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EQUIPMENT UPGRADE PROGRAMME 2024

Information and guidelines for applicants

Only applications submitted by a grant holder of a grant within the 'NNF Research Infrastructure Programme – Large Equipment and Facilities' will be considered for funding.

Table of contents

Information about the call

Grant capital:
Up to DKK 3 million per grant, for a period of up to four years.
The total grant capital in 2024 is expected to be DKK 10 million.

Application form opens:
11 October 2023

Application deadline:
11 January 2024, 2 pm (CET)

Applicant notification:
September 2024

Earliest start date:
1 October 2024

Latest start date:
1 January 2026

Review committee:
Internal committee

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Guidelines version:
2024.01

1   EQUIPMENT UPGRADE PROGRAMME 2024

Please read these guidelines carefully before initiating the application process, as they contain the complete call text as well as instructions regarding the completion of the application:

- **Section 1** describes the overall frame and conditions of the call, eligibility criteria, and evaluation process.
- **Section 2** provides technical guidance for how to access and navigate in the application and grant management system NORMA.
- **Section 3** gives essential information regarding the requirements to content, structure, and budget of the application.

Novo Nordisk Fonden (NNF) will treat all applicant and application information confidentially. Read more about how NNF processes personal data under 'privacy & security' in the online application system, NORMA. Furthermore, please read 'General Terms and Conditions' for grants from NNF that all Grant Recipients must comply with:
http://www.novonordiskfonden.dk/en/content/conditions-grants.

1.1   PURPOSE

With the Equipment Upgrade Programme, the NNF wishes to ensure that the Danish research, innovation and industry environments have continued access to timely research infrastructures by supporting the maintenance and upgrade of NNF funded research infrastructures.

The goal of the programme is to:
- Enable an upgrade and increased lifetime of the scientific equipment funded by the NNF Research Infrastructure – Large Equipment and Facilities Programme, hereunder to ensure that the equipment is continuously developed and maintained.
- Improve the impact and sustainability of NNF funded research infrastructures.
- Ensure that research communities have access to timely research infrastructure.

1.2   AREAS OF SUPPORT

The infrastructure applied for should enable research and development within NNF's strategic focuses on biomedicine and health sciences, sustainability and biotechnology, and natural and technical sciences as well as data science.

Specific overarching research fields include:
- Biomedicine
- Clinical and translational medicine
- Industrial and environmental biotechnology
- Plant science, agriculture, and food biotechnology
- Natural sciences with potential applications in health or sustainability
- Technical sciences with potential applications in health or sustainability
- Computational science, including data science, with potential applications in health or sustainability.

1.3 ELIGIBILITY

Only applications submitted by a grant holder of a grant within the 'NNF Research Infrastructure Programme – Large Equipment and Facilities' will be considered for funding. All other applications will receive an administrative rejection by NNF.

To be eligible for a grant, the following requirements must be met:
- The applicant, who holds a PhD, must be a grant holder of a previously funded grant in the Research Infrastructure Programme– Large Equipment and Facilities Programme and must be employed as time-unlimited senior scientist, time-unlimited academic technical staff ("AC-TAP"), associate professor, or professor, at a university, hospital, or other non-profit research institution in Denmark.
- The applicant can apply only once, and it should be 1-2 years before the end of the current project period.
- To obtain an Equipment Upgrade Grant, the existing research infrastructure must have proven successful, i.e., must have enabled new research and must have benefitted a significant number of users, also outside of the applicant's research group/institution.
- There must be a clear need for the proposed equipment to be upgraded and continued.

