

START PACKAGE GRANTS Q3 2024

- For faculty recruitment

Information and guidelines for applicants

Only applications submitted by the person with appointment authority at the recruiting institution will be considered for funding.

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Information about the call

Grant capital:
DKK 70 million

Award amount over 4 years:

- Up to DKK 4 million for a tenure track position at the assistant professor level
- Up to DKK 6 million for a position at the associate professor level
- Up to DKK 8 million for a position as clinical- or clinical chair professor
- Up to DKK 8 million for a position at the full professor level

Application form opens:
21 March 2024, 14:00 CET

Application deadline:
5 August 2024, 14:00 CET

Applicant notification:
Early September 2024

Earliest start date:
15 September 2024

Latest start date:
15 September 2025

Review committee:
Internal NNF committee: Committee on Start Package Grants

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1 START PACKAGE GRANTS

Please read these guidelines carefully before initiating the application process for the Start Package Grants programme, 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 application content, structure, and budget.

The Novo Nordisk Foundation (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

The primary purpose of the Start Package Grant is to make Danish universities or other research institutions more competitive when recruiting top researchers of any nationality. The aim is also to enhance researcher mobility across borders, among Danish universities and from industry to university.

The grant is intended to provide leverage for the hiring Danish university/research institution during recruitment and contract negotiations and to accompany the offer of one of the following positions:

- A tenure track position at the assistant professor level
- A time-unlimited position at the associate or full professor level
- A clinical- or clinical chair professorship position with mandatory research responsibilities for a minimum of five years

A Start Package Grant will provide the host institution with funding that must be used in connection with the candidate's establishment of an independent research group at the host institution.

1.2 AREAS OF SUPPORT

The recruited candidates must conduct their research within medical sciences, life sciences, or natural and technical sciences in fields that are in alignment with NNF's Strategy 2030

(<https://novonordiskfonden.dk/wp-content/uploads/Novo-Nordisk-Foundation-Strategy-1.pdf>). NNF's strategic focus areas include:

- Preventing and managing cardiometabolic disease
- Decreasing the burden and threat of infectious diseases
- Advancing and applying regenerative medicine
- Sustainable and high yield agriculture
- Sustainable food for healthy diets
- High-impact climate change mitigation technologies
- Fundamental research in bioscience, metabolism, the microbiome, systems biology, data and computer science, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, mathematical modelling, materials science, robotics, etc.
- Interdisciplinary research with potential application within health or sustainability
- Technology development with potential application within health or sustainability

1.3 ELIGIBILITY

Only applications submitted by the person with appointment authority at the recruiting institution will be considered for funding (NB: As this person varies between Danish research institutions, the guidelines cannot be more specific on who has this role at the individual institution). All other applications will receive an administrative rejection by NNF.

To be eligible for a grant, the following requirements must be met:

Mobility

- The candidate must show mobility. Internal recruitment is not supported; this also applies if the candidate relocates across faculties within the same institution. Out of the past 36 months the candidate must not have carried out research activities for more than 12 months at the recruiting faculty or institution. Periods with Leave of Absence should be excluded from the count of the 36 and 12 months.
- For clinical professorships with dual appointment at a university and a hospital, the mobility requirement pertains to both hospital and university affiliation.
- The candidate can be recruited either from abroad or within Denmark. However, if the recruitment occurs within Denmark, the candidate must be offered a position with career progression (i.e., from postdoc to tenure track assistant professor, assistant to associate professor, or associate to full professor/clinical professor).
- Recruitment can both be from one academic institution to another, or from industry to an academic institution. The requirement of career progression does not apply if the candidate is recruited from the industry.
- The candidate can have any nationality.

