

Yearbook 2025

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Villum Foundation and **VELUX FOUNDATION** contribute to society on several levels by supporting research, education, the climate and the environment as well as social and cultural projects in Denmark and abroad. Together and separately. In 2025, Villum Foundation awarded grants to 344 projects while VELUX FOUNDATION awarded grants to 390 projects.



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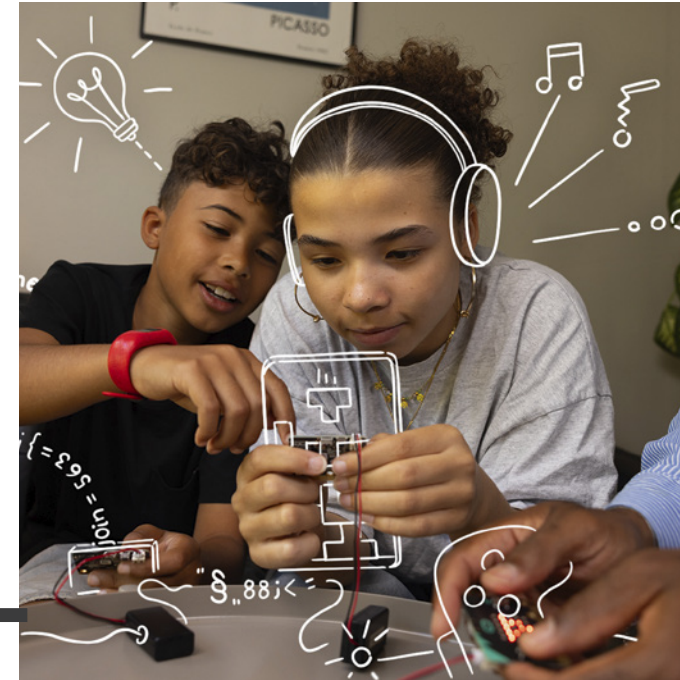


Research in green construction

With a new grant of DKK 100 million every year for ten years, Villum Foundation supports research in green construction and infrastructure.



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Digital literacy for digital natives

Villum Foundation wants to strengthen the digital literacy of future generations to empower them to navigate the many opportunities and challenges associated with technological advances.

Strategic collaboration to strengthen lawyers' sustainability competences

In line with the interdisciplinary focus and vision of VELUX FOUNDATION, support has been granted to 'JURiB – Legal Competences within Sustainability', an initiative bringing together research and education and contributing to strengthening transitions through the generation of new knowledge and capacity building in law.



A changing world calls for coordinated solutions

In 2025, VELUX FOUNDATION launched the vision initiative Democratic sustainability.

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Foreword

Shared responsibility in a changing world

In a changing and unpredictable world characterised by rapid shifts and a tendency towards short-termism, philanthropic foundations play an important role by maintaining a stable, persistent and long-term focus on making positive contributions to society.

Bearing this in mind and inspired by our founder, Villum Kann Rasmussen, Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION support initiatives benefitting society with courage, curiosity, decency and common sense. The two foundations share the same point of departure and values, but contribute differently to a positive and robust development of society. With a constant aim to maintain and develop the relevance of the foundations.

VELUX FOUNDATION: Democratic sustainability

When the world changes, complex dilemmas arise. For example, how do we transform society in a way that is environmentally, culturally and socially sustainable? And how do we include as many people as possible in the process?

Engaging as many people as possible requires an infrastructure that respects democratic principles based on the Constitutional

act in Denmark, where citizens can interact respectfully, aiming to achieve sustainable and long-lasting solutions with a strong stakeholder commitment.

This is the ambition behind the vision initiative Democratic sustainability, launched by the VELUX FOUNDATION in 2025, and rooted in the vision of aspiring to a democratic and sustainable society based on an enlightened and inclusive foundation.

The foundation seeks to provide support and arenas that enable citizens, researchers, practitioners, associations and other societal actors to – based on democratic principles – engage in dialogues about how to develop our society in a more sustainable direction.

The vision initiative is underpinned by a knowledge base that has mapped the views of different population groups on dilemmas associated with the transition based on their core values. New knowledge that can both increase our understanding of our different views on sustainability and contribute to empowering people and fostering initiatives with the potential to create change.

The foundation also wants to explore new engaging formats that can provide answers to the questions posed by societal developments. This is happening with 'Impact Lab 2.0' in partnership with Queen Mary's Centre at the University of Copenhagen. In an



Jens Kann-Rasmussen
Jens Kann-Rasmussen
 Chair of Villum Foundation

Lykke Kann Ogstrup Lunde
Lykke Kann Ogstrup Lunde
 Chair of VELUX FOUNDATION

experimental laboratory, researchers and practitioners create knowledge and find solutions together. This is also happening through the first eight research practice projects and research projects receiving grants under the vision initiative in 2025.

Villum Foundation: Knowledge, insight and enlightenment

Our need for knowledge and insight increases in step with the rising complexity of society. Therefore, Villum Foundation works for an enlightened world where research and education within science and technology help create a solid foundation for the development of society.

The foundation does this, for example, through a new billion-kroner grant for research into the green transition of the built environment. The new research programme, Civil Engineering and the Green Transition in the Built Environment, is the foundation's largest research grant to date and a strategic investment over the next ten years.

Another focus is to strengthen the digital literacy of future generations and their ability to navigate the opportunities and challenges associated with modern technology. The foundation also contributes to enlightenment and education through cultural projects promoting shared experiences and contributing to a more cohesive society.

Moreover, we support vocational education and training in several European countries to equip young people in Europe to become frontrunners in the digital and green transitions.

Thank you!

The philanthropic work of Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION is made possible by dividends from VKR Holding A/S, supplemented by returns from the foundations' own investments. Therefore, we would like to thank all employees, the executive boards and the boards of directors of the corporate group for their important efforts in the past year.

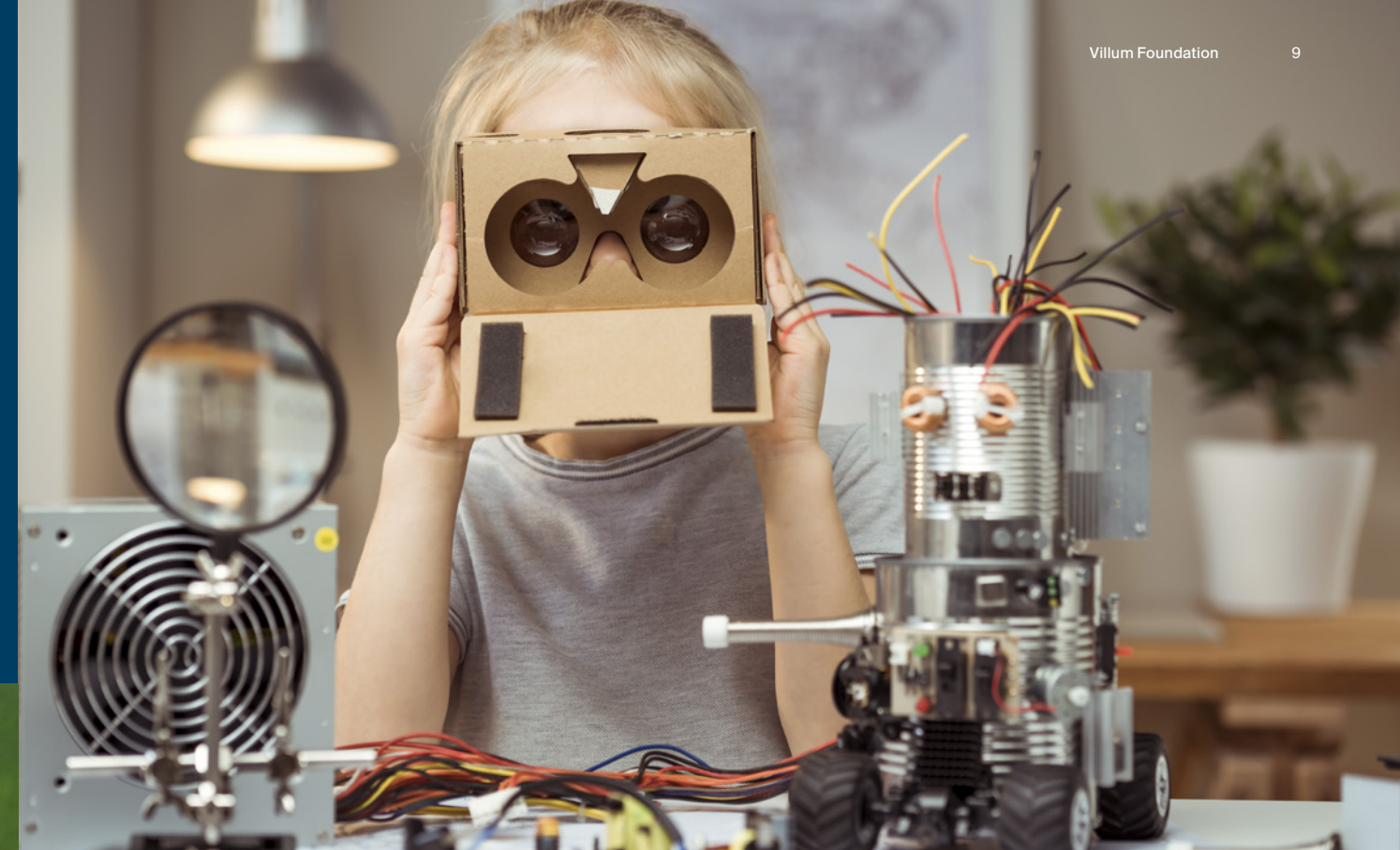
We would also like to thank the foundations' employees, partners and boards who, through their work, translate the foundations' ambitions and strategies into projects that make a difference.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge and thank our many grantees who, in their respective fields, are contributing to an enlightened world and a democratic and sustainable society.

Enjoy!



Villum Foundation



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Knowledge for an enlightened world

Villum Foundation supports education and research in the technical and natural sciences as well as environmental, social and cultural purposes in Denmark and internationally.

Villum Foundation's purpose is to be a good co-owner of VKR Holding A/S, a good manager of the foundation's wealth and to give back to society – in line with the ideas of its founder, Villum Kann Rasmussen.

The foundation's focus on the technical and natural sciences is central to its work for a more enlightened world. Research in these areas is crucial to understanding and solving complex societal challenges.

The foundation invests in research in the belief that new knowledge creates new

opportunities and strengthens society's ability to make informed decisions. Over half of the foundation's grants are allocated to technical and natural science research at Danish universities, to create new knowledge, new discoveries and new ideas that Denmark can rely on in the future.

Future generations

Science has a profound impact on our common culture, living conditions and perception of the world. The pace of development is rapid, and new dilemmas linked to the future organisation of society are constantly arising.

Therefore, the foundation also supports projects aimed at equipping future generations to make informed decisions about the interplay between nature, technology and people – and the associated societal and ethical issues.

Our goal is to elevate the “science capital” of children and young people and for them to develop the skills needed to understand, apply and discuss scientific knowledge.

The foundation also works to enhance the skills of young people and prepare them for active participation in the labour market of the future and for contributing to the green and digital transitions. This applies both in Denmark and in Europe, where the need for technological and scientific understanding is growing.

Focus on climate and environment

Scientific research, knowledge and insights are essential to solving the climate and environmental challenges facing the world.

The foundation supports climate and environmental projects – both through research grants and via KR Foundation,

which addresses the fundamental causes of climate change.

Since the co-founding in 2014 of KR Foundation by Villum Foundation – in collaboration with the descendants of V. Kann Rasmussen – Villum Foundation has granted more than DKK 1.4 billion to KR Foundation, reflecting the foundation's long-term commitment to the green transition.

A bright future for culture

Large and small cultural projects for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public are also a focus for the foundation. This applies especially to projects that bring daylight and fresh air into people's everyday lives, contribute to a healthy environment or move more daily activities outdoors.

The foundation has also supported a number of cultural signature projects abroad, for example in France, Germany and Poland.

Lasting change

The foundation supports initiatives with the potential to bring about lasting change that extends beyond the individual grant period – always in close collaboration with our applicant communities.

This makes dialogue with the rest of society – including the political system, civil society and grantees – crucial to the foundation's work. Dialogue helps to qualify our decision-making on which projects to support and ensures the foundation's efforts are both relevant and effective.

Through dialogue based on solid knowledge, the foundation is contributing to underpinning and further developing a competent society of enlightened and active citizens.



Funding areas



Technical and natural sciences

Villum Foundation supports research in the technical and natural sciences based on the ideas that researchers themselves are most interested in. The foundation supports researchers at all career stages from postdocs to professors, bold research ideas, interdisciplinary and data-driven research, and research infrastructure. Villum Foundation also takes part in major initiatives such as the establishment of strategic research centres.



European youth and education

Villum Foundation aims to support a strong European community, where young Europeans are equipped for the future labour market and where they become capable citizens prepared to drive the digital and green transitions. Supporting vocational schools is one example of how the foundation facilitates the transition of young Europeans from education to employment and to the future labour market. The foundation also focuses on helping socially vulnerable youth participate actively in society as self-reliant citizens. In odd years, the foundation finances projects in Poland, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary, while in even years the foundation supports projects in Italy and France – countries where the VKR Group has activities.



Culture and society

Under this funding area, Villum Foundation supports projects for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public, with a particular focus on initiatives that bring daylight and fresh air into people's daily lives and contribute to a bright and healthy environment. The foundation supports innovative ideas and agenda-setting projects that can move more everyday activities outdoors. The foundation also prioritises large cultural projects with a national and broad focus as well as selected cultural signature projects in selected European countries.



Children, youth and science

Villum Foundation wants to give more children and youth a strong science capital. The foundation therefore supports projects with a focus on investigative and real-world science education in primary and secondary schools. The foundation supports fun, educational and inspiring after-school activities that bring science and technology into children and young people's lives, making science a natural and relevant part of their everyday experience. And the foundation supports projects that focus on developing methods and approaches for more inclusive didactics. The aim is to ensure that all students, regardless of gender and background, experience science and technology as relevant in their everyday lives and as a potential future.



Climate and environment

Villum Foundation supports the climate through the philanthropic KR Foundation that aims to address the root causes of climate change. The KR Foundation works both internationally and in Denmark and primarily supports projects focused on accelerating the phasing-out of fossil fuels.

Grants in 2025

In 2025, Villum Foundation granted
EUR 242.7 million to 344 projects.

Key figures are rounded and adapted to graphics and
contexts, so variations may occur.

