



eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday 3 June 2010

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

The final deadline for editorial changes is Wednesday before the publication of eLIFE on Thursday.

The online newsletter may be subject to editorial changes.

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, LIFE Communications, glb@life.ku.dk

Life at LIFE

Competition: Do you know Café Væksthuset – and can you capture it on paper?

Café Væksthuset needs a new front page. Students are therefore invited to have a go at designing a new front page for Café Væksthuset. The picture will be used as a label on Café Væksthuset's wine and will also be printed as a poster. Both wine and poster will go on sale at the Café.

In addition to the honour, the prize for the winning design is a meal for four at Café Væksthuset, 3 bottles of wine and a poster.

So let your imagination run wild, maximum size is A2 and minimum size A4. All styles are welcome (poster, collage, watercolour, oil etc.). We are looking for a mood and not necessarily a portrait.

The picture must not infringe any copyrights, trademarks or other intellectual property rights.

Please submit your design by Monday, 14 June 2010 at 12 noon. The winner will be selected by a panel of judges. The artist will not incur any costs in connection with the printing. The name of the artist will be mentioned on the bottles and posters together with Café Væksthuset's name, if desired.

The picture will be the property of Café Væksthuset. By entering the competition, the artist transfers all rights to the current and future use and sale of the picture to Café Væksthuset. This applies to all formats for an indefinite period of time, including any reprints.

Kind regards from Café Væksthuset.

Sine Bomskov Møller, med. vet. student, bomskov@dsr.life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 2 June 2010

Buy your summer flowers at the greenhouses

Summer flowers will be on sale at the greenhouses on Thursday, 10 June 2010 between 7 am and 1 pm. The address is Rolighedsvej 23. All employees and LIFE students are welcome. Unfortunately, we do not accept payment by Dankort.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 31 May 2010

Many good proposals from PhD dialogue meeting

On Thursday 27 May, the LIFE Management held a dialogue meeting on PhD education, the purpose of which was to obtain input from the many different stakeholders in the PhD field on issues such as recruitment, working environment and career opportunities for PhD graduates from LIFE.

At the meeting, brief presentations were given by Erik Bisgaard Madsen, Associate Dean for Research, Kell Mortensen, Chairman of the Graduate School, Thomas Thøgersen, PhD student, and Anders Viksø-Nielsen from Novozymes.

Proposals now to be implemented

During the discussions at the meeting, many good proposals were made for changes and improvements in the PhD field.

The Management will now follow up on the proposals received and implement as many of them as possible.

Dialogue meeting on PhD education – 27 May 2010 Proposals:

Question:	Proposals received:
What can LIFE do to improve the recruitment of PhD students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- More external funding- Establish clearer career paths for future students- Visible role models for new students- Not necessarily focus on getting many applicants – focus on getting the right applications- Remember international advertising, as the talent base in Denmark may be too small- Solve the problem that international students are forced to pay for the first year

	<p>under the 4+4 PhD programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The rules for the 4+4 programme should be made clearer to both students and supervisors - Information on the employment prospects after completion of the PhD programme. There are no vacant postdoctoral fellowships or assistant professorships! - The options can be confusing for potential PhD students. It should be easier to access general information about the PhD studies at LIFE: How do you choose a subject, supervisor etc.? - The admission criteria should be clear and transparent – what do we require? How does the PhD committee assess applications (particularly international applications)? - Quota 2 for older applicants with research experience - I think we could attract more applicants by focusing more on personal development as well as the general career-promoting aspects of the PhD programme
<p>How can LIFE improve the working environment – both the physical and the psychological – for PhD students?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a lack of basic extra equipment for the many freshly recruited PhD students (chairs, tables, laboratory equipment) – no funds have been allocated for this in the research groups. This has a negative impact on the quality of the programme - There are too many PhD students in some places – not enough room - International students need more support to establish social networks. Many students leave their family back home, so they have no network at all upon arrival. They receive no help from their supervisors in this respect - Follow-up on the intro course - More PhD students at each department is a good thing – makes for a better social life - We need to work on building up and developing local counselling environments where supervisors can spar with each other. - Mentor/buddy/first contact for new PhD students - If the PhD student has planned his/her course of study so that the thesis is submitted prior to the expiry of the project funding period, the employment should be maintained until the expiry of the project period/the PhD thesis defence (whichever comes first) - More targeted information to PhD students about the workplace – they are often left to their own devices because the PhD supervisor has the main responsibility - Make sure that all PhD students complete our intro course - Clear information to students on their rights and obligations and what they can use their PhD funds for - A clear consistency between the intentions of the academic rules and the departments' implementation of the rules would also help to increase students' faith in the system in some departments (e.g. PhD employee development interviews (MUS))

