

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

- Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme

This document contains important information related to the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme and guidelines for completing the application correctly. We recommend reading the guidelines carefully and having the document available while completing the application.

November 2017

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Information about the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD Programme

About the programme

The Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme is an initiative that to provide an opportunity for international students to launch their careers in the vibrant environment of the Novo Nordisk Foundation (NNF) research centres.

Up to sixteen students will be recruited annually and will be selected based on academic achievements, research experience, academic references and interviews.

The four-year programme is divided into a pre-doctoral year followed by three years of PhD training at one of the NNF research centres:

- Center for Basic Metabolic Research (CBMR)
- Center for Biosustainability (CFB)
- Center for Protein Research (CPR)
- Center for Stem Cell Biology (DanStem)

The NNF research centres are embedded at the University of Copenhagen (CBMR, CPR, DanStem) and at the Technical University of Denmark (CFB). For more information about the centres:

<http://www.nvonordiskfonden.dk/en/content/cluster-research-centers>

During the first (pre-doctoral) year of training all students follow a common curriculum that includes short lab-rotations, common courses and selection of the PhD project. This provides the students with a comprehensive preparation for the following three years of PhD studies and allows the students to make an informed choice about which laboratory to join at the selected centre. Students are expected to make an agreement with a supervisor to host their long-term (PhD) project after completing three two-week rotation projects at the beginning of the pre-doctoral year. The supervisor should be one of the rotation project supervisors. Therefore, students are expected to join a laboratory approximately two months into the pre-doctoral year. It is not recommended for applicants to contact potential supervisors before starting the programme. At the end of the pre-doctoral year, all awardees must pass an assessment in order to qualify for the following three years of PhD education.

For more information about the programme: <https://cphbiosciencephd.org/>

Eligibility criteria

- The Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme is intended for international talents to relocate to Denmark and start their research careers at one of the NNF research centres.
- Applicants must submit an on-line application form before the deadline (December 14, 2017).
- To enter the programme at **CBMR**, **CPR**, or **DanStem**, applicants must either hold a degree from a university outside of Denmark, at a level equivalent to a Danish Master degree at the time of enrolment, or hold a Bachelor degree and have at least 12 months' research experience at the time of enrolment.
- To enter the programme at **CFB** applicants must hold a degree from a university outside of Denmark, at a level equivalent to a Danish Master degree at the time of enrolment.
- The programme is also open for applicants with Danish degrees who have full-time research experience from outside Denmark for at least one year and confirmed by a reference letter.
- The applicant should not have worked or studied at any of the NNF research centres previously (i.e. current or recent Master students and research assistants at the NNF research centres are not eligible to apply).
- The applicant must provide a minimum of two academic references. References should preferentially be from established research scientists that have supervised the applicant in a lab setting, or alternatively may be from academic teachers that know the applicant well.

- If the applicant is not a native English speaker, proof of English proficiency such as a valid TOEFL, IELTS, Cambridge Advanced English or GRE certificate must be provided. However, if the applicant has completed prior studies on university level in the English language or in an English speaking country, proof of English proficiency will not be required, but the applicant's experience with the English language must be clearly indicated in their CV.

Funding

- The NNF will provide up to four years of funding for each student. The funding cover full salary and tuition fee. All fellowships will be administered by the host institutions of the centres.
- During the first year, the student is employed as a research assistant and receives a pre-doctoral fellowship to cover their salary.
- During the following three years the students will be formally enrolled as PhD students at their host institution and receive a PhD fellowship.
- The fellowship will cover salary and tuition fee. Students that fail in their qualifying exam between the pre-doctoral year and the second year will not receive funding for years 2-4.

Application process

International students will be recruited once per year through a competitive interview process. The interviews take place in Copenhagen. The NNF will pay for travel and accommodation for selected applicants in association with the interview visit.

During the interview visit, selected applicants will:

- Tour the four NNF research centres and meet staff and students.
- Meet the other applicants and the present Copenhagen Bioscience PhD Programme students.
- Be interviewed by the admissions panel.
- Meet potential supervisors whose research is of interest in one-on-one meetings.

