

# Handbook Book a Scientist

**FORSK  
NINGENS  
DØGN**



**Ministry of Higher  
Education and Science  
Denmark**

## **Welcome to the 'Book a Scientist' handbook**

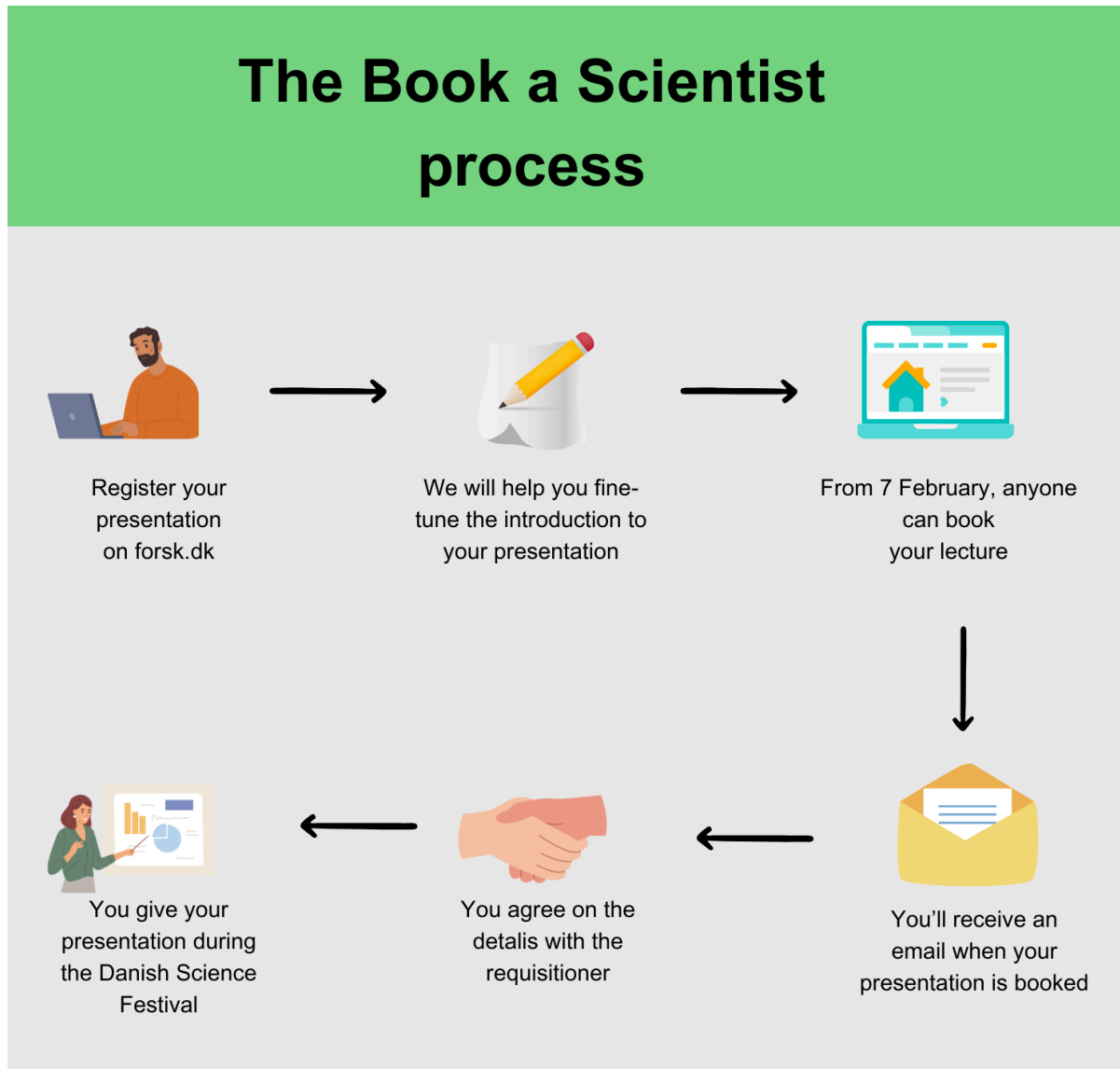
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# 1. What is Book a Scientist?

