



**NOVO NORDISK FOUNDATION  
LAUREATE RESEARCH GRANTS  
2024**

Information and guidelines for applicants

Science  
Research  
Grants  
2024

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## Information about the call

Grant capital:  
DKK 50 million

Award amount  
Up to DKK 50 million per grant

Application form opens:  
Stage I: 29 September 2023  
Stage II: 15 December 2023

Application deadline:  
Stage I: 16 November 2023  
Stage II: 22 February 2024

Applicant notification:  
Stage I: 15 December 2023  
Stage II: June 2024

Earliest start date:  
1 September 2024

Latest start date:  
1 April 2026

Review:  
NNF Laureate review committee  
External international peer review

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# 1 Novo Nordisk Foundation Laureate Research Grants 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 read these guidelines carefully 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 the '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

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.
- must, if awarded a Laureate Research Grant, have fully established her/his 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 publicised.

“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:**

- salaries, including for the grant recipient
- tuition fees
- direct project costs, including materials/consumables and purchase of services
- equipment costs
- travel expenses in relation to relocation and for project-related work
- conference participation including related travel expenses
- publication costs
- bench fees
- direct administrative expenses for the grant (up to 5% of the funding applied for)

**NNF will not award funding for:**

- commercial activities
- overheads

See section 3.5 for detailed description of budget posts and creation of budget.



The grant may not be used to cover 'overheads' (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 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

Host institutions (Dean, Head of Department or equivalent) should submit initial application(s) (Letter of Intent), bringing forward one or more named candidates.

Major aspects of the Stage I application are:

- The CV of the proposed candidate(s).
- Summary of the envisaged research proposal
- Strategic arguments for how recruitment or retainment of the specific candidate 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.

Based on this information, an internal NNF committee decides which of the suggested candidates should be invited to submit a full Stage II application.

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

#### *Important dates for Stage I applications:*

The deadline for Stage I applications will be 16 November 2024.

### 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 3 scientific experts.

The major aspects of the stage II application are:

- Submission of a full research proposal by the Laureate candidate.
- 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 review committee and potential peer reviewers.*

#### *Important dates for Stage II applications:*

Applicants invited for Stage II will be notified by mid December 2023.

The deadline for Stage II applications will be 22 February 2024.

### STAGE III

All candidates who successfully submit a full research proposal are invited for an on-site interview by the review committee. Stage III interviews will take place in Denmark in April 2024.

#### Timeline:



When all applications have been assessed, applicants will be notified whether or not 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 entered on initial registration.



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

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

## 2 THE APPLICATION AND GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – NORMA

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

### 2.1 USER REGISTRATION

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

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

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

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

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

#### STAGE I:

Only Stage I applications submitted by the person with appointment authority at the recruiting institution will be considered for funding, i.e., Stage I applications should not be submitted by the Laureate candidate.

In stage I, **please ignore** the “Applicant Details-section”

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.

#### STAGE II:

In Stage 2 the Laureate candidate will be made the main applicant. When inviting to stage II, we will ask the Laureate candidate to register in Norma and we will change the ‘Applicant’ of the specific application from the host institution to the Laureate candidate, who will be responsible for writing and submitting the Stage II application.

#### 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 administrated. This institution is where the candidate 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 STAGE I PROPOSAL (*Letter of intent from host institution*)**

Describe the project using the fields Project title, Brief project description, Project description, 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.

**BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION** (Maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces)

- Summary of the envisaged research proposal

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION** (Maximum 10,000 characters, including spaces).

Major aspects of the initial application (Letter of Intent) submitted by the host institution are:

- Strategic arguments for how recruitment or retainment of the specific candidate 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.

The **CV** of the proposed candidate should be uploaded under the Appendices section.



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

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

After receiving an invitation, we will change the main applicant to the Laureate candidate, who 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.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

(Maximum 50,000 characters including spaces)

*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

#### 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 (Stage II only)

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.

The total amount applied for should be up to DKK 50 million (~USD 7 million, ~EUR 6.7 million). Annual budget amounts can vary if needed (e.g., due to relocation or equipment costs). Up to DKK 14 million of the grant may be utilised for establishment of the laboratory during the first year, with following funding of up to 8 million per year over a 7-year grant period, amounting to a total budget of up to DKK 50 million per grant.

Include sufficient information and detail for the planned use of the funding to be clear.

#### Full-time equivalents (FTE)

For salary items, the number of full-time equivalents 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.



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

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

- **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 scholar.
- **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.
- **Bench fees;** see instructions below
- **Direct administrative expenses; (up to 5 % – see instructions below)**

**Bench fees** 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. Bench fee may account for maximum DKK 8.000 per month per FTE working on the project, and 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.

**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

### 3.6 APPENDICES

Stage 1: **Short CV** for the Laureate candidate (*Mandatory*)

Stage I/II: **Publication list** (*Optional*)

In case the space in the application form is too limited for the publication list, please upload the full list as an appendix.

Stage II: **Signed Letter of Agreement** (1 page) (*Mandatory*)

*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.

**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.



## 3.7 APPENDICES

### The Novo Nordisk Foundation

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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.