Position

- The candidate must not have started in the offered position earlier than the deadline for the preceding call for the Start Package Grant (**in this case 21 March 2024**).
- If awarded a Start Package Grant, the candidate must within one year establish his/her research group at the recruiting institution with a full-time commitment.
- The candidate must have been assessed qualified for the offered position by an appointment committee, also if it is a 'called' candidate:

- At the **assistant professor level**, the candidate must have been approved for and offered a research position which is part of the institution's tenure track programme, i.e., assistant professors in time-limited positions are not eligible for this programme. The position must have been announced in a public call.
- At the **associate or full professor level**, the candidate must have been approved for and offered a time-unlimited research position. The position may have been announced in a public call or the candidate may have been 'called'. A professor WSR/MSO is not eligible for a full professor-level Start Package grant but is eligible for an associate professor-level Start Package grant.
- **Clinical- or clinical chair professor candidates** must have been approved for and offered a professorship with mandatory research responsibilities for a minimum of five years. The position may have been announced in a public call or the candidate may have been 'called'.

Recruitment

- The recruiting institution must be a university, hospital, or other non-profit research organisation in Denmark.
- Prior to the application deadline the recruiting institution must have identified their top candidate by conducting the initial screening and performing an evaluation by a **scientifically competent and objective** assessment/appointment committee. The committee must have at least two external members, of which at least one must be international. The identity, title, and affiliation of all committee members must be disclosed. The committee's evaluation must be submitted alongside the other relevant information (see section 3.3 and 3.5).
- The recruiting institution must account for how the research plan of the candidate aligns with the strategy of the institution, and how the candidate will add to scientific, educational and faculty activities (see section 3.3).
- The research plan of the candidate and the scope of the position offered to the candidate must align with the strategic key themes of the Novo Nordisk Foundation's scientific grant-giving areas (see Areas of Support in section 1.2).
- The recruiting institution may only submit one Start Package Grant application per vacant faculty position, and for a designated candidate. There is no limit to how many applications the institution may submit in total, provided there is no overlap in the positions applied for.
- If the candidate is awarded a Start Package Grant, the recruiting institution must, within two months of notification, provide confirmation that the appointment has been co-signed by all involved parties, otherwise the grant is null and void.

General rules relevant for this programme:

- a) 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 must be informed immediately.
- b) It is not possible to hold more than one active grant of the following NNF grant types (in this programme the rule relates to the recruited candidate): 'Laureate Research Grant', 'Start Package Grant', 'RECRUIT Grant', 'NERD Programme' and any of the 'Investigator' grants.

- c) It is permitted to hold two or more active Novo Nordisk Foundation grants of different types, i.e., researchers with an active Start Package Grant may apply for a new grant of a different type, e.g., 'Project Grants'.
- d) During an application and review period of a Start Package Grant, the candidate is not allowed to apply for another NNF grant as main applicant.
- e) It is only allowed to apply for a Start Package Grant for a specific candidate one time.
- f) A candidate can only receive a Start Package Grant once.
- g) Please refer to our general terms and conditions (<https://novonordiskfonden.dk/en/conditions-for-grants/>) for further information that apply when applying for/receiving a grant from NNF.

1.4 FUNDING

An annual total of up to DKK 70 million is available for grants.

For each grant, the following amount can be awarded over a 4-year grant period:

- Up to DKK 4 million for a tenure track position at the assistant professor level
- Up to DKK 6 million for a position at the associate professor level
- Up to DKK 8 million for a position as clinical- or clinical chair professor
- Up to DKK 8 million for a position at the full professor level

The grant amount will be considered against the applicant's academic track record. The maximum amount for each career level will only be awarded in exceptional cases, i.e., if the candidate is considered of highest excellence in his/her field of research and has a track record at a high international level at the career stage applied for. Institutions are welcome to apply for grants below the maximum of each career level.

The grant cannot be used to cover the candidate's own salary, which must be covered by the recruiting institution or an external grant for a limited period.

Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses (see section 3.4 for details on conditions and requirements):

- Relocation expenses
- Salary for employees
- PhD tuition fee
- Travel and conferences
- Publication costs
- Operating expenses
- Equipment and infrastructure
- Bench fee
- Direct administrative expenses



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.

1.6 APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process consists of a one stage submission that must include the following elements:

- CV and publication list of the candidate.
- The candidate's research plan.
- A description of how the candidate's profile and research plan align with the strategy of the recruiting institution.
- An evaluation of the candidate by an assessment/appointment committee.
- A list of the members of the assessment/appointment committee, disclosing name, position, affiliation. At least two members must be external, of which at least one must be international. The committee members must not have a conflict of interest.
- Documentation for the faculty position applied for, e.g., job announcement.
- A detailed budget.
- For joint appointments, formal endorsement of the candidate from each employing entity.