Special rules for applications:
1) An applicant may submit only one application per call to any of the 'Exploratory Research Instrumentation", "Research Infrastructure", or "Equipment Upgrade" programmes. These three programmes are evaluated in parallel.
2) This grant only allows to cover part-time salary of a technician who has the capacity to maintain, update and run the infrastructure.
3) NNF does not allow double funding of project-specific expenses. If an applicant has applied for, or has received, funding for the project or parts of the project from others, this must be detailed in the budget of the application. If the applicant receives funding for the project or parts of the project from other sources following submission of the NNF application, NNF should be contacted immediately.
4) It is not possible to hold more than one active Equipment Upgrade grant.
5) It is not possible to hold both an active Equipment Upgrade Grant and a Research Infrastructure Grant. The grant holder of an ongoing NNF funded research infrastructure may apply for an Equipment Upgrade Grant with a project start date immediately after the project end date of the ongoing Research Infrastructure Grant.
6) It is permitted to hold two or more active NNF grants of different types, i.e., researchers with an active Equipment Upgrade grant may apply for a new grant of a different type, e.g., a Project Grant or an Investigator grant.
7) The general conditions that apply when receiving a grant from the NNF can be found on our webpage.

1.4 FUNDING

A total of approximately DKK 10 million is available for grants up to DKK 3 million for a period of up to 4 years.

Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses (see section 3.4 for details):
- Upgrade or replacement of essential instrument parts, computers and software.
- Part time salary for technical personnel that will operate and maintain the infrastructure (a maximum of up to 0.25 FTE per year).

- Training of technical personnel in relation to the equipment upgrade. This includes travel and accommodation.
- Data management, including expenses for collecting and storing data.
- Administrative expenses (up to 5% of the applicant's overall budget and included in the budget) to cover administrative expenses directly related to the project.

The call does not support salary for scientists or research activities.

Any potential co-funding of the infrastructure during the project period must be described in the budget and the project description.

NNF will not award funding for:
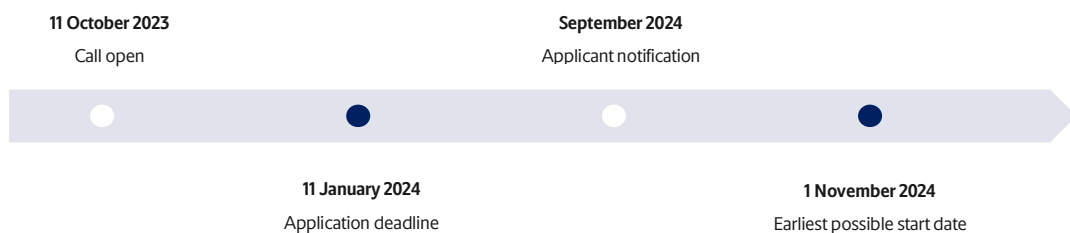- commercial activities
- overhead

1.5   LANGUAGE
The application and any additional uploads must be written in English.

1.6   APPLICATION PROCESS
The application must be completed and submitted using NNF's online application and grant management system, NORMA.

Further information on how to access and navigate in NORMA can be found in chapter 2 and information about the required application content can be found in chapter 3. **Please read Chapter 3 for detailed information on expected format of the application, budget, and required uploaded documentation.**

11 October 2023		September 2024	
Call open		Applicant notification	
○	●	○	●
	11 January 2024		1 November 2024
	Application deadline		Earliest possible start date

The applicants will be notified in September 2024 whether they have been awarded a grant or not. The notification e-mail will be sent from noreply@norma.novonordiskfonden.dk to the e-mail address entered on initial registration.

1.7   ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
Applications will primarily be assessed based on the following criteria:

- The NNF funded research infrastructure's performance during the project period based on previously formulated milestones, key performance indicators (e.g. availability to different user groups, enabled research), and a sustainable business plan.
- Scientific and managerial qualifications of the applicant.
- The timeliness and state-of-the-art of the upgraded infrastructure.
- Reasonability of the applied for budget.
- Commitment from the host institution.

If you have an active grant from NNF, this may be taken into consideration in the evaluation of your application for a new grant. In general, it is recommended that the Grant Recipient has delivered results on the active grant(s) before submission of a new application to NNF. If you apply, while having an active grant from NNF, you must describe how the project you propose in this application is different from and/or coherent with the project(s) already funded and briefly describe the progress of the already funded project(s).

