



DATA SCIENCE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME 2022

Information and guidelines for
applicants

2022

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Information about the call

Grant capital:
DKK 40 million

Award amount
DKK 5-15 million per grant

Application form opens:
December 2021

Application deadline:
5 May 2022, 14:00 CEST

Applicant notification:
December 2022

Earliest start date:
January 2023

Latest start date:
December 2023

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Committee for Data Science

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1 DATA SCIENCE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME 2022

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.

- **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.

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

The Data Science Research Infrastructure Programme aims to support open and national infrastructures which enable excellent data-science driven research in Denmark that:

- a) leads to new or improved core data science algorithms, methods, and technologies.
- b) explores and expands data science applications to real-world scientific problems within the scope of the NNF Data Science Initiative.

The programme is part of the NNF Data Science Initiative, through which the Foundation aims to strengthen the Danish academic research environment within data science and artificial intelligence, as well as support the education and training of the next generation of data scientists.

Infrastructure is in this context defined as:

- Computational infrastructures, including supercomputers, GPUs, storage, software, etc.
- Databases and data resources, including data collection, cleaning, annotation, integration, management, etc. This includes building and maintenance of existing databases if it promotes collaboration and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles, as well as secure and ethical use of such data.
- Data-generating technologies, including, but not limited to, sensors, instruments, omics platforms, etc.

The infrastructures must be state-of-the-art. Applications may request specialist-use infrastructures or common-use infrastructures with a large user base. Applicants may apply for new infrastructures, or the maintenance, extension, and/or improvement of existing ones.

Applicants can apply for ‘packages’ of hardware and skilled personnel that are anchored in a specific institution and linked to ongoing research that is within the scope of the NNF Data Science Initiative. Funding may be requested for such skilled personnel (staff positions) that can offer research-based training, consultation, data processing, data analysis, data management, software/database development, and dissemination of data/tools.

Additionally, the programme aims to:

- Strengthen education and training in data science.
- Ensure that facilities are continuously developed and maintained, also after their implementation.
- Boost the research environment, including companies (e.g., small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and incubators), that cannot invest in this to the same extent.

Open competition calls in the Novo Nordisk Foundation’s Data Science Initiative

- **The Data Science Investigator Programme** supports excellent independent research leaders with ambitious projects within the field of data science.
- **The Data Science Collaborative Research Programme** supports data science-driven collaborative research projects within the Foundation’s scientific focus areas.
- **The Data Science Research Infrastructure Programme** supports investment in shared supercomputers, hardware, staff positions, data collection, curation and management.
- **The Danish Data Science Academy** promotes collaboration, education, and awarding of travel grants and PhD and postdoc fellowships (calls are announced at <https://ddsa.dk>).

1.2 AREAS OF SUPPORT

The NNF Data Science Initiative aims to support the following key science areas:

- a) Development of new algorithms, methods, and technologies within data science, artificial intelligence (incl. machine learning and deep learning), data engineering, data mining, statistics, applied math, computer science, big data analytics, etc.
- b) Applications of data science (as defined above) within the Foundation’s core scientific areas: Biomedical and health science, life science and industrial applications promoting sustainability, as well as natural and technical sciences with potential application in biotechnology or biomedicine.

For projects mainly concerned with data science methods development, it is important that the applicants clearly show the relevance for potential future application and impact within life science, health science, or biotechnology. Vice versa, projects which have their primary focus on application of data science methods must describe and explain the novelty and impact of their

data science approach, be it development of novel methods or novel applications of existing methods.

The Novo Nordisk Foundation's scientific focus areas

Biomedical and Health Sciences supports basic research in biomedicine that paves the way for advances in translational medicine and innovative clinical applications. Among the key topics are: basic biomedical research, translational biomedical research and technologies, clinical research, health-related data science infrastructure and applications, and research in patient-centred healthcare and treatment systems.

Life Science and Industrial Applications Promoting Sustainability addresses the escalating global sustainability challenges and the potential to make a positive impact for the environment. The research areas that are supported are within industrial biotechnology and environmental biotechnology, plant science, agriculture and food biotechnology as well as ecosystems research related to these areas. Basic research, platforms, and technologies enabling research on sustainability are included.

Natural and Technical Sciences supports fundamental research within the natural and technical sciences, including, e.g., physics, chemistry, mathematics, data science, and technical sciences. The research must have potential interdisciplinary application in biomedicine, health sciences, or biotechnology; this application need not be in the project period but could be beyond. Focus areas include interdisciplinary research, quantum technologies with potential application in the life sciences, data science, and health- and med-tech.

In general, projects without potential future applications within the NNF's scientific focus areas (see box above) and projects with no novelty in terms of development or application of data science methods will not be funded in this programme.

Projects where the primary focus is on financial or insurance data, fraud detection, advertisement, social media, social science or humanities, security and mass surveillance, defence, gaming, etc. are considered outside of scope and will not be considered for funding.

1.3 ELIGIBILITY

The main applicant must be able to document expertise at the highest level within the research field of the applied-for research equipment or facility. The infrastructure must be linked to ongoing research and be within the scope of the NNF Data Science Initiative.

