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Benefiting people and society

2020

Highlights from the Annual Report

Click **here** for the full report in Danish

In 2020 ...

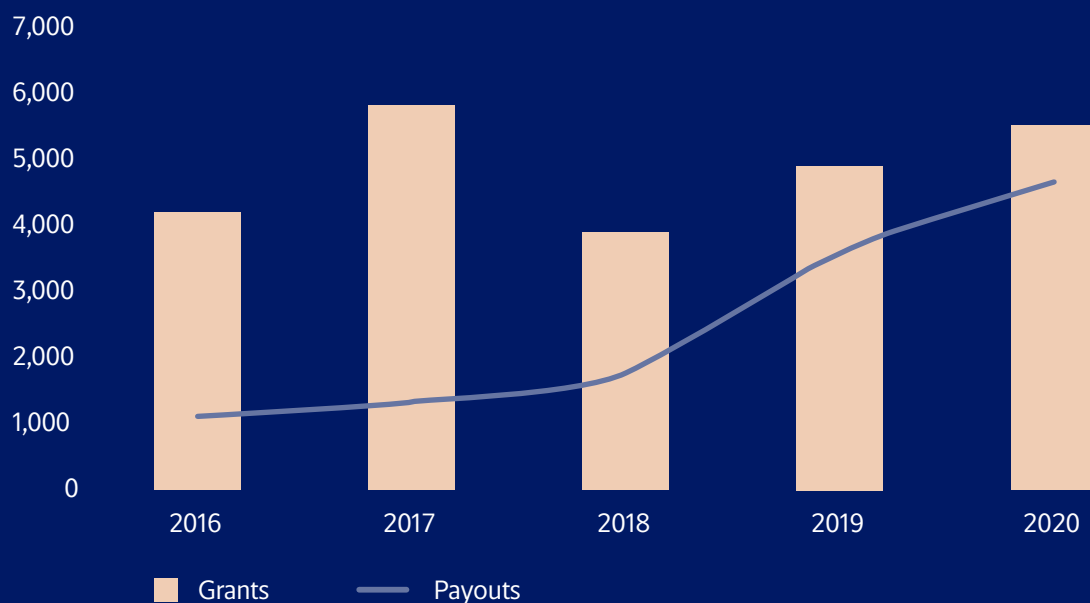
The Novo Nordisk Foundation received **4,410 applications**
and awarded **756 grants**

DKK 5.54 bn (EUR 739mn) awarded

DKK 4.6 bn (EUR 613 mn) paid out
(highest payout in the Foundation's history)



Annual grants and payouts of the Novo Nordisk Foundation, 2016-2020 (DKK million)





Looking back on the Foundation's activities in 2020, the implementation of our grant awarding strategy for 2019-2023 is well underway. The strategy builds on our vision of making a considerable contribution to research and development that improves the lives of people and the sustainability of society. We do this through our grant-giving activities within biomedicine, patient care, life science as well as natural and technical science research, education, outreach, innovation as well as through social and humanitarian projects.

These years, our focus areas include green transition and strengthening the synergy between academic research and industry through education and innovation. In the area of health, the Foundation has contributed to the global effort against antimicrobial resistance through several impact investments. And with the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, we have played an active part in strengthening the collaboration between the Danish authorities, foundations, research institutions and industry.

On behalf of the Board of Directors

Lars Rebien Sørensen, Chair
Marianne Philip, Vice Chair



New CEO in 2021

On 1 March 2021, Birgitte Nauntofte stepped down as CEO of the Novo Nordisk Foundation, after 12 years heading the organization. Mads Krogsgaard Thomsen, former Vice President, Head of R&D and Chief Scientific Officer at Novo Nordisk A/S, has been appointed as her successor.



2020 was an eventful year with many activities and changes, as the Foundation has been busy executing on its 2019-2023 strategy in close dialogue with the surrounding society. Our grants make up a large and still growing share of investments in public research in Denmark. Also, in 2020 we have awarded a large number of extraordinary grants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In line with previous years, the Foundation has supported a wide range of ambitious and groundbreaking projects. In addition to our grants awarded in open competition, we have entered into partnerships and launched our own initiatives to strengthen education, research, health, sustainability and innovation, among other things.

Birgitte Nauntofte, CEO

Amounts granted in 2020 by grant-giving areas



***Includes grants for COVID-19 related initiatives, at a total amount of DKK 420.15 million (EUR 56 mn)**
Including DKK 250 million (EUR 33 mn) for the establishment of TestCenter Denmark

Read more about the Foundation's response to the coronavirus pandemic [here](#)

Highlights from Novo Holdings' Annual Report 2020



Portfolio companies

457 DKK bn
(EUR 61 bn)

Total investment assets

9%

Total 5-year average return
on the Investment Portfolio

Investment Portfolio

150 DKK bn
(EUR 20 bn)



10

DKK bn
(EUR 1.3 bn)

Deployed into life sciences

17%

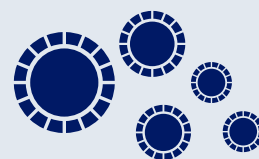
Return on Life Science Investments

8%

Return on Capital Investments

Total Income and Return

29 DKK bn
(EUR 4 bn)



LIFE & BII

Establishment of LIFE and BII as independent foundations

For a number of years, the Novo Nordisk Foundation has been working on two large-scale initiatives, LIFE and BII. In 2020, as a consequence of the maturation of both initiatives, it was decided to establish them as independent commercial foundations.

LIFE FONDEN

The purpose of the LIFE initiative is to strengthen the interest among children and young people in the natural sciences. Collaborating closely with industry, research institutions and schools, LIFE develops theme-based teaching courses where pupils get the opportunity to explore various societal challenges through lab-based work.

With the establishment of the LIFE Foundation, the teaching initiative has the best possible conditions for becoming a permanent, nationwide effort within primary and secondary school education.

BII BioInnovation Institute

Since 2017, the Bio Innovation Institute has served as a life science incubator that helps researchers and entrepreneurs develop and mature research-based solutions and innovative ideas, contributing to the establishment of sustainable start-ups within life science and biotechnology. BII offers grants and loans to start-up companies in the early stages of the commercial food chain.

Establishing BII as an independent foundation consolidates the initiative, providing a permanent platform for helping excellent research and entrepreneurs take their ideas to market. In addition to this, it enables the life science incubator to grow and house more projects and start-up companies in the future.