

# AU ATTRACTS INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH TALENT

Aarhus University regards the development of research talent as one of its central tasks, both for the benefit of society and the world of research, which depends for its vitality on coming generations of new talent.

One important aspect of the university's focus on researcher talent development efforts involves attracting talented researchers from abroad. Increasingly, AU's many research environments are succeeding in doing just that.

## NEW BLOOD FOR RESEARCH

The Department of Economics and Business has established an excellent international reputation over the years, as evidenced by the fact that it recently received around 350 foreign applications for a small number of vacant junior research positions. That reputation has helped to establish a truly international research environment at the department, as well as partnerships with some of the world's leading economics institutions.

The Department of Economics and Business has a long tradition of advertising its vacancies outside Denmark. The department participates in an annual job fair in the United States in order to talk to applicants to postdoctoral and assistant professor positions.

This year, around one applicant in ten was invited to a job interview with the department in the United States. Ten of these candidates were subsequently invited to Aarhus to give seminars and to gain an impression of life at the department. In the end, five of them were hired.

'Foreign academics bring new blood into the department. They have knowledge and experience that are different from those that Danish researchers can offer, and thus they bring a new dynamism to our work,' states Professor Kim Allan Andersen, who is responsible for talent development at the Department of Economics and Business.

Recruiting internationally is also a way of gaining access to the contacts of the foreign researchers. And when these international junior researchers leave Aarhus again after two or three years, they themselves become a part of the department's international network.

'This gives our PhD students good opportunities to spend time working at a foreign institution where they know that there will be someone there that they can work with,' explains Professor Andersen.

The international network also increases the likelihood that talented foreign researchers will find their way to Aarhus in the future.

### FOREIGN RESEARCH TALENT

AT THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

19 ASSISTANT PROFESSORS  
OF WHOM 9 ARE FOREIGNERS



13 POSTDOCS  
OF WHOM 9 ARE FOREIGNERS



72 PHD STUDENTS  
OF WHOM 28 ARE FOREIGNERS



Miriam-Rose Ash, a postdoc from Australia, obtained a grant from the European Molecular Biology Organisation to do her postdoctoral research with Professor Poul Nissen.

## TALENTED RESEARCHERS FUND THEIR OWN STUDIES

Foreign junior researchers are applying to come to Aarhus University in ever increasing numbers to give a boost to their academic careers. More and more of them have also found their own sources of funding for their stay, either from a national research council or from other foundations.

Professor Poul Nissen from the PUMPKIN basic research centre has noticed the trend.

'Foreign junior researchers are coming in increasing numbers as the reputation of our laboratories grows, and the fact that they have been able to obtain funding represents a guarantee that we are getting the best,' he says. Poul Nielsen's research centre carries out research into the structure and functioning of the pumps that are found in all plant and animal cells.

'It is a clear recognition of our status when international research talents choose our laboratory in preference to other places in the world. And they contribute greatly to increasing the number of international publications we produce,' says Dr Nissen.

He adds yet another advantage: 'They are very ambitious, and that is an inspiration for others.' Karl Anker Jørgensen, a professor of chemistry, has seen the same trend in his research group. He generally has eight to ten postdoctoral researchers at any given time, and increasing numbers of them have been through a very tough evaluation process in their home countries to obtain funding for their stay in Aarhus.

'These young researchers are at a very high level, and they come here because our research has made a great impression in the world. And if they do well here in Aarhus, they know that doors will open for them in other places,' says Pro-

fessor Jørgensen. The foreign researchers who have worked for a period in his laboratories over the years have included many from Spain.

'The first two who left here made good careers for themselves, and so we acquired a reputation as being a good place for bright young researchers to start. That also made it easier for the next ones to get funding to come here,' explains Karl Anker Jørgensen.

He points out that training postdoctoral researchers also helps to create important networks and contacts, for example in major international companies.

'For example, two of our postdocs are currently employed in Swiss pharmaceutical companies. People like that are good contacts for us, and help us to know what is going on in both the commercial and academic worlds. It shows us something of the requirements that future PhD students and postdoctoral researchers will have to live up to.'

Australian Miriam-Rose Ash obtained a grant from the European Molecular Biology Organisation to do her postdoctoral research with Professor Poul Nissen.

'I've always admired the work done in Poul Nissen's laboratory, and I was very excited at the prospect of being a part of an ambitious project aimed at solving a great mystery in our area of structural biology. So when I was lucky enough to be offered a grant at this laboratory, I didn't hesitate to get on a plane and to make Aarhus my new home!'