

# Partnership for Children's Research call for applications for GRANTS FOR CHILDREN'S RESEARCH (within the 0-6 year age range)

## 1. About the Partnership for Children's Research

The Partnership for Children's Research was established as part of the research reserve in 2021, which allocated DKK 50 million annually over a four-year period to the Partnership to build and strengthen Danish children's research focused on the youngest children (0-6 years old). The purpose of the Partnership is to support research that contributes to strengthening the quality of early childhood education, to ensure that all children have a good childhood and the best possible conditions to succeed in life, and that all children in early childhood education thrive, learn, and develop during their formative years.

The Partnership for Children's Research supports research projects within the area of children's research, which benefit the children which the pedagogical practitioners work with. For this reason, the research must be close to practice and be performed in collaboration between at least one university/research institute university, one college of professional education/pedagogical education and one practice organization/local government body/institution. Research partners are encouraged to cooperate on the development, application and delivery of the research projects. This setup allows the research partners to collaborate and make use of different resources and competencies. The Partnership emphasizes the importance of a genuine prioritization of practical relevance and proximity in the project. Furthermore, the Partnership aims to cover the entire age range within child research (0-6 years) in its overall work.

As a baseline, the Partnership for Children's research supports larger research projects with budgets ranging from DKK 5-12 million, including overhead costs. The research programs can consist of multiple sub-projects that collectively contribute to a common issue. The research project may include PhD projects to build capacity in the field of children's research and in pedagogical education associated with the research project.

## 2. Themes for projects and research support initiatives in 2024

In 2024, The Partnership for Children's Research is open for research projects within three themes. This year, the Partnership will also support research support initiatives.

The themes are:

1. Children's lives in early childhood education: Well-being, children communities, and opportunities for participation.

2. Structures, organization, and pedagogical leadership in early childhood education.
3. Contemporary childhood.

Note that applications that span across themes are also welcome.

### **Theme 1: Children's lives in early childhood education: Well-being, children's communities, and opportunities for participation.**

This theme focuses on what is important for a good childhood, taking into account that children spend a significant part of their daily lives in an early childhood education setting (nursery, daycare, or kindergarten).

Projects that fall under Theme 1 can, for example, focus on one of the following topics (the list is not exhaustive):

- Examining different aspects of interaction in early childhood institutions and the relationship between a good childhood and pedagogical work, such as exploring communities, opportunities for participation, vulnerability, or well-being.
- Exploring new understandings of what communities and opportunities for participation mean for children's well-being in early childhood education, including children in vulnerable positions.
- Developing new understandings and nuances of pedagogical practices related to community, opportunities for participation, vulnerability, and well-being in early childhood education.

### **Topic 2: Structures, organization, and Pedagogical Leadership in early Childhood Education**

This theme focuses on how structures that involve children, parents, and staff in early childhood education impact children's lives and the quality of the early childhood institution, including the framework conditions and working conditions.

Projects falling under theme 2 can, for example, focus on one of the following topics (the list is not exhaustive):

- How structural conditions and frameworks (such as governance chains, leadership, organization and staffing ratios) can affect a good childhood, what is experienced or understood as quality in early childhood education and pedagogical work.
- How expertise is understood, developed and supported through amongst other things the education and further training of pedagogical staff. And how different ways of organizing can impact the professional communities in early childhood institutions and the development of the educators' capacity for taking the appropriate actions and their professional identity.

- Development of the pedagogical evaluation culture, including exploring and, if possible, testing new ways to organize and create frameworks for a good childhood.

### **Topic 3: Contemporary Childhood**

This theme focuses on the entirety of a child's life and everyday experiences. Projects under this theme examine the various arenas that shape children's daily lives, including family, early childhood education, leisure time, friends, authorities, and analog and digital environments from a community perspective.

Projects falling under theme 3 can, for example, focus on one of the following topics (the list is not exhaustive):

- Developing and conducting a representative survey on the living conditions of children aged 0-6 and the caregivers surrounding them.
- Gathering new knowledge about the diverse ways in which childhood is currently lived and organized.

