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**RESEARCH IN LONG-TERM  
HEALTH CONSEQUENCES  
OF COVID-19 ILLNESS**

Information and guidelines for  
applicants

Research  
in  
Long-Term  
Health  
Consequences  
of  
COVID-19  
Illness

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## Information about the call

Grant capital:  
DKK 40 million

Award amount  
Up to DKK 10 million per grant

Application form opens:  
10 November 2020

Application deadline:  
12 January 2021

Applicant notification:  
End of May 2021

Earliest start date:  
1 June 2021

Latest start date:  
31 December 2021

Review committee:  
Internal peer-review

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# 1 RESEARCH IN LONG-TERM HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF COVID-19 ILLNESS

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

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

Furthermore, please read 'General Terms and Conditions' for grants from NNF that all Grant Recipients must comply with:

<http://www.novonordiskfonden.dk/en/content/conditions-grants>

## 1.1 PURPOSE

It is estimated that 10% of patients experience prolonged illness after COVID-19. Several reports indicate that COVID-19 is not just an acute respiratory disease but may cause long-term disease or discomfort by affecting organ systems. Especially worrying is that COVID-19 seems to cause persistent symptoms even in patients with milder forms of the illness. The range of symptoms are broad including neurological, cardiopulmonary, and immunological. Typical symptoms include persistent fatigue, neurological difficulties breathlessness, loss of smell and taste, joint and chest pain, metabolic disruption (such as poor control of diabetes), thromboembolic conditions, and depression and mental health conditions.

At present there is limited knowledge regarding the number of patients having long term symptoms, and how to best treat these patients.

The purpose of the programme will be to support collaborative projects that investigate the nature, incidence, distribution of long-term symptoms, and their underlying pathogenesis in COVID-19 patients as well as to develop and test treatments for long-term COVID-19 illness.

## 1.2 AREAS OF SUPPORT

The current thematic call is aimed to fund projects that:

1. Investigate the nature, incidence, distribution and duration of long-term symptoms, and their underlying pathogenesis in COVID-19 patients.
2. Development and test treatments for long-term COVID-19 illness.

It is important that the applicant documents access to an adequate patient group for the completion of the study. In order to obtain a sufficient number of patients Nordic/international collaboration is encouraged.

### 1.3 ELIGIBILITY

The programme supports excellent scientists from 1-5 research groups, (main applicant plus 1-4 co-applicants). It is expected that the main applicant is employed at a Danish hospital, Danish university, or other non-profit Danish research organization, that will be considered the host institution of the project. The research institutions of the co-applicants can be in Denmark or abroad.

It must be documented that the research group has access to “enough” patients to complete the study. Power calculations justifying the number of patients is required within the application.

#### General rules for applications:

- Being the recipient of another NNF research grant does not preclude receiving this grant.
- For further information please refer to our general terms and conditions <https://novonordiskfonden.dk/en/conditions-for-grants/> that apply when receiving a grant from NNF.

### 1.4 FUNDING

A total of up to DKK 40 million is available for grants between DKK 3 and DKK 10 million for projects lasting up to 4 years.

The grant cannot be used to cover the salary of the main applicant or the co-applicant(s). Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses:

- Salaries for research assistants, postdoctoral fellows, PhD students, consultants and statisticians.
- Tuition fees for PhD students.
- Operating expenses for: consumables, materials, services, and other similar items directly related to the project.
- Equipment and infrastructures required for the project.
- Data management: data collection, data analysis, and data storage.
- Collaboration activities – expenses for related meetings, workshops, seminars and exchange of personnel that will strengthen the collaboration between partners of the programme.
- Conference participation: travel costs, accommodation, and registration at scientific conferences in Denmark and elsewhere that are directly relevant to the project.
- Publication costs: scientific articles, posters and other scientific dissemination activities based on the project.
- Bench fee – Support for individual researchers to cover direct expenses needed to conduct the research project. Bench fees must be specified in the budget and may only be used for operating expenses, lab consumables and access to laboratory space and facilities that cannot be included within another individual budget category. To include a bench fee in the budget, the fee must be part of the general expenses policy of the institute/institution and apply to all employees for which the policy concerns.
- Administrative support: an amount up to 5% of, and included in, the funding applied for from the NNF may be included in the budget.