In the event that it is impossible for the applicant to attend the interview visit, the applicant may be given the opportunity for a Skype panel interview. However, this is not recommended.

When applying for the programme the applicant has to select which research centre they wish to join.

Applicants are required to explain their interest in particular supervisors and/or research topics in the application form. Please note that indicating a specific supervisor in the application does not commit the applicant to joining that lab or doing a rotation in that lab. Students joining the programme will be asked to make rotation choices after starting the programme, and will make an agreement with one of their rotation supervisors to join their lab after completing the rotation projects. There is no guarantee that the student will be able to join the preferred PhD supervisor, as it is important that this be mutually agreed between the student and supervisor after the rotation period.

The applicant has to provide name and contact details of the referees in the application form. The referees will be contacted via the application system and asked to provide their reference in the online system. The applicant will not be able to see the referee's comments but will be able to see if their referee has submitted a recommendation or not. **Please note that it will not be possible to submit an application until two referees have provided their reference.** The applicant should prepare their referees in advance to make sure they are able to submit their recommendation in the online system before the application deadline.

The application must be completed and submitted using the NNF web-based application system, which can be accessed on the NNF homepage: <http://novonordiskfonden.dk/da/cphbiosciencephd> (press "Apply" in upper right corner of the page).

Important dates:

- Applications can be submitted starting October 16, 2017.
- Application deadline is **December 14, 2017** at 23:59 CET.
- Up to 40 applicants will be invited to interviews and up to an additional 20 will be placed on a waiting list. All applicants will be informed of the results in mid-February 2018.
- Interviews will take place in Copenhagen on **March 18-21, 2018**
- Final decisions will be communicated before April 15, 2018.
- Selected students will be enrolled in August-September, 2018.

Please note that the NNF does not provide feedback if the application is not selected for funding.

Contact**For questions about the application process or general questions about the programme:**

- Carlotta Marasini
Copenhagen Bioscience PhD Programme Coordinator
carlotta.marasini@sund.ku.dk
Phone number +45 35 32 82 89

For questions related to the application system:

- phdprogramme@novo.dk

For specific questions about the NNF research centres:

- Center for Basic Metabolic Research:
Helle Hald, Research Coordinator, helle.hald@sund.ku.dk
- Center for Biosustainability:
Rebeca Thostrup, PhD Administrative Coordinator, retho@biosustain.dtu.dk
- Center for Protein Research:
Marie Sofie Yoo Larsen, Research and PhD Coordinator, marie.larsen@cpr.ku.dk
- Center for Stem Cell Biology:
Naomi Dayan, Senior Advisor, PhD Coordinator, students-danstem@sund.ku.dk

Guidelines for completing the application

General instructions

Filling in the fields

- For all applications, all fields must be completed in accordance with these guidelines and the instructions provided in the application form. If there is any discrepancy between the instructions in the application form and these guidelines, the instructions in the application form takes preference.
- Abbreviations should be defined the first time they are used.
- The maximum character limit for each text field may not be exceeded. Character counts include spaces, but not line changes.
- **To prevent loss of data, it is essential to press "Save Draft" before you leave the application system or navigate in the system.**

Submission

- The application must be submitted electronically via the NNF's application system. It is not possible to submit an application or any part of it by standard mail or email.
- Please note that references has to be provided through the system in order to submit your application.
- It is only possible to submit one application per centre. In case the applicant has submitted applications to more than one centre they will all be considered.
- If the applicant wishes to makes changes to a submitted application before the submission deadline, it is possible for the applicant to reopen the application. Be aware that the application must be re-submitted before the deadline in order to be evaluated.
- Applications cannot be modified after the submission deadline, 14 December 2017.
- Once the application has been submitted, a confirmation of receipt will be sent to the applicant via the email address provided in the application. If the applicant does not receive a confirmation of receipt, the applicant should contact the NNF as soon as possible by email to: phdprogramme@novo.dk, or by telephone at: +45 3527 6600.