The grant must be anchored at a university or other non-profit research institution in Denmark, which administrates the grant. A hosting letter signed by the head of the department must be included in the application. If the proposal requests funding for hardware, the relevant institution(s) must commit to hosting this. See section 3.5 for details.

Besides the main applicant, the proposal must be supported by several core collaborators associated with Danish research institutions, who are committed to becoming core users or data contributors for the infrastructure. Core collaborators signify researchers for whom no funding is requested in the budget, but who will be among the drivers of the research which the

infrastructure will support. In this context, an industrial partner could also be a core collaborator. Core collaborators must provide a letter of support and a short CV (see section 3.5).

Collaborators who are involved in the establishment of the infrastructure, but who are not core collaborators, i.e., not future users of the infrastructure, may be mentioned in the project description but should not provide letter of support or CV.

The facility or equipment must be established at a research institution with expertise within the relevant field. This is to ensure that the infrastructure can develop in parallel with the scientific progress in the area, and that there are qualified personnel to operate and maintain the equipment, as well as to supervise others in its use.

The infrastructure should strengthen data science research in Denmark. Priority for funding will be given to applications that demonstrate coordination with other Danish research groups, and/or enhance Danish data science beyond the current state-of-the-art.

Applications to maintain or expand existing infrastructures are welcome. Applications may include the building, maintenance and/or expansion of databases if it promotes collaboration and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles. Funding may be requested for skilled data science personnel (staff positions) that can offer research-based training, consultation, data processing, data analysis, data management, software/database development, and dissemination of data/tools.

Additionally, the following eligibility constraints are imposed:

- The applicant must be employed as senior scientist, associate professor, or professor at a university, hospital, or other non-profit research institution in Denmark.
- Alternatively, the applicant is a scientific manager of a high-performance computer facility. In this case the application should show a direct link to the local group conducting the research for which the infrastructure is needed.
- Applicants may submit only one application per call.

1.4 FUNDING

For each grant, DKK 1-3 million can be awarded on average per year over a grant period of up to 5 years, for a total budget of up to DKK 5-15 million.

The total 2022 grant budget for the programme is up to DKK 40 million.

Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses (see section 3.3 for details):

- Equipment
- Infrastructure establishment and installation
- Operating expenses
- Salary for technical personnel
- Training of technical personnel
- Data management
- Direct administrative expenses (up to 5% of the total budget)

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

NNF will not award funding for:

- commercial activities
- overhead
- Double funding of projects:
 - If the applicant has received funding for the proposed project from other sources, in part or in full, this situation 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 NNF, it must be noted in the application.
 - If the applicant, post application submission, receives funding for the project or parts of the project from others, the NNF must be contacted immediately.



The grant may not be used to cover 'overhead' (i.e. rent, electricity, water, maintenance etc.)

Dual submission for the concurrent “Research Infrastructure – Large equipment and facilities” programme is not allowed. In this context, it should be stressed that the Data Science Research Infrastructure Programme is focused on funding infrastructures that are rooted in data science research.

Applying for a Data Science Research Infrastructure grant does not prevent the applicant from also applying (as either a main or co-applicant) for funding via the two other programmes under the NNF Data Science Initiative (Data Science Investigators and Data Science Collaborative Research programme); however:

- The applicant must indicate which other submitted proposals includes her/him as a main or co-applicant.
- The different applications should not be contingent on each other. For instance, the feasibility of the project applied for here cannot depend on access to a shared infrastructure applied for under the Research Infrastructure programme, and vice versa.
- Applying with the same project to more than one call is not allowed. Any overlap in project description between applications that are submitted should be clearly indicated and explained.
- An applicant who has used the possibility of adding top-up funding for infrastructure in a Data Science Collaborative Research proposal cannot submit an application for the Data Science Research Infrastructure call in the same round.]

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, which can be accessed from:

<https://norma.novonordiskfonden.dk>

[Please see section 3.3 for detailed instructions on application content.](#)

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 the result in an e-mail 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

The NNF's Committee for Data Science, which consists of 13 international experts within the field, will be responsible for the scientific evaluation and prioritisation of the applications, based on the following criteria:

- Scientific need for the infrastructure (locally and nationally).
- State-of-the-art of the requested equipment and how widespread its use will be.
- Scientific and managerial qualifications of the applicant.
- Scientific qualifications of core collaborators.
- Feasibility and suitability of the proposed organisational set up for the infrastructure, including expected use and maintenance.
- Coordination with and/or relevance for other Danish research groups.
- Plan for accessibility to the infrastructure for the local and national research community, including internal, external and industrial users, as well as a clear plan for how to grant access in an open and transparent manner for external users.
- The applicant's and/or collaborators' plan to actively participate in, and direct, educational or training courses in data science in Denmark, leveraging on the proposed infrastructure.

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 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

The main responsible party for the application can enter their details through the Applicant Details-task with the type 'Applicant'. After filling in all mandatory fields, the applicant should complete the task to save the details.

In addition to a CV, please include in the **CV** section:

- A short bibliographic overview summarising total number of peer-reviewed publications, number of first authorships, number of corresponding authorships, number of citations, H-index, etc.

