



eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday 25 September 2008

Email to the editors: elife@life.ku.dk

Final deadline for editorial changes is Wednesday before publication of eLIFE on Thursday.

Editorial changes may occur in relation to the online newsletter.

As regards links in the newsletter, please refer to the Danish online version at the faculty's website http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev.aspx

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, Communications, glb@life.ku.dk

Life at LIFE

Sign up for the University Festival

9 and 10 October are drawing near, and so is the largest joint event at the University of Copenhagen this year, which will be held for the first time ever for all University staff and students: the 'Universitetets Døgn' festival. And because LIFE is the main organiser and because the party tent will be set up here at the Frederiksberg Campus, I hope to see lots of LIFEers during the two-day event to proudly represent our Faculty and warmly welcome our colleagues and fellow students to the Frederiksberg Campus.

In addition to free food, drink, music and entertainment, the festival also offers a variety of educational, alternative, hands-on and entertaining activities, some of which you may have already heard a bit about from colleagues or fellow students. If you haven't already done so yet, I suggest you check out the website www.universitetsdoegn.ku.dk where you can also sign up directly. Invite a colleague or fellow student along and sign up right away for one or more activities while there are still places available.

Many LIFE staff and students have contributed to organising the 'Universitetets Døgn' festival, which comprises different parts:

CPH Campus Race – A different and entertaining ‘problem-based’ bicycle race will take place over a couple of hours late in the afternoon on Thursday 9 October. There will be cool team awards, not for the fastest, but for those who have the most fun, and who are best at completing the ‘problems’ ;o) and who have the best experience of new sides of the four campuses. Form a team of five employees and/or students and sign up at www.universitetetsdoegn.ku.dk/Cykelloeb. Free, high-quality cycling/running T-shirts and dinner, paid for by the University, for the first 400 participants to sign up.

Climate lounge – Will take place in the evening on Thursday 9 October with live camels, sand on the floor and tropical plants: the University of Copenhagen anno 2050. Free entertainment, music and lounge atmosphere with fellow students and colleagues from the entire University of Copenhagen. Sign up now at www.universitetetsdoegn.ku.dk/Klimalounge

Friday 10 October can help secure a sustainable future for your university:

Workshops, Jazz café, Campus beer and warm-up for the Copenhagen Night of Culture, the ‘Universitetets Døgn’ festival invites you to attend eight workshops that are out of the ordinary both in terms of form and content. Join fellow students, staff and management at the University of Copenhagen, leading consultants, journalists, a judge from the X-factor show, dancers and others in designing the future of the University of Copenhagen. You can read more about the individual workshops and sign up at www.universitetetsdoegn.ku.dk/Workshops

Per Holten-Andersen

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 25 September 2008

Frederiksberg Erhvervspris to be presented at LIFE

On Tuesday, 30 September 2008, the business award ‘Frederiksberg Erhvervspris’ will be presented at an event in the main lecture hall at the Faculty of Life Sciences.

The programme includes, among other things, a presentation about LIFE and entrepreneurship by Tina Lewis, Business Affairs Manager, Research and Innovation Office. Dean Per Holten-Andersen will give the welcoming speech and Mayor Mads Lebech will conclude the awards ceremony.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 25 September 2008

Student ministers are consulted

Stefan Lamhauge Hansen, student minister at the University of Copenhagen Faculties of Law, Theology and Social Sciences, and Nicolai Halvorsen, student minister at the University of Copenhagen Faculties of Life Sciences and Health Sciences, explain in a commentary the background for and results of a well-being survey carried out at the University of Copenhagen. According to the authors, it is important to note that 17 per cent of students surveyed, those from PHARMA and LIFE, were not part of the University of Copenhagen until 2007, and so did not have access to a student minister when the survey took place. However, plans are underway to establish a student minister position at the Frederiksberg Campus. “There are always grounds for considering whether we have done enough to call attention to our presence in the study environment. And it is necessary to clear up any prejudices about the role of the student minister by emphasising that it is possible to request a pastoral care interview without it being about religious problems,” the authors write in their commentary.

From LIFE press clippings: *Kristeligt Dagblad*, 22 September 2008
Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 22 September 2008

Ginkgo with its amazing sex life

The Ginkgo biloba tree is considered the oldest living species of tree in the world, and we have an example of this ancient species in the old Faculty Gardens. The ginkgo has an exciting history in which both monks and nuclear bombs have played a part. The tree also has an unusual sex life, at least for trees.