158.7

EUR million for 131 projects

Technical and natural
sciences

23.6

EUR million for 150 projects

Children, youth and science

20

EUR million for 1 project

Climate and environment

20

EUR million for 18 projects

European youth and education

16.4

EUR million for 40 projects

Culture and society

3.3

EUR million

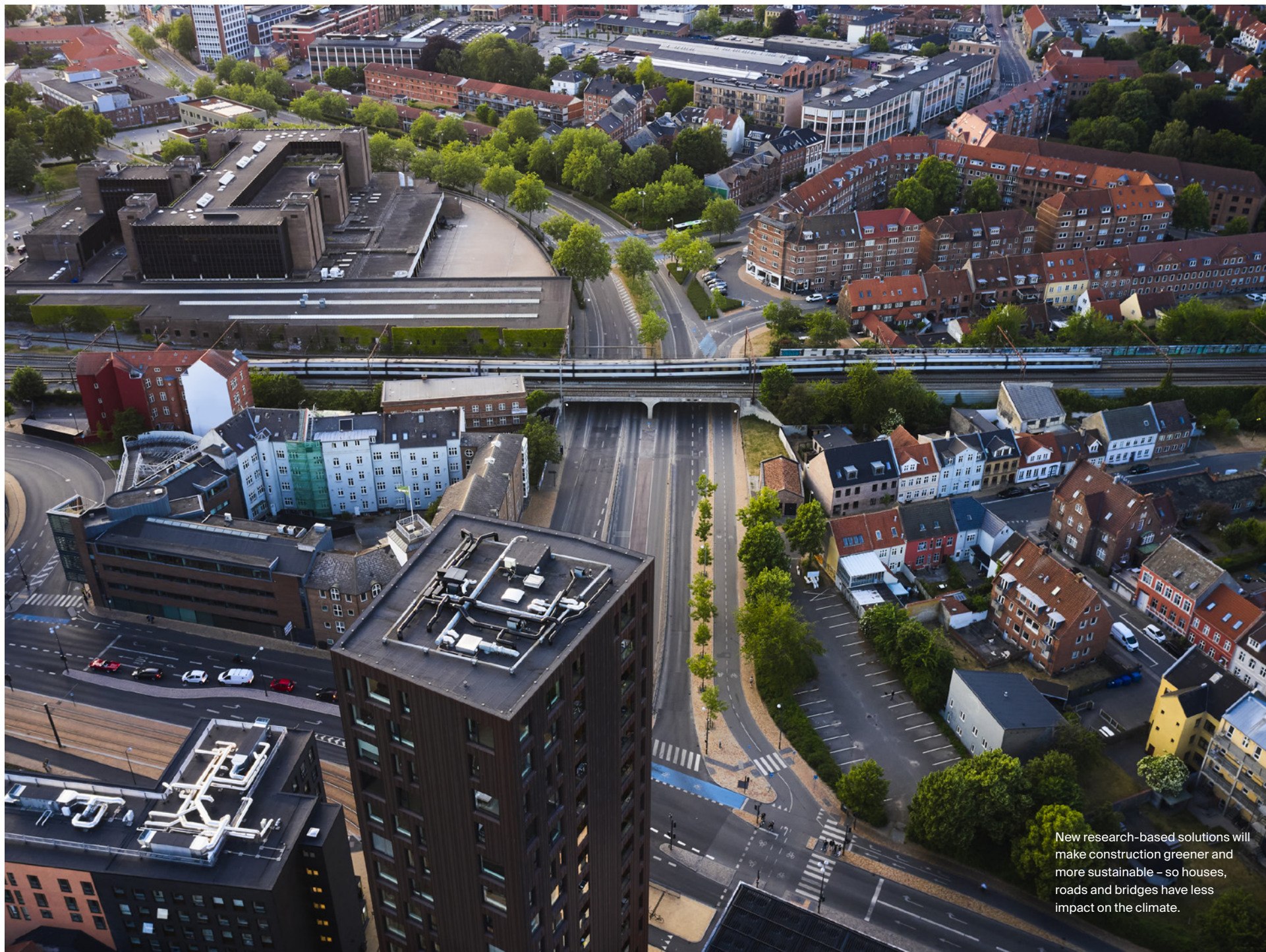
Employee Foundation

0.68

EUR million

Awards

In 2025, Villum Foundation launched its largest research grant to date. The goal is to create new foundational knowledge that can make buildings and infrastructure more sustainable.



New research-based solutions will make construction greener and more sustainable – so houses, roads and bridges have less impact on the climate.

Research for more sustainable construction

The construction sector currently accounts for 37% of carbon emissions globally and therefore holds a significant potential for the green transition. But changing the way we construct and maintain the built environment requires new knowledge to reduce the associated resource consumption and climate footprint. This is the background for a new research programme called Civil Engineering and the Green Transition in the Built Environment (CEBE) that will explore new ways of promoting sustainability in construction.

The intention is to support the project with DKK 1 billion over a ten-year period. This is the foundation's largest research grant to date and a strategic initiative that encompasses the entire



The new research programme will develop new knowledge, methods and materials that can reduce the climate impact and resource consumption of construction.

ecosystem of the built environment – from developing new educational and research capacity to recruiting international talent and collaborating with stakeholders from the construction sector and industry.

More knowledge – less of a footprint

The programme will develop new knowledge, methods and materials that can reduce the climate impact and resource consumption of construction, while ensuring that houses, roads, bridges and other structures remain fully functional. As part of the effort, academic programmes will be strengthened, and new talent will be attracted to the field. The ambition behind CEBE is to make Denmark a European frontrunner in the field.

Four Danish universities with construction research environments are leading the way: Aalborg University, Aarhus University,



“It’s an investment in knowledge and innovation that will benefit society as a whole – not just in Denmark, but also globally.

Jens Kann-Rasmussen,
Chair of Villum Foundation

University of Southern Denmark and the Technical University of Denmark.

“With this generous grant from Villum Foundation, the universities can set a completely new standard for education and research capacity in the field – one that will make a decisive difference for the construction sector in Denmark and Europe. There is a clear ‘before’ and ‘after’ this grant, for which I am very grateful on behalf of the universities,” says Per Michael Johansen, Rector of Aalborg University.

Encompassing the entire ecosystem

CEBE is structured around seven research fields that together cover the entire life cycle of the built environment – from design, construction and operation to lifetime extension and reuse. These areas are closely interconnected, and the interdisciplinary approach ensures that new knowledge and new technologies are not developed in silos but translated into real-world solutions.

Chair of Villum Foundation Jens Kann-Rasmussen is pleased with the initiative:

“With CEBE, we’re bringing together some of the country’s strongest research environments in a joint effort to develop solutions that reduce the climate footprint of construction and enhance societal resilience. It’s an investment in knowledge and innovation that will benefit society as a whole – not just in Denmark, but also globally,” he says.

International reach

The CEBE programme includes DKK 150 million for international collaboration, including a strategic partnership with a foreign university and the opportunity for international researchers to participate.

CEBE’s international potential is clear, says Alice Moncaster, Professor of Sustainable Construction at the University of the West of England and a member of CEBE’s external Advisory Board:

“The programme will create international impact by publishing and disseminating world-class research, but also by building collaboration with international partners and educating an international research community through knowledge sharing across borders,” she says.

The external Advisory Board will support the four universities throughout the project period. Members are international experts from abroad as well as leaders from the Danish construction sector.

“This will build meaningful relations across Europe and beyond and support research of direct relevance to the industry,” says Alice Moncaster.



A shortage of skilled workers in Europe is challenging the green and digital transitions. Villum Foundation is therefore supporting vocational education and training in several European countries. The aim is to provide young people with the skills they need to enter the labour market of the future, while also helping vulnerable young people to become active and included members of society.

More skilled workers boost the green and digital transitions in Europe

Up until 2040, the European workforce is projected to shrink by as many as 2 million people a year. This is a problem both for the European economies and for the green and digital transitions.

There is a particular shortage of skilled workers – such as electricians, painters, computer technicians and IT specialists, i.e. the ones that will develop and build the solutions needed for the transitions.

By supporting vocational education and training, the foundation is contributing to finding solutions to these problems. Vocational education and training enhances the skills of young Europeans, enabling them to partake in the green transition and the digitalisation of society, and equipping them for a changing labour market.

Nicolas Schunck, Grant Area Director, European youth and education at Villum Foundation, explains:

“Vocational education and training is crucial for Europe’s transition to becoming a greener and more digital society. We support projects that provide young people with essential skills that can actively contribute to this transformation. Also, vocational education and training strengthens the self-confidence and self-esteem of young people and makes it easier for vulnerable and at-risk young people to gain a foothold in the labour market and participate in society as active citizens.”

New initiatives in France and Italy

This year, for the first time, the foundation has supported vocational education and training in France and Italy. A total of 13 projects have received total funding of DKK 126 million for various initiatives – from supporting young people who are not in education, employment or training to developing sustainable and digital practices in education and training. The projects are tailored to specific target

“ Vocational education and training is crucial for Europe’s transition to becoming a greener and more digital society.

Nicolas Schunck, Grant Area Director, European youth and education at Villum Foundation

groups and will also contribute to developing effective methods and activities for the education programmes.

In France, the foundation is supporting École Gustave in establishing three new campuses in Paris, Lyon and Marseille. Young people will be trained in energy renovation, energy efficiency, eco-building and understanding environmental standards.



In 2025, the foundation also supported EuroSkills – the official European Championship of Young Professionals.

The programmes target young people who have dropped out of the traditional school system, thereby also promoting inclusion and social cohesion.

EuroSkills

In 2025, the foundation also supported EuroSkills – the official European Championship of Young Professionals. The event was held in Herning, where almost 600 young people from all over Europe competed in 38 different disciplines that can contribute to a sustainable transition of society. The support included collaboration with Boss Ladies, an initiative by Divers, focusing on international role models in the form of ambassadors working to empower women to pursue careers in the technical professions.

“By supporting EuroSkills, we contribute to enhancing the image of vocational education and training, promoting diversity and highlighting its importance

to society. At the same time, we bring young skilled Europeans together, which can strengthen their professional development as well as cross-border relations,” says Nicolas Schunck.

EuroSkills 2025 coincided with the Danish EU Presidency, and European ministers for education, school heads and business representatives gathered in Herning to discuss ways of strengthening and future-proofing vocational education and training. The Herning Declaration was signed by the ministers as a joint commitment to strengthening vocational education and training and securing Europe’s green and digital future.

European youth and education

Villum Foundation aims to promote a strong European community, where young Europeans are equipped for the challenges of the future.

The VKR Group is an international company, which is why Villum Foundation – in addition to activities in Denmark – also has activities in some of the countries in which the company operates.

In even years, Villum Foundation supports projects in France and Italy, while in odd years it supports projects in Poland, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary.

Villum Foundation also supports green vocational education and training in Denmark.

Villum Foundation supports projects within culture and society for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public. A special focus is on projects that bring daylight and fresh air into people's daily lives and contribute to a healthy environment. Or that bridge the gap between inside and outside by moving indoor activities outdoors.

Den Frie, Copenhagen.



“Our cultural heritage is something we share and an integral part of our identity – even transcending borders.

Lars Bo Nielsen, Executive Director,
Villum Foundation



Grand Palais, Paris.

Enlightening cultural spaces

Culture provides a space for reflection, new perspectives and community. In 2025, even more venues for cultural experiences – both in Denmark and internationally – have been revitalised. With support from Villum Foundation, museums, exhibition spaces and other cultural institutions have been strengthened and can now welcome visitors to more open, bright and sustainable environments where inside and outside spaces come together and where communities have room to grow. Lars Bo Nielsen, Executive Director, Villum Foundation says:

“In times like ours, it is particularly important for our identity and social cohesion that we have shared experiences, room for reflection and an understanding of our common culture and values.”

New entrance and foyer for ‘Den Frie’

An example of this is ‘Den Frie Udstilling’, an association of more than 50 artists dedicated to showcasing high-quality contemporary art in ‘Den Frie’ – a listed building designed by J.F. Willumsen in 1898 and located opposite Østerbro Station in Copenhagen.

Respecting the building's distinctive architecture, Villum Foundation has supported a renovation and redesign of the forecourt, entrance and foyer, allowing daylight to penetrate deeper into the building, and creating an open forecourt to enhance the visibility of the iconic building in the cityscape. The new area was inaugurated in February 2025, and the project received a grant of DKK 5.1 million.

Botanical garden for schoolchildren

While ‘Den Frie’ has high ceilings, the skies are even higher at Tårnby School Botanical Garden. Founded in 1968, the botanical garden, which has been used for biology and special needs classes and as a recreational area, had become marked by the ravages of time.

With support from the foundation, the botanical garden has now been transformed into a modern, outdoor teaching space with

Tårnby School
Botanical
Garden.

a focus on biodiversity and knowledge about flora and fauna. New facilities have been added around the courtyard as well as a modern outdoor classroom. So now the garden is once again used for a multitude of different activities, learning and socialising. The garden is open to all at all hours of the day and night, strengthening the sense of community and social cohesion in the local area.

The restoration of the botanical garden has been managed by the Municipality of Tårnby, and received a grant of DKK 1.9 million.

Grand Palais in Paris

In 2025, one of Europe's most iconic cultural and historical monuments opened its doors to the public following extensive restoration. The Grand Palais is a historic site, exhibition hall and museum complex on the Champs-Élysées in Paris – originally built for the Universal Exposition of 1900. Over the past four years, the Grand Palais has undergone restoration, and Villum Foundation has supported the restoration of central glass sections with DKK 7.5 million. The foundation has also previously (2014) supported the restoration of the spectacular glass roof of the Rotonde d'Antin, also part of the Grand Palais.

Following a series of renovation campaigns, the Grand Palais has been restored to its original architectural grandeur through the recreation of its original spatial continuum and the maximisation of natural light. A full 60% of the building's space has been reclaimed. The vision is for the Grand Palais to serve as a vibrant cultural hub in the heart of Paris and as a venue for activities, debates, art exhibitions, concerts and other events engaging citizens as well as the city's many visitors.

“Our cultural heritage is something we share and an integral part of our identity – even transcending borders. That is why it is important to support projects that promote a vibrant cultural life and cultural communities for the benefit of future generations,” says Lars Bo Nielsen.

AI, algorithms and social media have entered our lives. Are we ready for it? Villum Foundation wants to strengthen the digital literacy of future generations to enable them to navigate the many opportunities and challenges associated with technological advances.

Digital literacy for digital natives

They have been referred to as digital natives, but even though they are quick with a keyboard and have grown up with TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram, children and young people are not adequately prepared for a time when the virtual and real worlds are converging.

Villum Foundation is therefore working to strengthen the digital literacy of children and young people in Denmark to make sure that future generations will be able to make informed decisions about the interaction between technology and people.

Ole Laursen, Grant Area Director, Children, youth and science at Villum Foundation, says:

“We need to find out how technology is impacting our children and young people, and we need to make sure they are not left to their own devices in a digital future.”

Greater understanding of digital technology

There are many views on how best to protect children and young people from the dark side of technology. Ideas include mobile-free schools and after-school clubs, paper and pencil for selected exams in secondary school and a minimum age for social media platforms.

Whatever approaches are chosen, they must be knowledge-based. Villum Foundation is supporting the development of a knowledge base, for example through Knowledge Center for

Digital Technology Understanding (Videnscenter for Digital Teknologiforståelse) established in a collaboration between all the Danish university colleges, Aarhus University and the University of Copenhagen.

The centre has created a common knowledge base on digital technology understanding for children and young people in primary and secondary schools.

“The work of the knowledge centre has led to a unified Danish approach to the topic across universities, university colleges, primary and secondary schools. It has created an important foundation for teaching children and young people to use technology constructively and to help them understand how digital technologies affect both them and our society,” says Ole Laursen.

Democratic citizens

The knowledge centre also explores how children and young people can help create and develop the technologies that shape our society, communities and lives. For example, through coding, developing apps and building robots.

“The ambition is for all children and young people – irrespective of gender, postcode or social background – to acquire a better understanding of technology, enabling them to constructively and critically participate as democratic citizens in a digitalised society.



Ultra:bit Beyond

Villum Foundation is also helping to strengthen children's understanding of technology and digital literacy through the 'Ultra:bit Beyond' project. The project produces programmes and news for children via 'DR Ramasjang' and 'DR Ultra', boxes of microbits for schools, courses for teachers and initiatives aimed at parents.

Project period
2025-2029

Grant
DKK 25 million from Villum Foundation.

Target group
Children in years 1 to 6, their teachers and parents.

Partners
Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR), Centre for Teaching Materials, Center for Computational Thinking and Design at Aarhus University, LIFE Foundation.

The project builds on the success of ultra:bit, which since 2018 has inspired schools to teach technology in years 4 to 8 and put microcomputers in the hands of around 100,000 children across Denmark.

The ambition is for all children and young people to acquire a better understanding of technology, enabling them to constructively and critically participate as democratic citizens in society.

“We need to know what technology is doing to our children and young people.

Ole Laursen, Grant Area Director, Children, youth and science at Villum Foundation

“The Danish approach in this field is unique. It’s not just about digital skills, such as programming, but also about digital empowerment and giving children and young people a critical understanding of the role and importance of technology in society. This whole issue has only become even more relevant with the development and spread of AI and the influence of tech giants on our society and everyday lives,” Ole Laursen continues.

Villum Foundation has supported the Knowledge Center for Digital Technology Understanding with DKK 20 million.



Support for VKR Group employees and local communities. The Employee Foundation for the VKR Group received a grant of DKK 25 million, of which DKK 15 million went towards strengthening the employees’ physical and mental health, and DKK 10 million went to Reconnect with Nature, a programme aiming to improve outdoor areas and promote connecting with nature locally at and around the VKR Group’s sites.



Science and technology in the open air. More children and young people now have the opportunity to learn about science and technology while getting dirt under their fingernails and wind in their hair. In 2025, Villum Foundation supported 24 projects aimed at establishing outdoor teaching spaces with a total grant of DKK 40 million.