<p>What will make a stay abroad relevant and interesting for a PhD student?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better support from the supervisor in relation to students going abroad to study - The supervisor could utilise his/her network to procure interesting travel options for PhD students. - There should be a much better website on this – where do you turn to get help? - We should accept that shorter stays may also be of interest and something that you can learn from. Short stays are much easier to handle for PhD students with families who are unable to accompany them. - Supervisors should mention the possibilities early on in the PhD programme – and then it should be incorporated into the PhD plan - Travel grants - Counselling and possibly a website on tax rules - Consider in each individual case what the precise benefit of a stay would be. The key issue is international exposure and the ability to publish in collaboration with colleagues abroad – not that you stay abroad for X number of months - Possibility of applying for supplementary funding in connection with stays abroad – especially considering the new tax rules. Drawing attention to the fact that the stay abroad does not necessarily have to be one long stay, but that it could consist of several short stays – particularly relevant for students with a family - Proposal: Bonuses for stays abroad should be more specific from the outset (how can this be ensured?) The supervisor should have a plan. The benefit for the supervisor is the establishment of a stronger network - Extra time - Earmarking some of the operating funding for stays abroad in the individual project might be considered - A ‘pixie book’ on stays abroad would help many. The graduate school/research schools (FUP) should be able to help out with that
<p>What constitutes a good PhD supervisor and good PhD counselling?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is very important to hold MUS interviews and discuss career prospects - A good supervisor has many tools in his/her ‘toolbox’ so that the counselling can be adapted to the needs of the individual PhD student. A good supervisor reflects on, evaluates and talks with the student about the counselling - PhD students should have the chance to discuss this subject in a wider forum – not just with the supervisor - Counselling depending on the situation. The counselling should be based on an open and trusting relationship. The supervisor should, by and large, be able to handle the student’s personal development from MSc level (instruction) to PhD level (coaching). The supervisor should also be prepared to handle cultural differences - Some foreign universities hold regular section-based workshops of 1-3 hours’ duration at which supervisors and students work with various issues based on prepared cases. This model could easily be implemented at LIFE. There is quite a bit of literature and teaching material available which could easily be adapted to our situation

<p>How can LIFE facilitate the transition of PhD students to the industrial sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mapping career prospects for PhD graduates - Responsibility should be shared by the student, the supervisor and the central organisation - Creating more formal networks with the industrial sector - Formal network meetings conducted in English with the industrial sector - Job ideas: Holding a meeting once or twice a year with ideas for the students - Career clarification process (HR, the Unemployment Insurance Fund for Academics (AAK), SOAR – Research School for Organic Agriculture and Food Systems) - The supervisor initiates discussion of ‘further career’ - The departments clearly announce the purpose of the project, the PhD and the subject area going forward - Discussion with individual supervisors about the future/career plan at an early stage - Supervisors should focus on how elements in the PhD plan can be utilised later on in the career - Examples of job functions where a PhD is useful - Is it possible to get a research job outside the university? - Students should know from the start of the project that the future careers of a large part of the students will lie outside the universities. Therefore, already during the first or second year, they should determine how they would like to continue their career and make a personal plan for how best to improve their competencies for their dream jobs, e.g. by doing project management courses, application courses etc. offered, for example, by PUMA or the graduate school - The academic environments should be open to the fact that students may want to leave the section after having completed their degree. Unfortunately, we sometimes see supervisors discriminating students on these grounds - LIFE could focus more on the career-promoting aspects of the PhD programme. We do discuss this in the intro courses, but it might be a good idea for the graduate school to follow up on this with career development workshops etc.
<p>What kind of dialogue would PhD students like to have with LIFE’s employer representatives in the industrial sector during their PhD studies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite companies to visit LIFE - Inform companies about the possibilities (from PhD graduates from LIFE) - PhD students should put things into a wider perspective - Networks to create dialogue between students and the industrial sector - Network meetings conducted in English - Any kind of dialogue! Apart from the six-monthly evaluations, there is no contact at all - Do we even know who the prospective employers are? - Possibly a subproject/data collection at a company? (Instead of studying abroad?) - Network for LIFE’s PhD students - Speed dating - Gathering knowledge about companies - A stay with a company should be able to replace a stay abroad - Companies should ensure that PhD students finish all their articles

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Which skills are most in demand? Technical or theoretical? Communicative? Management skills? |
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Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 3 June 2010

Announcements

University was aware of cuts

The University of Copenhagen was informed of plans to cut budgets over the next few years, says Danish Minister of Science. This is in response to a letter in which Ralf Hemmingsen, rector of the university, claims otherwise.