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

**NNF will not award funding for:**

- commercial activities
- overhead
- salary for PI and co-PIs



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

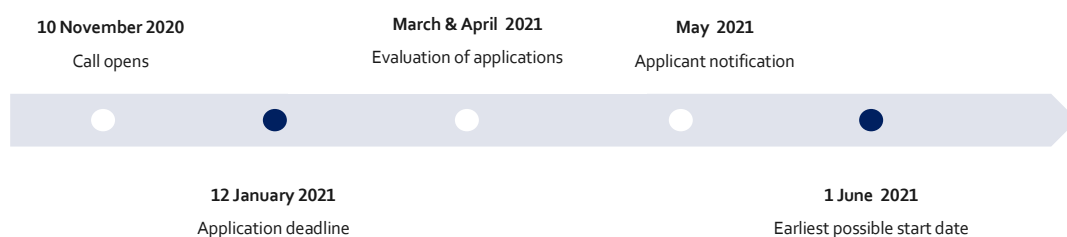
## 1.5 LANGUAGE

The application and any additional uploads must be written in English.

## 1.6 APPLICATION PROCESS

The application 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 or not they have been awarded a grant. The notification e-mail will be sent from [noreply@norma.novonordiskfonden.dk](mailto:noreply@norma.novonordiskfonden.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

After initial evaluation by an internal evaluation board, selected applications will be sent for external peer-review by experts within the relevant fields. The assessment of the applications will be based on the following criteria:

- Scientific excellence and originality of the proposal,
- Societal impact and feasibility of the project,
- The collaborative approach and relevance,
- The professional expertise of all collaborators.
- Managerial and scientific qualifications of the programme leader/main applicant.

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 on REGISTER AS APPLICANT. You will be asked to fill in a contact form, which will appear in a new window. The main applicant should only have one user profile. Use your work e-mail address for registration. After the registration, you will receive an e-mail with your user name and password. You can now log in to NORMA. When you log in for the first time, you will be asked to change your password.

Applicants who have previously applied for a grant from NNF or have an active grant may already have a user profile in NORMA. If you are in doubt, an existing user profile can be retrieved by clicking FORGOT PASSWORD and entering an e-mail address. If you have a user profile in the system, you will receive an e-mail with login information and a new password within 5–10 minutes.

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

To initiate a new application, you first need to identify the call and grant you wish to apply for. In NORMA, go to the OPEN CALLS tab, which is located in the upper right corner of the screen. All currently available grants are visible in tabs that are sorted by NNF's overall grant areas.

Initiate an application by clicking the blue APPLY NOW button. Your draft application is then created and will remain a draft version until you actively submit the application.

You can create and subsequently edit a draft version of the application until the deadline. A draft application can be saved by clicking SAVE DRAFT and may be cancelled at any time up to the deadline by clicking the button CANCEL APPLICATION. An application is not submitted to NNF until an applicant has clicked SUBMIT.

The application comprises tabbed sheets that need to be completed but not necessarily in chronological order. Fields marked with a red star (\*) are obligatory to fill in.

You can review the application at any time by clicking OPEN under MY APPLICATIONS on the NORMA front page. The whole application, including any currently entered data, can be downloaded as a PDF file by clicking on APPLICATION PDF. Make sure the PDF is readable and formatted appropriately before submitting your application.

## 2.3 TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS

### FILLING IN THE FIELDS

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.

### APPLICATION TEXTS

Text from Word, for example, can be copied and pasted into most text fields of the application. It is, however, important to check that formatting, special letters and symbols have not been converted or lost in the text fields after copying and pasting. If the formatting looks wrong in NORMA and in the PDF, you can try to change all text to "Normal" under the tab FORMAT.