### **Initiatives that support research**

Funding in support of research initiatives can be applied for, to a smaller extent. Examples of projects could be funds to establish shared research infrastructure and PhD Summer Schools, which is seen as valuable to research projects that meet the aims of the Partnership.

The applications must show a link between the initiative and the amount applied for. Funding for initiatives that support research can be applied for jointly or by a single organization.

## **3. Means and starting date**

### **Means**

As a baseline, the Partnership for Children's Research aims to fund larger research projects. These projects can consist of multiple sub-projects that collectively contribute to a common research question, with each part helping to answer an overarching research question. It may be advantageous to design one or more of these sub-projects as a PhD project.

By focusing on larger projects and PhD education, the Partnership ensures alignment in the allocation of funds for child research and long-term capacity building within the field.

Additionally, funding may be provided, to a lesser extent, for the establishment of shared research infrastructure and other supportive initiatives. An example of infrastructure is the establishment of data that has general value for research, aligning with the partnership's objectives.

### **Starting date**

Projects submitted by the application deadline of May 15th, 2024, are expected to commence in the spring of 2025.

## **4. Who can apply**

The partnership is established to support research which contributes to giving all children the best possible opportunities to succeeding in their later lives, e.g. by ensuring that all children in early childhood education thrive, learn, and develop during their formative years. As stated, in order to ensure research which is of a high scientific standard and relevant for and conducted closely with members of the practice field, it is a prerequisite that the application is prepared in collaboration between at least one university/college of professional education, one university/research institute, and one practice organization/institution. As such, it is guaranteed that both research competencies and practical competencies are included. Furthermore, it is necessary for the research projects to relate to a pedagogical education, which ensures embedding of knowledge of the results of the research within the next generation of professional practitioners.

The partnership considers diversity as a resource, and anyone can apply for funding regardless of age, gender, religion, nationality, ethnic background, or political belief.

The main applicant is the project leader and responsible for the grant. The main applicant must be at an internationally recognized research level and have documented scientific qualifications at the PhD level. It is advantageous if the main applicant has experience in leading research projects and research teams.

Co-applicants are the primary collaborating partners from the collaborating institutions. Co-applicants must have documented scientific qualifications to a degree that collectively demonstrates competence to carry out the entire project. Co-applicants must also demonstrate a scientific production commensurate with their career progression and seniority.

### **Organization**

The application must clearly state how the collaboration is organized within the research team and between research institutions, municipalities, educational practice, and/or pedagogical education. This includes specifying what the participating institutions expect to gain from the collaboration and how the practice collaborators are integrated in all phases of the project.

If one or more postdoctoral researchers or PhD students are involved in the project, their organizational affiliation must be indicated, and a letter of enrollment from a PhD school must be attached if the PhD candidate is named in the application.

A recruitment plan should be included when recruiting new employees for the project.

## 5. Budget

It is possible to apply for funding to cover expenses directly related to the proposed project, which are relevant and necessary for its implementation. In addition, an overhead/administration expense (OH) should be included to cover indirect costs associated with conducting a research project. Indirect expenses are costs that cannot be directly attributed to the specific project, such as shared expenses for rent, general work computers, common software, administration, etc.

The budget should be presented as an overall budget with a maximum of 10 budget lines, clearly indicating the project's main activities, such as salaries, PhD education, release of pedagogical staff, etc.

For public research institutions, the OH represents 44% of the direct costs. OH is generally not provided for expenses such as release of pedagogical staff or other costs incurred by non-research-active partner institutions.

The grant amount for each project ranges from 5 to 12 million DKK (including OH).

The administering institution is responsible for managing and recording the project's expenses. The administering institution must be the same as the main applicant's employing institution. It is a prerequisite for the grant that the budget information is approved and signed by the leadership of the administering institution.