Book a Scientist is a Danish Science Festival initiative; an annual week-long festival organised by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. Book a Scientist is a presentation programme where scientists can register a presentation to be included in the Danish Science Festival.

Overview of Book a Scientist - from start to finish:



## **Why Book a Scientist?**

Book a Scientist is an initiative where scientists communicate their knowledge to the general public. The festival aims to communicate science and research in order to strengthen the relationship between scientists and the general public in Denmark. Furthermore, to establish a meeting point between the public and scientists and to showcase how research and innovation contribute to solving social challenges and issues.

## **What do I gain from Book a Scientist?**

Book a Scientist is voluntary. Therefore, you will not receive a fee if you participate. Book a Scientist does, however, give you the opportunity to strengthen your communication skills, and hopefully it will provide you with some positive and enriching experiences.

Scientists, who have already participated in the programme, enjoyed it very much. Bente Jensen, professor of education, Danish School of Education, said following her participation:

*»To enter into a dialogue with the users is, in my opinion, one of the most important things a scientist can do (...) It also sharpens my own research because I have to present it to a different target audience. I focus in a completely different way.«*

When you communicate your research, you strengthen your communicative skills. Thereby, you are able to articulate yourself better and more accurately because you are challenged because you have to talk to a different audience than peers or students. When talking to laypersons it is important to avoid scientific vernacular, to start by presenting your results and to make the presentation concise and clear.

By participating in the Book a Scientist programme, you help strengthen and qualify public debate and critical thinking. In 2024, 22,500 people took part in the 651 Book a Scientist events.

## **How much time is needed?**

The Danish Science Festival lasts one week, but you do not need to participate all week. It's up to you which days you want to take part and where you want to give your presentation. Let us know the details when you sign up.

## **Who will book my presentation?**

Anyone can order your presentation, if they fit your target group - private individuals, libraries, associations, schools, colleges, companies, and municipal departments. To book a presentation, the requisitioners must guarantee an audience of at least 20 people and find a suitable venue to host the visit. Once the Secretariat of the Danish Science Festival has arranged the contact between you and the requisitioner, you agree on the details between yourselves.

## **Online and physical presentations**

We will keep online presentations as a possibility after good experiences with this format.

When you register your presentation, you have to choose between digital or physical for all the time slots you are registering for. In this way you can plan your week more in detail.

When your presentation is booked for online presentation, it's the requisitioner that has the responsibility for the technical part. Including preparing a digital meeting, introducing the platform to you, inviting you and other relevant participants.

## **Who can take part in Book a Scientist?**

To participate in Book a Scientist you must be a scientist. This means that you must be a PhD student, have a PhD degree or have equivalent qualifications. You must also be employed by a public or private company that has research as one of its primary tasks, and your employment must not be more than seven years old. You can apply for exemption for the employment period.

Your presentation must be based on research-based knowledge and you are expected to be a skilled communicator who can engage the target group you wish to address

When you register for Book a Scientist, it is for one year at a time. We can mutually and at any time terminate our collaboration.

As part of your participation in Book a Scientist, the Ministry of Higher Education and Science processes personal data. When you register for the programme, you consent to this. You can read more about our processing of your personal data and your rights in "Information on processing of personal data in connection with Book a Scientist 2024".

## 2. How to register?

If you would like to take part in Book a Scientist you can register one (or several) presentation(s). You can register a new presentation at this link:  
[http://forsk.dk/add\\_lecture\\_form](http://forsk.dk/add_lecture_form).

Outline your presentation (see 'How to introduce your presentation - advice and tricks). You will also have to state:

- where in Denmark you can give your presentation
- when it is possible to book a presentation
- who the target audience is
- whether you want to give your presentation online

You will be asked for contact and personal information, which will not be made public. **When you register, you accept that we store relevant information.**

### FAQ

**I have participated before, and would like to sign up with the same presentation again. What to do?**

Contact us, if you wish to participate with a presentation which has been in the catalogue before. We can re-activate your presentation without you registering again.

**Why is 'Title' listed twice?**

The first 'title' is the title of the presentation - the title you wish to give your presentation. Under the contact information, the 'Title' is your academic or professional title.

