

novo nordisk  
**foundation**

Benefitting people and society

Guidelines for applicants

**NOVO NORDISK FOUNDATION  
LAUREATE  
RESEARCH GRANTS  
2025**



## Facts about the call

Total amount available for granting:  
**DKK 50 million**

Amount available per grant:  
Up to **DKK 50 million**

Call opens:  
Stage 1: **5 September 2024**  
Stage 2: **12 December 2024**

Call closes:  
**31 October 2024**  
**6 February 2025**

Applicant notification:  
Stage 1: **December 2024**  
Stage 2: **June 2025**

Earliest start date:  
**1 October 2025**

Latest start date:  
**1 April 2027**

**Review:**  
NNF Laureate review committee  
External international peer review

**Contact:**  
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Senior Grant Manager  
E-mail: [kekv@novo.dk](mailto:kekv@novo.dk)



All Grant Recipients must comply with the [‘General Terms and Conditions’](#) for grants from the Novo Nordisk Foundation (the Foundation).

The Foundation will treat all applicant and application information confidentially. Read more about how the Foundation processes personal data under ‘privacy & security’ in the online application system, NORMA. See how to access NORMA in section 2 of these guidelines.

You can find more information about the Foundation’s application and granting process at the [NORMA Help Centre](#). Detailed information about the different parts of the application is available in NORMA.



# 1 Novo Nordisk Foundation Laureate Research Grants 2025

## 1.1 Purpose

NNF Laureate Research Grant is for **recruitment** or **retainment** of an outstanding established biomedical researcher to come to Denmark from abroad or stay in Denmark to further expand their research. The grant should also facilitate collaboration across scientific and geographic borders, thereby strengthening the Danish biomedical research environment to meet societal challenges.

## 1.2 Areas of support

NNF is seeking to support outstanding scientists working within any area of biomedical sciences. The scientific program can involve basic, translational, clinical and/or epidemiological research.

## 1.3 Eligibility

- must be a principal investigator with an independent research program that s/he has directed for 7 or more years in total.
- must, if awarded a Laureate Research Grant, work on-site at the Danish host institution equivalent to at least 75 % of a fulltime position.
- clinicians must, if awarded a Laureate Research Grant, work on-site at the Danish host institution equivalent to at least 75 % of a fulltime position, i.e., clinical commitments must be reduced to 25% of a fulltime position.
- must, if awarded a Laureate Research Grant, have fully established their principal research group in Denmark within two years of starting the grant.
- may have any nationality.
- may not be a member of a NNF expert review committee or an employee within the Novo Group of companies.

### IMPORTANT RULES

- A Laureate candidate may submit only one application to the Novo Nordisk Foundation for an “Investigator grant” and cannot submit another application for an “Investigator grant”

while the application is under review. If an applicant submits more than one “Investigator grant” application for simultaneously review, only the first application submitted will be evaluated, while the subsequent applications will receive administrative rejections.

- An applicant that holds an active “Investigator grant” from the Novo Nordisk Foundation is only eligible to apply for a new “Investigator grant” during the final year of the existing grant, and the two grant periods cannot overlap.
- While a project submitted to one call in the Novo Nordisk Foundation is under evaluation – a similar or overlapping project CANNOT be submitted to other calls from the Novo Nordisk Foundation. I.e., projects submitted for Laureate Research Grants cannot be submitted to any other calls in the Novo Nordisk Foundation until the outcome of this call has been published.

“**Investigator grants**” in the Novo Nordisk Foundation defined to include the following calls/grants across all funding areas: Emerging Investigator, Ascending Investigator, Distinguished Investigator, NNF Laureate research grants, RECRUIT and NERD.

## 1.4 Funding

A total of up to DKK 50 million for projects lasting up to 7 years.

**Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses directly related to the project:**

- Salary; for the main applicant.
- Salary; for research and technical assistance, including senior researchers, assistant and associate professors, postdoctoral researchers, PhD students, technicians and pre-graduate scholars.
- Tuition fees; for PhD students (up to DKK 80,000 per budget year) - must be specified separately in the budget.
- Operating expenses; e.g. lab consumables, chemicals and reagents, research animals, sequencing/proteomics and other analysis services directly related to the project.
- Equipment; required for the project.
- Conference participation; for travel and registration expenses in relation to presenting the project at conferences and workshops.
- Travel; travel expenses directly related to the project, i.e. experiments carried out in other labs for a limited period.
- Publication costs; of results emanating from the research project.
- Relocation expenses; personal and professional moving costs.
- Project supplement (only applicable for Danish Universities); instructions below.
- Bench fees (not applicable for Danish universities); instructions below.
- Direct administrative expenses - up to 5 % (not applicable for Danish Universities); instructions below.

**Full-time equivalents (FTEs)**

For each salary entry, please specify the FTE in years within the designated FTE field. This will indicate the proportion of a full-time position that the project funding will support for each year of the grant period. One full-time employee for one year equals 1.0 FTE.

**Bench fee** (not applicable to Danish universities)

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 [eligible to apply for salary]. It may only be used for expenses related to the research project which cannot be included within another individual budget category. Bench fee may account for a maximum of DKK 8,000 per month per FTE. 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

**PLEASE NOTE** that bench fee cannot cover rent, administrative support, representation, social contributions etc. A valid bench fee policy in line with the Foundation's requirements must be available at the time of application, and this official documentation from the administrating/co-applicant's institution must be provided upon request.

**Project supplement for research grants:** (Danish universities only)

The project supplement contributes to the coverage of indirect costs at Danish universities, and replaces budget posts such as administrative costs, bench fee and parental leave.

More information on the joint model for project supplement is found at [Universities Denmark's website](#). Questions related to the project supplement should be directed to the research support units at your university.

**Administrative support** (not applicable to Danish universities)

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.

**The Foundation will not award funding for:**

- Commercial activities
- Overhead/indirect costs (such as rent, electricity, water and maintenance)
- Double funding of projects:
  - If the applicant has received funding for the proposed project from other sources, in part or in full, this must be accounted for in the budget, as no budgetary overlaps are allowed
  - If an identical or overlapping project proposal has been submitted to other funding institutions than the Foundation, it must be noted in the application
  - If the applicant receives funding for the project, or parts of the project, from other sources following submission of the application to the Foundation, the Foundation must be informed immediately

## 1.5 Language

The application and all additional materials must be submitted in English.

## 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.

### Application stages

The evaluation process consists of three stages:

#### STAGE I

The Laureate candidate should submit the initial application/letter of intent.

Major aspects of the Stage I application are:

- Submission of a letter of intent.
- Assessment by the NNF Committee on Laureate Research Grants based on
  - scientific achievements and track record of the applicant

- goals and significance of the proposed research program
- scientific questions to be addressed and the research to occur

**Please see section 3.3 in these Guidelines for a detailed description of the content of the Stage I application.**

Based on the Stage I assessment, up to three candidates will be invited to submit a full Stage II application and to attend an interview at the Foundation's premises in Denmark.

*Important dates for Stage I applications:*

The deadline for Stage I applications will be 31 October 2025.

### **STAGE II (Invited candidates only)**

Up to three candidates are invited to submit a full research proposal, which is sent for external review by at least three scientific experts.

The major aspects of the stage II stage are:

- Submission of a full research proposal
- External peer-review by at least 3 scientific experts.
- Assessment will be conducted according to defined criteria relating to scientific quality and expected impact of the proposed research programme, candidate merits and potential, as well as the strategic match with the host institution and the benefit to the Danish research ecosystem.

**Please see section 3.4 in these Guidelines for a detailed description of the content of the Stage II application.**

*Please be aware that all material will be exposed to the review committee and potential peer reviewers.*

*Important dates for Stage II applications:*

Applicants invited for Stage II will be notified by early December 2024.

The deadline for Stage II applications will be 6 February 2025.