The available functions for formatting text are at the top of the text fields. Some shorter text fields do not have the option to format.



For readability purposes, standard fonts, font size 11-12, and line spacing between 1.0 and 1.5 must be used.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations with figures, charts, tables, images etc. related to the project description can be uploaded under PROJECT INFORMATION (a maximum of four illustrations are allowed). Include the illustration number and a legend or caption for each illustration file when uploading. The illustrations will be integrated in the final application PDF.

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.

All applicants must read and accept NNF's Standards for Good Research Practice before submitting the application. A link can be found under "Policies" in the top right corner of the window. 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. Fields in the application that are incorrectly completed or incomplete will be listed in a box at the top of the screen. Clicking on each individual line marked in red takes you directly to the incomplete field. The box will disappear when you select SAVE DRAFT. This allows you to continue with the application and submission.



A list of any incorrect or incomplete entries will be autogenerated when you click SUBMIT. Amending incorrect or incomplete entries can be time-consuming, so we recommend submitting applications well before the deadline.

If you wish to modify a submitted application before the deadline, it is possible to reopen the application. Be aware that the application must be resubmitted before the deadline. Applications cannot be modified after the submission deadline.

Once the application has been submitted, a confirmation of receipt will be sent to the e-mail address used for logging into the system. If you do not receive a confirmation of receipt (please check your spam folder), you should contact NNF as soon as possible using the contact details on page 3.

If you wish to withdraw a submitted application after the deadline, you must contact NNF via e-mail, using the contact information on page 3.



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

## 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 INFORMATION

Enter information on the main applicant, any co-applicant(s) and administrating institution in the following tabbed sheets:

- Personal information
- Current institution
- Educational information
- Administrating institution
- Applicant information
- Co-applicant(s)



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.

#### MAIN APPLICANT

The main applicant and host institution must be anchored in Denmark. The host institution could be a Danish hospital, university or non-profit research institution.

**CV for main applicant:** can be a maximum of 4,000 characters. Please include in your CV: - A short bibliographic overview summarizing total number of peer-reviewed publications, number of first authorships, number of corresponding authorships, number of citations, and h-index.

**Publications list** (for main applicant). Can be a maximum of 5,000 characters (including spaces, line breaks and special characters). Please only include the 10 most relevant publications for evaluating your merits. Include a complete specification of all authors for each publication with your own name highlighted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a full list of publications in ORCID.

**Supplementary Information** (under Applicant Information). This field can be utilized to describe special circumstances regarding your application that the evaluation committee should be aware of, e.g. current terms of employment. Please do not include any personal information of a sensitive nature, e.g. illnesses, family conditions etc.

**CO-APPLICANT(S)**

For this call, 1-4 co-applicants may be either required or allowed for the application. Co-applicants participate actively in organizing and implementing the project and receive a share of the grant. The project description should clearly describe the role of any co-applicants, and the budget should clearly indicate the co-applicants' share of the total budget. Co-applicants must be invited through NORMA and subsequently confirm their status as co-applicants in the application.

- Go to the INVITATIONS link in the blue field on the left.
- Click the + symbol and enter the name and e-mail address of the co-applicant.
- Select CO-APPLICANT under ROLE in the drop-down menu (REFEREE cannot be used for this call).
- Click INVITE.
- Co-applicants will be contacted automatically through NORMA and asked to confirm their status as co-applicants.

When the co-applicant accepts his or her status as co-applicant, additional fields will appear in the application. The CO-APPLICANT field includes information about co-applicant(s), including previous grants received from NNF. A short CV (maximum two pages) or an endorsement from the institution for each co-applicant can also be uploaded as a PDF file by clicking on CO-APPLICANT UPLOAD(S).

Either the co-applicant or the main applicant must complete the CO-APPLICANT field. Only one person can edit the application at a time.

If the co-applicant has confirmed participation but the information has not been entered in the CO-APPLICANT field, NORMA will not include the co-applicant as part of the application. The main applicant must therefore check that the information about any co-applicant(s) is included in the application before submitting it.