**Which picture should I upload?**

The picture needs to fit the presentation. Choose something that illustrates your subject, which will make people want to book your presentation. If you do not have a suitable picture, we can help you find one. We recommend that you do not upload a portrait of yourself or a graph relating to your research.

### 3. How do I describe my presentation?

We will now advise you on how to introduce your presentation, so that it will be interesting for your target audience.

#### **Highlight the things that your target audience will find especially interesting**

Before you start writing the introduction for your presentation, you need to be aware which elements will be of special interest to your audience.

Clarify **the relevance criteria** that makes an interesting story. You will find the most interesting elements by looking at your presentation with the relevance criteria as a prism. By highlighting one or several of these elements you can generate interest in your presentation:

**News value:** Highlight elements that are topical when you are giving your presentation. The Danish Science Festival is held in April so it could, for instance, be 'Spring', the occupation of Denmark during the Second World War or World Autism Awareness Day, which is on 2 April.

**Essentiality:** Focus on knowledge of important problems that affect large parts of society and that are also important to your target audience. That could be MRSA-resistance or research in support for socially disadvantaged.

**Identification:** Talk about things that your audience can take example from. It can either be relevant anecdotes from your own life, and/or advice on what your audience can do to prevent dementia, or reduce air pollution when using a woodburning stove.

**Conflict:** If your presentation deals with a conflict, you can highlight this. For example, if you put social criticism or a defence/attack on pseudoscience, it will generate interest if you are brave enough to highlight this in the description of your presentation. Be prepared, however, that this tends to attract an audience hungry for debate.

**Fascination:** Some science stories can generate enthusiasm and produce even more curiosity. These are stories that make a potential audience think: 'It can actually be done!' Some subjects are always fascinating. For example, space, Vikings, giant constructions such as skyscrapers, animals, ancient Egypt, robots, explorers, etc. Remember to highlight the most fascinating things about your research in the headline and text.

**Myth busting:** Does your presentation in any way contradict your target audience's accepted knowledge or myths? You can capture the audience's attention by highlighting the myth busters. It could, for instance, be the assumption that slim people are always healthy or that computer games make children dumb and anti-social.

**In the future:** What will your research lead to? Maybe you are helping to develop the technology behind the precision robot surgery of the future? Or maybe we will experience fundamentally different primary schools in 30 years? Does your presentation deal with wild scenarios regarding our lives in the future? This could be an element you can highlight in your text.

Keep in mind that the elements you emphasise should have a similarly prominent place in your presentation, or you might risk disappointing your audience.

### **Use 'I am going to talk about...' as a common thread**

When compiling the introduction for your presentation, you need to define a common thread. You do not have the time to tell the audience everything there is to know about your research. Define what is most important. Using the phrase '**I am going to talk about**' can be helpful.

For example:

- **I am going to talk about** how the stories and pictures we are surrounded by affect your opinion on ourselves and the outside world.

Or:

- **I am going to talk about** how the genome editing tool, CRISPR, can be used to edit our genes, and how we 50 years from now might be able to cure cancer and cystic fibrosis.

When you have decided on your 'I will talk about...' introduction you will have the common thread, which you can then use as an underlying common thread in the introduction for your presentation.

### **Start with the most interesting aspect**

The introduction for your presentation should capture the attention of the target audience in the first two or three sentences. Use the relevance criteria to get some ideas.

For instance, you can outline in the first two sentences:

- A problem that is relevant for the target group (identification) or society (essentiality), which your research might help solve.
- A sensational claim that is relevant for your presentation (fascination or conflict)
- An ultra-brief description of a future scenario (the future). You can use qualifiers like 'maybe', 'probably', or 'hopefully' to express reservations in this very brief introduction.



## **Examples:**

### **Of course the Earth is flat!**

What if the Earth is actually flat, the moon landings were a hoax, and Andreas Mogensen has never been to space? (fascination and conflict)

### **Will my sewer get smart?**

And why does a lot of rain flood the streets? Have you ever been swimming in Copenhagen's harbour? In the last decade, engineers have been working on making your drainage system smarter so that the basement will stay dry, the fish in streams will be happy.... (identification)

### **Tales from the microbes in the sea**

Single-cell organisms dominate the oceans. They play an essential role in the Earth's ecosystem, climate, fishing, and biodiversity. They are also home to any number of strange, crazy, and impressive tales (essentiality and fascination).