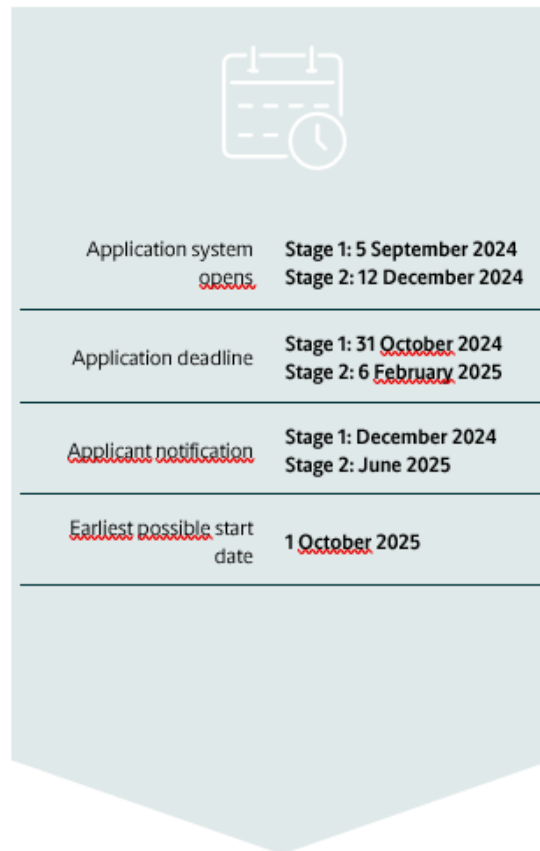
### **STAGE III**

All candidates who successfully submit a full research proposal are invited for an on-site interview by the Internal committee and selected experts. Stage III interviews will take place in Denmark in March 2025.

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](mailto:norma-noreply@novo.dk) to the e-mail address used when creating a profile in NORMA.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Foundation does not provide feedback in case an application is declined.



**Timeline:****1.7 Assessment criteria**

Selection of NNF Laureate Research Grant awardees will be based on scientific excellence of both the investigator and the proposed research program.

Evaluation of stage I, stage II and stage III of the application process must emphasise:

- scientific quality
- originality
- potential impact

Impact includes the effect on the research environment at the host institution and in Denmark.

If you have an active grant from the Foundation, this may be taken into consideration in the evaluation of your application for a new grant. In general, it is recommended that the main applicant has delivered results on the active grant(s) before submission of a new application to the Foundation.

If you apply while having an active grant from the Foundation, 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). This information should be included in the **Project Description**.



## 2 The application and grant management system NORMA

### 2.1 Creating and submitting an application

The Foundation uses the application and grant management system NORMA:

<https://norma.novonordiskfonden.dk>

If you do not have a user profile in NORMA, you can create one by clicking **Register** on the login page. The main applicant should only have one user profile. Please use your work e-mail address for registration.

The registered user who submits an application will be legally responsible for the truthfulness of the content of the application.

You can find guidance on how to create and submit an application at: [NORMA Help Centre](#).

If you experience technical problems and cannot find a solution in the NORMA Help Centre, please contact NORMA Support: [norma-support@novo.dk](mailto:norma-support@novo.dk).



## 3 Application content

This section provides guidelines on the content required in the sections of the online application form for this call. Detailed information about the different parts of the application is available in NORMA.

### 3.1 Applicant

#### **MAIN APPLICANT (The Laureate candidate)**

Information about the applicant is collected through individual tasks in the APPLICANT DETAILS-section, detailing experience, publication history, application history with NNF, etc. After filling in all mandatory fields, the applicant should complete the task to save the details.

**CV** can be maximum 4,000 characters.

Please provide your brief CV including:

- Education
- Employment history
- Recent research funding
- Supervision/training/teaching activities
- A short bibliographic overview summarising total number of peer-reviewed publications, number of first/corresponding/senior authorships, number of citations without self-citations.

**Publication list** can be a maximum of 5,000 characters.

Please provide the complete reference information for your most important recent publications (up to 10). Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a full list of publications in ORCID.

**Supplementary Information** (under Applicant Information – maximum 2,000 characters):

In this field, please describe your motivation(s) for applying for an NNF Laureate Research Grant and relocating to, or remaining in, Denmark. These can be related to scientific opportunities, personal reasons, etc.