2 THE APPLICATION AND GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – NORMA

Sections 2 and 3 provide guidance on completing and submitting an application through NNF's online application and grant management system NORMA. Section 2 contains general technical information, while section 3 contains information specific to the individual call. All the fields of the application form must be completed in accordance with these guidelines and the instructions in NORMA.

2.1 USER REGISTRATION

NORMA can be accessed through links on NNF's website or directly at:
https://norma.novonordiskfonden.dk

Before you begin, please read the instructions on the login page.

If you do not have a user profile in NORMA, you can register by clicking REGISTER from the login-page. Here you can also retrieve forgotten passwords by clicking the FORGOT PASSWORD-link. The main applicant should only have one user profile. Please use your work e-mail address for registration. After registration, you will receive an e-mail with your username and a temporary password, which you can then use to log in to NORMA. After logging in for the first time you will be asked to provide a password of your own choosing.

A registered user who submits an application is legally responsible for the truthfulness of the content of the application.

If you experience technical problems, please contact NORMA Support:
norma-support@novo.dk.

⚠ An applicant cannot change the e-mail address provided at registration.
Please contact NORMA Support if you need to change your e-mail address.

2.2   CREATING AN APPLICATION

Initiate an application by finding the call you wish to apply for in the OPEN CALLS-section on the
Applicant Portal in NORMA. Use the search filters at the top of the section to filter by, e.g., overall
funding area, and initiate an application by clicking APPLY NOW next to the relevant call.

Applications can be edited up until the deadline. A draft application can be saved by clicking
SAVE DRAFT and may be cancelled at any time up until the deadline by clicking CANCEL
APPLICATION. An application is not submitted to NNF until an applicant has clicked SUBMIT and
has received confirmation that the application has been successfully submitted.

You can review the application at any time by reopening from within NORMA. Opening the
application will also allow you to download the application in its entirety as a PDF. Make sure
the PDF is readable and formatted appropriately before submitting your application.

2.3   TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS

For all applications, the individual fields must be completed in accordance with these guidelines
and the instructions supplied in NORMA.

⚠ To prevent loss of data, it is essential to press SAVE DRAFT before you leave
NORMA or navigate in the system.

TEXT FIELDS
Text from Microsoft Word or comparable word processors can be copied and pasted into most
text fields of the application. It is, however, important to check that formatting, special
characters, and symbols have not been converted or lost in the text fields after copying and
pasting. If the formatting looks wrong in NORMA or in the PDF, try changing all text to *Normal*
using the FORMAT dropdown. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the pdf looks
correct before submitting.

The available options for formatting text are at the top of the text fields. Some shorter text fields
do not have the option to use rich text formatting.

⚠ For readability purposes, standard fonts, font size 11-12, and line spacing
between 1.0 and 1.5 must be used.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations such as figures, charts, tables, images, etc. related to the project description can be uploaded under PROPOSAL. A maximum of four illustrations are allowed. The illustrations will be placed on a separate page in the application PDF but can be referenced throughout the project proposal as needed. For readability, please name the files numerically by the order in which they are referenced.

The following file formats for illustrations are accepted in the system: JPG, JPEG, PNG, and BMP. The maximum accepted size for each illustration is 1050*1650 pixels.

> ⚠ Please remember to check that the PDF version of the application is legible and contains all data and uploads before submitting.

2.4   SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

The application in its entirety must be submitted electronically via the application system by clicking SUBMIT. It is not possible to submit an application or any part of it by standard mail or e-mail. Any material submitted outside the application system will not be included in the evaluation and will not be returned.

All applicants must read and accept NNF's Standards for Good Research Practice before submitting the application. Further, the applicant must declare that the information provided in the application is true and accurate.