### **Think of a good headline**

Your presentation will be part of a catalogue with many others. Your chosen headline needs to get the target audience to click on it and read about YOUR presentation. That is why you need to make it as enticing as possible. At the same time, the headline needs to be short and comprehensive in relation to your presentation.

Try to:

- make your headline specific
- use words that create images
- use active verbs

### **Headlines and opening sentences - examples**

How does the atmosphere purify itself? (active verb)

Tough farmers and quarrelsome chieftains (adjectives that create images)

Greenlanders carry a treasure trove of knowledge (active verb plus subject and object create images)

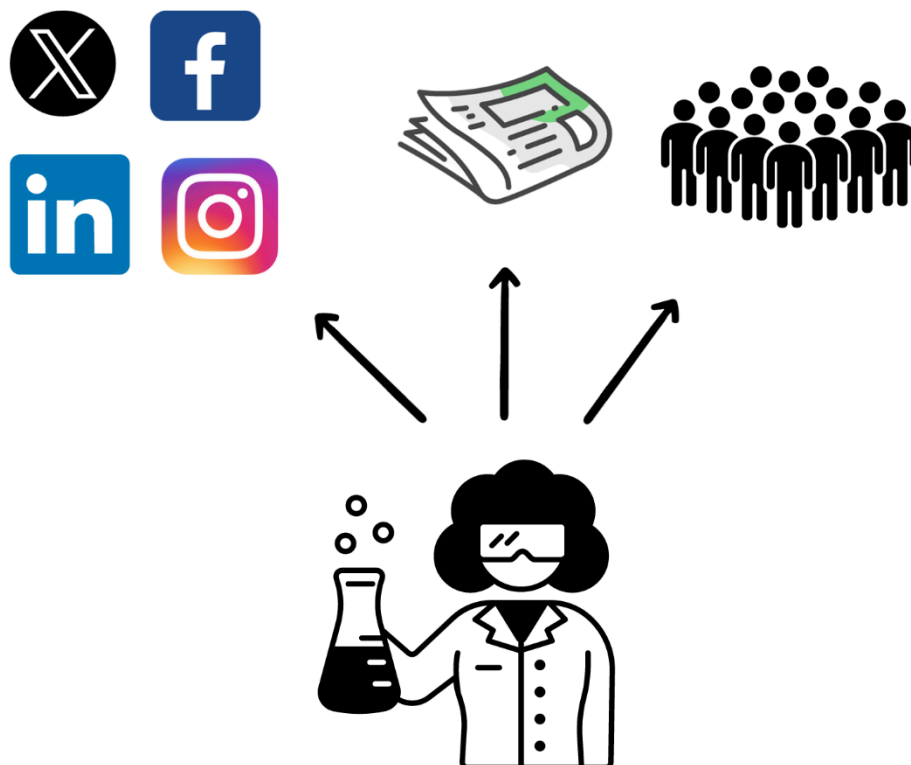
## 4. Promoting your presentation

Our aim is that all presentations are booked. Promotion of Book a Scientist is on several channels, and you are welcome to help find the right audience for your presentation.

You can promote the presentation yourself.

We recommend that you take the target audience into consideration. It might be schools, universities, private or public companies, organisations, sports associations, or libraries. Contact them to hear if they are interested in you visiting them.

You can also contact local papers, spread the word on social media or contact a communications officer at your place of work.



## 5. Guidance in connection with bookings

From the end of February right through to the beginning of April anyone in your target audience can book your presentation. Every year the dates vary a little, but you can see them on our website [www.forsk.dk](http://www.forsk.dk). Book a Scientist is very popular and every year there are lots of bookings. We will contact you when your presentation is booked.

### What happens once my presentation is booked?

You will know when and where your presentation has been booked when you receive a confirmation from us. The email will let you know:

- who booked your presentation
- where and when it is booked for
- your contact information and that of the requisitioner

When you have received the confirmation email you will agree on the last details with the requisitioner. We recommend that you agree on:

- the exact time of the presentation
- where you need to turn up (a link to the digital platform or address)
- who the audience is
- how many will attend

### Who is in charge of logistics?

Once your presentation is booked it is up to us to work out logistics, so that time and location come together. This is not as relevant when online.