If co-applicants are mandatory, the application cannot be submitted before the required number of co-applicants have accepted. Similarly, if the number of co-applicants exceeds the maximum number allowed, the application cannot be submitted.

Please start the process of inviting co-applicants well in advance of the submission deadline.



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

**3.2 PROJECT INFORMATION**

Enter a description of the project under the PROJECT INFORMATION tab. A maximum of four illustrations can be uploaded here.

**GRANT PERIOD**

After you enter the start and end dates for the grant, NORMA generates a grant period in whole years. The grant period is the duration of NNF's grant for the project.

**PROJECT TITLE**

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

**BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Please provide a brief stand-alone summary of the project describing its purpose, target group and activities. (maximum 2000 characters, including spaces).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Please describe the proposed research project in detail – including purpose, background, methods, collaborations, and the significance of the project. (maximum 30,000 characters, including spaces).

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

**LITERATURE REFERENCES**

Please provide the reference information for the literature cited in the project description (maximum 4000 characters, including spaces).

**LAY PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Please provide a brief summary for non-experts in lay language. If the application is awarded a grant, the text may be used for publication (maximum 1000 characters, including spaces).



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

**3.3 BUDGET**

The budget only comprises the information entered in the BUDGET tab. Additional budget information attached under UPLOADS or added under other tabs than BUDGET will not be considered.

Before you begin to fill in the budget template, enter GRANT PERIOD START DATE and GRANT PERIOD END DATE under the PROJECT INFORMATION tab and press SAVE DRAFT. The budget must be entered in budget years following the grant period and not calendar years.

Complete the budget as follows:

- Click on the blue OPEN/EDIT icon to open a budget in a pop-up window.
- Click the + key to add budget rows.
- Select one of the budget headings, enter an amount under VALUE (DKK) and specify what the amount is for under DESCRIPTION.
- All amounts must be stated in Danish kroner (DKK) without decimal points, commas or spaces. NORMA automatically inserts the thousands separator.
- In the first budget year, the costs are shown from the project start until 31 December. The first budget year can cover a period of 15 months if the project's start date falls within one of the last three months (October, November or December) of a calendar year. This ensures that the next budget year follows the calendar year.
- In the subsequent budget years, the costs are shown from 1 January to 31 December.
- The last budget year can cover a period of 15 months if the project's end date falls within one of the first three months (January, February or March) of a calendar year.
- Save and close the budget spreadsheet by clicking SAVE and CLOSE (in that order) and then return to the BUDGET tab.

**Important:** If you make any changes to the grant period after filling out the budget, you must clear the budget table before making the change to the grant period.

Any comments about the budget can be entered in the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION field. The number of months covered by the budget in individual budget years should be specified here if they differ from 12 months.

Funding, both received and applied for, from the applicant's own organisation and from other sources should be entered under ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE PROJECT. The amount entered should be the total sum for the entire grant period. The NNF does not allow double funding and there can be no budgetary overlaps between projects. The INFORMATION FOR ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS field must clearly describe what the additional contributions cover and how the project proposed in this application is different from the project already funded or applied for from other parties than NNF. If the applicant, after submitting the application, receives funding for the project or parts of the applied project from others, the NNF must be contacted as soon as possible.

The way in which the budget is set up influences any later financial reporting to NNF. Please note that the financial accounts must have the same headings as the budget posts in the application.



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

### 3.4 UPLOADS

Hosting letter from the Danish host institution.  
Support letters from all co-applicants.

**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.

### 3.5 PREVIOUS AND CURRENT GRANTS FROM THE FOUNDATION

If you have received any grants from NNF as an applicant or a co-applicant within the past five years, you must provide the application number, project title, grant period (in years), grant amount and the percentage share of the grant (100% if there is no co-applicant). Briefly summarize how any of the grants are related to the current application.

If you have previously submitted other applications in the same calendar year, summarize how these applications are related to the current application.

November 2020

## 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.