its implications. The funds are also intended to contribute to a better understanding of social and cultural changes and conditions in Arctic communities resulting from, among other things, climate change, historical factors, etc.

Associate Professor Thomas Ingeman-Nielsen <small>(Chair)</small>	Technical University of Denmark
Professor Anja Engel	GEOMAR
Associate Professor Annemette Nyborg Lauridsen	Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland)
Associate Professor Anni Djurhuus	University of the Faroe Islands
Associate Professor Christian Zdanowicz	Uppsala University
Associate Professor Jakob Abermann	University of Graz
Associate Professor Karla Jessen Williamson	University of Saskatchewan
Professor Kirsten Seestern Christoffersen	University of Copenhagen
Professor Mads Peter Heide-Jørgensen	Pinngortitaleriffik (Greenland Institute of Natural Resources)
Professor Minik Rosing	University of Copenhagen and Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland)
Professor Morten Meldgaard	University of Copenhagen and Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland)
Professor Pål Weihe	University of the Faroe Islands
Professor Sebastian Mernild	University of Southern Denmark
Professor Trude Fonneland	UiT, The Arctic University of Norway



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