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TANDEM PROGRAMME 2024

Translational research collaboration between one basic and one clinical researcher

Information and guidelines for applicants

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Information about the call

Grant capital:
Total DKK 40 million.

Award amount
Up to DKK 10 million per grant

Application form opens:
October 26, 2023

Application deadline:
January 10, 2024, 2pm (CET)

Applicant notification:
Beginning of April 2024

Earliest start date:
May 1, 2024

Latest start date:
February 1, 2025

Review committee:
Committee on Clinical and Translational Medicine

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1 TANDEM PROGRAMME 2024

These guidelines are intended to assist you in the application process when applying for a grant from the Novo Nordisk Foundation (NNF). It is important that you carefully read these guidelines before initiating the application process, as the guidelines contain the complete call text as well as instructions regarding the completion of the application.

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. See how to access NORMA in section 2 of these guidelines.

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 Tandem Programme, the Novo Nordisk Foundation wishes to strengthen and support Danish translational health research of high international quality. Collaborative project applications from one basic and one clinical researcher, that seek to stimulate the transition of basic research to clinical practice and *vice versa* are invited.

1.2 AREAS OF SUPPORT

One basic scientist and one clinical scientist must apply together for a project, which is clinically relevant, cross-disciplinary, and translational in nature, to catalyse improved treatment or diagnosis of patients, or understanding of underlying disease mechanisms.
level, while they have maintained an association with clinical work and responsibility.

1.3 ELIGIBILITY

- The project must be anchored at a university, hospital or other non-profit research institution in Denmark.
- The main applicant must have his/her primary employment (minimum 75%) at a university, hospital or other non-profit research institution in Denmark. The co-applicant can be anchored in Denmark or abroad.
- Only applications where one basic and one clinical researcher establish a cross-disciplinary collaboration will be considered for funding. In this context, a clinical researcher is defined as a person with clinical responsibilities doing patient-centered research.
- It is crucial that the equal collaboration between the main- and co-applicant is very clear from the application
- The main applicant can be either the basic researcher or the clinical researcher.
- The clinical researcher must be active in the clinic and have current clinical responsibilities, i.e. not be employed in a full-time research position.

- The grant cannot cover the salaries for the main- and co-applicant. Therefore, the main- and co-applicant must be guaranteed his or her salaries for the entire applied project period.
- Both the main applicant and the co-applicant must receive a defined part of the grant budget, and this must be detailed in the application budget, and it must be clear from the application, how the project collaboration is ensured, and the work is distributed.
- The applied project must be of 4 years duration.
- The maximum budget per project is DKK 10 million (minimum budget DKK 7 million).

Applications from ph.d. students and postdocs that carry out research under supervision, and applications where ph.d. students or postdocs are named as co-applicants will not be considered.

Important rules:
- An applicant may submit only one application per call, and if you are main applicant on one application, you cannot be a co-applicant on another application. Also, you can only be co-applicant on one application.
- It is not possible to hold more than one active Tandem Programme grant as either main or co-applicant.
- An applicant may not submit identical/very overlapping proposals to different NNF calls within the same calendar year.
- The applicant must be able to account for own and co-applicant's salary during the entire grant period applied for.

1.4   FUNDING

A total of up to DKK 40 million is available for four grants between DKK 7 million and DKK 10 million for 4-year projects.

Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses:

- **Salary** for technicians, bio-analysts and other technical and administrative assistance
- **Salary** for postdoctoral researchers
- **Salary** for PhD students (tuition fee up to DKK 80,000 per budget year – **must** be specified/applied in the budget when applying for PhD salary)
- **Salary** for pre-graduate scholar, up to DKK 150,000 per budget year
- **Operating expenses**, e.g. lab consumables, chemicals and reagents, research animals, sequencing/proteomics and other analysis services <u>directly related to the project</u>.
- **Bench fee**, can be included in the budget for support of individual researchers to cover expenses needed to conduct the proposed research. Bench fee is calculated per academic employee actively working on the project and may only be used for expenses that are related to the research project and which cannot be included within another individual budget category. The budget must specify the expenses covered by the bench fee, which may include: Common or shared laboratory expenses and consumables, Laboratory utilities (electricity, gas, water), maintenance of essential equipment, service contracts, technical and IT support.

  Note, that bench fee cannot cover rent, administrative support, representation, social contributions etc.

