



Danish
Cardiovascular
Academy

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

DCAcademy PhD Programme

Deadline: February 21, 2025

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THE DCAcademy PhD PROGRAMME

The Danish Cardiovascular Academy invites applications for PhD Scholarships within the DCAcademy PhD Programme. The DCAcademy offers 1/3, 2/3 and full PhD scholarships. Recipients of full scholarships are selected by The Danish Heart Foundation among the applications selected for the DCAcademy PhD Programme. These scholarships are co-financed between Danish Cardiovascular Academy and The Danish Heart Foundation.

Applications can be within

- **Clinical** cardiovascular research.
- **Basic** cardiovascular research
- **Epidemiological** cardiovascular research
- **Public Health** cardiovascular research

Deadline for application is Friday 21st of February, 2025 at 12:00

- A 1/3 PhD Scholarship amounts to 550,000 DKK.
- A 2/3 PhD Scholarship amounts to 1,100,000 DKK.
- A full PhD Scholarship amounts to 1,650,000 DKK.

The full PhD Scholarships co-financed by The Danish Heart Foundation grants are primarily allocated to projects within clinical research, prevention, or public health. The scholarships cover salary and tuition fee for the scholarship period. Please note that The Danish Cardiovascular Academy does not cover overhead. The grant must be activated within six months after receiving the grant notification letter (or by agreement with the Danish Cardiovascular Academy).

Please note that you and your supervisors must become members of the Danish Cardiovascular Academy before you can submit an application. Sign up at www.DCAcademy.dk

PURPOSE

The Danish Cardiovascular Academy aims to strengthen the Danish cardiovascular research environment through excellent interdisciplinary education and training of early career researchers. The goal is to improve understanding of mechanisms of disease and improve disease prevention, diagnostics, treatment, and rehabilitation of cardiovascular disease.

With the DCAcademy PhD Programme, we further aim to:

- *Promote interdisciplinarity and cross-sectoral cardiovascular research.*
- *Position Denmark at an international level within cardiovascular research.*
- *Create viable networks across disciplines and sectors within cardiovascular research.*

ABOUT THE DCAcademy PhD PROGRAMME

When accepted for the DCAcademy PhD Programme, scholars and their supervisors have a number of exclusive possibilities, as well as some obligations. When accepting the grant, the scholar and supervisors agree to adhere to these obligations.

- The DCAcademy PhD scholars must participate in the mandatory DCAcademy introduction course on the 14th and 15th of August 2025 at Hotel Sinatur Gl. Avernæs. The course will give DCA-funded researchers an introduction to the Danish Cardiovascular Academy and the DCAcademy Educational Programme, as well as international guest lectures. During the introduction course, scholars will be invited into the DCAcademy Peer Mentoring Programme and work on their personal presentation skills.
- The DCAcademy PhD scholars are expected to participate in the annual DCAcademy Summer Meeting from the 22nd to 24th of June 2025 at Hotel Sinatur Storebælt, Nyborg. Participation is free of charge. Main supervisors are strongly encouraged to participate.
- The DCAcademy PhD scholars must organize a MidTerm Symposium providing a broader perspective to the PhD scholars' project focus. The symposium will be financially supported by the DCAcademy.
- All DCAcademy PhD scholars will be appointed as Science Ambassadors for The Danish Heart Foundation and the Danish Cardiovascular Academy. As ambassador, the grant recipient is expected to actively disseminate their research as well as assist the academy and The Danish Heart Foundation in promoting their activities and create awareness of the importance of cardiovascular research.
- The DCAcademy PhD scholars will be able to apply the DCAcademy for an additional 1-year of salary (after 2 years of completed study). This grant will provide the PhD scholar with the possibility of continuing their research for an additional year as either PhD-student or postdoctoral fellow.