Top researchers receive millions in funding. In 2025, 11 top researchers received a total of DKK 317 million for groundbreaking research through the Villum Investigator Programme. The research ranges from recycling of plastics to energy-saving data networks. The projects will strengthen Danish research and contribute new knowledge about fundamental scientific questions.



New European research award. The Into Change Award honours research groups in Europe that have demonstrated groundbreaking research at the highest international level. The award was instituted in 2025 in collaboration between the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Villum Foundation, the Carlsberg Foundation and the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

Highlights



EuroSkills. Electricians, cabinetmakers, hairdressers, mechanics, social and health-care assistants, floral decorators and many other skilled young people from all over Europe competed in the official European Championship of Young Professionals, EuroSkills 2025, in Herning supported by Villum Foundation.



Restoration of Edinburgh Palm Houses. The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is one of Europe’s architectural and botanical landmarks. With support from Villum Foundation and other donors, the restoration and revitalisation of the garden’s Victorian palm houses was completed in 2025.



Three new research programmes. In 2025, Villum Foundation launched three new research programmes: Villum Ascending Investigator, for mid-career researchers with research leadership potential, Villum Sabbatical, for researchers employed at foreign universities who wish to visit a Danish university, and Villum Infrastructure, which supports the acquisition by Danish research environments of cutting-edge equipment and research facilities.



Housing and social centre in Ukraine. With support from Villum Foundation, SOS Children’s Villages broke ground for the construction of new housing and a social centre for children and foster families in western Ukraine. The houses are built according to the ‘Living Places’ concept developed by VELUX, EFFEKT and Artelia.

Portraits



People drive projects. Meet some of our grantees, who are helping to create a brighter world through their work.

Technical and natural sciences

How do you recycle plastic that cannot be melted? This question has driven chemistry professor at Aarhus University Troels Skrydstrup for the past five years. With support from the Villum Investigator Programme, he is working on chemical technologies that can recreate the original building blocks of plastic.

What have you used the funding from Villum Foundation for?

The grant has enabled us to focus on one of the biggest challenges in plastic recycling: thermoset plastics. This type of plastic is used in everything from wind turbine blades to airplanes because it is strong and durable. But these are also the very properties that make it almost impossible to recycle.

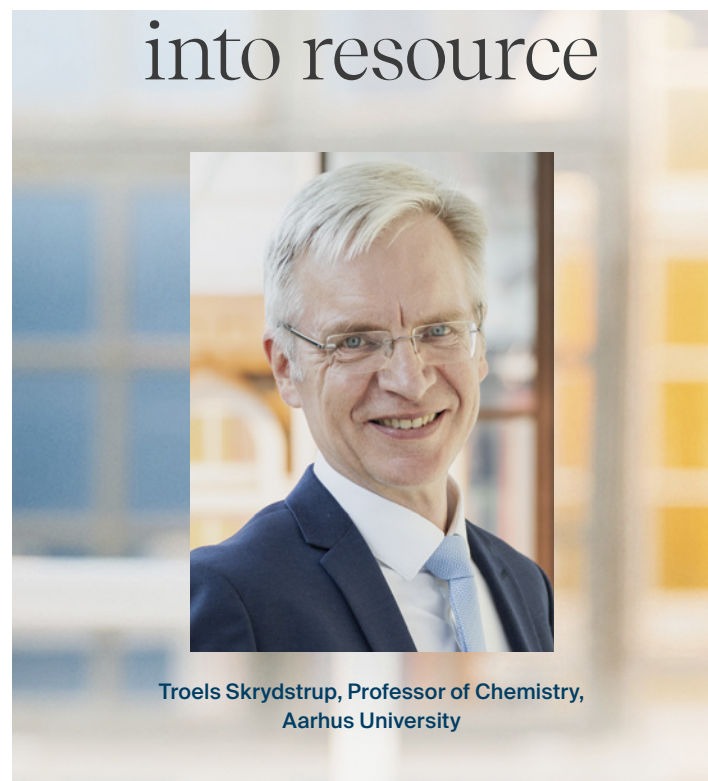
We have developed catalytic methods for deconstructing these complex materials and recreating their chemical building blocks. The funding has allowed us to expand our team and establish new collaborations with industry.

Our research builds on years of experience in transition metal catalysis, and the

“It makes me confident that we can rethink the entire system and contribute to a fossil-free future.”

grant has allowed us to apply our expertise in new and groundbreaking ways.

Chemist turns waste into resource



Troels Skrydstrup, Professor of Chemistry,
Aarhus University

What difference has the grant made to your project?

It has meant freedom to think long-term and ambitiously. Among other things, we will be able to test some ideas that would otherwise be difficult to realise. It will accelerate our research and bring us closer to developing sustainable solutions with the potential to change the chemical industry's approach to plastics and waste.

What experience will you bring to the project?

I come with a strong belief in the importance of combining research with application-oriented goals. Our work shows that even the most complex materials can be kept in a circular flow if you dare to challenge conventional thinking. It makes me confident that we can rethink the entire system and contribute to a fossil-free future.

Children, youth and science

Villum Foundation has granted DKK 50 million to make vocational education and training greener in Denmark because VET institutions are a cornerstone of the green transition. They produce the skilled workers who can translate green knowledge into concrete solutions. At TECHCOLLEGE in Aalborg, 20-year-old Mikkel Graff is training to become a chef.

Skilled workers of the future are green



Mikkel Graff, trainee chef, TECHCOLLEGE and Restaurant Applaus in Aalborg

Your education has a green profile.

Did it matter to you when you were choosing your education?

Not at first, but after starting the programme, I definitely care more about sustainability. It's great that they can push us in the right direction.

I think it's important, for example, to think seasonal ingredients to reduce the carbon footprint from production and

transport. It's perfectly possible to make food that tastes good and protects the planet a bit more.

How do you feel sustainability is a theme on your programme?

We do a lot at the school that has to do with sustainability. For example, we're given lists of seasonal ingredients, which are the only ones we're allowed to use. So we have to be creative and come up with

“ When it comes to eating vegetables instead of meat, it is no good simply trying to make a substitute. You have to come up with something new.

new dishes. For example, for a particular dish I ended up replacing passion fruit with sea buckthorn. It added a Nordic twist, while allowing me to use a local ingredient.

We also talk about transport, and how things are grown. How can flying an avocado to Denmark ever be sustainable?

Have you used your sustainability knowledge during your apprenticeship?

Yes. At Restaurant Applaus, we make a lot of low-cost dishes, so we're very good at using every part of our ingredients. We think about food waste both because we care about the climate and because it makes sense financially.

We also do a lot of fish and purely vegetarian dishes – trying to push the boundaries for what the locals eat.

When it comes to eating vegetables instead of meat, it is no good simply trying to make a substitute. You have to come up with something new, I think. For

example, you can find inspiration in Asian cuisine, which has a lot of flavour-adding sauces and marinades.

What do you dream of working with in the future?

My biggest dream is getting my very own Michelin star. And getting a green Michelin star one day would also be cool.

Green practices

- Mechanics learn how to repair electric cars.
- Chefs learn to cook using climate-friendly ingredients.
- Plumbers and electricians learn about sustainable indoor climate solutions and energy consumption in buildings.
- Bricklayers and carpenters learn to work with sustainable materials.
- Farmers learn about green production methods, biodiversity and sustainable niche products.



Villum Foundation supports the extension of Trapholt, a museum of modern art, craft and design overlooking Kolding Fjord. Greater flow will be created between the museum, the park and a new visitor centre, and daylight will be incorporated into the architecture. It will revitalise the museum and guarantee more and better experiences for visitors.

Why is Trapholt being extended?

In 2025, we had about double the number of visitors the museum was designed for when it opened in 1988. So we simply lack space – especially space to properly welcome our visitors.

Our educational and knowledge dissemination activities are award-winning, but we do not have an actual visitor centre. Also, while located in a wonderful park, at the moment the museum is unfortunately

quite closed off towards much of the park.

What will you be spending the grant on?

We're expanding our entrance area, establishing a lounge with sculptures and building a new education and craft centre. In the sculpture lounge, for example, visitors will have a unique opportunity to experience a 48 square metre work by Verner Panton in bright and airy surroundings.

“ There will be more of a seamless connection between the indoor and outdoor spaces and between light and air. The museum will breathe again.

The museum's beautiful underground atrium will be restored based on the original architectural concept and bringing daylight into the spaces.

We're also opening up the museum to the park, activating the park as part of the overall experience and connecting the indoors and outdoors. Experience zones and path systems will be established suitable for children, prams, the elderly and people with walking difficulties.

What difference does the grant make to the museum?

A huge difference. This will unlock more of Trapholt's potential and significantly enhance the experience for our visitors. There will be more of a seamless connection between the indoor and outdoor spaces and between light and air. The museum will breathe again.

In addition to the establishment of the new facilities, we're installing new digital infrastructure, which is important for the modern operation of the museum, we're rehangng our collection and will be able to display a larger part of our collection.

Light and air revitalising Trapholt



Karen Grøn, Director, Trapholt

A project in Italy bridges the gap between migrants and the labour market. The solution is vocational education and training, where the need for labour is considerable.

What is the purpose of the 'B.R.I.D.G.E.' project?

Many manufacturing companies in northern Italy need employees with technical training, especially for roles to do with the green transition and digitalisation. Concurrently, many migrants have arrived in Italy. We bridge the gap between immigrants and businesses that need employees with technical training. This promotes integration and can pave the way for new vocational education and training in Italy.

'B.R.I.D.G.E.' stands for Building Resources for Integration, Development, Guidance and Empowerment, and with the project we're reconciling the different needs. When supported and integrated, migrants bring valuable skills and resources to Italian and European businesses, both now and in the future.

What will you be spending the grant on?

We teach and hold courses where participants learn the language and about Italian society, develop green, digital and technical skills, and learn about workplace safety.

We're committed to building a network between our school, other educational institutions, the public authorities and our partner companies. In this way, we can match the people we train with businesses where they can be employed.

What difference does the grant make?

Without the grant, the project would not have been possible because in Italy

When education strengthens integration



Angelo Faré, Project Manager for 'B.R.I.D.G.E.'

there is no public funding for technical courses for people over the age of 18. We're hoping to create results that will change this in the future, so that people over 18 can also have access to publicly funded vocational education and training.

Read more about why and how Villum Foundation supports the education of young Europeans on page 20.

“ We bridge the gap between immigrants and businesses that need employees with technical training. This promotes integration and can pave the way for new vocational education and training in Italy.

Selected grants

Meet some of the projects that inspired change in 2025.

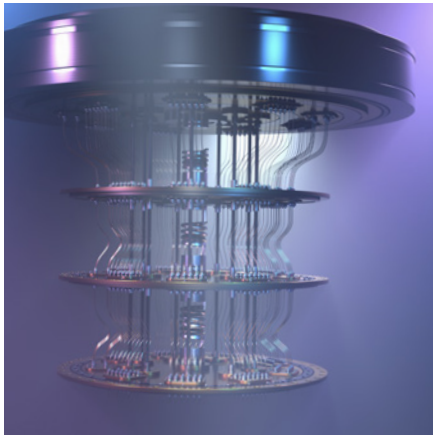


Students in Poland as green problem-solvers

European youth and education

An ambitious teaching programme engages students and teachers in 140 Polish schools in environmental protection and sustainability. Through interdisciplinary courses and local mini-projects, students identify and solve specific environmental problems in their local communities. The goal is to strengthen green education and empower children and young people to take action in response to the climate crisis.

Grant
DKK 5.9 million



New hub for quantum research

Technical and natural sciences

With support from Villum Foundation, the University of Copenhagen and the Technical University of Denmark have established a new PhD programme to strengthen Denmark's position in quantum technology. The programme comprises 24 PhD scholarships and fellowships for international students. The aim is to attract and retain talent, strengthen collaboration with industry and promote quantum research at the highest level.

Grant
DKK 60 million



Pathways into the natural sciences

Children, youth and science

Why do some children take a keen interest in science, nature and technology, while others find these subjects boring? The 'SCOPE' research project identifies the factors that shape young people's relationship with science – at school, at home and in everyday life in general. The aim of the research project, which runs until 2030, is to support equal opportunities for all children and young people to build resources in science and technology.

Grant
DKK 10.3 million



Why do ticks bite some people rather than others?

Technical and natural sciences

In 2025, Villum Foundation supported 52 bold research projects through the Villum Experiment Programme. One of them, headed by Professor Karen Angeliki Krogfelt from Roskilde University, is investigating why ticks bite some people and animals more than others. The project will identify which skin bacteria are particularly attractive to the small but potentially dangerous pest. The hope is to develop methods to reduce the risk of tick bites.

Grant
DKK 2.5 million



Sustainability and citizenship in Czech schools

European youth and education

In Czechia, 130 teachers and 6,400 students will be equipped to work with sustainability and active citizenship. The students develop their own green projects, and teachers undergo long-lasting supplementary training. The project focuses on schools in structurally challenged areas where environmental challenges and social problems go hand in hand.

Grant
DKK 8 million



Copenhagen as a living canvas

Culture and society

The Copenhagen Light Festival transforms the quiet and cold winter darkness of Copenhagen into a celebration of light and sensory experiences. Building on Nordic traditions, the festival brings together artists, designers and organisations to create light experiences for both local and international visitors. The aim is to showcase the city in new ways and increase interest in light as a tool for artistic and cultural expression.

Grant
DKK 300,000



Teachers focus on gender issues

Children, youth and science

In 2025, the Danish Union of Teachers received funding to make gender awareness an active tool in primary school teaching. A network of teacher ambassadors will be trained in collaboration with University College Copenhagen, and a package of new materials will help teachers and school heads create teaching activities where gender does not limit the students’ academic and personal development.

Grant
DKK 5.1 million



Forgotten Viking crafts brought back to life

Culture and society

While it was previously thought that glass first arrived in Denmark as part of our medieval churches and castles, new archaeological research shows that the Vikings were already using glass in their religious buildings. This has prompted Ribe VikingeCenter to replace the temporary covers in the reconstruction of Ansgar Church in year 860 with stained glass windows. In Viking times, glass windows were associated with mysticism, magical properties and, not least, status.

Grant
DKK 200,000



Science with winches and salt water

Children, youth and science

Thousands of children and young people can now do science in their free time and immerse themselves in everything from the future of food to fusion energy. As part of ten new leisure projects across the country that have received grants, participants have built robots, studied coastal ecosystems and developed games – in after-school clubs, in the Science Club and out in the countryside. The goal is to strengthen curiosity and scientific self-confidence in informal communities.

Grant
DKK 25 million



Windows shed light on the history of workers

Culture and society

In Copenhagen, the listed building housing the Workers Museum has undergone extensive restoration. Painters and carpenters have restored 244 original windows, allowing daylight to flood into the historic halls once again. The restoration also includes a ceiling frieze in the Banquet Hall, which was discovered during previous restoration work and has now been preserved for posterity. The Workers Museum is Europe’s oldest workers’ assembly building.

Grant
DKK 850,000



Digital learning with a social impact

European youth and education

In Slovakia, teachers need support in using digital technologies in the classroom, with a special focus on students from vulnerable and minority backgrounds. The project updates teaching materials and provides hands-on training to support teachers in adapting their practice to different student groups. One of the goals is to create a national training programme to ensure that no students fall behind in the digital transition.

Grant
DKK 8.7 million



Fungus manipulates spider brains

Technical and natural sciences

Through the Villum Young Investigator Programme, the foundation has supported Curator and Assistant Professor João Araújo from the Natural History Museum of Denmark at the University of Copenhagen. João Araújo has discovered a previously unknown species of fungus in the Brazilian rainforests that manipulates the spider’s behaviour before devouring it. João Araújo’s research into zombie fungi has been featured in National Geographic and Wall Street Journal, among others.

Grant
DKK 9 million



VELUX FOUNDATION

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VELUX FOUNDATION is a philanthropic foundation that works to improve people's lives and opportunities for playing a role in a democratic and sustainable society.

Solving future societal challenges through interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations

Driven by curiosity, courage, common sense and decency, and as a responsible steward of its assets, the foundation is able to support research and initiatives within four funding areas: Social initiatives, Humanities and social science research and culture, An ocean in balance and Transitions and changes during the adult life.