To include a bench fee in the budget, the fee must be a part of the general expense policy of the administrating institution, and it must apply for all employees independently of funding source. Documentation that the administrating institution has a general bench fee policy should be included from the administrating institution enclosed as link or appendix. An unspecified bench fee without documentation will not be accepted. (maximum DKK 8,000 per month per FTE working on the project).

- **Equipment** required for the project, however not exceeding 20% of the total budget.
- **Travel expenses** in relation to the project, i.e. conference and workshop participation and presentation of research results, up to DKK 50,000 per budget year.
- **Other travel expenses** directly related to the project, i.e. experiments carried out in other labs for a limited period.
- **Publication of results** emanating from the research project, up to DKK 25,000 per budget year.
- **Administrative support**, up to 5% of, and included in, the funding applied for.

Administrative support may account for a maximum of 5% of the total budget and must be included therein.

The administrative support:
- can cover expenses such as for accounting, payment of salaries, purchasing, hiring, as well as auditing and financial reporting on the project
- cannot cover administrative expenses that are not directly related to the project
- can via the host institution be shared between the institutions of the main- and co-applicant(s), as detailed in the application budget
- is not automatically included in the grant, and must be stated/applied for in the application budget, but should not be specified in detail

Applicants **may not apply for** funding for the following types of expenses:

- Own salary for main- or co-applicant
- Commercial activities

⚠️ The grant **may not be used to cover 'overhead'** (i.e. rent, electricity, water, maintenance etc.)
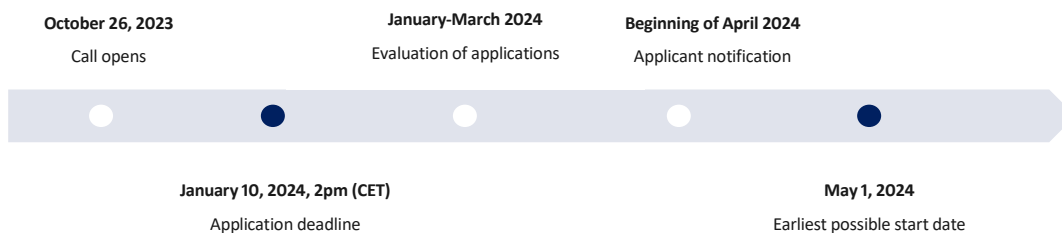
1.5   LANGUAGE
The application and any additional uploads must be written in English (including layman description).

1.6   APPLICATION PROCESS
The application must be completed and submitted using NNF's online application and grant management system, NORMA, which can be accessed from: https://norma.novonordiskfonden.dk

Further information on how to access and navigate in NORMA can be found in chapter 2.

October 26, 2023	January-March 2024	Beginning of April 2024
Call opens	Evaluation of applications	Applicant notification

January 10, 2024, 2pm (CET)	May 1, 2024
Application deadline	Earliest possible start date

When all applications have been assessed, applicants will be notified about whether or not they have been awarded a grant. The notification e-mail will be sent from norma-noreply@novo.dk to the e-mail address entered on initial registration.

> ⚠ NNF does not provide feedback in case an application is not selected for funding.

1.7 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

NNF's Committee on Clinical and Translational Medicine will primarily assess the applications based on the following criteria:

Quality, novelty, translational and feasibility character and clinical relevance of the project and the contributions and merits of both the main- and the co-applicant.

It is crucial that the equal collaboration between the main- and co-applicant is very clear from the application.

NNF does not allow double funding of projects and to ensure sufficient time commitment, considerations regarding existing funding at the time of application is taken into consideration. In general, it is recommended that the Grant Recipient has delivered results on the active NNF 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 user name 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.

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.

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

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.

3.1 APPLICANT

The APPLICANT-tab contains information about all those involved with an application, meaning the main applicant or the contact person applying on behalf of an organization/institution as well as any co-applicants. Information about each applicant is collected through individual tasks in the APPLICANT DETAILS-section, detailing experience, publication history, application history with NNF, etc.

MAIN APPLICANT
It is only possible **to be main applicant on one application per application round.** If you are main applicant on one application, you cannot be a co-applicant on another application.

As main applicant you cannot apply if you already hold a Tandem Programme grant, as main-/ or co-applicant.

The main applicant must have his/her primary employment (minimum 75%) at a university, hospital or other non-profit research institution in Denmark and can be either the basic researcher or the clinical researcher.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT GRANTS FROM NNF
If you have previously submitted other applications in the same calendar year, summarize 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 summarize how any of the grants are related to the current application.