- An overview of your current grants with indication of how much of your research time (in %) is committed to each of the projects.
- A short paragraph on your teaching experience and current obligations. In the project description, you must provide a clear plan for how the collaboration will actively direct or participate in educational or training courses in data science in Denmark during the project period (see section 3.3).

Please include in the **Publications** section:

- A link to an updated profile with a full publication list on, e.g., ORCID, Google Scholar, Web of Science, or Scopus.
- A list of the 10 most relevant publications (or conference contributions) for evaluating your merits. Kindly include a complete specification of all authors for each publication.

Please include in the **Summary of own research** section an outline of your research focus and main contributions and achievements relevant for the present application.

3.2 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.

3.3 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 DESCRIPTION

The project description can be a maximum of 30,000 characters (including spaces, line breaks and special characters).

Please describe the proposed research project in detail – including purpose, background, methods, collaborations, and the significance of the project.

It is particularly important to clearly describe **how the infrastructure will support and strengthen data science research and education in Denmark**. Since the evaluation committee is purely international, make sure to clearly describe **how your proposal compares to, supplements, and aligns with the current national landscape and relevant future national strategies and initiatives**.

Please address the following questions in the project description:

- The scientific need for the infrastructure, including a mapping of similar, existing infrastructures in Denmark, as well as an assessment of the timeliness of the suggested infrastructure and how it differs from those available in the Danish research environment.
- The scientific and technical expertise within the relevant field at the research institution where the infrastructure will be established.
- How the technical expertise will be obtained to ensure qualified operation and maintenance of the infrastructure as well as instruction of new and experienced users.
- The potential user group of the infrastructure, including a presentation of the core collaborators and other relevant users. It is encouraged to provide an estimation of the distribution of expected use by the applicant, core users, and external users.
- A clear plan for how the infrastructure will be made available for a wider group of scientists from, e.g., other research institutions, SME's, or incubators, including communication and outreach activities, access criteria, and possible payment schemes for external users. Priority for funding will be given to applications that demonstrate coordination with other Danish research groups. Open access is encouraged.
- A clear plan for data management (storage, databases, handling and processing of data using cloud/edge/fog computing, etc.).
- The organisation of the infrastructure, including a timeline for establishment, running and maintenance of the infrastructure and a description of a steering committee and its responsibilities.
- A business plan describing how the infrastructure will be embedded, used, maintained, and financed during and after the grant has ended. If possible, please provide relevant key performance indicators.
- In case of user fees for using the infrastructure, make sure to describe how the income from such sources will be used during and after the grant period. For instance, if the funds will be used to upgrade, maintain, expand, etc., the infrastructure.
- A plan for how the main applicant and/or core collaborators plan to actively participate in and direct educational or training courses in data science in Denmark, leveraging the proposed infrastructure.
- Permits from public authorities needed to establish the infrastructure, if relevant.

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



Please note that the application should address all the assessment criteria listed in subsection 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 COSTS

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

- **Equipment**, i.e., purchase of equipment for the infrastructure. This is not necessarily a single piece of equipment but can be several that cover different aspects of the same field or can be equipment that is often used sequentially. However, the intent is that only larger equipment should be put in the Equipment budget category.
- **Infrastructure**, i.e., establishment and installation of the infrastructure. This may include minor modifications strictly necessary for establishing and operating the infrastructure.
- **Operating expenses**, e.g.:
 - Materials, consumables, and service contracts directly related to operating and maintaining the infrastructure.
 - Funds for hosting annual networking/outreach events.
 - Specialised software needed for the infrastructure.
- **Salary** for technical personnel (i.e. AC TAP or TAP), that will run and maintain the equipment. These can also offer research-based training, consultation, data processing, data analysis, data management, software/database development, and dissemination of data/tools. 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 relevant for running and maintaining the infrastructure. This includes travel and accommodations.
- **Data management**, e.g., expenses for collecting and storing data.
- **Direct administrative expenses** of up to 5% of the total funding applied for, which:
 - 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.
- Is not automatically included in the grant and must be stated/applied for in the application budget but should not be specified in detail.

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



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

3.5 APPENDICES

Please provide the following documentation:

- A single combined PDF file with a frontpage indicating the names and affiliations of the core collaborators, which contains:
 - Signed letter of support from each core collaborators stating their contribution and commitment to using the applied for infrastructure.
 - Short CV (maximum 2 pages) for each core collaborator, and when relevant, the core collaborators' data science related teaching portfolio.
- A signed hosting letter from the administrating institution, which:
 - Confirms that the hosting institution taking responsibility for establishing and embedding the infrastructure within the institution as well as for administrating the grant.
 - Describes potential institutional co-financing of the infrastructure.
 - If the proposal requests funding for hardware placed at the core collaborators' institutions, these institutions must provide a similar hosting letter.
- Vendor quotes, if applicable, for the major equipment applied for.

Collaborators who are involved in the establishment of the infrastructure, but who are not considered core collaborators, i.e., not data contributors or future users of the infrastructure, may be mentioned in the project description but should not provide letter of support or CV.

All uploads must be in PDF format. NORMA automatically places these uploads at the end of the application. Please do not include other appendices.

December 2021

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.