## 6. Application and Project Description

The project description should state the research project's problem statement, research questions, objectives, and the synergy between the sub-projects. Additionally, the project description must include a description of the project's leadership and organizational structure, as well as a plan for publishing and implementing the results in practice. All subprojects, including PhD and postdoc projects, should be briefly described in terms of content. A visual overview of the collaborating partners and a timeline for the project can be added as an appendix. A further two appendices, no more than one page each, can be added.

The application must include:

- Project description (maximum of six standard pages of 2,400 characters including spaces, captions, formulas etc.). The project description may contain a cover page, which does not count towards the final word count and is not included in the six standard pages. Reference and literature lists should be attached as appendices.
- Project summary in Danish and English (maximum of 500 characters)

- CVs for the main applicant and co-applicants (only for scientific level (co-)applicants)
- Declaration of co-operation from practice collaborator co-applicants including their motivation for collaborating.
- Publication list for the main applicant and any co-applicants
- Budget (including a budget commitment signed by the leadership of the main applicant's institution)
- Confirmation from the main applicant's employing institution (host organization) including approval of the budget costs.
- A graphic representation of the schedule and organizing of the project (maximum three pages of A4) (may be omitted)
- Recruitment plan if there is a need for recruitment in the project
- Confirmation from a PhD school stating that a candidate can enroll in the PhD program (if relevant).

The application must be submitted using the online application system GrantOne. Access to GrantOne is available from February 25th, 2024.

The application will be automatically validated before being submitted for evaluation.

To be eligible for evaluation by the assessment panels, the application must fulfill the following requirements:

- The application must be submitted before the application deadline.
- The application must be written in Danish or English.
- The application must adhere to the maximum character limits as specified in the application guidelines (maximum of 6 standard pages of 2,400 characters including spaces).
- The CV for the main applicant must adhere to the maximum length requirement (maximum of two A4 pages, excluding the publication list).
- The CV for co-applicants must adhere to the maximum length requirement (maximum of three A4 pages, including the publication list).
- Declaration of co-operation from practice collaborator co-applicants including their motivation for collaborating (the declaration must be a maximum of two A4 pages).
- Budget. The total budget amount must not exceed the grant limit specified in the call.
- If there are named PhD students in the project, a confirmation from a PhD school must be attached stating that the candidate can enroll in the PhD program.
- Recruitment plan if there is a need for recruitment in the project.
- The application meets the goals described in the call.

## 7. Evaluation of Applications

Applications to the Partnership for Child Research are assessed by two evaluation panels before being presented to the board for a final decision on

whether the application will be granted. The two evaluation panels, appointed by the board, have different goals: The scientific panel aims to ensure that the research which receives a grant is of high scientific quality. The practice panel aims to prioritize practice relevance and proximity.

The evaluation panel's assessment is sent for consultation with the applicant before the board makes the final decision on whether the application receives a grant.

## 8. Evaluation Criteria

For the evaluation of the application, the Partnership has established the following criteria. The evaluation will involve an overall assessment where the criteria may be fulfilled to a greater or lesser extent. Not all criteria will be relevant to all applications. Due to the competition among applications, meeting the criteria does not guarantee funding. In all cases, the Partnership will assess your application based on whether the proposed project benefits Danish children's research in the 0-6-year-old age range. The evaluations will put emphasis on relevance, quality and ability to embed.

The scientific panel will evaluate the applications on the basis on the below criteria:

- Relevance and scientific quality of the project
- Organizational anchoring and feasibility of the project
- Qualifications and composition of the participants
- Publication and dissemination of research results
- Contribution of the project to improving children's lives for all children
- Capacity building in pedagogical education and in pedagogical practice

The practice panel will evaluate the applications on the basis of the below criteria:

- Involvement of practice
- Practice relevance and qualification of the knowledge base for pedagogical practice and pedagogical education
- Practice-oriented dissemination and anchoring
- Ability to implement the project by practitioners

## 9. Timeline

- Application system GrantOne opens: February 15th 2024
- Application deadline: May 15th 2024, 12pm
- Evaluation in the evaluation panels: June-October 2024
- Consultation: November 2024
- Expected issuance of funding letters and rejections: Before the end of 2024.