**Notice:** It is the requisitioner who is responsible for the technical part of the presentation if it is booked for online presentation.

If you have to cancel, contact us as soon as possible.

### Important dates in 2025

1 February 2025: Deadline for registration

7 February 2025: The booking period starts

14 March 2025: The booking period ends

22 to 27 April 2025: Book a Scientist takes place

## 6. Personal data

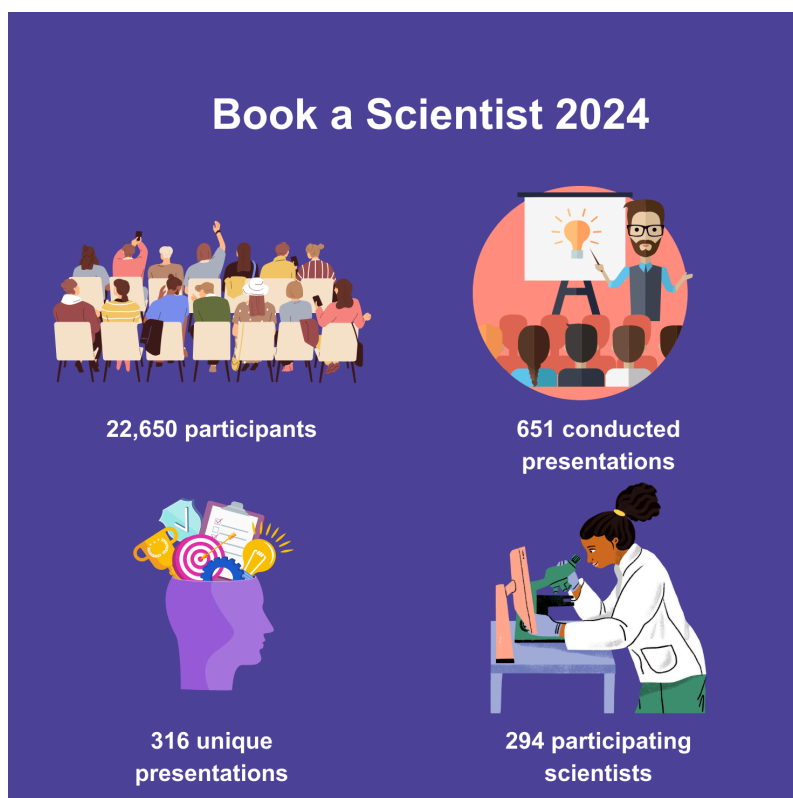
### *Processing of personal data*

When you register at Book a Scientist, Videnskab.dk receives your description of your presentation on forsk.dk on behalf of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science (UFS). Your name, job title and place of employment will be publicly available when your presentation have been published.

Your contact details also appears on forsk.dk, but they are only available to Videnskab.dk and UFS, so that they can get in touch with you, apart from when requisitioning your lecture, where we send your contact details to the requisitioner.

After the end of Forskningens Døgn, Videnskab.dk stores your information in a folder to which only we have access so that Videnskab.dk can contact you about participation next year

Related to the Book a Scientist programme, Videnskab.dk and UFS may mention your name, job title and place of employment on the websites and social media of Forskningens Døgn and the Ministry of Higher Education. The information will also be used in connection with publicity.



## 7. Contact

Book a Scientist is administered by the Book a Scientist administration. We are located at the Danish Centre for Science Communication at Videnskab.dk. We have been in charge of Book a Scientist since 2017.

We appreciate feedback and would like to answer any questions you may have

### **Contact us on:**

Mail: [bestilenforsker@bestilenforsker.dk](mailto:bestilenforsker@bestilenforsker.dk)

Phone: +45 2974 5231

Read more on our website: <https://forsk.dk>

### **Find us on social media:**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/forskningensdogn/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/forskdk/>

X (tidligere Twitter): <https://twitter.com/forskdk>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4Sdgb1LHImA2PONwvyZr2Q>