The vision initiative entitled Democratic sustainability brings together and materialises the strategy towards 2030, and the foundation's vision is realised through grant activities and contributions to strengthening a democratic and sustainable society through knowledge, research and new opportunities for action in collaboration between the funding areas.

The foundation contributes to finding new solutions through interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaboration. The interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach calls for innovative thinking.

Interdisciplinary collaboration, also across the foundation's funding areas, requires courage and concrete support in the way the foundation's daily activities are organised.

Interdisciplinary focus strengthened through new organisation
To ensure this both internally and externally, VELUX FOUNDATION has organised itself in a way that supports the 2030 strategy while strengthening the foundation's role as a relevant and engaging societal actor.

The focal point of the 2030 strategy is the link between practice and research, which is why two deputy director positions have been created for strategic practice initiatives and strategic research initiatives, respectively. The ambition is to maintain focus on resolving challenges and pave the way for interdisciplinary collaboration, ideation and shared learning.

The two deputy directorships work closely together through interdisciplinary activities to strengthen and develop a unifying research strategy and effort for all four funding areas, as well as solid practice initiatives.

Transparent processes, innovative initiatives and proactive communication efforts will strengthen both the foundation's research strategy profile and its activities in the field of practice,

while increasing awareness of the foundation's work and power to bring about change as a relevant societal actor.

First implementation realised in a new interdisciplinary call
As part of the strategy, in 2025 the foundation launched its first interdisciplinary call involving the Social initiatives and Humanities and social science research and culture granting areas.

With a total grant framework of DKK 20 million, researchers and practitioners will together create new knowledge about the value of voluntary social work. The call is based on the 2030 strategy, where research-practice collaborations and civil society communities are key elements.

In its constant efforts to further engaged philanthropy, the foundation has for some time been talking to both researchers and practitioners and holding networking meetings. This has highlighted common challenges that can now be explored together.



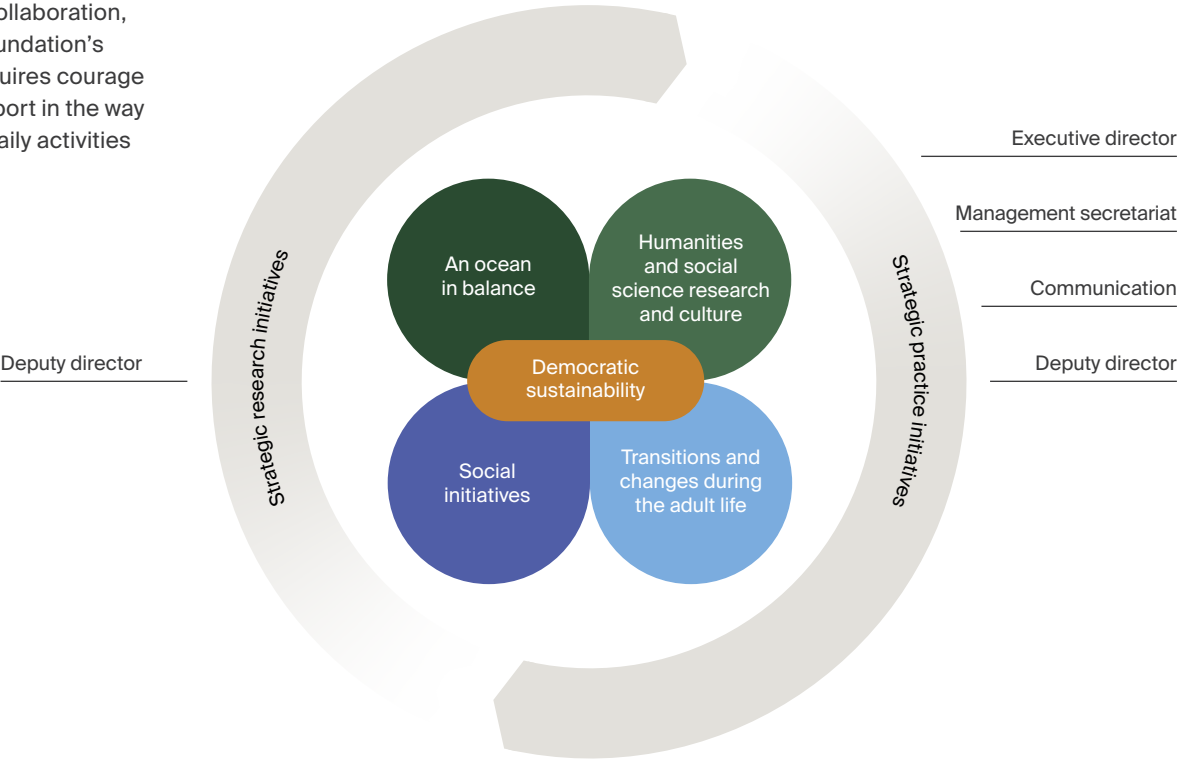
New initiative brings together legal environments

In line with the foundation’s interdisciplinary focus and vision, in 2025, funding was also granted to the first initiative by the legal education and research environments in Denmark, and which fundamentally brings together research and education.

The five-year initiative entitled ‘JURiB – Legal Competences within Sustainability’ (JURiB – Juridiske kompetencer inden for bæredygtighed) will support the development of a more sustainable society through the creation of new knowledge and through capacity building within the legal aspects of sustainability. The initiative is coordinated by the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen.

Organising for interdisciplinary collaboration

Interdisciplinary collaboration, also across the foundation’s funding areas, requires courage and concrete support in the way the foundation’s daily activities are organised.



From left: Members of the VELUX FOUNDATION management are Executive Director Ane Hendriksen, Deputy Director Henrik Tronier, responsible for strategic research initiatives, and Deputy Director Trine Heidemann, responsible for strategic practice initiatives.

Vision

VELUX FOUNDATION aspires to a democratic and sustainable society based on an enlightened and inclusive foundation.

Mission

VELUX FOUNDATION works to improve people’s lives and opportunities for playing a role in a democratic and sustainable society by supporting research into and initiatives spanning social conditions, age groups, adult life and its transitions, society and culture as well as the marine environment.

Approach

VELUX FOUNDATION contributes positively when the foundation is responsive to stakeholders and society, when we make room for new ideas and demonstrate trust and inquisitiveness based on a solid professional foundation, in a transparent process.

Positive contributions

The foundation wants to make a number of positive contributions to society:

- Research and new knowledge
- Capacity building
- Interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations
- Communities
- Involving, dialogical and listening

Ambition

The foundation’s ambition is that by 2030 VELUX FOUNDATION will have contributed to creating new and fruitful relationships between the foundation’s many stakeholders and proactively realised its other five positive contributions, ensuring that the vision of a sustainable democratic society can be supported and communicated in the best possible way.

Strategy to contribute to resolving four societal challenges

The strategy addresses a number of significant challenges and opportunities in our society:

- Increasing mental distress and vulnerability
- Significant pressure on the ocean
- The population of Denmark is growing and aging
- Changes supported by research

Funding areas



An ocean in balance

VELUX FOUNDATION aims to contribute to a healthy marine environment capable of withstanding climate change. The funding area supports projects aimed at rebuilding marine and coastal ecosystems with a focus on climate as well as projects combating marine pollution and projects working on future climate solutions for the ocean and their potential effects on the marine environment. Read more on page 62.

Transitions and changes during the adult life

VELUX FOUNDATION aims to strengthen society's understanding of transitions and changes during adult life for people aged 50+. The funding area supports projects that contribute to new knowledge about transitions and changes during adult life, and development projects that create new opportunities for adults aged 60+. In addition, funding is provided to individuals and groups aged 60+ wishing to initiate activities for themselves and others with a focus on communities, sustainability and local cohesion. Funding is also granted for the publication of books by adults aged 67+. Read more on page 58.

Humanities and social science research and culture

VELUX FOUNDATION aims to advance knowledge of people, culture and society to support democracy and sustainability. The funding area supports projects involving independent basic research, driven by curiosity, in the humanities and related social sciences. We also support cross-sectoral research-practice collaborations between humanities and social science researchers and practitioners. Read more on page 56.

Democratic sustainability

With the vision initiative Democratic sustainability, VELUX FOUNDATION wishes to focus on the interconnectedness of people, the environment and democracy and its key importance for the sustainable transition. This is done through grants, partnerships and knowledge production to contribute to a new common direction. Read more on page 48.

Interdisciplinary projects

By 2030, VELUX FOUNDATION wants to be leading the way and setting the direction for the development of innovative collaborations, both internally and externally in the application environments. The ambition is to contribute solutions to current and future societal challenges through cross-sectoral communities. The foundation focuses on collaborations between its strategic priorities and supports projects working within two or more of the foundation's four funding areas.

Social initiatives

VELUX FOUNDATION aims to contribute to rethinking and developing social initiatives to make it possible for more people to choose to actively participate in society's communities. The funding area supports method development projects that sustain participation in communities and increased mental well-being for people in socially vulnerable positions. Read more on page 60.

Current affairs fund

With the current affairs fund, VELUX FOUNDATION wishes to be able to agilely support projects deemed to be of particularly topical relevance to society in relation to one or more of the foundation's positive contributions. Read more on page 52.

Grants in 2025

In 2025, VELUX FOUNDATION granted EUR 62.9 million to 390 projects.

Some of the grants are awarded to interdisciplinary projects working within two or more of the foundation's funding areas.

Key figures are rounded and adapted to graphics and contexts, so variations may occur.

28

EUR million

An ocean in balance

12

EUR million

Humanities and social science research and culture

8.4

EUR million

Social initiatives

EUR 1.6 million for interdisciplinary projects

5.7

EUR million

Democratic sustainability

4.4

EUR million

Transitions and changes during the adult life

4.4

EUR million

Current affairs fund

10,700 EUR Awards

EUR 1.6 million for interdisciplinary projects

A changing world calls for coordinated solutions

In 2025, VELUX FOUNDATION launched the vision initiative Democratic sustainability to contribute to models and facilitate new conversations and dialogues in society embracing environmental, cultural and social issues.

How do we make sustainable decisions in a democratic society? How do we create a transition of society that is environmentally, culturally and socially sustainable? And how do we get everyone involved in the transition and make sure they feel heard and included?

These are some of the key questions that have inspired Democratic sustainability, VELUX FOUNDATION's vision initiative springing from the foundation's 2030 strategy and its aspirations for a democratic and sustainable society based on an enlightened and inclusive foundation.

“The foundation’s work and grants cover environmental initiatives, human empowerment and social activities,

research and culture. However, society is increasingly facing challenges spanning some or all of these areas, calling for coordinated solutions. And when society changes rapidly and fundamentally, democratic dilemmas arise,” says Lykke Kann Ogstrup Lunde, chair of VELUX FOUNDATION.

VELUX FOUNDATION wants to promote a holistic approach to a society where the environment, social conditions and culture go hand in hand. Changes need to happen in all three areas – and they need to support, not hinder, each other.

“As humans, we’re interconnected with each other, and we’re part of nature. So democracy is inextricably linked to

cultural, social and environmental sustainability,” says Lykke Kann Ogstrup Lunde.

Launch at ‘Folkemødet’

The vision initiative was launched at ‘Folkemødet’ on Bornholm, the biggest democratic festival in Denmark, in June 2025. The launch took place at an event that included a panel debate, dilemma games and roundtable discussions based on the six value groups that Danes can be divided into.

“The conversation about the green transition is not just a conversation about an environmental transition to becoming a sustainable society. It is also about ensuring that we get everybody on board, and about ensuring social cohesion and

cohesiveness. That’s why it was great to see how the participants started this conversation at ‘Folkemødet’ and with such enthusiasm,” says Jakob Østergård Carstensen, Senior Adviser at VELUX FOUNDATION.

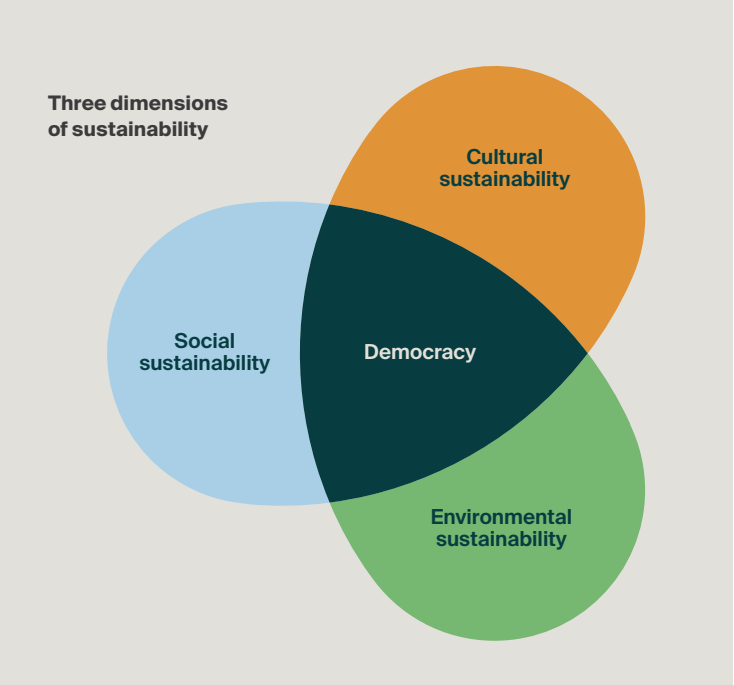
Six population groups contribute to understanding dilemmas of transition

A focus area of the vision initiative has been to develop a knowledge base that can support specific initiatives. The knowledge base provides insight into what various population groups think about democracy, sustainability and participation.

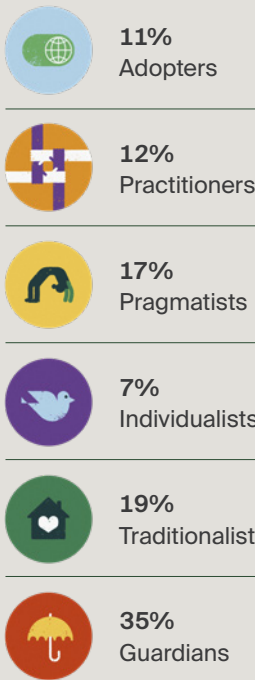
Danes navigate based on different sets of core values, and from this starting point,



At ‘Folkemødet’, a strong panel consisting of Ulrik Kampmann, Birgit Hansen, Helga Grønnegaard, Olav Hesseldahl and Rune Baastrup delivered an inspiring debate on how to strike the right balances in the green transition.



Danes can be understood based on six value groups



Partnership for democratic sustainability

In a partnership between VELUX FOUNDATION and Queen Mary’s Centre, 15 selected researchers and practitioners from the humanities and social sciences participate in an experimental laboratory under the project title ‘Impact Lab 2.0’.

Over the course of a year, the participants will work together to develop new knowledge and concrete solutions to current issues – while strengthening research in the field of democratic sustainability. The second round of the green lab was opened in 2025.

knowledge can be established on what unites and divides various population groups when faced with dilemmas related to the transition of society.

With reference to the Core Belief model, Danes can be understood based on six value groups reflecting different self-understandings, levels of trust in democracy, perceptions of justice and views of the future, and different priorities when it comes to environmental, social and cultural sustainability.

“The knowledge base shows that values shape how we embrace the transition – but also that we’re united by a belief in the power of community. To get more on board, people need to feel seen, heard and understood. The foundation will work to start conversations where more people can participate. Democratic sustainability is ultimately not only about what we change, but also how we do it,” says Jakob Østergård Carstensen.

New projects to strengthen role of democracy in the transition

In 2025, VELUX FOUNDATION announced an open call for research and research-practice projects that could answer the questions ‘How can environmental, social and cultural sustainability be aligned in the transformation of society? And how can democracy be strengthened and developed at the same time?’

The foundation received 77 applications from universities and other institutions

The second round of Impact Lab 2.0 was opened in 2025.



How the foundation works with democratic sustainability

Towards 2030, the foundation will invite researchers, practitioners and citizens to explore and activate the concept of democratic sustainability. The foundation contributes in two ways:

- By supporting research projects and research-practice projects that develop new knowledge and tools for researchers, decision makers and citizens.
- By supporting frameworks where more people experience real opportunities for taking part in the transition – through dialogue, citizen engagement and ownership.