An application cannot be submitted unless all the required fields have been completed. Applications can be cancelled at any time before submission. If you need to withdraw an application after the deadline, please get in touch with NNF via e-mail, using the contact information on page 3.

> ⚠ A list of any incorrect or incomplete entries will be generated at the top of the screen when you click SUBMIT. Clicking one of these error messages will take you to the relevant field. Amending incorrect or incomplete entries can be time-consuming, so we recommend submitting applications well before the deadline.

3   APPLICATION CONTENT

This section provides guidelines on the content required in the sections of the online application form for this call, and best practice of how to apply for this specific call.

3.1 APPLICANT

Only applications submitted by a grant holder of a grant within the 'NNF Research Infrastructure Programme – Large Equipment and Facilities' will be considered for funding. All other applications will receive an administrative rejection by NNF.

The applicant tab contains various sections with information about the main applicant:
- Personal information
- Educational information
- Current institution
- Experience
- Previous and Current Grants from NNF

After filling in all mandatory fields, the applicant should complete the task to save the details.

Please note the following requirements:
- **CV** can be maximum 4,000 characters (including spaces, line breaks and special characters). Please include in the CV a short bibliographic overview summarising total number of peer-reviewed publications, number of first authorships and corresponding authorships, number of citations and *h*-index. If relevant, please include a description of the technologies that the applicant has contributed to developing and the applicant's role in the development.
- **Publication list** can be a maximum of 5,000 characters (including spaces, line breaks and special characters). Include up to the 10 most relevant products (publications, patents, software or similar) and briefly motivate the choice of these in relation to the current application. Include the name of all authors/contributors for all products with your own name highlighted. You are strongly encouraged to include a link to an updated profile (with full publication list) in ORCID, Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, or similar.
- **Previous and current grants from NNF:** If you have previously submitted other applications within the last year, summarise how these applications are related to the current application. If you have received any grants from NNF as an applicant or a co-applicant within the past five years, you must provide the application number, project title, grant period (in years), grant amount and the percentage share of the grant (100% if there is no co-applicant). Briefly summarise how any of the grants are related to the current application.

Please note that invitation of co-applicants is not possible within this call.

3.2 INSTITUTION

Please provide information about the institution where the grant will be administrated. This institution is where the infrastructure will be anchored during the grant period and the institution which will be responsible for budgeting, accounting, and staff supported by the grant.

Registering a new administrating institution in NORMA can take up two working days. The application can be edited but cannot be submitted before this information is registered. We therefore recommend that you register an administrating institution in good time.

3.3 PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE

Please provide a short title for the infrastructure to be updated and continued (maximum 150 characters, including spaces).

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION
- Describe the scientific scope of the infrastructure as well as the users who have benefited from the infrastructure and those who will benefit from a continuation of the infrastructure.

 (a maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project description can be a maximum of 10,000 characters. Please address the points below succinctly preferable in the order given:

- A description of the proposed upgrade and how this will ensure an up-to-date and timely research infrastructure.
- The science that has been enabled by the infrastructure and the new research which is anticipated to be enabled by a continuing and updating the infrastructure.
- The technical expertise available to ensure continued qualified operation and maintenance of the infrastructure as well as instruction of new and experienced users. Describe the tasks of the staff funded by the Equipment Upgrade grant, if applied for.
- Access policy for the infrastructure. *Notice that open-access is expected and if not offered should be justified.*
- The organisation, governance and financing during the expected lifetime of the infrastructure, which should include:
    - A business plan describing the user access policy and pricing as well as contributions from other sources.
- Data management and permits from public authorities needed, if relevant.
- The performance of the NNF funded Research Infrastructure during the project period based on milestones, key performance indicators (e.g. availability to different user groups), and a sustainable business plan. *It is encouraged to upload relevant data as tables, graphs or similar as illustrations.*

Please limit the use of abbreviations and non-standard acronyms. Abbreviations should be defined at the first use. The application will be assessed by an interdisciplinary committee, which may not be familiar with field-specific acronyms.