ELIGIBILITY

To support the aims of the Danish Cardiovascular Academy, the PhD-projects should bring researchers from different disciplines and/or sectors together. This can be accomplished by dual supervision where the scholar has supervisors and/or collaborators from different research groups, preferably from different disciplines and sectors. Longer research stays at the research environment of both supervisors are highly recommended. The candidate and the main supervisor must fulfill the requirements stated below.

The candidate

In order to apply for the DCAcademy PhD Programme, the following requirements must be fulfilled:

- The candidate must have a Master's degree from a Danish university or an equivalent degree from a foreign university by the time of applicationⁱ.
- The main supervisor must be associated with a Danish university.
- A supervisor can only be the main supervisor on one application per call.
- High-level of proficiency in English is requiredⁱⁱ.

Furthermore, the candidate must be no more than 5 years from candidate/master's degree (excluding periods of maternity and paternity leave, disease, and "hoveduddannelse"). It is evaluated positively if the applicant has research experience. An education as MSc. (cand. scient.) can be considered as having research experience from the thesis; an MD may document research experience from publications, submitted manuscripts, or pre-graduate research year.

Supervisors cannot apply for PhD scholarships, only candidates may apply. You can only apply for one PhD Scholarship per application round. You may re-apply up to three times and it is important that you indicate whether your application is a re-application for the same or similar project or a different project.

The main supervisor

The main supervisor must be affiliated with a Danish universityⁱⁱⁱ and provide documentation that the supervisor's group has experience with the essential methods as well as the expertise and funding necessary for a successful PhD-project. It is only possible to be the main supervisor on one application per Call.

The co-supervisor(s)

To facilitate broad and complementary research training of the PhD scholar, it is recommended that the scholar has two or more co-supervisors representing different areas and/or sectors. All supervisors are expected to play a highly active role in the training and supervision of the scholar.

THE APPLICATION

Applications must be in English and submitted through the online application system.

www.efond.dk/dca

In the application system you must provide relevant contact information, project title, short project description in English, and upload the main application document.

The main application document must consist of the following documents, merged into a single PDF-file in the order stated below

For readability purposes, all documents must be prepared using standard fonts, font size 11-12, and line spacing between 1.15 and 1.5.

To be prepared by the candidate

- **Project description including:**
 - Aim and specific objectives
 - Significance of the proposed study
 - Preliminary studies/results (if applicable)
 - Hypotheses
 - Project design and methods, including statistics
 - Risk management strategy ("plan B")
 - Perspectives(max 4 pages, including illustrations; excluding references).

The Grant Committee urges applicants to focus project description on project and methods and to keep introduction/background very short!

- **The candidate's contribution including:**
 - Description of which parts of the project the candidate is expected to perform independently
 - Description of which parts of the project other research team members will contribute/be responsible for (max 1 page)
- **Candidate's CV** (max 2 pages)
- **Grade transcript**
- **Other relevant documents**

To be prepared by main supervisors

- **Description of the supervisors' research environment including:**
 - Supervisors' involvement and contribution to the project
 - Experience with supervision and relevant methods
 - Contribution to the research training of the scholar
 - Description of how the interdisciplinary and/or trans-sectorial aspects contribute to synergies within the project area^{iv} (max 2 pages)
- **CV for each supervisor**, including 5 publications most relevant for the proposed project (max 2 pages per CV)

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

After submitting your application, you will receive a receipt of your application by email – if you do not receive this email, please contact the Danish Cardiovascular Academy administration at etb@biomed.au.dk

EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Danish Cardiovascular Academy secretariat will process all incoming applications. Applications not fulfilling the eligibility criteria and/or technical requirements will not be considered.

All eligible applications will be forwarded to the Danish Cardiovascular Academy Grant Committee for a scientific evaluation.

Evaluation criteria

- **Significance:** Does the study address an important problem?
- **Approach:** Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the objectives of the project?
- **Innovation:** Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches, or methods?
- **Applicant:** Is the applicant appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work?
- **Environment:** Does the scientific environment in which the work will be performed, contribute to the probability of success?
- **Interdisciplinarity** and cross-sectorial focus: This is recommended and will be evaluated positively but is not mandatory.
- **Internationalisation:** An international aspect, if relevant, is evaluated positively.
- **Feasibility:** Are three years suitable for completion of the project?