NB: See chapter 3 for detailed information regarding the content and format required for the application.

The Start Package Grant call is open all year and grants are awarded four times per year, with a quarterly submission deadline and grant notification typically within 4-5 weeks.

Call #	Application deadline (tentative)	Grant notification (tentative)
Q4 2024	Mid-October	Late November
Q1 2025	Late January	Early March
Q2 2025	Early April	Early May
Q3 2025	Early August	Mid-September

The institution can apply for a Start Package Grant when the candidate has been offered a position or if the candidate has not started in the position earlier than the deadline of the previous call, cf. section 1.3. The grant period can start up until 12 months after grant notification. The candidate is expected to have arrived at the recruiting institution before or very shortly after the start of the grant period.

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.

When all applications have been assessed, applicants will be notified about whether 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 will evaluate all applications and the proposed candidates according to their career level, primarily based on the following criteria:

- Scientific track record and/or academic potential of the candidate.
- Alignment with the overall NNF strategy and the strategic key themes as outlined in section 1.2.
- How the research plan of the candidate aligns with the recruiting institution. This could either be by strengthening existing research areas or by introducing new research fields to the institution..
- The objectivity and quality of the recruiting institution's candidate assessment. *NB: It should be clear from the submitted evaluation that the evaluation of the candidate has been carried out in a transparent manner by a scientifically competent and objective assessment/appointment committee. The members must not have a conflict of interest.*
- How the candidate plans to contribute to scientific, educational, and other activities at the recruiting institution.

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 in 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

Only applications submitted by the person with appointment authority at the recruiting institution will be considered for funding. All other applications will receive an administrative rejection by NNF.

Provide information on the main applicant (i.e., the person with appointment authority) and the candidate (i.e., the person under recruitment) in APPLICANT DETAILS, according to the following instructions:

- **Personal Details.** Fill in information for the candidate in 'Most Recent Degree' and 'Date of Degree'. The remaining information in this section is pre-loaded from the applicant's profile and should not be edited.
- **Current institution.** Fill in information for the candidate. Please contact NORMA Support if you need to register the candidate's institution: norma-support@novo.dk.
- **Experience.** Fill in N/A in all the mandatory fields and instead use the APPENDICES tab to provide CV and publication list for the candidate, cf. section 3.5.
- **Previous and Current Grants from NNF.** Information in this section is pre-loaded from the applicant's profile and should not be edited. If the candidate has submitted other applications to NNF in the same calendar year, and/or received any grants from NNF within the last 5 years, as main or co-applicant, this information should be included in the candidate's CV, cf. section 3.5.
- **Supporting Documents.** Do not upload any supporting documents but use the APPENDICES tab to provide CV and publication list for the candidate, cf. section 3.5.

Once you have clicked 'Complete Task' you cannot edit the information provided in APPLICANT DETAILS anymore. Please contact the Foundation if you completed the task prematurely.

3.2 INSTITUTION

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



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

3.3 PROPOSAL

Describe the project using the following fields on the PROPOSAL tab:

PROJECT TITLE

Please provide a short title for the recruitment (maximum 150 characters, including spaces). The title should contain the career level that the candidate will be recruited to, and the name of the candidate, i.e., [*position*] + [*name*].

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This does not apply for this type of call, please fill in N/A.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please account for the candidate's profile and research plan, and alignment with the strategy of the recruiting institution. Describe how the candidate will add to scientific, educational, and faculty activities at the recruiting institution. Please provide start date if the candidate has already started in the position at the recruiting institution (maximum 5,000 characters, including spaces).

ILLUSTRATION UPLOADS

A maximum of four illustrations of a maximum file size of 50 mb each can be uploaded here. A maximum size for each illustration of 1050*1650 pixel is recommended. 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). If not applicable, please fill in N/A.

LAY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please provide a brief summary of the recruitment 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).



Please note that the application should address all the assessment criteria listed in section 1.7.

3.4 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 have 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.