Read more (in Danish) at demokratiskbaeredygtighed.dk/da

and organisations, which were reviewed by an interdisciplinary Nordic panel. The interest expressed by applicants was overwhelming, and based on the many strong proposals, the grant framework was increased, resulting in the awarding of total funding of DKK 42 million to eight projects.

“The eight projects represent a pioneering field with contributions from all three dimensions of sustainability. They show how we can rethink an active part of the transition in landscapes, in towns and cities, in public administrations and in politics. They point to the fact that the solutions of the future are not just about technology and economics, but also about the understandings of people, community and trust that the humanities and social sciences bring to the transition,” says Lykke Kann Ogstrup Lunde.

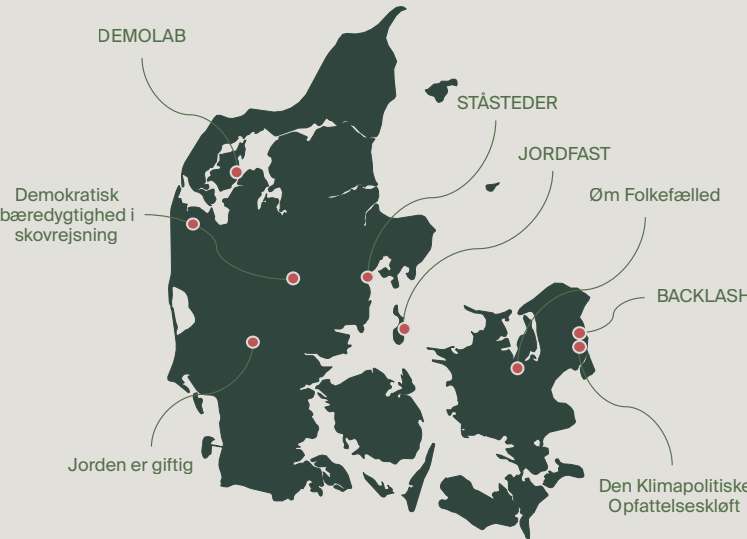
The projects will explore ways of contributing new knowledge and concrete tools

for decision makers and citizens. They cover both local and national issues in several areas, and the ambition is to involve a broad selection of citizens.

One project is ‘Toxic earth’ (Jorden er giftig), exploring how cultural heritage can empower local communities affected by generational pollution. Using Grindstedværket, a former chemical factory, as a case study, citizens, authorities, researchers and cultural institutions are developing new methods for change.

Another project is entitled ‘Politician Perception Gap in Danish Climate Politics’ (Den Klimapolitiske Opfattelseskluft). Analysing political responsiveness and legitimacy in the green transition, the project examines how the gap between levels of public support and politicians’ ambition levels can challenge the change.

The projects will start up officially in 2026 and run until 2029.



In 2025, funding was granted to six research-practice projects based locally in Denmark and two research projects that look at the core tenets of democracy.

Education and research environments in the field of law have joined forces in the 'JURiB' project to create new knowledge and strengthen the sustainability competences of future lawyers.

Strategic collaboration to strengthen lawyers' sustainability competences

Never before has sustainability played such an important role as it does today. This is leading to a host of legal challenges and dilemmas that need addressing by states, public institutions and private companies.

Developments are bringing about a need for new competences among virtually all legal professionals – including lawyers, advisers and case officers in functions working with the implementation of sustainability requirements.

Six of Denmark's legal education and research environments are now joining forces to ensure that future lawyers are even better equipped to handle the new challenges associated with the sustainability agenda.

This is done through a groundbreaking collaboration entitled 'JURiB – Legal Competences within Sustainability' (JURiB – Juridiske kompetencer inden for bæredygtighed), which will create new knowledge about sustainability and develop legal competences across the education and research environments at UCPH, SDU, AAU, AU, RUC and CBS.

Sustainability agenda is fundamental

This is the first time that all six Danish education and research environments in the field of law have entered into a collaboration of this kind.

According to Vibe Garf Ulfbeck, Head of Centre and Professor at the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen and

coordinator of JURiB, sustainability is an obvious and necessary area to work on together.

"The sustainability agenda is fundamental to our society, and it touches on almost every aspect of the law. So you cannot handle the challenges through a classic subject like environmental law alone. We need to look at sustainability as a separate legal focus and ensure that it is integrated into all legal disciplines," she explains.

Unique opportunity

According to a survey of offerings under Danish law degree programmes, there are currently very few courses with a sustainability focus, and the offerings are unlikely to provide current and future law

“VELUX FOUNDATION is looking forward to following JURiB, a unique and ambitious partnership between six institutions developing the academic foundation for our law degrees through research and new knowledge.

Ane Hendriksen,
Executive Director, VELUX FOUNDATION



Student life at UCPH's South Campus, home to the Faculty of Law.



Vibe Garf Ulfbeck, Head of Centre and Professor at the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen and coordinator for JURiB, and Jacob Graff Nielsen, Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen.

students with the necessary skills when it comes to the legal aspects of sustainable development.

Jacob Graff Nielsen is Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen and a member of the JURiB management group. He hopes that the broad collaboration can create a solid foundation for future lawyers to stand on.

“This is a unique chance for the legal education and research environments in Denmark to build research excellence in sustainability, while ensuring that our degree programmes provide future law graduates with the strong and necessary skills,” he says.

New knowledge and better degrees
JURiB’s first three projects will look at sustainability from an administrative law perspective, a business perspective and an international perspective. All three projects will contribute to creating new research-based knowledge at the highest level and strengthen our law degrees.

“The research findings will be published both in Denmark and internationally, for the benefit of our Danish students, and also to contribute to addressing some of the legal issues that transcend national borders, such as questions about trade barriers due to sustainability requirements,” says Vibe Garf Ulfbeck.

Based on the experience gained and knowledge sharing across the first three projects, further projects will be initiated.

Ownership and engagement go hand in hand
All six institutions have been involved early in the process and helped shape the application. This has created a strong sense of ownership and engagement and laid the foundation for committed collaboration with the potential to inspire more joint initiatives.

“Through working together, researchers and lecturers from the various institutions get to know each other even better, and ideas start to form. So I’m convinced that the project can pave the way for new

“ Through working together, researchers and lecturers from the various institutions get to know each other even better, and ideas start to form. So I’m convinced that the project can pave the way for new interdisciplinary projects.

Jacob Graff Nielsen,
Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen

interdisciplinary projects,” says Jacob Graff Nielsen.

Nordic review and international attention
The JURiB application has been reviewed by leading Nordic law experts, who have all highlighted the strong relevance of the international-class project, stating for example:

“The JURiB project is a very strong project. It represents a unique partnership spanning key Danish education and research institutions in the field of law, and other academic communities both in the Nordic region and beyond will look to Denmark as an example of how you can collaborate nationally to boost research and education in the field of law related to sustainability.”

VELUX FOUNDATION supports JURiB with DKK 25 million in the project period 2025–2031 – in line with the foundation’s aspirations for a democratic and sustainable society based on an enlightened and inclusive foundation.

JURiB – Legal Competences within Sustainability

Unique collaboration between the six education and research environments in the field of law in Denmark



CBS Law, Department of Business Humanities and Law, Copenhagen Business School (CBS)



AALBORG
UNIVERSITET
Department of Law, Aalborg University (AAU)



Faculty of Law, University of Copenhagen (UCPH)



Department of Social Sciences and Business, Roskilde University (RUC)



Department of Law, University of Southern Denmark (SDU)



AARHUS UNIVERSITET
Department of Law, Aarhus University (AU)

Humanities and social science research contributes new knowledge about people, culture and society, and is the foundation for strengthening the transition.

Knowledge as a foundation for societal development

VELUX FOUNDATION supports humanities and social science research and culture making us more informed about what our society is built on. The foundation also contributes to knowledge being disseminated widely in society.

“The humanities and the social sciences add topical, theoretical and historical breadth and depth to our understanding of society as well as offering new perspectives on the societal challenges we face. Through cross-sectoral research and practice collaborations, knowledge can also be activated and used to bring about sustainable change – culturally and socially, and when it comes to the climate,” says Henrik Tronier, Deputy Director of VELUX FOUNDATION.

The foundation’s role is particularly important because the challenges of our times cannot be solved with technical or economic insight alone. Knowledge of the human factor and its role in both the challenges and possible solutions is also required.

Voices of history provide new perspectives on society
VELUX FOUNDATION awards funding within humanities and social science research and culture through the programmes

Independent basic research within humanities and social sciences, Literature and humanities in dialogue, and the interdisciplinary programme HUMpraxis.

Since 2008, the foundation’s core group programme has supported curiosity-driven basic research in the humanities and social sciences in close collaboration with university departments.

Independent basic research is about thinking innovatively and exploring connections across disciplines. One example of this is ‘Melancholia’, a project which examines the dynamics between theology and medicine in 18th-century Denmark and how these dynamics have influenced our understanding of mental health and forensic psychiatry.

Using digital tools, researchers from the University of Copenhagen are able to analyse large volumes of data in the form of court records from cases where citizens have been allowed to speak. Here the citizens talk about their experience of acute crises, spiritual suffering and mental illness.



In the ‘Local breakthroughs’ (Lokale landvindinger) project, researchers and experts ventured into the field to develop solutions for land distribution.

Other selected projects

‘The rise of science and fiction in 18th-century Denmark’
(Videnskabens og fiktionens fremkomst i 1700-tallets Danmark). Researchers with backgrounds in physics, history of ideas, literature and history explore how fiction and science emerged and shaped each other in 18th-century Denmark.
Grant amount DKK 6 million.

‘How do we belong together’
(Hvordan hører vi sammen). The project aims to strengthen communities for people with hearing loss by creating good social spaces in schools and at work.
Grant amount DKK 6 million.

“The project is a good example of the importance of basic research because it broadens horizons and creates new perspectives on modern forensic psychiatry by giving citizens a voice through historical source material,” says Sanne de Fine Licht Raith, Senior Adviser at VELUX FOUNDATION.

The University of Copenhagen has received DKK 5.7 million in funding for the ‘Melancholia’ project.

Landscape narratives as an asset in land distribution
For ten years, the foundation’s HUMpraxis programme has supported collaboration between researchers and practitioners.

An example of how research within the humanities is translated into practice and contributes to sustainable societal development is the project ‘Local breakthroughs: Narratives and co-creation in multifunctional land consolidation’ (Lokale landvindinger: Landskabsfortællinger og samskabelse i multifunktionel jordfordeling).

Since 2020, researchers from the University of Copenhagen and experts from Danish Nature Agency Himmerland and

the municipalities of Mariagerfjord, Viborg and Randers have been working to find solutions to land distribution, which is a key challenge in the implementation of the green tripartite agreement.

The project ended in 2025 and has developed specific tools for co-creation in landscape management, including the guide ‘Co-created Landscapes’ (Samskabte Landskaber) and the interactive platform ‘Listen to the Landscape’ (Lyt til Landskabet). Through research articles, policy briefs and public presentations, the project has contributed new knowledge about divergent views of nature and the green transition in rural areas.

“The project shows how narratives about the landscape and its historical development can play a role in complex negotiations and contribute to co-creation and a shared understanding of future landscapes. It’s a strong example of how humanities research can be translated into concrete and practical tools,” says Michael Christensen, Senior Adviser at VELUX FOUNDATION.

The project has received a grant of DKK 6.3 million.

More people live longer. This is changing the fabric of society as well as the lives of individuals. Partnerships and new methods will strengthen communities and empower seniors.

Partnerships and new approaches strengthen communities and volunteering

More people are feeling how increasing life expectancies are changing their everyday lives at work, in their families and in social communities. New approaches are needed to make the most of these extra years of life by leveraging the experience, vitality and resources of seniors.

VELUX FOUNDATION would like to help unlock this potential. Therefore, the foundation supports projects that develop and test new methods, build knowledge and strengthen communities by making people better able to handle transitions during adult life for the benefit of the individual and the local community.

In the second half of 2025, the foundation launched a call dedicated to major method development projects in this field. The ambition is to empower adults aged 60+ to become independent drivers of volunteer activities in their communities.

“There’s a need to motivate more people aged 60+ in areas and associations where they are not currently active. So it may be necessary to develop methods that can reach out to and strengthen their voluntary engagement in the continued

development of a democratic and sustainable society,” says Trine Heidemann, Deputy Director, VELUX FOUNDATION.

Development of volunteer engagement at FødevareBanken

An example of this is the development of a new model for capacity building and volunteering initiated by FødevareBanken (the Danish Food Bank). FødevareBanken fights food waste and social inequality through the collection and distribution of surplus food. In 2024 alone, this amounted to over 1,600 tonnes of food, equivalent to 4.1 million meals.

Volunteers are crucial to the work of FødevareBanken, and the vast majority of volunteers are male active senior citizens. With support from the foundation, FødevareBanken is collaborating with other organisations to develop a new volunteering model targeted predominantly at the 60+ age group.

“By strengthening workflows and developing concrete tools for working with volunteers aged 60+ across FødevareBanken’s regional departments, the project will help create a more sustainable framework for

both employees and the many volunteers. We see this as an important effort in helping to empower volunteers aged 60+, who contribute greatly to the community,” says Kasper Werge, Senior Adviser at VELUX FOUNDATION.

The value of partnerships

For many years, VELUX FOUNDATION has focused on partnerships as an effective approach to reaching out to more active volunteers aged 60+, increasing local awareness of the foundation’s programme and contributing to building capacity in the participating organisations.

In 2025, the foundation intensified its efforts through new partnerships with, among others, the nationwide interest organisation Association of Danish Seniors (Danske Seniorer).

“Partnerships constitute a cornerstone of the foundation’s work as they enable us to reach a wider audience, strengthening local communities and supporting senior citizen engagement. This is how we can help create real change – by building capacity and empowering civil society,” says Trine Heidemann.



A voluntary reading guide from the Reading Association (Læseforeningen) is reading aloud, openly asking the group about their experience of the text along the way.

New partnerships in 2025

Table Tennis Denmark (Bordtennis Danmark) Wants to get more seniors playing table tennis by making it easier to start new 60+ teams around the country and empowering the volunteers who run the activities. One-year partnership agreement with a **framework grant of DKK 500,000**.

Professional Seniors Association (Faglige Seniorer) Strengthening opportunities for senior citizens to volunteer and participate in communities. Through targeted activities in local clubs, active seniors are encouraged to contribute to community-building activities focusing on transitions in adult life. One-year partnership agreement with **framework grant of DKK 1.5 million** for distribution one year from the commencement date of the agreement.

Association of Danish Seniors (Danske Seniorer) Supporting efforts by active seniors to promote activities for their own benefit and the benefit of others within the member associations of the Association of Danish Seniors. The partnership agreement has a term of one year with a **framework grant of DKK 1.2 million** for distribution one year from the commencement date of the agreement.

Other method development projects

‘Developing methodology and local anchoring – common reading for all’ (Metodeudvikling og Lokal Forankring – Fælleslæsning for alle). Strengthens communities for adults aged 60+ through ‘guided shared reading’ and develops new volunteer roles that ensure quality and local anchoring. The project is testing ways of mobilising senior citizens as reading hosts and collaborating with local stakeholders. **Grant amount DKK 965,600**.

‘Communities on first aid’ (Fællesskaber for førstehjælp) Over three years, the project will develop, test and evaluate new methods for bringing people aged 60+ together in local first-aid groups. At the same time, the project helps to activate important resources by training seniors as first aiders, strengthening local communities and making the general population feel safe. **Grant amount DKK 2.2 million**.

Citizens with lived experiences are the voice of target groups

In Aarhus, 'The Mobile High School' (Den rullende daghøjskole) organises creative workshops for patients affiliated with the psychiatric services.

■ Social initiatives

Who knows better what is needed than people who have experienced it themselves? This is the idea behind the foundation's collaboration with citizens with lived experiences who have suffered from psychiatric disorders or severe mental distress. The collaboration has proven extremely valuable. That is why it will continue beyond 2025.

Other selected projects

Other projects covered by the Mental well-being programme where citizens with lived experiences have contributed to the grantmaking process.