In the evaluation process there will be given separate scores for project (50%), research environment (25%), and applicant's qualifications (25%).

The selected candidate will be informed about the decision by May 2025.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Applicants must be aware of the fact that specific requirements can vary from one university to another e.g. required research experience, publication of articles in peer-reviewed journals, English skills. The main supervisor is expected to assist the candidate when submitting her/his application for enrolment at the Graduate School.

Place of enrolment and employment

Enrollment must take place at a university in Denmark. Employment is full-time and will last for three years unless an agreement with the Danish Cardiovascular Academy is made. Employment takes place at a Danish research institution or a private life sciences company where the PhD project will be carried out.

Enrollment and employment should be within six months after receiving the grant notification letter. If this is not achieved, the grant will be retracted. Upon the enrolment, the enrolment letter must be submitted to the DCAcademy.

If the PhD project includes close research collaborations between two universities (one Danish university and one university abroad), it is possible to obtain a joint or double PhD degree (according to the rules in force and Danish legislation), but enrollment must take place at one of the Danish universities (home university). For further information, the PhD candidate should contact the institution where she/he will be enrolled.

Terms of employment are according to the agreement between the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations and the Ministry of Finance.

PhD programme

The PhD programme must be completed in accordance with The Ministerial Order on the PhD Programme at the Universities, Ministry of Higher Education and Science and the regulations and guidelines defined by the university where employment will take place.

If you receive additional grants covering salary for the project (except for the 1/3 or 2/3 salary not included in the grant from the DCAcademy), the Danish Cardiovascular Academy reserves the right to withdraw your PhD scholarship grant or part of it.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about the DCAcademy PhD programme, please contact the Executive Director Christian Aalkjær; ca@biomed.au.dk

For information about DCAcademy PhD Scholarships, please contact Chief Operation Officer Emil T Brøndum: etb@biomed.au.dk.

ⁱ If the exam is not yet passed, the applicant should enclose a statement from the supervisor of the Master thesis confirming when the thesis will be handed in and when the exam will take place. The Master's degree certificate must be forwarded to the Danish Cardiovascular Academy Executive Management Team no later than six months after receiving the grant notification letter. If we have not received your Master's degree certificate six months after receiving the grant notification letter or if you do not pass the Master's exam, the scholarship will be withdrawn.

ⁱⁱ The Danish Cardiovascular Academy expects high-level proficiency in English oral as well as written. Please be aware of the fact, that specific requirements can vary from one university to another with regards to English language skills. We refer to the individual PhD schools of the Danish university where you will apply for enrolment.

ⁱⁱⁱ *The main supervisor* must be employed at the faculty at which the student applies for enrolment, and he/she must conduct research as an associate professor or professor within the subject studied by the PhD student. The main supervisor has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with all formalities relating to the PhD programme. Please note that a main supervisor can only be main supervisor on one application for a Danish Cardiovascular Academy PhD scholarship per application round.

^{iv} *International collaboration*: The collaboration can be documented by e.g. a collaboration agreement or an email from the collaborator describing the nature of the collaboration. The international collaboration must create actual value for the project and the applicant, and it should therefore be incorporated in the project from the beginning.

Interdisciplinary collaboration: Such as affiliation of collaborators from other research disciplines e.g. basic science, clinical science, industry or integration of different research disciplines in the project. The collaboration must be described with regards to the description of the hypothesis, methods and/or idea development. The collaboration should result in synergy between the collaborators.

Cross sectorial: Such as affiliation of collaborators from other sectors e.g. industry, general practice, university hospitals; formalized agreements with collaborators from other sectors; and/or change of research/work environment in other sectors. The collaboration can be documented by joint publications based on affiliation and educational background of authors, joint and funded applications, patent applications or spin-off companies. The collaboration should result in synergy between the collaborators.