



Call for Papers

Jakobsleiter vol. 3: *Why Not?*

Why not? is a trick we use to gain confidence in a decision when we are not sure what to do. *Why not?* is also a way to respond to others when they question our choices. As such, it is immensely useful when allowing ourselves to venture out and do something inspired and unconventional, including spending tens of days burrowing down a rabbit hole to research a niche topic. Why not trace down existing approaches to an especially stubborn mathematical problem, such as the four-colour theorem, to see how they have developed over time? Why not try and define what distinguishes known and popular fictional languages from less successful attempts? Why not amass structured arguments for overhauling the current transportation systems in Europe in favour of a more sustainable solution? Why not spend days elucidating the possible meanings of that one tricky line of poetry in Ancient Greek, or that one still from a movie? Why not try and revisit public health guidelines on COVID-19 as they have changed over time, evaluate their effectiveness given the latest knowledge of how the virus and its many variants spread, and try to model a better response? Why not map a more effective taxation system, voting system, or a system for classifying butterflies? The list goes on—the rabbit holes are many and very spread out. Regardless of how respectable a given topic is in the outside world, secretly we know the importance of dabbling, tinkering, and pottering about without a clear goal in sight, for the sheer love of the process; or of setting sail without a map and a clear destination in mind. *Why not?* is a friend of the quiet joys of a bookworm and of the defiant daring of an explorer alike.

Jakobsleiter is a Milestone-run peer-reviewed academic journal for high-school students that aims to foster independent inquiry and make cutting-edge student research available to others. For this third issue, we are looking for unbounded curiosity and daring: the kind of research articles that are written under the protective and propelling aegis of the simple question: *Why not?*. This issue is open to those who ask unconventional questions, use unorthodox methods, and propose unexpected solutions to problems previously considered too tricky or insignificant to solve.

The deadline for submissions is April 15, 2024. Articles should be between 3,000 and 3,500 words long. Manuscripts that pass the initial editorial review will be anonymised and forwarded to an anonymous peer reviewer, who will assess their academic soundness and originality. Should the assessment of the peer reviewer be positive, they will suggest how the manuscript should be

improved, and after the author revises it, the article will be published. The provisional time of publication is late September 2024.

Articles should either:

- present the results of an original research analysing primary sources or data collected by the author themselves (e.g. interviews with respondents, surveys, archival research);
- present a novel reading of one or more publicly available sources (e.g. books, digital communications, statistical data, films, etc.) done against the backdrop of previous approaches to them and arguing clearly how the proposed approach is novel;
- offer a review of existing literature in the field in a way that presents an argument about the field's development and the state of current debates. This option is especially welcome for papers in the Natural Sciences and Psychology, where you may not be able to conduct your own research from start to finish.

Prospective authors will be offered support from the Academic Team of Milestone Institute in the form of a workshop and individual advising sessions. The kick-off workshop will be held on **December 8th**. To attend, please submit an initial [Interest Form](#). Attending the workshop and all advising sessions is not compulsory for submitting the article by the final deadline, but it will be very helpful in clarifying whether a submission to this issue of *Jakobsleiter* is the best way forward for a given forward, and in strengthening the article to be fit for the editorial review.

Timeline

For Milestone students

November 24: Interest form: submit a 5-sentence idea for what you would like your article to be about and what you have already done

December 8: Kick-off workshop: What makes an article original?

Advising series:

- 1) **Mid-December:** Decide how to go forward
- 2) **Mid-January:** Submit a min. 2-page literature review, research question and hypothesis
- 3) **Mid-February:** Submit a raw draft
- 4) **Mid-March:** Submit a full draft to the Editorial Board
- 5) **April 15:** Final submission

For external students

Please contact the Editorial Board directly at jakobsleiter@msinst.org as soon as you have decided to write an article for *Jakobsleiter*, and no later than **20 December 2023**: submit a 5-sentence idea for what you would like your article to be about and what you have already done.

For more information, please see our webpage: <https://milestone-institute.org/jakobsleiter/>