'Path to everyday life' (Vejen til hverdagslivet) Volunteer peers in four municipalities help the mentally vulnerable on the road to recovery and to make life changes in their daily lives. Based on experiences from the Peer Partnership. Supported by two grants for method development and anchoring **totalling DKK 16.9 million.**

'Mental well-being on Samsø' (Mental trivsel på Samsø) People with mental health problems on the island of Samsø are supported in taking part in active and meaningful leisure communities. The project also strengthens collaboration between the Municipality of Samsø and civil society organisations on the island. **Grant amount DKK 1.8 million.**

'People need people' (Mennesker har brug for mennesker) Gardening communities that contribute to psychiatric treatment. Partnership between the social enterprises VeteranHaven in Slagelse and Sct. Hans Have in Roskilde as well as the regional psychiatric services, the municipal socio-psychiatric services and user representatives from psychiatry. **Grant amount DKK 5.9 million.**

Figures from the National Health Profile have shown that an increasing number of adults live with mental health problems. At the same time, the psychiatric services in Denmark have been under pressure for a number of years.

More efforts are therefore needed to increase mental well-being. And who knows better what is needed than people who have themselves experienced mental distress? This is the idea behind the foundation's collaboration with citizens with lived experiences who have suffered from psychiatric disorders or severe mental distress.

"As a foundation, we want to listen. By involving citizens with lived experiences, we want to bridge the gap between research, practice and the voices from lived experience. Through their personal experiences, they are experts when it comes to the

problems we are trying to solve. They see things differently, and they give the target groups a voice. They provide extremely valuable input for our assessment and selection of projects we want to support," says Trine Heidemann, Deputy Director of VELUX FOUNDATION.

Bridging the gap between civil society and psychiatric services

Among other things, the citizens with lived experiences have called for everyday and social activities to be used to smooth the transition for people being discharged from psychiatric hospital. One example of this is 'The Mobile High School' (Den rullende daghøjskole), a method development project which organises creative workshops to support the recovery process among patients affiliated with the psychiatric services by offering them access to a community that they can continue to be part of.

"The Mobile High School has shown how civil society, the municipalities and the regions can work together to help people with mental health challenges. The project has developed a method for promoting communities that involve participants in everyday activities that resemble life outside the hospital as a way also of strengthening their social relations," explains Jimmie Gade Nielsen, Senior Adviser at VELUX FOUNDATION.

The foundation has supported the project with a grant and a subsequent grant earmarked for anchoring the aftercare efforts totalling DKK 3 million.

- Social initiatives
- Humanities and social science research and culture

Uncovering the value of social volunteering

The role of civil society is also in focus as researchers and practitioners join forces to explore the value of voluntary social work through a call cutting across the Social initiatives and Humanities and social science research and culture funding areas.

"Researchers are good at finding patterns of practice, while practitioners are closer to the target groups and better at quickly identifying their specific challenges. That is why research-practice collaborations are a central idea in the foundation's 2030 strategy," says Ane Grubb, Senior Adviser at VELUX FOUNDATION.

In 2025, the foundation had set aside a total pool of up to DKK 20 million for projects looking into the value of voluntary social work. The projects were approved at the end of 2025 for start-up in 2026.

The oceans are under pressure from human activities, the consequences of which are not yet fully understood. That is why VELUX FOUNDATION supports research projects that create new applied knowledge and solutions to combat pollution and protect marine life.

Invisible pollution has major consequences for marine environments

Marine ecosystems are inextricably linked to human life, behaviour and well-being, and furthermore help regulate the climate.

At the same time, the marine environment in Denmark is under constant pressure from human activities. Key threats include pollutants, nutrients, degraded habitats for marine life, marine debris including plastics, and underwater noise.

Many of these impacts are invisible to the eye, but can have major consequences for marine ecosystems. Even green solutions such as new fuels, offshore wind farms and offshore CO₂ storage impact marine ecosystems and may cause pollution with as yet unknown consequences.

“We need research that can help boost the resilience of the marine environment, reduce pressure factors and provide solutions that contribute to a more ecosystem-based approach to marine management and one that respects the limited carrying capacity of our marine ecosystems,” says Henrik Tronier, Deputy Director of VELUX FOUNDATION.

Noise pollution in the sea must be mapped and reduced

Underwater noise from ships poses a growing threat to marine life such as fish and marine mammals. With a grant of DKK 8.3 million from the foundation, researchers from Aarhus University are mapping noise pollution in Danish waters and investigating its effects on marine wildlife.

The ‘SEANOISE’ project is headed by professors Peter Teglberg Madsen and Jakob Tougaard, who are positioning underwater noise recorders in and around protected Natura 2000 areas.

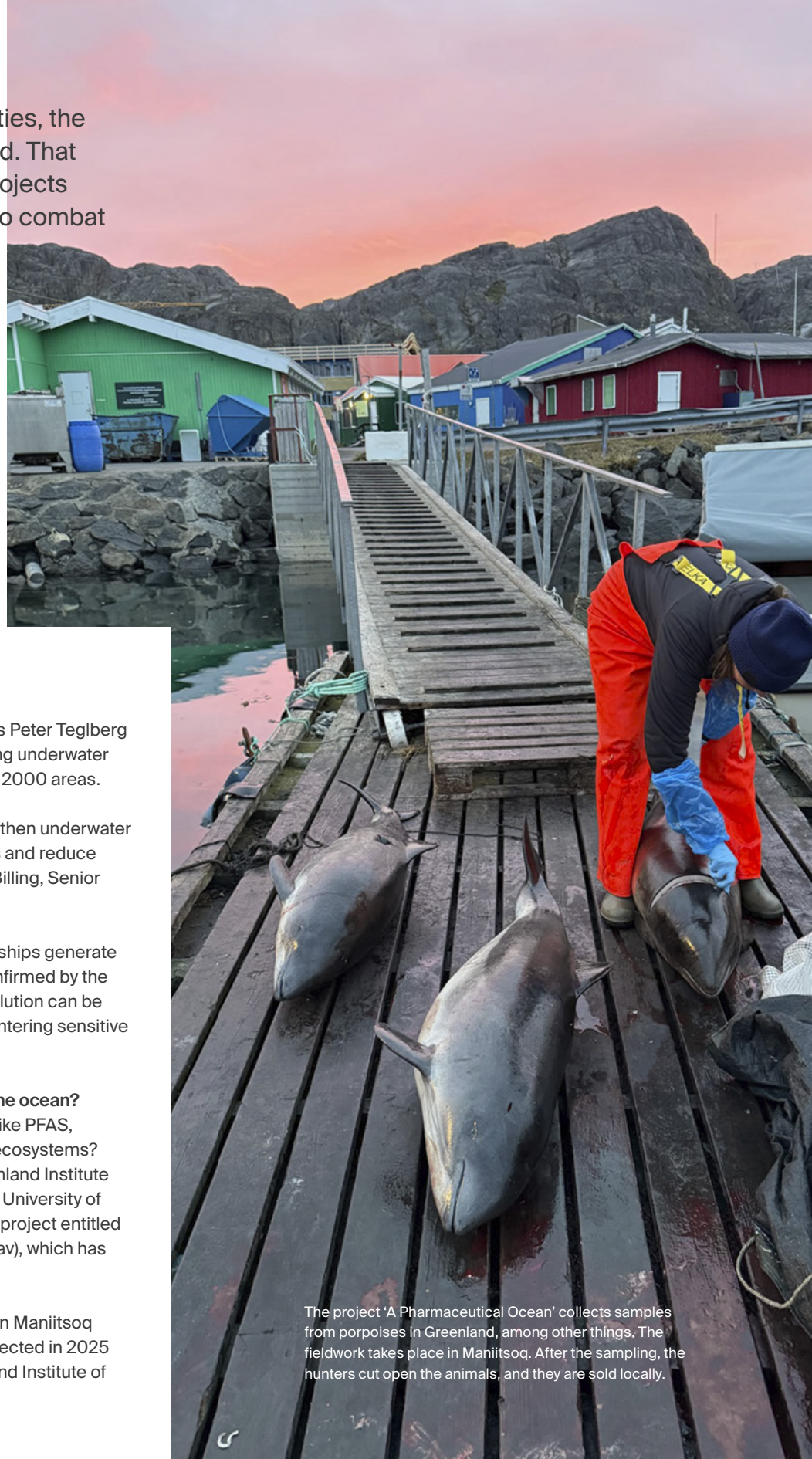
“This is a socially relevant project that will strengthen underwater noise research and help address the challenges and reduce the effects of noise from shipping,” says Adam Billing, Senior Adviser at VELUX FOUNDATION.

Preliminary data suggests that less than 15% of ships generate more than half the noise. If this hypothesis is confirmed by the researchers, a substantial reduction in noise pollution can be achieved by restricting the noisiest ships from entering sensitive marine areas.

What do whales tell us about drug residues in the ocean?

How do drug residues and synthetic chemicals like PFAS, pesticides and PCBs affect marine wildlife and ecosystems? Researchers from Roskilde University, the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources, Aarhus University and the University of Copenhagen are investigating this question in a project entitled ‘A Pharmaceutical Ocean’ (Det farmaceutiske Hav), which has received funding of DKK 10 million.

In close collaboration with subsistence hunters in Maniitsoq in Greenland, samples from porpoises were collected in 2025 – both for full tissue analysis and for the Greenland Institute of



The project ‘A Pharmaceutical Ocean’ collects samples from porpoises in Greenland, among other things. The fieldwork takes place in Maniitsoq. After the sampling, the hunters cut open the animals, and they are sold locally.

Other projects focusing on pollution in the oceans

Marine Plastic II. Danish research will strengthen international efforts to combat plastic pollution in the oceans. The Roskilde University project builds on the results of the MarinePlastic research centre and focuses on presenting new knowledge to the UN and the EU, both in relation to the circular economy and the regulation of plastic.

Grant amount DKK 8 million.

‘Less plastic and pollution in the Greenland marine environment’ (Mindre plastik og forurening i havmiljøet i Grønland). The project from Aarhus University aims to increase citizen awareness of local sources of plastic and wastewater pollution. By mapping local pollution and through workshops and awareness campaigns as well as citizen engagement, efforts targeting the Arctic marine environment will be strengthened.

Grant amount DKK 4 million.

Mille Gori hones in on plastic in the oceans. The DR documentary ‘Mille and the animal planet’ (Mille og dyrenes planet) looks at plastic pollution in the oceans – from the Greenland Sea to the Caribbean – and how waste is threatening the marine environment and wildlife.

Grant amount DKK 1.5 million.

PREMISE. Anchored at DTU, the project investigates how microplastics from offshore wind turbine blades affect marine biodiversity and the marine environment, and develops strategies to mitigate the pollution together with industry, stakeholders and authorities.

Grant amount DKK 4.8 million.

Natural Resources Biobank. The project builds on data collected over four decades and is a unique opportunity for researchers to monitor historical developments in chemical exposures in Arctic whales.

“We lack knowledge about the effects on the marine ecosystem and human health of drug residues and other man-made chemicals that end up in the marine environment. The project will provide crucial knowledge that can help prevent and reduce marine pollution while identifying solutions that can be used to protect marine organisms and human health,” says Adam Billing.

Humanities and social science research and culture

Authors and researchers together.

Network meeting in the foundation's Writers-in-residence programme, where experiences from author residencies at universities were shared. Author Rasmus Dagbjerg and researcher Torsten Bøgh Thomsen talked about work processes and co-creation.



Humanities and social science research and culture

Zooming in on soil life. The first farm event under the 'Connecting with the earth' (Jordforbindelser) research project, which is supported by the foundation, gathered 100 participants for sensory workshops on regenerative agriculture and soil life – in collaboration with Andelsgaarde and Aalborg University.



An ocean in balance

Debating the future of our oceans. The EU Mission Ocean conference brought together policy makers, scientists and industry for two days of dialogue on restoring the marine environment. Several projects supported by the foundation contributed to the dialogue on a common roadmap for the European seas.



An ocean in balance

Transitions and changes during the adult life

Children and young people look beneath the surface of the sea.

With the inauguration of the first underwater drone from the Mobile Nature School (Den Rullende Naturskole), senior volunteers can now awaken the curiosity of children and young people about life in the sea. Supported by 'Blue Gold' (Blåt Guld), a partnership between the Danish Society for Nature Conservation and VELUX FOUNDATION.



Transitions and changes during the adult life

'Seniorfolkemødet' brought together active senior citizens. Viborg was the setting for a day of singing, debates and inspiration for an active senior life. The foundation has supported 'Seniorfolkemødet', a festival for seniors, for a number of years.



Humanities and social science research and culture

Strengthened focus on communication about projects. How do you disseminate knowledge when researchers and practitioners work closely together? This was the theme of a networking meeting for participants in projects under the HUMpraxis programme.

Transitions and changes during the adult life

Young people and seniors met to advance hope and action. Future workshops at libraries across the country brought together young people and adults aged 60+ as part of the 'Getting ready for the future together' (Sammen om fremtiden) project, which focuses on the green transition, generational meetings and joint climate action.

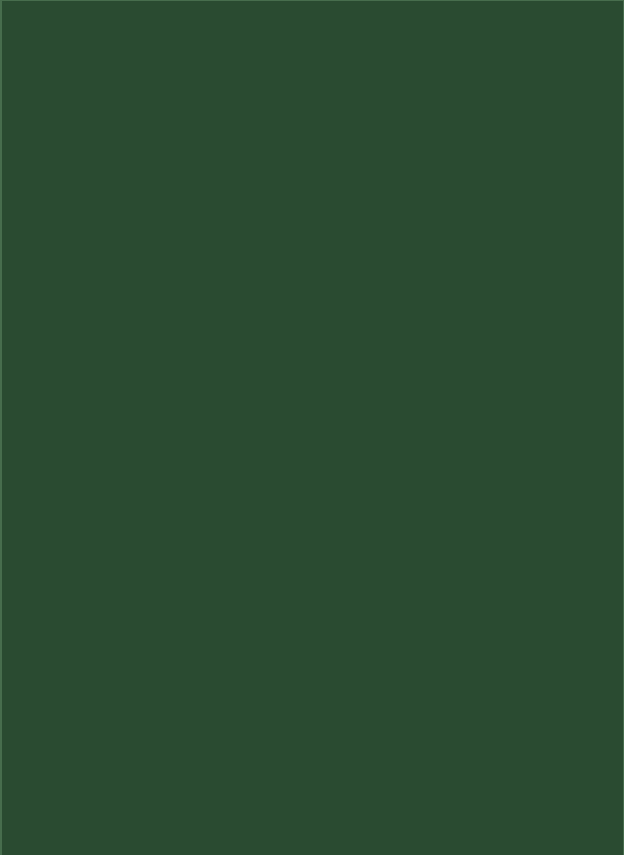


Current affairs fund

Inspiration and new knowledge for candidates. In Ringsted, 250 candidates running in the municipal and regional elections in Denmark attended a workshop as part of the project 'Your Vote. Our Denmark' (Dit Valg. Vores Danmark). The initiator is Constructive Institute, which through knowledge, dialogue and action wanted to ensure that the Danes, through the media, got the best possible coverage of the municipal and regional elections in autumn 2025.

Highlights

Portraits



Meet some of our grantees whose projects are contributing to new models and change.

■ Humanities and social science research and culture

What is a room’s atmosphere, and how does it influence us? These are two of the questions the research project ‘Aesthetic atmosphere’ (Æstetisk atmosfære) is setting out to answer. The ambition is to make sensory experiences and more diffuse elements part of the psychology profession. This is the first time that phenomenological psychology has investigated the experience of atmospheres.

What are aesthetic atmospheres, and what made you curious about them?
Atmosphere, as defined in the project, is a feeling we attribute to a space. It’s a mood. Throughout my career, I have worked with aesthetics. It’s not just about art and beauty, but also about the human way of being in the world. When we experience the world, it’s atmospheric. At the same time, atmosphere is neither measurable nor constant and hasn’t been a big part of psychology, which has focused on what can be measured and quantified.

How do you expect the project to contribute to the field of psychology?
We’re investigating how atmospheres arise and what they do – especially in the context of music and architecture involving the senses and movement. We hope that through phenomenology we can get to grips with what is otherwise quite diffuse and qualify it as scientifically as possible.