ILLUSTRATION UPLOADS

A maximum of four illustrations of 50 MB each can be uploaded here. Accepted formats are .jpg, .png, .gif, .bmp.

LITERATURE REFERENCES

Please provide the reference information for the literature cited in the project description (maximum 8,000 characters, including spaces).

LAY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please provide a brief summary for non-experts in lay language. If the application is awarded a grant, the text may be used for publication (maximum 1000 characters, including spaces).

> ⚠ Please note that the application should address all the assessment criteria listed in subsection 1.7.

3.4 BUDGET

The budget only comprises the information entered in the BUDGET tab. Additional budget information attached under UPLOADS or added under any other tabs than BUDGET will not be considered. The budget must be entered in budget years following the grant period and not calendar years. Notice that the total budget for the grant is up to DKK 3 million.

ELIGIBLE BUDGET EXPENSES
Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses:

- **Equipment**: Upgrade or replacement of major instrument parts, computers and software related to the previously funded NNF research infrastructure.
- **Salary of up to 0.25 FTE per year for academic or technical personnel (AC-TAP or TAP)** that will operate and maintain the infrastructure. Note that the requested TAP salary can be used for personnel with an academic background but cannot be used for conducting research.
- **Training of technical personnel** in relation to the equipment upgrade. This includes travel and accommodations.
- **Data management** incl. expenses for collecting and storing data.
- **Direct administrative expenses** for up to 5 % of the funding applied for. The following applies:
  - can cover non-scientific, administrative expenses in relation to the infrastructure, such as accounting, administration related to payment of salaries and purchasing, hiring, as well as auditing and financial reporting on the infrastructure,
  - cannot cover administrative expenses that are not directly related to the infrastructure,
  - is not automatically included in the grant and must be stated/applied for in the application budget but should not be specified in detail.

GRANT PERIOD
Before you can fill in the budget template, start by entering the start and end dates for the grant. NORMA then generates a grant period in whole years, which is reflected in the budget template. The grant period is the duration of NNF's grant for the project, which for this call is up to 4 years.

CREATE BUDGET
After saving the project start and end dates, the budget template will become available to edit. The budget will open in a new tab, in which you will need to add the subcategories you need for your budget. Please follow the instructions at the top of the screen to complete the budget.

Notes:

- The budget continuously saves changes you've made without the need to manually save. You are free to leave the budget at any time and come back at a later point.

- When you are done filling in your budget, please use the SAVE AND CLOSE button. This will check that all information has been filled out correctly and in accordance with the guidelines, saving the budget to your application.
- You can always return to the BUDGET tab. A summary of the budget will be displayed, review it to ensure that it is correct.
- The full budget details can be viewed or edited at any time before submission of the application by reopening the budget template.

Any comments about the budget can be entered in the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION field.

3.5   APPENDICES
- Vendor quotes for the equipment exceeding DKK 500,000. Please mark quoted equipment in the budget description. (*Other uploads*)
- A signed letter of support from the hosting institution taking responsibility for hosting the infrastructure within the institution and administrating the grant. If any salary is applied for, the letter should also account for the remaining part of the salary for the NNF funded staff. (*Hosting Letter*)

All uploads must be in PDF format. NORMA automatically places these uploads at the end of the application. Please respect the page limitation and the upload requirements stated in the call. Uploads in excess of these limits may not be considered for evaluation.

October 2023

The Novo Nordisk Foundation

The Novo Nordisk Foundation is an independent Danish Foundation with corporate interests. The objective of the Novo Nordisk Foundation is twofold: To provide a stable basis for the commercial and research activities conducted by the companies within the Novo Group and to support scientific and humanitarian purposes.

The vision of the Novo Nordisk Foundation is to contribute significantly to research and development that improves the lives of people and the sustainability of society and the planet.