Confidentiality

- All applicant and application information will be treated as confidential.

NNF's standards for use of personal information:

In connection with the NNF's processing of your personal information you are entitled to:

- 1) Request access to processed personal information about you,
- 2) Object to the processing of your personal information, and
- 3) To have incorrect or misleading personal information or personal information processed in violation of mandatory law deleted, corrected or blocked.

The Novo Nordisk Foundation, Tuborg Havnevej 19, 2900 Hellerup is the data controller and LXP Consulting, Arne Jacobsens Allé 16, 3. Sal, 2300 København S, may as data processor receive and process personal information on behalf of the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

New user registration

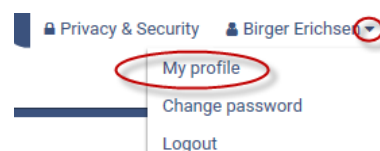
- To apply for the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme the applicant must register as a user in the NNF grant application system.
- The NNF grant application system can be accessed through the "Apply now" link on the NNF website: <http://novonordiskfonden.dk/en/content/copenhagen-bioscience-phd-programme>. The link leads to the login site, where a new user registration link is found beneath the login for existing users "Copenhagen Bioscience PhD Programme Registration".

Notes for new user registration

- Please enter first name, last name, email address, gender, nationality, country and date-of-birth in the registration form and press "Submit".
- You will receive an email with your first time password to access the system.
- After your first login you have to change your password. Your password must contain both letters and numbers and have a minimum of 8 characters.

Creating and completing your profile

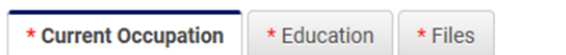
- After login you need to update your profile in order to apply.
- Press the small arrow next to your name in the upper right corner and choose "My profile".



Personal information:

- Please fill in all mandatory fields. Mandatory fields are indicated with a red asterisk (*).
- If you have an ORCID¹ please provide that in your profile.

Move on to fill in the information required under the tabs for "Current Occupation", "Education" and to provide the mandatory diplomas and if required proof of English proficiency under the tab "Files".



Current Occupation:

- Please choose the type/area of occupation. Depending on your choice fill in the appropriate information.
- If your academic institution does not appear in the search, please check "My institution is not in the list" and provide the name of your institution.

Education:

- In this section you provide information about your educational background. You can enter a maximum of three degrees, please start with your most recent degree.
- If you are still enrolled as a student and did not yet receive your degree, please provide information about the degree you expect to complete, your expected graduation date, and calculate an estimate of your GPA based on your grades so far. Please note that you must be able to provide your degree certificate by August 2018.
- Select type of degree in the drop-down menu. If your degree is not on the list, please select "other" and specify the degree in the text-field that appears.
- Enter your Grade Point Average (GPA) converted to the US system using 4.0 scale. Please use <https://www.foreigncredits.com/Resources/GPA-Calculator/> for conversion.
- Enter information about your "Original grade/score" if you have converted your grades.
- Provide a short explanatory text about your degree.
- If relevant, please provide information about additional degrees you have obtained.

Files:

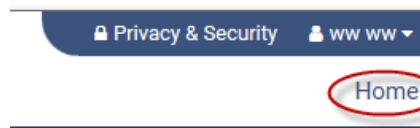
- Upload your diplomas and grade lists. If your diplomas and grade lists were issued in another language than English or any of the Scandinavian languages, you must also provide an official translation to English. Translations of university degrees must be provided by the university or by an official translator, and should be stamped accordingly.
- If required please upload documentation for English proficiency. Proof of English proficiency is not required if you have completed a university degree in an English-speaking country. We accept TOEFL, IELTS, GRE, Cambridge Advanced English or other internationally recognized certification of English language proficiency.

¹ ORCID is an independent non-profit ID that is used to identify scientific authors. Please provide your ORCID in this format: 1234-1234-1234-1234.