The project therefore investigates how atmospheres are experienced and evolve. We’re investigating something basic: Our sensory and emotional experience of the world. Different art forms engage different senses: Music appeals to the sense of hearing, and architecture speaks to the sense of sight. The project is basic research because we’re trying to shed light on some key aspects of the psyche: How do we experience? What moves us? How does a physical space or a piece of music engage with our emotions and bodily states and continue to affect us over time?

What has receiving a grant from the foundation’s Core group programme meant to you?

How do atmospheres affect us?



It has enabled us to think big and work long-term. It’s important that we create space for basic research that is driven neither by orders nor by a need for short-term solutions. When research is only a response to financial or political interests, and when we micromanage art and science, we risk overlooking the ideas that arise and the progress that can be achieved when researchers are free to pursue their ideas. We’ve been given a chance to pursue our ideas.

Phenomenological psychology
A psychological approach that examines human experiences as they appear to the individual, without reducing them to biological processes, diagnoses or theoretical models.

Atmosphere (phenomenological)
An atmosphere is a mood that fills a space and is perceived physically before we think about it. It’s in-between the subjective and the objective.

Social initiatives

In the ‘People need people’ (Mennesker har brug for mennesker) project, patients affiliated with the psychiatric services work in gardens run by social enterprises. Sille Vibe Rasmussen has been part of the project since June 2024 and is finding that working outdoors and as part of a community can advance recovery and help people find meaning and resources in their everyday lives.

Community and empowerment through gardening



Sille Vibe Rasmussen, garden host at Sct. Hans Have

What was it like for you the first time you worked in the garden?

After spending my first Tuesday in the garden, I wrote in my diary that it was a beautiful place with good people and that I felt that I should come every Tuesday from then on. So from the very first time, I felt safe there, both because of the environment and the people I surround myself with.

What does the garden mean to you today?

The garden means a lot to me and plays a big part in my well-being and recovery from the things I struggle with mentally. I feel connected to nature and the people I work with in the garden. Witnessing the passing of the seasons in the garden makes me feel both hopeful and optimistic. Even after the harshest winter, snowdrops and erantis burst

forth in spring. I also feel optimistic and empowered when it comes to my own resources. It makes so much sense for me to come to Sct. Hans Have. I’ve rediscovered a sense of purpose in taking care of the garden together with good people and being part of the community again after many years of struggling with mental illness.

How would you describe the sense of community in the garden?

We’re many very different people with different life experiences and resources, yet there is a strong sense of community and room for everyone. In the garden, we’re all equal and have the same purpose: Taking good care of Sct. Hans Have.

What do you hope the garden can bring you and maybe others in the future?

I hope the garden can continue to be an oasis in a real and figurative sense – for me and for others. A place where there’s room for everyone, where you can be yourself and where, as part of this amazing community, we can nurture something greater and enjoy nature. A place where you can reconnect with your own resources and find new things you’re good at. A place where you can find both peace and new energy.

“ I’ve rediscovered a sense of purpose in taking care of the garden together with good people and being part of the community again.



An ocean in balance

The Ocean Institute (Tænketanken Hav) is a non-profit member-based organisation working to gather knowledge about the ocean and translating it into concrete actions and recommendations. The institute was founded on the initiative of VELUX FOUNDATION in 2021.

Why was the Ocean Institute created?
We have neglected our oceans. Pollution, climate change and human activities have brought ecosystems close to collapse. Marine life is under threat.

The Ocean Institute was set up to help reverse this development, to rebalance our oceans and ensure that we do not exceed the carrying capacity of the sea. Based on a diverse range of expertise and the broad engagement of members and other key stakeholders, we’re working to develop approaches that can strengthen and restore marine ecosystems.

What difference can the institute make – and what signs do you see of the impact you are making?
For decades, we’ve known about the ocean crisis and its causes, including nitrogen discharges, declining fish stocks and impacts on the seabed, raw material extraction, dredging and much more. Yet, far too little has been done.

Employing all this knowledge, we want to alert businesses and policy makers to the problems, while creating a forum where stakeholders with an interest in the ocean can come together and commit to betterment in the future.

The institute has contributed to the Agreement on a Green Denmark (Aftalen om den grønne trepart), to the fisheries agreement designating large parts of Danish waters as free from bottom trawling, and to offshore wind tenders containing nature-based requirements. We have done this by engaging research knowledge at the right time and through dialogue and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

The ocean needs a voice too



Liselotte Hohwy Stockholm, CEO, Ocean Institute

How do you imagine the state of the ocean in ten years’ time?
Overcoming the ocean crisis requires sustained efforts, but it is far from impossible. In ten years’ time, I believe we will start to see clear signs of recovery.

I envision an ocean more full of life and more balanced, where businesses adopt more sustainable practices and where the management of our oceans respects the natural limits of the oceans.

“Overcoming the ocean crisis requires sustained efforts, but it is far from impossible.

Changing course takes courage and will-power – but we have the knowledge and opportunities. The future of the ocean can be bright if we act now.

Transitions and changes during the adult life

In 2025, VELUX FOUNDATION and Table Tennis Denmark (Bordtennis Danmark) entered into a partnership to create more local initiatives run by and for seniors who want to be active in the table tennis community – and to strengthen the power of active volunteers.

“Replace rowing machines with table tennis tables. It makes much more sense.

What does table tennis mean to you?
Over the past ten years, table tennis has practically become my job. Before BAT60+ [a subdivision of Table Tennis Denmark, ed.], I was already volunteering and had a lot to do with table tennis. I met many people aged 60+ who used to play tennis, volleyball or badminton, but who missed playing a sport. I saw great potential straight away, and it has turned out to be an incredibly fun and exciting journey. Since then, a lot has happened, and last spring we entered into a partnership with VELUX FOUNDATION. And this has already proven a great idea, as many new local initiatives are now emerging all over Denmark.

What do seniors get out of playing table tennis?
People laugh a lot when they play. Table tennis is full of irregular and unpredictable bounces, which creates a light-hearted atmosphere. This was confirmed by a large survey of over 1,200 seniors, of whom 77% said that having fun is the most important thing about table tennis. If you ask people who go to the gym, most will probably mention exercise and health as their primary motivation for going, but table tennis is all about joy and laughter. It is also one of the few sports where you can talk while you play – about your grandchildren or anything else going on in your life, which means a lot.

What do you hope the project will have contributed in a few years’ time?
My greatest vision is for table tennis to become a natural part of senior rehabilitation initiatives. When a 60-year-old breaks an arm or a leg, today rehabilitation is often about fitness machines and exercises. But for many, the motivation to carry on with the exercises is quite low.

This is where table tennis can make a difference because it feels like play – and that’s much more motivating. Imagine what we could do with a fitness room: Replace rowing machines with table tennis tables. It makes much more sense for the individual and can benefit society by keeping people active for longer.

Table tennis brings laughter and joy



Gert Jørgensen, volunteer and table tennis instructor in BAT60+

New grants in 2025

In 2025, VELUX FOUNDATION awarded funding to a total of 390 projects that all address important challenges and opportunities in our society today. Read about selected projects in the following pages.



Grief communities and new grief research

- Transitions and changes during the adult life
- Humanities and social science research and culture

How do men aged 50+ deal with grief after losing a loved one? In the ‘Garden of Grief’ (Sorgens Have) project, researchers and practitioners investigate how cemeteries can serve as grief community venues. The project combines fieldwork and theory development. It will contribute to a new understanding of grief and design grief processes centred around the cemetery where conversations can take place on the participants’ own terms.

Grant
DKK 5.9 million



Literary talent at universities

- Humanities and social science research and culture

In early 2025, eight Danish writers took up residency at Danish universities on two-year working grants. They spend their days at the universities to inspire – and be inspired by – researchers and students.

The eight writers-in-residence are Shëkufe Tadayoni Heiberg, Ikimalik Pikilak, Rúni Weihe, Nanna Storr-Hansen, Jonas Eika, Monia Sander Haj-Mohamed, Elias Sadaq and Rasmus Theisen.

Grant
DKK 5.2 million



Support for local democracy

- Current affairs fund

The largest poll in Danish history, boot-camps for candidates for the municipal and regional elections and election festivals. The project ‘Your Vote. Our Denmark’ (Dit valg. Vores Danmark) was initiated by Constructive Institute and consisted of a wide range of initiatives before, during and after the municipal and regional elections. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, efforts were made to ensure the best possible election coverage for the Danish population and to provide opportunities for dialogue in the run-up to the municipal and regional elections in autumn 2025.

Grant
DKK 6 million



Room for communities

- Transitions and changes during the adult life

At Oplevelsescenter Nyvang, you step into a time warp from the mid-20th century. Here, 30 senior volunteers in ‘Friends of the Zone Rescue Corps’ (Zone-Redningskorpsets Venner) gather to tell the history of the old haulage business and rescue station and to carry out repairs.

An unused attic is being converted to serve as a place for the volunteers, who are all aged 60+, to meet. The repairs are carried out by the volunteers themselves, most of whom used to be tradesmen.

Grant
DKK 225,000



New ways of improving quality of life for people with visual impairment

- Transitions and changes during the adult life

Five interdisciplinary research-practice collaboration projects focus on how adults aged 50+ with visual impairment can maintain their quality of life through playing active roles in communities and society. The projects are ‘FOREVER’, ‘Detection of loss of eyesight in nursing home residents’ (Opsporing af synsnedsættelse hos plejehjemsbeboere), ‘Job in sight’ (Med job i sigte), ‘Patient empowerment and quality of life in wet AMD treatment’ (Patienters handlekraft og livskvalitet ved behandling af våd AMD) and ‘VISTA’.

Grant
DKK 14 million



Communities in everyday life

- Social initiatives

‘Democratic neighborhoods’ (Demokratiske nabolag) works with residential areas in Aarhus, Vejle, Gladsaxe and Jyderup to strengthen opportunities for residents to become part of everyday communities – for example in leisure organisations and housing associations. The goal is to develop methods that promote active citizenship and increase the sense of belonging. The project also brings together local stakeholders such as teachers, library staff, social housing workers and volunteers from various associations in new communities of practice.

Grant
DKK 5.4 million



Social caretakers strengthen sense of community

■ Social initiatives

More people should have the chance to become part of local communities – also in rural and remote areas. The ‘Community Varde’ project aims to increase well-being and strengthen cohesiveness among citizens in socially vulnerable positions in small towns and villages in the Municipality of Varde.

The project builds on the positive experience gained with social caretakers who foster contact, dialogue and a sense of community among residents who are outside the established communities.

Grant
DKK 6.6 million



Recreation of marine environment in Vejle Fjord continues

■ An ocean in balance

The ‘A Healthy Vejle Fjord 2.0’ (Sund Vejle Fjord 2.0) project builds on the results and experience gained from the first phase of Denmark’s largest marine restoration project. The Municipality of Vejle and the University of Southern Denmark will expand the ecosystem-based approach. Over the next five years, there will be a renewed focus on recreating the ecosystems in the fjord through research, knowledge dissemination and local citizen engagement. A letter of intent from the foundation grants total funding of up to DKK 17 million for the project during the period.

Grant
DKK 4 million

Helping seabirds under pressure

■ An ocean in balance

Danish waters are important foraging areas for seabirds, but the birds face serious threats, and several species are in decline. ‘Seabirds under Pressure’ will establish a national model for surveys of stranded birds in Denmark, contributing new knowledge of how seabirds are affected by pressure factors such as climate change, fishing and pollution. Volunteers from DOF BirdLife will record bird occurrences, and solutions must be found through collaboration with the authorities, research institutions and stakeholders.

Grant
DKK 5.4 million



History
Finances
Awards
Boards



In 2024 and 2025, the foundations' headquarters underwent renovation and modernisation. Drone photo from December 2025.

Aerial photo of Maskinvej 4 and Tobaksvejen 10 from October 1963.



Renovation of headquarters and green initiatives

The physical environment must support the foundations' work. Therefore, the foundations' headquarters have undergone extensive renovation.

In 1963, Villum Kann Rasmussen established new headquarters at Tobaksvejen 10 in Søborg for the company V. Kann Rasmussen & Co, which later became the VKR Group. Designed by the architect Dan Fink, the building served as the group's headquarters until 2006, when it was acquired by the foundations as a domicile for their expanding funding activities.

Today, Tobaksvejen 10 is still home to the joint secretariat of Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION. The foundations' strategic direction, initiatives and work processes are continuously evolving to maintain societal relevance and align with the times, and for this purpose the headquarters underwent extensive renovation and modernisation in 2024 and 2025.

The building has been the setting for a unique company history that deserves safeguarding. It must also foster collaboration and innovation, while reflecting the foundations' core values – courage, decency, curiosity and common sense – and their commitment to making a positive difference in society.

The renovated headquarters feature spaces for large network meetings, encouraging open dialogue with grantees and partners. New and more meeting rooms will also facilitate workshops and knowledge sharing among employees.

Choice of materials and reuse

The renovation has worked around the idea of keeping and reusing as much as possible – both to preserve the spirit of the



place and to reduce the climate impact of the renovation. In the new changing rooms, which are used, among others, by employees who cycle to work, the walls and floors have been lined with micro-cement, which has less of a carbon impact than ceramic tiles. Office furniture has been upcycled, and the original doors have been carefully restored.

Natural ventilation is ensured through automated and weather-regulated window control and sun protection.

Greening of surroundings
The neighbouring building at Maskinvej 4 used to house the development and production of VELUX skylights. Today, the building houses the VILLUM Window Collection, documenting and communicating the history, development and importance of windows for people's access to light, air and views of the outside world.

Between the two buildings, a landscaped garden has been created with winding paths connecting the buildings. These areas also allow rainwater collection and delayed entry into the sewer system of particularly heavy rainfalls.

Planting walls have been created with reused stones, and cobblestones and setts have been laid instead of concrete paving stones and asphalt, while bio-diversity is promoted by plant diversity and insect hotels. A sculpture from the VKR Group has also been installed in the garden.

Charging stations for electric cars have been installed, and sheds for waste collection and bicycles feature living green roofs.

Over time and as they grow, the trees, flowers and plants will contribute to the greening of the surroundings, while changing character with the seasons.

The sculpture by sculptor Søren West will occupy a prominent position in the new garden.



Story of the founder

Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION are philanthropic foundations founded in 1971 and 1981 by civil engineer, inventor and manufacturer Villum Kann Rasmussen. Developer of the VELUX skylight in 1942, he was the founder of VELUX A/S and other companies in the VKR Group, the purpose of which is to bring daylight, fresh air and a better environment into people's everyday lives.

Villum Kann Rasmussen founded Villum Foundation to ensure a generational change that would see his life's work continue as a well-consolidated and successful company. The foundation could take over his role as the majority shareholder of the corporate group – a form of ownership allowing him to guarantee the long-term survival of the company while paying back to the society he felt had given him so much.

As the VKR Group grew, Villum Kann Rasmussen could establish another foundation focused solely on philanthropic grants: VELUX FOUNDATION.

Today, both foundations actively support philanthropic causes, and Villum Foundation remains the majority shareholder of the VKR Group.

Villum Kann Rasmussen's foundation universe also includes the Employee Foundation of the VKR Group, KR Foundation, Velux Stiftung in Switzerland and the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation in the USA.



The domicile was built by the founder, Villum Kann Rasmussen, in 1963. Here he is photographed in his office in 1990.

Investing in the green transition

The philanthropic work of Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION is made possible, among other things, by returns from the foundations’ own investments. In 2025, the foundations launched a new investment programme designed to contribute to the green transition across industries and borders.

The green transition has long been an important focus for the foundations. This is especially true in the investment area, and since 2013 the foundations have invested increasingly in green impact investments to help combat climate change and increase resource efficiency – for example in companies that produce new green solutions for the benefit of society.

In the debate about the green transition, the focus is often either on black industries producing coal, oil and gas, or on green companies generating renewable energy or developing sustainable technologies.

But the vast majority of companies are neither black nor green, but grey, i.e. somewhere in-between. And this is where we find the many companies that also have the greatest potential for reducing their carbon emissions. They are the ones targeted by Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION’s new investment programme, Grey to Green. Under this programme, the

foundations’ investments come with a requirement for companies to address their carbon emissions.

These ‘grey’ companies are often in an early phase of reducing their carbon emissions, making it possible to introduce measures that will significantly boost the green transition as well as the expected return.