#### **Previous and current grants from NNF (if relevant)**

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.

## 3.2 Institution

The project must be anchored at a university, hospital, or other non-profit research institution in Denmark.

Please provide information about the institution where the grant will be administered. This institution is where the main applicant will be employed during the grant period, and the institution that will ultimately be responsible for administering and allocating the grant, including budgeting, financial reporting and staff supported by the grant.



**It can take up to five working days to register a new administrating institution in NORMA.**

The application cannot be submitted before the institution has been registered.

## 3.3 STAGE I PROPOSAL (Letter of intent)

Describe the project using the fields in the **Proposal** tab in Norma.

Special requirements for Stage I application:

### **BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

- Summary of the envisaged research proposal (Maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces, line breaks and special characters).

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Letter of intent)**

(Maximum 10,000 characters, including spaces, line breaks and special characters)

Major aspects of the initial application (Letter of Intent) are:

- Vision of the research program
- Research questions/hypotheses
- Background that is most relevant for this research
- Primary experimental designs and procedures
- Infrastructure, facilities, and larger equipment needed
- Significance and potential impact
- Description of the benefits of conducting the research at the specific host institution
- Brief rationale for proposed start-date

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT** (Maximum one A4 page per letter - uploaded under the Appendices section)

**Letter 1** - From Head of Department (or equivalent) outlining:

- Strategic arguments for how recruitment or retainment of the applicant will benefit the host institution and the Danish biomedical research environment.
- Details regarding opportunities for scientific synergy between the candidate and ongoing research activities at the host institution.
- Description of how the host will provide administrative and scientific support for the candidate.
- Declaration that the candidate will work on-site at the Danish host institution equivalent to at least 75 % of a fulltime position.

**Letter 2** - From Dean associated with host department outlining:

- Their augmentation for supporting the candidate.

### 3.4 STAGE II PROPOSAL (*invited applicants only*)

After receiving an invitation, you will be granted access to the Stage II application form in NORMA. It is an expanded version of the Stage I application, and some fields are prefilled. The full Stage II application includes a more comprehensive project description, a detailed budget, and upload of a signed letter of agreement.

Special requirements for the Stage II application:

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

(Maximum 50,000 characters including spaces, line breaks and special characters)

*Please include:*

- Vision of the research program
- Research questions/hypotheses
- Objectives
- Background that is most relevant for this research
- Research outline for 7 years
  - Primary experimental designs and procedures
  - Methods and technologies to be utilized and developed
  - Infrastructure, facilities, and larger equipment needed
- Discussion
  - Experimental outcomes
  - Risks and alternative approaches that may be needed
- Significance and potential impact

*As a separate section in this field, please describe:*

- Collaborations and expected synergies for the research program
  - Current or previous research partners
  - Planned new research partners
- Contribution to the Danish research ecosystem

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

### **HOSTING LETTER (SIGNED LETTER OF AGREEMENT)** (Maximum 1 A4 page)

*Please include:*

- Brief outline of support to be provided by the host institution to the Laureate candidate.
- Confirmation of working arrangement, including declaration that the candidate will work on-site at the Danish host institution equivalent to at least 75 % of a fulltime position.
- Signature from a person with appointment authority at the recruiting institution.
- Signature from the Laureate candidate.

## **3.5 Budget**

A detailed budget is only required for stage II applications.

Enter the project grant period, and the budget template will become available. Only budget information submitted via the **Budget** tab will be considered in the review process. Any additional budget information attached under Appendices (or any other tabs) will not be considered.

Please see section 1.4 for details regarding the funding.

## **3.6 Appendices**

- Stage I: Two letters of support (further details in section 3.3) (Mandatory)
- Stage II: Signed letter of agreement (further details in section 3.4) (Mandatory)
- Stage I/II: Full publication list (Optional)

**All uploads must be in PDF format.** NORMA automatically places these uploads at the end of the application. Appendices other than those specified here are not permitted and will not be included in the evaluation.