Read more in UniversityPost <http://universitypost.dk/article/university-was-aware-cuts>

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 2 June 2010

DSR - The Life Students' Association calls on staff to join the students' demonstration against cutbacks on Tuesday 8 June

Dear members of staff at LIFE,

Universities are facing huge cutbacks. At University of Copenhagen alone it will be necessary to cut back DKK 600 million. This corresponds to around half of LIFE's budget!

It is already clear that the planned renovation of the laboratories at Thorvaldsensvej to the tune of DKK 200 million will be dropped. Twenty-five percent of PhDs and between 400 and 700 members of staff will be fired. In the previous cost-cutting rounds, LIFE has been hit by the cutbacks to a considerable degree but not quite as hard as some of the other faculties. This time, it looks as if LIFE will be massively affected, resulting in extensive redundancies and other cost-saving measures. This will affect education, which will deteriorate, and research, with some research areas having to close down.

DSR calls on staff to join the students at a demonstration on 8 June. We will meet at the lawn in front of the 'Festauditorium' (Main lecture hall). From there we will bike to Frue Plads (the square in front of the old University of Copenhagen main building) where we will arrive at 15:30. People without bikes should go directly to Frue Plads where the demonstration will start at 15:30. Together with students and staff from the other faculties, we will march to Christiansborg Slotsplads where the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions is organising a large demonstration.

DSR will hold an information meeting on 7 June at 12:00 – 13:00 in Auditorium 3.13 and everybody is invited.

Ida Iversen Engelund, DSR, ida-engelund@dsr.life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 2 June 2010

Demolition of the old printing facility at Dyrslægevej 5/Acaciavej 7

The demolition of the printing facility Dyrslægevej 5/Acaciavej 7 is about to start. The work will be carried out in the period from 1 June until 24 June 2010.

We will, of course, endeavour to prevent any inconvenience which may be caused by the work.

Queries concerning the above should be directed at

Anja Gabelgård at anga@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 2 June 2010

IT Service Desk: Opening hours over the summer

The Service Desk will be manned from 9 am until 3 pm from Monday 5 July until Friday 27 August 2010. At other times, the Service Desk will be open from 8 am until 4 pm.

Lisbet Ring-Hansen, IT, lrh@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 28 May 2010

International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation

ICERI2010 - International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation - will be held in Madrid, Spain, next 15, 16 and 17 November 2010.

The deadline for abstract submission is 15 July 2010.

This third annual event brings together professionals in the field of Education and Technology. It will be an excellent opportunity to share your experiences and projects with educators and professionals from all parts of the world.

More information is available at: www.iceri2010.org

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 28 May 2010

Education

EnviroSymp 2010: Nanoparticles in the Environment

This symposium invites students and supervisors to present their work in the area of Environmental Chemistry and Biology. Students eager to learn more about nanoparticles in the environment can participate in a workshop and receive 2.5 ECTS. More information can be found on the website: www.envirosymp.dk

Denisa Cupi, Environmental Chemistry and Health, denisa@dsr.life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 28 May 2010

Staff news

New Chairman of the Danish Council for Strategic Research Programme Commission on Health, Food and Welfare

The Board of the Danish Council for Strategic Research has appointed Managing Director Lars Hinrichsen new Chairman of the Programme Commission on Health, Food and Welfare.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 31 May 2010

Research

Ethics Dilemma and Ethics Decision-Making

Ethics Dilemma is an interactive learning tool presenting five ethical standpoints. The user will learn about his or her own ethical standpoint and experience how standpoints influence decisions: www.ethics-e-learning.com

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, elife@life.ku.dk – latest update 1 June 2010

Grants

Research funds etc.

See the updated information on the Research & Information website.