



## Call for Papers

# *Jakobsleiter vol. 4: The Unexpected*

How can we define the unexpected? Is it something that we did not think about, or rather something for which we prove to be unprepared?

Artificial Intelligence has been dreamt of as a possibility for decades; yet when ChatGPT arrived, it spurred a flurry of responses that showed how vulnerable we were for its advent. AI turned out to be both much cleverer than imagined and capable of very obvious blunders. Since then, we have been almost incessantly talking about how AI is going to revolutionise our lives. At the same time, the possibility of positive social and political change still appears uncertain. The unexpected can be the arrival of something we did not expect; but it can also be the absence of something we hoped to see.

Ranging from unpredictable global pandemics to surprising election results, from surprising correlations between family structures and longevity to startling connections between far-fetched fields, the unexpected can be daunting or even scary in our everyday lives. Yet in research, it is as likely to bring the frustration of a hypothesis not working out as the joy of discovery.

Has there been something that surprised you in your area of interest?

Are you excited about a recent shift that has changed how you see things?

Has there been something that you had expected to have an impact but that did not fulfil the expectations?

***Jakobsleiter*** is a Milestone-run peer-reviewed academic journal for high-school students in Hungary and beyond that aims to foster independent inquiry and make cutting-edge student research available to others. **We are looking for original articles that address the unexpected in any discipline and area of life**, including but not limited to:

- Unexpected scientific discoveries and inventions;
- Unexpected political changes and their results, recent as well as historical;
- Technological shifts big and small and their impact on their respective fields;
- Technological shifts and their impact on seemingly unrelated fields or on society at large;
- Recent as well as historical changes in morality;
- Positive and negative change and resilience to the unexpected in psychology;
- Historical moments of rupture and upheaval, and different reactions to them;
- Climate change and its implications;
- Cases of real economies not behaving according to economic models;
- Unexpected behaviours and phenomena in biology and physics.

The final deadline for submissions is **April 20, 2025**.

**Students who submit their earlier working drafts will receive personalised feedback from members of the Milestone Academic Team. Please scroll down to learn more!**

## What does peer review mean?

*Jakobsleiter* has a two-step selection process:

- 1) First, Milestone's Editorial Board determines if the article is to be accepted for peer review;
- 2) If an article is accepted, it is sent out to an **independent expert on the topic**. Usually, these are **university professors abroad or in Hungary**.

The peer reviewer returns the article with their general verdict (whether it is fit to be published or not) and—if deemed fitting—suggestions on how to improve it before publication.

Peer review is double-blind, meaning that the reviewers do not know the name of the author, and the author does not know who reviewed their article. However, some reviewers may decide to share their names as a gesture of goodwill.

## Why write an article for *Jakobsleiter*?

- Working on a research article is a great way to **experience authentic scholarship and try out what it feels like to be a university student** in your discipline.

- Since you can write on any topic that interests you, it is a great opportunity to **deepen your knowledge on a specific question**
- It is a unique opportunity to get **personalised feedback** from Milestone’s Academic Team and from an expert in your field **about the topic that interests you**.
- All three items above apply even if your article is not accepted for the final publication—even if you “fail,” you gain a lot.
- Because it is rigorously reviewed, successfully publishing an article in *Jakobsleiter* can become one of the **key elements of your university application profile**.

## Requirements

- The final deadline for submissions is **April 20, 2025**.
- Articles should be between 3,000 and 3,500 words long, **not counting the bibliography**.
- Articles should either:
  - present the results of **original research analysing primary sources or data collected by the authors 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 critical review of existing scholarship on a narrow topic** in a way that presents an argument about the field’s development, the state of current debates, or the current consensus on a specific issue. 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.
  - For examples of successful articles, check out the [two published volumes here!](#)
- This year, we are also accepting **academic book reviews**:
  - A book review should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words long.
  - The book reviewed should be published within the last two years (in 2023 or 2024).
  - The review should give a brief summary of the book’s argument, an overview of its contents, and assess its contribution to the field.
  - The author may choose to review and compare two or three books addressing a similar topic as well, which would allow them to draw broader conclusions about the current debates on a topic. In this case, the book review can be up to 2,000 words long.

As you can see above, **writing an original research article requires hard work and considerable time**, which is comparable to taking on one or more additional module(s),—this is what makes it such a strong profile element, showing your commitment to your interests.

## Submission Timeline

Prospective authors will be offered support from the Academic Team of Milestone Institute: a **workshop and individual advising sessions**.

You can join them at any time, but it is advised to start as early as possible. Attending the workshop and all advising sessions is not compulsory for submitting the article by the final deadline. However, it will be very helpful in clarifying whether a submission to this issue of *Jakobsleiter* is the best way forward for a given project, and in strengthening the article for the editorial review.

**December 8:** Deadline to submit a short [Interest Form](#) telling us **what you would like your article to be about and what you have already done** to research it.

**December 10: Kick-Off Workshop** for *Jakobsleiter* 2025—What makes an article original and how to write one? The workshop will be held from 18:00 to 19:30 at Milestone Institute, Wesselényi u. 17, in the Grund.

**January 10:** Submit a min. **2-page literature review**, including your research question and hypothesis and attend an advising session with a member of Milestone's Academic Team

**February 10:** Submit the **first draft of your article** (appr. 2500 words) and attend another advising session

**March 10:** Submit the **full draft of your article (3,000-3,500 words)** to the Editorial Board to receive feedback before the final submission

**April 20: Final submission deadline**

We welcome submissions from Milestone and non-Milestone students alike.

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