Fossils of the ginkgo species can be dated back to the Permian era about 230 million years ago, but the species was most abundant in the Jurassic era about 150 million years ago, where the tree grew in the prehistoric forests along with the dinosaurs. The ginkgo tree was actually widely spread out across most of the northern hemisphere, and fossilised leaves have been found in both Greenland and on the Danish island of Bornholm. The ice ages contributed to the downfall of the species, and because it also has the unfortunate characteristic of growing very slowly in its early years, it has been replaced over time by trees with faster-growing trees. The Ginkgo is also often called a living fossil, which was a favourite saying by Charles Darwin. It became known to Europeans as a tree planted around the temples in Japan, but it is actually most at home in the lush mixed forests along the rivers of China, where it grows alongside dove trees, holly, butterfly bushes, blackberries, climbing hydrangea etc. The tree was brought to Japan by Buddhist monks, and it is said that they were planted around the temples because an extract of the leaves supposedly inhibits the need to urinate. Thus, during prolonged religious ceremonies, the monks did not have to raise the hands all the time to ask permission to be excused.

The doctor and botanist E. Kämpfer, who worked for the Dutch East India Company, discovered the tree while travelling in Japan in 1690, where he was impressed by its beauty. When describing the tree, he confused the Chinese characters of y and g in the name. Ginkgo is actually derived from the Chinese word *Yin-kuo-tsu* (Ginkyo), meaning silver nut or silver plum. When Carl von Linné later officially named the tree, he kept the name ginkgo and added the second part of the name biloba, meaning dual-lobed in reference to the leaves. The first ginkgo tree arrived in Europe in 1730. It was planted in Utrecht's Botanical Gardens in the Netherlands, where it still stands today, 300 years later. However, it is far from old, as the ginkgo can live to be up to 1,000 years old.

As its Latin name suggests, its fruit resembles a yellowish-green plum of approx. 3 cm. And despite its repulsive smell of rancid butter, it is actually eaten in East Asia, although primarily by men as it is said to strengthen the sex drive. In my opinion, they must pickle it or perhaps fry it before eating it, because when I once bit into a raw fruit, my lips burned for days and it didn't seem to strengthen anything. A closer look at the leaves reveals their primitive structure without the main vein that is otherwise visible in all later deciduous trees, which have a main vein running through the middle of the leaf with smaller veins radiating out from it. On ginkgo leaves, the veins distribute from the leaf stalk like a fan on each half of the leaf. By the way the ginkgo also has beautiful yellow autumn foliage.

The ginkgo is dioecious, which means that there are both male trees and female trees, but it is not possible to see the sex of the tree until it is about 20 years old. Our largest ginkgo is a tall, handsome male tree, planted in 1883 in the middle of the large rockery in the Faculty's listed garden. In the spring, he flowers with catkin-like pollen cones, each with a large number of sporophylls arranged in a spiral that develop pollen. Every year, he fathers lots of fruit with a sole female plant in a neighbouring garden on the opposite side of Bülowsvej across from the main building at Bülowsvej 17. She does not produce regular flowers, but on the ends of stalks,

two fleshy ovules develop with pore-like openings leading to the archegonia. When she is ready to be fertilised, she secretes a drop of sticky substance which attracts the attention of our ginkgo – who has not taken a vow of celibacy – who then sends his pollen grains in her direction. They land in the sticky substance of the female tree and sink into the seed where they sprout. Within the seed something amazing occurs – the cells divide twice and release two large automotive spermatozoa, which use thousands of flagella to move towards and fertilise the ovule. It sounds incredible, but according to the Japanese botanist Sakugoró Hirasé, who discovered the unique fertilisation technique in 1896, this is the actual method.

In addition to its doubtful potency-enhancing effects, it has been proven that the leaves contain a complex combination of many different, partly unknown, substances that are extracted and used in herbal medicines. The flavonoid glycosides and terpenoids are particularly unique to the ginkgo, and are not found anywhere else in the plant kingdom. Many studies have been conducted, including by the Department of Medicinal Chemistry at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Copenhagen, and scientists have determined that the unique ginkgolides can enter the brain and influence important receptors. Ginkgo preparations are often recommended for circulation disorders and memory and concentration problems, and they appear to have a positive effect on people with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases.

The Chinese have known of the positive effects for 5,000 years, and with more than 50 million trees throughout the world producing 8,000 tonnes of dried leaves a year, this is not just a fad – ginkgo preparations are among the most popular herbal medicines in the world.

The ginkgo tree has no natural enemies and is resistant to insects, viruses, fungi and bacteria, even people have trouble damaging it. It is said that there once was a huge ginkgo tree in Hiroshima in Japan, where as you know a nuclear bomb was 'dropped' during World War II. The tree was incinerated like everything else at a radius of many kilometres, but one year later it was the only plant to actually produce fresh shoots.

Kim Greiner, Senior Gardener

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 22 September 2008

Announcements

Have you seen the University's electronic dictionary KULex?

The University of Copenhagen's new terminology database, [KULex](#), works like an electronic dictionary of university-related words.

