Call for nominations: Elite Research Travel Grants 2021

As part of the Elite Research Initiative, we hereby announce that a maximum of twenty Elite Research Travel Grants, each worth DKK 200,000, will be awarded to talented PhD students enrolled at Danish universities. The grants are intended to fund long study periods at prominent international research centres.

The grants are awarded by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. All nominations for grants will be assessed by the board of the Independent Research Fund Denmark, who will recommend a maximum of twenty candidates to the Minister of Higher Education and Science.

1. Purpose of the grants
The Government aims to make Denmark one of the leading and most competitive knowledge societies. For this reason, the Ministry of Higher Education and Science has launched the Elite Research Initiative to support and encourage the most gifted and talented researchers.

The Elite Research Initiative is intended to draw attention to their results and put them forward as role models for other young people who have embarked on research careers. The Elite Research Travel Grants of DKK 200,000 will help to ensure that talented PhD students can take lengthy study periods at prominent international research centres. These study periods will strengthen the internationalisation of Danish research.

2. Conditions for nomination
Nominations for the Elite Research Travel Grants may be submitted by institutions that confer PhD degrees. Candidates may not nominate themselves. Institutions are encouraged to nominate both women and men.

Grant disbursements will be made at the beginning of 2021 at the earliest. As the Elite Research Travel Grants are to be used in connection with studies for a research degree, the candidates nominated shall at the time of nomination have at least one and a half years of their PhD studies left. Please note that the date for the conclusion of the PhD study programme (including the defence) must be stated on the e-grant form at nomination.

Universities and other institutions that confer PhDs may be divided into five groups according to the number of PhD students enrolled. On this basis, University of Copenhagen will be entitled to nominate up to eight candidates; Aarhus University up to seven candidates; Technical University of Denmark, University of Southern Denmark and Aalborg University up to five candidates each; Copenhagen Business School and Roskilde University up to three candidates each; while IT University of Copenhagen and other institutions that confer PhDs may each nominate one candidate.
3. Requirements concerning nominations
Nominations are to be submitted using the e-grant application system at http://ufm.dk/fi/e-grant, and including the following attachments in PDF format for each candidate nominated:

A. An academic justification for the nomination, including a description of the level and quality of the candidate's PhD project in terms of research. This justification must be written in Danish and must not cover more than one normal page (2,400 characters including spaces).
B. The CV and list of publications (if applicable) may be written in Danish or English.
C. A description of the foreign research environments that will contribute to the research training programme, and the significance and purpose of the study period abroad in relation to the PhD project in question. This must be written in Danish and must not cover more than one normal page (2,400 characters including spaces) per candidate.

No attachments other than those listed here will be sent to the Independent Research Fund Denmark.

4. Assessment criteria
The nominations will be judged competitively, and will be subject to an overall assessment comprising the following elements:

- the academic justification for nominating the candidates;
- the academic qualifications of the candidates;
- the quality of the study period(s) abroad that form part of the research training programme.

Please observe the requirements concerning nominations specified in section three above, as well as the purpose of the grants.

5. How big are the grants and what do they cover?
The Elite Research Travel Grants are each worth DKK 200,000, including overheads. The grants may be used to cover, wholly or partially, expenses incurred in connection with a study period at a foreign research institution and when attending research conferences abroad:

- admission fees to foreign institutions;
- expenses connected with attending conferences abroad, including subsistence allowances;
- the purchase of books, subscriptions and IT - within reason;
- expenses connected with running a laboratory (chemicals, test tubes, etc.) - within reason;
- the candidates own travel expenses in connection with a study period abroad;
- travel and health insurance for the candidate, including medical repatriation;
- expenses connected with the transport of personal effects - within reason;
- actual extra expenses of rented accommodation.
The grant may not be used to cover subsistence allowances for study periods abroad (conference attendance not included) or salary, nor expenses connected with the layout, printing, editing, proof reading, and distribution, etc., of the PhD thesis.

As the grant is a framework grant, additional running costs must be met within the given budget or covered from some other source. It is not possible to apply for a supplementary grant.

6. Administration and legal framework
The total grant awarded will be administered by the grant holder's place of employment, which will also advise the grant holder on how the grant is to be spent. The administration of the grant shall follow the rules for grant-funded research activities laid down in the budget guidelines of the Ministry of Finance.

7. Nomination procedure
Should the deadlines or requirements stated in this call for nominations not be adhered to, the nomination will be rejected without being considered. Should the submitted documentation be incomplete, the nomination will be considered on the basis of the documentation received.

Consideration of nominations received will be concluded at the end of 2020. The travel grants will be announced in connection with the Elite Research prize award ceremony 2021, scheduled for week 9, 2021.

8. Handling of personal information
Documents containing personal information are to be archived according to the provisions of the Access to Public Administration Files Act and are to be delivered to the archives authorities according to the provisions of the Danish Archives Act (about every five years). After delivering documents to the archives authorities, the Agency will keep a copy for about five years, depending on the designated period for the transfer of archives, after which the information held by the Agency will be deleted.

9. Final date for nominations
The final date for the submission of nominations is May 26, 2020, at twelve noon.

10. Contact information
For further information, please contact the Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education by email at eliteforsk@ufm.dk, or call Michael Philip Poulsen on +45 7231 8274.