ELIGIBLE BUDGET COSTS

Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses when directly related to the candidate's proposed research activities:

- **Relocation expenses**, e.g., related to relocation, lab establishment and refurbishment.
- **Salary for employees**, e.g., postdoctoral researchers, PhD students, research-year students, and technicians.

For salary items, the number of full-time equivalents (FTE) in years must be stated in the field FTE. One full-time employee for one year equals 1.0 FTE. Most institutions have defined a standard number of annual working hours which equals 1.0 FTE. NNF does not require the institutions to use a particular number of annual working hours.

- EXAMPLE: To find the FTE for e.g. 74 hours, the calculation is: $74 \text{ (hours)} / 1554 \text{ (standard annual hours (example))} = 0.05$, which is what should be stated in the FTE field.
- **Tuition fee** up to DKK 80,000 per PhD student per budget year (must be included separately).
- **Travel** expenses for, e.g., conference and workshop participation, meetings, or experiments carried out in other labs for a limited period.
- **Publication** costs.
- **Operating expenses**, e.g., materials, consumables, animals, data management, and purchase of services.
- **Equipment** or infrastructure required for the project.
- **Bench fee** can be included in the budget for support of the involved 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 fees, 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 fees 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 administering institution has a general bench fee policy should be included as an upload. An unspecified bench fee without documentation will not be accepted. Maximum DKK 8,000 per month per FTE working on the project is acceptable for this item.

- **Direct administrative expenses** of up to 5% of the total budget:
 - can cover expenses such as 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.
 - is not automatically included in the grant and must be included separately in the application budget but should not be specified in detail.

Any comments about the budget can be entered in the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION field. If bench fee is included in the budget, documenting that the administrating institution has a general bench fee policy should be provided here.



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

3.5 APPENDICES

The following uploads are required:

- **Short CV:** Maximum 2 pages. The candidate must disclose his/her citizenship. If the candidate has submitted other applications to NNF in the same calendar year, and/or received any grants from NNF within the last 5 years, as main or co-applicant, this information must be included in the CV. (Please upload under SHORT CV).
- **Publication list:** Please provide a full publication list and include a short bibliometric overview summarising total number of peer-reviewed publications, number of first authorships, number of corresponding authorships, number of citations, and h-index of the candidate (please indicate the source of the bibliometric data). Candidates are strongly encouraged to state their ORCID. (Please upload under OTHER UPLOADS).
- **Evaluation of the candidate** by a scientifically competent and objective assessment/appointment committee, conducted in connection with the evaluation of the candidate(s) for the relevant faculty position, and organized by the recruiting institution. The members of the committee must not have a conflict of interest. (Please upload under OTHER UPLOADS). It is the obligation of the recruiting institution to seek consent from involved parties to share this evaluation with NNF.
- **List of the members of the assessment/appointment committee.** If not already included in the candidate evaluation report, a list of the committee members, disclosing their names, positions, and affiliation should be provided. At least two members must be external, of which at least one must be international. (Please upload under OTHER UPLOADS).
- **The candidate's research plan.** This research plan must be identical to the one which the candidate submitted for the job advertisement, and which has been evaluated by the assessment/appointment committee. If the candidate is 'called', the research plan must also be identical to the one evaluated by the assessment/appointment committee. (Please

upload under OTHER UPLOADS). If literature references are not part of the research plan, these may be added in the PROPOSAL tab under LITERATURE REFERENCES.

- **Plan/timeline for relocation** which must be prepared by the candidate and potentially address collaborators that the candidate has identified in the Danish research communities. Maximum 1 page. (Please upload under OTHER UPLOADS).
- **The faculty job advertisement** which the candidate has applied for. This public announcement of the position is a mandatory appendix unless the candidate is 'called'. (Please upload under OTHER UPLOADS).
- **Bench fee document.** Please attach documentation for a bench fee policy for the administering institution when bench fee is included in the budget. (Please upload under OTHER UPLOADS). The bench fee should adhere to specifications detailed under section 3.4 'Eligible budget costs'.

Joint appointments: If the candidate is hired into a position with joint appoint, such as a clinical professorship affiliated with both a university and a hospital, each employing entity must formally express their endorsement of the candidate.

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.

March 2024

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.