Here you can search for university terminology – e.g. job titles, educational terms and organisational terms – in a Danish-English as well as an English-Danish dictionary. However, the KULex only contains a limited selection of specialist research terminology.

KULex is optimised to search from Danish into English, so it is possible that more than one row of results can pop up with the same entry word if you search from English into Danish.

You can find KULex at www.ordbog.ku.dk or via [LIFE's language page](#) (in Danish).

If you have any comments regarding the terminology in KULex, please write to Kirsten Jenlev, kje@life.ku.dk

Kirsten Jenlev, Communications, kje@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 24 September 2008

New LIFE Staff Portal in English launched

A new English-language staff portal has just been launched: You can also find the new staff portal by clicking the 'internal sites' window in the upper right-hand side of the English website or at this address: www.life.ku.dk/staffportal.

On the English-language staff portal, you will find information about:

- Recruitment and employment, including useful information about your digital payslip, rules on holidays and leave of absence, working in Denmark, staff policy, competence development etc.
- Courses and exams, including things you need to know about how to conduct exams, exam plans, cancelled courses, the Danish marking scale, curricula etc.
- Maps and information on internal transport, accommodation for foreign staff and health and safety at work
- Canteens and bookshop, the communication toolbox, Danish-English word list and language assistance
- LIFE's internal newsletter eLIFE, available in English every Tuesday
- Many other things of importance to you as a member of staff at LIFE

Kirsten Jenlev, Communications, kje@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 25 September 2008

Academy of Technical Sciences conference: Energy 2008+ – Technological Pathways of the Future, Monday 27 October at DTU

The Danish Academy of Technical Sciences (ATV) brings together leading Danish and international energy scientists, business leaders and energy policy opinion-makers to a conference on the energy technologies of the future at the Technical University of Denmark in Lyngby, north of Copenhagen.

The objective of the conference is to increase understanding in Denmark of the global reality in terms of energy policy and the need to join forces in the area of energy technology. The Academy seeks to qualify public discourse on the topic as well as contribute to a common understanding and common language in order to develop long-term energy solutions.

[See the conference programme here](#). You can register here. There is a registration fee. Registration deadline: 20 October 2008. After that date, registration is binding.

The conference is sponsored by DONG Energy A/S, Haldor Topsøe A/S, Siemens Danmark and the Technical University of Denmark, with the Danish engineering publication *Dagbladet Ingeniøren* as media partner.

For any questions, please contact Jens Christian Riise, project manager ATV, on tel. +45 45 96 08 21 or by email: atv-konference@atv.dk

Invitation to the Danish Academy of Technical Sciences' Annual Conference 2008

Technical University of Denmark, 27 October 2008

The focus of the Danish Academy's Annual Conference 2008 is technological energy pathways for the future in the light of the Danish technological strongholds. We want to discuss openly:

- What are the technological, structural and political realities of global energy supply of today?
- What are the technological possibilities and main technological problems to be overcome within the next decades?
- What are our dreams for the new technologies in the light of the challenges the world is facing up to 2100 and beyond?
- What does it take to move ahead fast, in terms of strategies, partnerships and economic inputs?

The conference will create an important platform for discussions on how technological energy solutions may be developed from idea to commercial scale over time.

Please read the programme for the conference. You may register [here](#). Please note the registration fee and the deadline for registration: 20 October 2008.

Sponsors: DONG Energy A/S, Haldor Topsøe A/S, Siemens Danmark and the Technical University of Denmark.
Media partner: Ingeniøren.

Please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat for further inquiries on telephone: +45 45 96 08 21 or by email: atv-konference@atv.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 22 September 2008

Education

Danish Development Research Network – inspiration seminar for Master's thesis students on 8 October

The Danish Development Research Network (DDRN) is hosting an inspiration seminar for Master's thesis students at the Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen, on Wednesday 8 October, 1-3 pm. [Read more](#)

Louise Dyhr Edjabou, Internationalisation and Developing Countries, louisedp@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 25 September 2008

Postgraduate course in applied toxicology, November 2008

For the fourth year running, the Department of Experimental Medicine at the University of Copenhagen offers a postgraduate course in applied toxicology. The focus of the course is on risk assessment of industrial chemicals, but also other types of chemical substances, e.g. pharmaceuticals, are included.

Read more: <http://emed.ku.dk/kurser/toksikologi/toxeng/>

Registration: <http://emed.ku.dk/kurser/toksikologi/>

Niels Christian Kampmann, Department of Experimental Medicine, chka@sund.ku.dk

NOVA application round

Applications to NOVA for funding for establishing intensive MSc courses and PhD courses, respectively, in spring 2009. Deadline: 15 October 2008.

[More information](#)

- PhD courses 2009 - Funding is available for Nordic networks to offer PhD courses in 2009.