3.2   CO-APPLICANT

CO-APPLICANT
For this call, only one co-applicant is allowed for the application, and it is only possible to be co-applicant on one application per application round.

The co-applicant can be anchored in Denmark or abroad.

The project description should clearly describe the role of the co-applicant, and the budget should clearly indicate the co-applicant' share of the total budget. **It is crucial that the equal collaboration between the main- and co-applicant is very clear from the application.**

Co-applicants participate actively in organizing and implementing the project and receive a share of the grant. The project description should clearly describe the role of any co-applicants, and the budget should clearly indicate the co-applicants' share of the total budget. Co-applicants must be invited through NORMA and subsequently enter their details in the system. Please follow the instructions in NORMA on how to invite co-applicants to your application.

> ⚠ Note that inviting co-applicants can be time-consuming. Please start the invitation process as soon as possible and well in advance of the submission deadline

When the co-applicant accepts his or her invitation and has registered as a user in NORMA, they will gain access to the application. In addition, they will be assigned an APPLICANT DETAILS-task, available under MY TASKS from the APPLICANT PORTAL in NORMA. With this task, co-applicants should input details such as their institutional affiliation, work and publication history, application history with NNF and will be able to upload supporting documents such as a short CV (maximum two pages) or an endorsement from the institution.

Co-applicants will only be able to edit their own APPLICANT DETAILS-task, as well as make changes to the main application. The main applicant, on the other hand, can review and edit all Applicant Details-tasks for the application including those for co-applicants.

> ⚠️ Please note that co-applicants can read, edit, and upload information in the entire application but cannot submit the application.

3.3   INSTITUTION

Please provide information about the institution where the grant will be administrated. This institution is where you will be employed 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.

3.4   PROPOSAL

Describe the project using the fields on the PROPOSAL tab. Each field (Project title, Brief project description, Project description, Illustration uploads, Lay project description, and Research methods) will have a short instruction text describing the expected input and maximum characters available.

PROJECT TITLE
Please provide a short title for the project (maximum 150 characters, including spaces and special characters).

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Please provide a brief stand-alone summary of the project describing its purpose, target group and activities. (maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces and special characters).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Can be a maximum of 30,000 characters (including spaces, line breaks and special characters). Please describe your proposed research project in detail – including purpose, background, methods, collaborations and the significance of the project. Up to four illustrations can be uploaded to the project description.

Abbreviations should be defined at the first use, and preferably a list of abbreviations should be included in the project description.

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 and special characters).

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 1,000 characters, including spaces and special characters).

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

3.5   BUDGET

The budget for the project applied for only comprises the information entered on the BUDGET tab. Additional budget information attached under UPLOADS or added on any other tabs than BUDGET will not be considered.

GRANT PERIOD
Before you can fill in the budget template, start by entering the start and end dates for the grant. This will determine the number of years available from the budget template. The grant period is the duration of NNF's grant for the project, and the budget counts years following the project start date rather than calendar 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 now 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.

> ⚠️ For salary items, the number of full-time equivalents in years must be stated in the field FTE.

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS (FTE)
For salary items, the number of full-time equivalents in years must be stated in the field FTE. There are 1924 gross hours in a year, from where non-working days must be deducted.

EXAMPLE: 6 weeks of holidays (222 hours), 10 public holidays (74 hours) 10 educational days (74 hours) deducted from 1924 amounts to 1554 net hours per year. To find the FTE for e.g., 30 hours, the calculation should be: 30 (hours) / 1554 (net hours) = 0.02, which is what should be stated in the FTE field.

Budget item (illustrative purposes only)	FTE	Description (illustrative purposes only)
Salary – PhD	1	PhD (1 person-year full time)
Salary – project employees	0,08	Project staff (2 x 60 hours)
Salary – TAP	0,21	Technical staff 2.5 person months full time

> ⚠️ Applicants may only apply for the types of expenses listed in subsection 1.4.

3.6   APPENDICES
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.

Only bench fee policy must be uploaded (and only if this budget post is applied for):

Bench fee
If you apply for a bench fee to be covered by the grant, you must provide official documentation that the administrating institution or co-applicant's institution has a general bench fee policy. This should be included in the Hosting letter/letter of support from the administrating institution enclosed as link or appendix. Bench fee may only be used for lab consumables and access to lab

space and facilities that cannot be included within 'operating expenses' or another budget category, see section 1.6.

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.