Taking an active stand
The new investment programme is aimed at companies that recognise that the green transition is happening, and which are actively addressing the associated challenges and opportunities. No matter which industry or which part of the world they are operating in.

“Our ambition with our investment portfolios is to deliver returns, but also for all our investments to be purpose-driven. We therefore see this as a natural step for the foundations’ investment portfolios,” says Fredrik Skoglund, Chief Investment Officer of both foundations.

“A tonne of CO₂ saved is a tonne of CO₂ saved – no matter where the reduction is achieved.

Anders Lyngaa Kristoffersen,
Head of Impact Investments

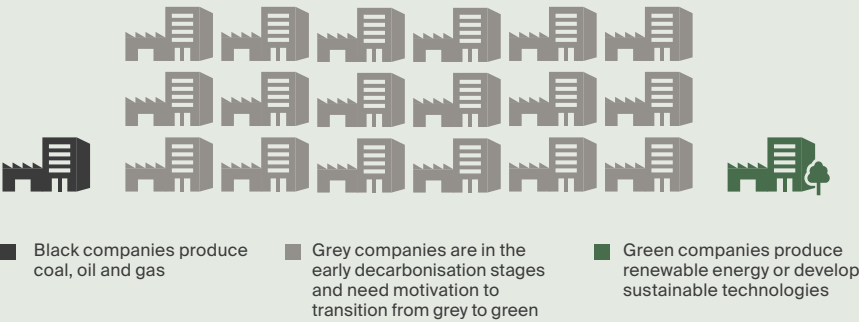
Anders Lyngaa Kristoffersen, Head of Impact Investments, explains:

“A tonne of CO₂ saved is a tonne of CO₂ saved – no matter where the reduction is achieved. Through our investments, we basically help companies delivering products the world needs in their own transition. The programme is also diversifying our investment portfolio, which is already focused on green investments through our Impact programme.”

The investment programme also covers investments in the climate and energy

Strongest potential for green transition among grey companies

Grey to Green investments require companies to take an active stand when it comes to their carbon emissions



optimisation of existing properties. Solar panels, insulation and other measures can make buildings cheaper to heat or cool, for example.

Same mindset as for other investments
It will be five to ten years before the Grey to Green programme is fully implemented due to the gradual roll-out of new investments. The ambition is for the programme to account for approximately half of the unlisted investments making up the foundations’ restricted investment assets. The other half is made up of the Impact programme.

“As is the case with our other investment areas, the specific investments are handled by asset managers and subject to the same financial due diligence processes, but with a focus on decarbonisation as an additional tool in the toolbox,” says Anders Lyngaa Kristoffersen.

Where does the money come from?

The philanthropic work of Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION is made possible by dividends from VKR Holding A/S, supplemented by returns from the foundations’ own investments. In years when dividends are distributed by VKR Holding, approximately 90% of the dividends go to Villum Foundation, some of which are then transferred to VELUX FOUNDATION.

The foundations also invest their assets in shares, bonds and alternative investments, with the returns from these investments supplementing the dividends from VKR Holding.

The foundations’ assets are invested broadly within the framework defined by the Danish Department of Civil Affairs and the foundations’ respective charters and boards. They must ensure the highest possible return within this framework in order to maximise the funds available for distribution to philanthropic purposes.

1.8
EUR billion
Villum Foundation’s assets
at the end of 2025*

585
EUR million
VELUX FOUNDATION’s
assets at the end of 2025*

* The values of the investment assets are based on the available data as of 5 January 2026, and may differ from the final audited financial statements for 2025.

This year's awards

Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION hand out annual awards to honour and promote outstanding achievements in the fields of architecture, research and science.

In 2025, the two foundations jointly presented the Building Component Award, while Villum Foundation presented the Villum Kann Rasmussen Annual Award in Science and Technology.

Every other year, Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION present the international Daylight Award jointly with Swiss Velux Stiftung.



The recipients of the Building Component Award 2025, Lars Keller and Simon Ingvarsen, together with chair of Villum Foundation Jens Kann Rasmussen and chair of VELUX FOUNDATION Lykke Kann Ogstrup Lunde.

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Eske Willerslev is presented with the Villum Kann Rasmussen Annual Award by chair of Villum Foundation Jens Kann Rasmussen.



Villum Kann Rasmussens Annual Award

The Villum Kann Rasmussen Annual Award in Science and Technology is presented once a year on the founder's birthday, 23 January. Through the award, Villum Kann Rasmussen sought to support science and technology research and provide better opportunities for creative scientific work, to benefit and inspire Danish research. The Annual Award therefore recognises a particularly valuable contribution to science and technology.

The award is for DKK 5 million and cannot be applied for. The recipient of the Annual Award is chosen by the board of Villum Foundation on the recommendation of the award committee, based on evaluations by independent international experts.

The pioneer of environmental DNA

In 2025, the Villum Kann Rasmussen Annual Award went to Professor Eske Willerslev, known for his pioneering environmental DNA research. His discoveries have revolutionised our understanding of biodiversity and the evolution of ecosystems.

The inspiration came unexpectedly. As a Master's degree student, Eske Willerslev was looking out of the window when he saw a dog pooing in the street.

"I thought, there's DNA in all these things," he says and continues:

"The dog poo, all the leaves – they're gone after a while, but what happens to the DNA? Could it survive in the soil?"

It was a bold hypothesis. No one believed that animal and plant DNA would be preserved in the environment. Even his supervisor dismissed the idea. But Willerslev refused to give up. Many years spent trekking the permafrost of Siberia, trapping animals, had taught him how well organic matter is preserved in the frozen ground. With two grams of ancient soil from the Siberian permafrost, he conducted his experiment. Ready on Christmas Day, the results exceeded all expectations: From the soil

samples, DNA from woolly mammoth, bison, reindeer, lemming and hare was successfully extracted, as well as DNA from a number of plants.

New understanding of our past

It was the start of a whole new field of research: environmental DNA. Thanks to Willerslev's work, with a single water or soil sample we can now gain insight into entire ecosystems and test new hypotheses about how life on Earth is connected. We can identify endangered species with greater certainty and fewer resources and see how ecosystems have adapted to climate change in the past. All important knowledge that can be used to find new solutions to climate, biodiversity and food security problems.

"Willerslev's groundbreaking results have opened a history book that is rewriting our entire understanding of the past", says Thomas Bjørnholm, Chief Scientific Officer at Villum Foundation.

For several years, Eske Willerslev's ideas were met with scepticism. Peers questioned whether DNA could survive in soil and why it should be used instead of pollen. The breakthrough came when biologist Pierre Taberlet teamed up with Willerslev and named the field 'Environmental DNA'. Since then, the field has exploded and has become important for climate research and biodiversity monitoring, among other things.

Climate-resilient crops

Today, Willerslev leads two research efforts at the University of Copenhagen, the Centre of Excellence in Ancient Environmental Genomics (CAEG) and the AEGIS initiative, which investigates how ancient DNA can contribute to climate-resilient crops and sustainable agriculture. By analysing genetic material from sediment cores, Willerslev and his team hope to understand how past ecosystems and species adapted to climatic changes.

Eske Willerslev's merits

- Professor at University of Copenhagen and Cambridge University
- Member of the US National Academy of Sciences and the European Molecular Biology Organization
- First sequencing of ancient human genome – from a Saqqaq individual from Greenland (2010)
- Reassessing the first immigration to America (2016)
- Awarded the Order of the Dannebrog by Queen Margrethe II (2017)
- Discovery of two million-year-old DNA in Greenland (2022)
- Recipient of the Balzan Prize (2023) and the Albert Einstein World Award of Science (2024)

The power of being there

Willerslev's approach to research was shaped by the time he spent living in Siberia trapping animals. He insists on being physically present in the field:

"Many researchers don't go out to take samples themselves. They contact museums and never experience the regions or landscapes where the samples come from. When I've been out in the wind, rain and snow, I connect the data to something real," he says. This ethos has taken him to some of the most remote corners of the world and has proven valuable for his studies in both environmental DNA and human genomics.

Looking back, Willerslev says he is proudest of his work with environmental DNA because of how it has redefined what's possible: "Our work fundamentally changed how we think about DNA – where it's found, and how we use it. It's a legacy I'm deeply proud of passing on."



“

Our work fundamentally changed how we think about DNA – where it's found, and how we use it.

THE BUILDING COMPONENT AWARD



By honouring ingenuity in the details, Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION seek to inspire continued innovation – as a necessary driving force in the sustainable transition of the construction industry.

The Building Component Award carries forward the legacy of the founder, inventor and entrepreneur Villum Kann Rasmussen, who through his work demonstrated how technical insight and curiosity, combined with industrial solutions, can create value in the built environment.

The Building Component Award jury consists of representatives from the construction industry in Denmark. The jury evaluates the candidates based on the value created by the building components and the recipient's development journey.

The award comes with DKK 100,000 for each of the recipients.

We celebrate ingenuity in the details

Lars Keller and Simon Ingvarsten were honoured in 2025 for their pioneering use of straw wall systems.

The Building Component Award focuses on innovation, sustainability and the passionate people who drive the green transition of the building industry forward.

Presented by Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION, the award honours individuals and small groups who – through innovation, precision and persistence – have created or refined building components that contribute significantly to quality and value creation in the built environment.

This year's recipients

In 2025, the award went to Lars Keller, Director of EcoCocon Denmark, and Simon Ingvarsten, Design Director at Henning Larsen Architects, for their groundbreaking work with straw wall systems in Bestseller's new logistics centre in the Netherlands.



Straw walls for large-scale construction

Read more and watch the video with the two recipients talking about their groundbreaking work.



With 40,000 square metres of straw wall systems, the project is the largest of its kind in the world and a strong example of how an agricultural waste product can become the biogenic building material of the future that both stores CO₂ and is naturally degradable.

The straw wall is a unique building component because it can be produced in common formats, is easy to transport and install and meets all load, insulation, acoustic and moisture control requirements. At the same time, straw stores CO₂, grows quickly and can be harvested locally.

From pioneering project to international breakthrough

The collaboration between Lars Keller and Henning Larsen Architects began in 2016 and led to the development and construction of Feldballe Friskole. The experience gained paved the way for the current project on behalf of Bestseller, where straw wall systems are a key component.

The Building Component Award was presented at an award ceremony at Design Museum Denmark on 9 October 2025.

Villum Foundation board



Pictured (from left to right):

Keenan Wilson
Observer, student, Business
Academy Copenhagen

Christian Søndergaard Jensen
Professor, DScTech,
PhD, Aalborg University,
Department of Computer
Science

Merete Eldrup
Former CEO of
TV 2 Danmark A/S

Jens Kann-Rasmussen
Chair, MSc (Engineering)

Jørgen Tang-Jensen
Former CEO of VELUX A/S,
MSc (Economics and
Business Administration)

Søren Hartmann Hede
CEO, Finance Administration,
City of Copenhagen

Connie Hedegaard
Vice-chair, former minister
and EU commissioner, MA

The Villum Foundation board is responsible for the foundation's strategy and makes final decisions on all funding matters and other issues of significance for the foundation, such as asset management and governance policies, and for its co-ownership of VKR Holding A/S.

The board appoints new members to fill any vacancies and aims for a composition where members have broad insight into the areas supported by the foundation.

One member must be a descendant of the foundation's founder, Villum Kann Rasmussen, and one member must be a current or former employee of the VKR Group.

VELUX FOUNDATION board

The board is self-elective and aims for a composition where members have broad insight into the areas supported by the foundation. One member must be a descendant of the foundation's founder, Villum Kann Rasmussen.

The board is responsible for the foundation's strategy and makes final decisions on all distribution matters and other issues of significance for the foundation, such as asset management and governance policies. This happens at board meetings approximately every two months. In addition to board meetings, members participate in an annual strategy day, and the chair also participates in preliminary meetings etc.

Pictured (from left to right):

Erik Darre
Vice-chair, surgeon general,
specialist in orthopaedic
surgery

Hanne Strager
MSc, author

Lykke Kann Ogstrup Lunde
Chair, journalist

Lisbeth Knudsen
Strategy Director, journalist

Anne-Marie Mai
Professor, lic. phil.

Katrine Kann Rasmussen
Observer, student of
archaeology



Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION

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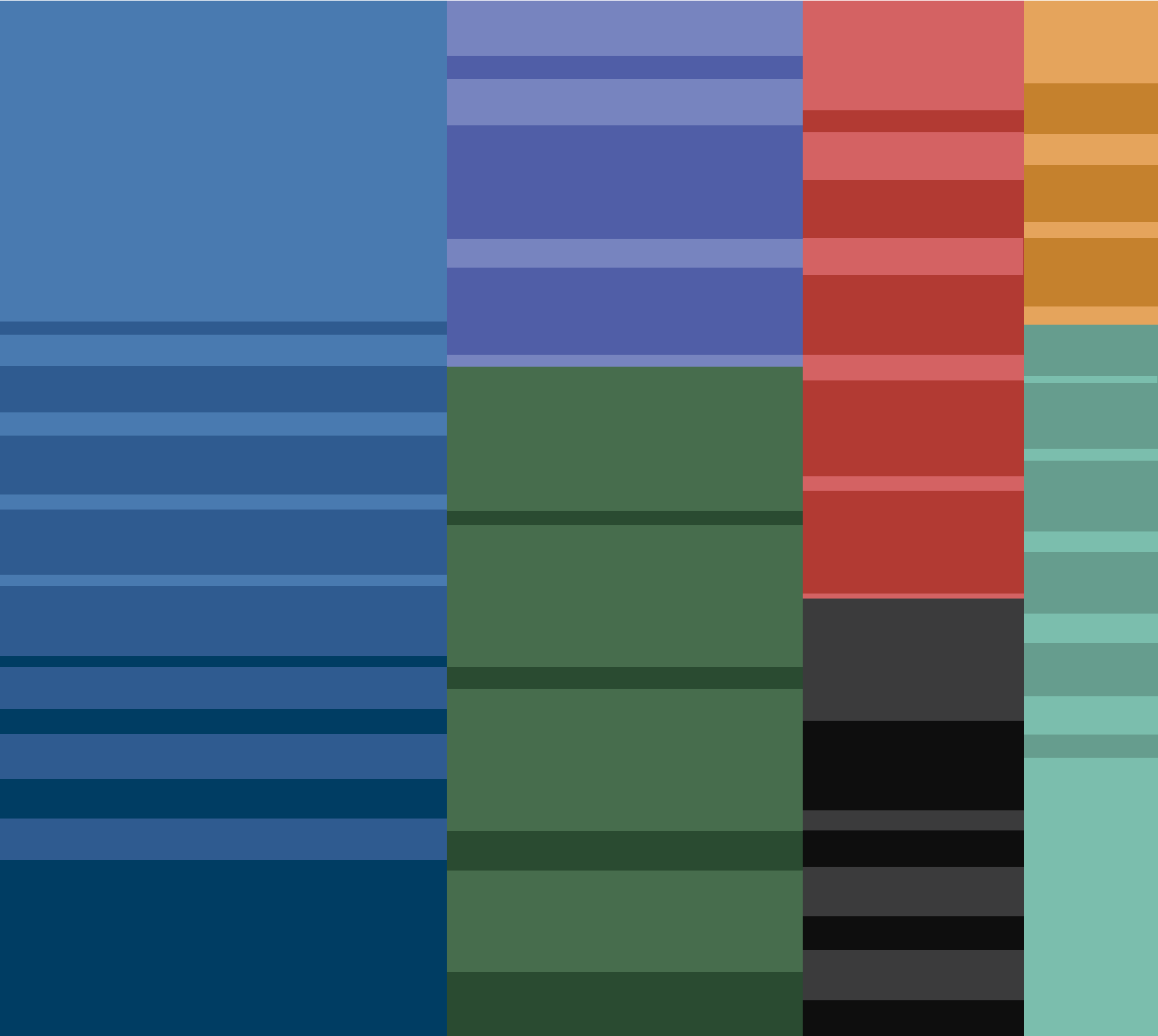
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Management
Lars Bo Nielsen, Executive Director, Villum Foundation
Ane Hendriksen, Executive Director, VELUX FOUNDATION
Fredrik Skoglund, Chief Investment Officer,
Villum Foundation and VELUX FOUNDATION

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