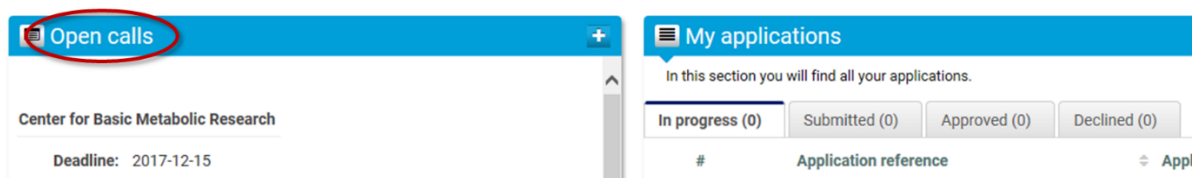
- You can upload files by pressing the blue "Upload" button. In the "File Manager", you can then drag and drop or use the "Browse" button to find the file to upload.
- Please note that you can only upload pdf-files.
- After uploading your documents, close the File Manger window by pressing the "X" in the upper right corner.

If you cannot provide your diploma(s) or English test results before the deadline for good reason, you should clearly explain the reason in your application, and the expected date that the test results will be provided (no later than January 25, 2018 for English test results; or August 2018 for diplomas).

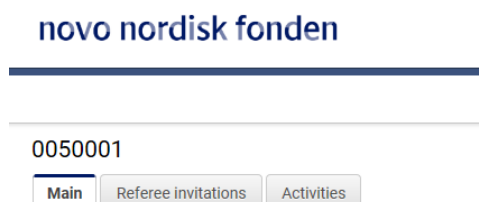
When you have updated your profile click "Activate Profile"
Once you have activated your profile you will be able to apply for the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme. Press "Home" in the upper right corner to get to the application portal front page.



Creating and completing your application

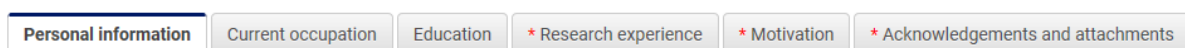


- On the right side of the page, you will find all open application calls. When you scroll down in the menu, you will find one application call per centre.
- Select the centre that you wish to apply to. You can apply to more than one centre, but you can only submit one application per centre.
- Please read the instructions in the "Show/Hide instructions" section at the top of the page.
- Under the "Main" tab, you fill in all information needed for your application.
- Under the "Referee invitations" tab you must provide names and emails of two academic references. **Please note that you need two references in order to submit your application. You have to make sure your referees are contacted in due time before the application deadline.**
- Under the "Activities" tab, you can see if your referees have submitted their reference. You will not be able to read the reference but only to see whether it has been submitted or not. You will also receive an email notification when a referee has submitted a reference.



Main

- The tabs "Personal information" "Current occupation" and "Education" contains information from your profile. Should you need to update the information, you can access your profile in the upper right corner of the form (as described in the section "Creating and updating your profile"). The updated information will become visible in your application.
- The following three tabs: "Research experience", "Motivation" and "Acknowledgements and attachments" must be completed.
- When filling in the textboxes you can copy text from a Word processing program or you can write directly in the box.



If the following information is not correct, please go to your profile and update it before submitting your application.

Research experience:

- Indicate your total number of months of total independent research experience. Independent research experience refers to time spent in a laboratory or other research environment, most likely working full-time and conducting a research project driven independently of any study programme.
- In the text box, provide a description of your independent research experience. Include information about the research problem to solve, the lab (specifying institution and supervisor), and the duration of your stay. You may also include information about unpaid internships or projects, making clear if they were unpaid or part of any study programme, and describing aspects of the project you worked on independently.
- If relevant, please provide information about peer-reviewed publications, grants and awards.
- Character limits and the number of used characters are indicated below the text fields.

Motivation:

- In the first text box, describe in the text box your research background and your research interests. Focus particularly on why you are a good fit for the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme and the research centre you are applying to. If you are also applying for another research centre, you can mention that here.
- In the second text box, explain your interest in specific research area(s) and/or supervisor(s) (from the [list of potential supervisors](#)) at the centre you selected.
- Character limits and the number of used characters are indicated below the text fields.