- Intensive MSc courses - Funding is available for Nordic networks to offer intensive MSc courses (1-2 weeks) in 2009 and January 2010.

- Planning of Erasmus Mundus II applications - The objective of the funding is to support networks in the process of planning and writing applications to the Erasmus Mundus II programme.

www.nova-university.org/opencall

secretariat@nova-university.org

Michael Guldager, Internationalisation and Developing Countries, mgu@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 24 September 2008

Invitation to the 3rd Erasmus workshop: NEW DATES: 6-7 November 2008

This is an invitation to the 3rd workshop of the Erasmus network developed by the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering at Ghent University, which will be held at the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (UPV-ETSIA). Due to accommodation problems in Valencia at the end of October, we had to reschedule the dates of the meeting. Please note that the workshop will take place on 6 and 7 November 2008.

The topic of the 3rd workshop will be "How to strengthen research collaboration within the network through student exchange?"

Also the online internationalisation platform providing information for exchange students on the Master programmes in the network will be presented.

Reports on the previous workshops are available on the following websites:

- http://www.fbw.ugent.be/Socrates_workshop/index.html

- http://www.fbw.ugent.be/2nd_Erasmus_workshop/index.html

Here you can find a list of the invited network partners as well as the agenda of the workshop, the registration form and the accommodation form.

We want to emphasise that this meeting is not only for people in the international office but mainly aimed at the faculty staff (professors, assistants) involved in the exchange of students within the network. We would, therefore, appreciate it if you could forward the invitation to interested staff members at your institution and encourage their presence at the meeting.

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Ida Marie Krogager, Study and Students' Affairs, imkr@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 24 September 2008

Introduction course for PhD students at UC-LIFE 6-10 October 2008

This course will give you a thorough introduction to the life as a PhD student at UC-LIFE. During the course, you will get a basic overview of the study programme, the skills and competencies necessary to become a mature and independent researcher.

The course will focus on:

- Career planning – your Personal Development Plan
- Oral presentation techniques
- Academic writing
- International patent rights
- Project management
- Research ethics
- Collaboration with your supervisors
- Aspects of PhD administration

You will work on your own Personal Development Plan for the next three years during the course.

The course will also be a platform for networking with new PhD students from different departments at UC-LIFE and other universities.

Teaching staff: Annette Ersbøll, Sofie Kobayashi, Brian Grout, Lawrence White, Lars Holm Rasmussen and Claus Jarløv.

The teachers on the course have been chosen among specialists at UC-LIFE and professional consultants.

Venue: UC-LIFE (Frederiksberg) and Rådvd Vandrehjem (Lyngby Danhostel), Rådvd, just North of Copenhagen)

Fee: None – all expenses are covered

Number of participants: Max. 20

Registration deadline: 22 September 2008

Course credit by approval of report: 2 ECTS

Language: English

Course leaders: Sofie Kobayashi, Brian Grout and Lars Holm Rasmussen

Registration and further information: introduction-course@life.ku.dk Registration form

Course website: to be announced later

This course is organised by the CRS secretariats on behalf of the LIFE Graduate School.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 18 September 2008

Staff news

Inaugural lecture: Professor Jan Gorodkin, Friday 14 November, 2 pm, main lecture hall 1-01

On 1 May, Jan Gorodkin was appointed Professor of Bioinformatics with special responsibilities within animal genomics. Professor Gorodkin will be giving his inaugural lecture entitled "Bioinformatics for mapping the genome of the mammal" in Danish on Friday 14 November 2008 at 2 pm in the main lecture hall.

The lecture will be followed by a reception on the 1st floor in the Anatomy building, Grønnegårdsvej 7.

[See invitation](#)

Helle Strandlyst, Department of Basic Animal and Veterinary Sciences, hks@life.dk

Research

NordForsk Call

NordForsk launches a call for Nordic Private Public Partnership (PPP) PhD Projects. The aim of the NordForsk PPP PhD programme is to contribute to the opening up of the Nordic Research and Innovation Area, NORIA, by promoting trans-Nordic academia-industry collaboration and knowledge exchange. The call is also available at <http://www.nordforsk.org/text.cfm?id=551>

NordForsk is the Nordic research board, operating under the Nordic Council of Ministers; responsible for Nordic collaboration in research and research training.

- [Call](#)
- [Guidelines for Applicants](#)
- [Application Form](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 22 September 2008

Grants

Danida's travel grants

You can apply for Danida's travel grants via the Danish Development Research Network (DDRN). The grants are for Master's thesis students wanting to conduct field work in a developing country.

[For more information see here](#) and under [Travel Grants](#)

Lone Frederiksen, Danish Development Research Network, lf@ddrn.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 24 September 2008

Research funding etc.

See the updated information on the Research & Information website.