Acknowledgements and attachments:

- Upload a **one page** CV in pdf-format. You can upload by pressing the blue "Upload" button. In the "File Manager". Drag and drop or use the "Browse" button to find the file to upload.
- Please note that you can only upload one file and that it cannot be larger than one A4 page. After uploading your CV in the file manager, close the File Manger window by pressing the "X" in the upper right corner.
- To be able to submit your application you have to approve that the Novo Nordisk Foundation share the information provided in the application with the Human Resources departments at the University of Copenhagen or the Technical University of Denmark in order to assess of your qualifications for the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD Programme.

Referee invitations

- Your application needs to be supported by two (not more or less) references. We recommend that at least one of the two referees is a supervisor who has supervised you during your independent research experience or other lab project work. Academic supervisors (/teachers) who know the applicant well are also acceptable referees.
- If you invite more than two referees, only the first two that submit their reference will be able to do so. If one of your referees decline or do not submit the reference you can add another referee. It is your own responsibility to make sure that you have two references before the application deadline.
- Provide name (first and last) and email of your referees under the "Referee" tab.
- For each referee you wish to add click the "+" icon and fill in the fields that appear
- You can add up to 5 referees, but we recommend that you only add two.
- After filling in the fields click "Invite". The system will send an email to the given referee asking them to accept to be referee. The status will change to Invited in your application.
- Once your referee accept to provide a reference, the status will change from Invited to Accepted.
- When your referee submit hers/his reference, you will receive a notification to the email address that you have used to register.

First Name	Last Name	Email	Role	Status
Stephen	Hawking	steph@novonordisk.com	Referee	Invited
Michael	W. Young	Michael@cpb.bioscience.com	Referee	Accepted



Activities

- You can see the status of your referees activities under the "Activities" tab.
- When your referee has provided a reference, the status will change to Submitted.

#	Type	Referee	Status	Submitted Date
1	Referee Form	Michael Wong Young	Draft	

Accessing and submitting your application

- After your application has been created and while it is in the process of being completed, you can access your application through "My applications" in the "In progress" tab. You can open and edit your application from here.
- You can at any time view your application as a pdf by pressing the blue "Application PDF" button. Please remember to save a draft before generating the pdf.
- When all mandatory fields has been completed, and when two referees have submitted their references, you will be able to submit your application.
- After submitting the application, you will receive an email confirmation. If you do not receive an email confirmation, please contact the NNF (phdprogramme@novo.dk) immediately.
- Once submitted, your application will be moved to the "Submitted" tab. From the "Submitted" tab you can access your application.
- It is possible to re-open your submitted application before the application deadline to correct or add information, but remember that you need to re-submit before the deadline.
- **To prevent loss of data, it is essential to press "Save Draft" before you leave the application system or navigate in the system.**
- To log out of the application and system please use logout in the upper right corner.

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ

My medium of instruction has been English; do you still require proof of English proficiency?

No, if you have prior studies on university level completed in the English language or in an English speaking country, proof of English proficiency will not be required. Remember to indicate this in your application.

Which international English proficiency tests are accepted?

We accept internationally recognized tests, including TOEFL, IELTS, Cambridge Advanced English or GRE.

Can I submit my English test results after the application deadline?

We strongly prefer that you submit your test results before the deadline. In exceptional circumstances, we may accept late test results, as long as the expected test date is provided in the application, and the test results can be provided before January 26.

My TOEFL/IELTS/GRE has expired; do I have to retake the test?

Yes, you should provide a valid test.

Is there a minimum score for the English test?

We do not define a minimum score cut-off. However, excellent English ability is essential for participants in the PhD Programme, as all supervision and teaching is in English. Therefore, we recommend a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 (B2) or TOEFL score of 80.

I received my Bachelor's degree in another country than Denmark but am currently studying for my Master's degree in Denmark; can I apply for the programme?

The Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme is intended for international talents to relocate to Denmark and start their research careers at one of the NNF research centres. Applicants currently studying for a Master's degree in Denmark are only eligible if they obtain at least a year full-time research experience from outside Denmark, confirmed by a reference letter. The applicant should not have worked or studied at any of the NNF research centres previously.

I received my Master's degree in Denmark; can I apply for the programme?

The Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme is intended for international talents to relocate to Denmark and start their research careers at one of the NNF research centres. The programme is open for applicants with Danish degrees who have at least a year of full-time research experience from outside Denmark for at least one year, confirmed by a reference letter. The applicant should not have worked or studied at any of the NNF research centres previously.

I am currently studying to receive my Master's degree but have not received it yet, can I still apply?

Yes, you can provide us with a letter of study completion in the meantime. However, upon admission you have to be able to provide the university with the proper documentation to support your application.

I have received my degree in another language than English; do I need to get an official translation of my diploma and grade list?

Yes, unless your degree was issued in English or any of the Scandinavian languages.

Do I need to translate my grades to a certain grading system?

Yes, when applying you will be required to provide us with your Grade Point Average (GPA) translated to the US system. You should use [this](#) online calculator to convert your grades. You should also include your grades in the original format, and explain the grading system used in the original. If you have not completed your degree yet please provide an estimate of your GPA (in the original and US systems) based on your results so far.

Is there a minimum GPA score requirement?

We recommend a minimum GPA (US system) of 3.0.

Should I myself provide a letter of recommendation from my two academic referees?

No, you have to provide name and contact details of the referees that you wish to include in the application system. Your referees will then be asked to provide their reference directly into the application system, you as applicant will not be able to see your referees comments but you will be able to see if your referee has submitted a recommendation or not. **Please note that you will not be able to submit your application until two referees have provided their reference.** You are advised to notify your referees in advance so they are able to submit a letter of recommendation before the application deadline.

Do I have to provide you with two academic references?

Yes, two references are required. References should preferably come from scientists who have supervised you recently in an academic research environment. You may also provide references from scientists you have interacted closely with during coursework, or from scientists who have supervised you in industrial labs if you have significant recent experience in that context.

What if my referees fail to submit a reference?

If your referee does not respond to the invitation to be a reference, you can add another referee instead.

Are my professional qualifications also of importance for the evaluation of the application?

Yes, if your previous professional qualifications are within a relevant topic.

How can I find out more about the research topics offered by the PhD programme?

We recommend that you have a look at [the programme website](#), and follow the links to potential supervisors' webpages, and review their publications to find out about the research topics covered by the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD Programme. Note that the PhD project is decided upon after the applicant joins the PhD programme, following discussion with the supervisor.

Should I contact a potential PhD supervisor prior to applying for the programme?

It is not necessary to contact potential supervisors before the interviews. You should then have the opportunity to meet 2-4 relevant supervisors from the centre you applied to during the interview visit. At the beginning of the pre-doctoral year, you will complete three short lab rotation projects to facilitate a good student-supervisor match.

Are the start dates flexible?

No, you must start on the programme start date (c. September 1, 2018). You also must be able to attend the full curriculum during the first year. It is not possible to skip the first year, and it is unlikely that you will complete the Copenhagen Bioscience PhD programme in less than four years.

Is there an age limit?

No.

Can I apply for more than one research centre at the same time?

When applying for the programme you also apply for a specific research centre you. However, you will be able to indicate in your application under the motivation text box, if you are interested in other research centres as well. It is possible to submit separate applications to more than one research centre in the same call.

What is the salary, and is it sufficient to pay rent in Copenhagen?

We cannot give an exact salary, since it is calculated on an individual basis according to experience. However, Danish universities publish approximate PhD student and research assistant salaries. You can visit the links from the programme [website](#) to find out more. The salary is sufficient to pay rent and live comfortably in Copenhagen.

Is it difficult to find a place to live when moving to Copenhagen?

We help students to find [accommodation](#) for their first year.

October, 2017