

NON-DIABETIC ENDOCRINOLOGY - NATIONAL THEMATIC COLLABORATIVE GRANT 2024

Information and guidelines for
applicants

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Information about the call

Grant capital:
DKK 25 million

A total of DKK 25 million is available for one grant for a five-year research project

Stage 1 Expression of Interest form opens: 21 November 2023

Stage 1 Expression of Interest deadline: 23 January 2024, 2pm CET

Stage 2 application form opens: April 2024

Stage 2 application deadline: 17 June 2024, 2pm CEST

Applicant notification:
Stage 1 Expression of Interest: April 2024
Stage 2 application: September 2024

Earliest start date:
1 October 2024

Latest start date:
30 September 2025

Review committee:
Committee on Endocrinology and Metabolism

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1 NON-DIABETIC ENDOCRINOLOGY - NATIONAL THEMATIC COLLABORATIVE GRANT

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

The purpose of the *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - National Thematic Collaborative Grant* is to provide exceptional researchers within clinical endocrinology the possibility to establish collaborative research projects with a unifying vision and mission and facilitate synergy between the research partners.

AIM

The aim with the *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - National Thematic Collaborative Grant* is to:

- Strengthen clinical collaborative research within non-diabetic endocrinology.
- Position Denmark at an international level in improving prevention and care for patients with non-diabetic endocrine disorders.

FOCUS ON COLLABORATION

Collaborative projects are essential for obtaining the grant. The application must therefore describe how the collaboration is pivotal in addressing the challenge, as well as how each applicant contributes to the research project. This collaborative nature should be evident in the description of the project.

1.2 AREAS OF SUPPORT

The research projects must be clinical and collaborative and focus on endocrine disorders within e.g. thyroid, calcium metabolism, pituitary/adrenal/neuroendocrine, reproduction and women's diseases. Projects within diabetes research are **not** eligible.

1.3 ELIGIBILITY

Due to the collaborative purpose of the grant, the research project must bring researchers, preferentially from university hospitals from all the five Danish regions,

together (but from at least three university hospitals, from three different regions), in solving a challenge within the area of clinical non-diabetic endocrinology. This could be accomplished by establishing national cohorts and/or infrastructure or by other means. International scientific and clinical collaboration on the research project where relevant is encouraged.

THE MAIN APPLICANT

- The main applicant must be anchored at a Danish university hospital.
- The main applicant must have documented experience leading large-scale collaborative clinical research projects.

CO-APPLICANTS

- It is required that co-applicants participate from at least three different university hospitals from different regions in Denmark (the main applicant and one of the co-applicants can be anchored in the same region).
- Additional co-applicants can be anchored at a non-profit research institution, university or hospital in Denmark or abroad. International collaborations are strongly encouraged.

Please pay careful attention to required documentation that must be uploaded for main and co-applicants, see more under 3.6 Appendices.

PLEASE NOTE

A person can only be a main applicant on one application and co-applicant on one application for the call *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - National Thematic Collaborative Grant*.

Active grants:

Main applicants with another active NNF grant can apply for a *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - National Thematic Collaborative Grant*. If the main applicant has an active grant from NNF, this will be taken into consideration in the evaluation of the 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 applying while having an active grant from NNF, the application must clearly state the differences between the projects.

A main applicant with an active *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - National Thematic Collaborative Grant* can apply for a new *National Thematic Collaborative Grant* during the final year of the active grant. If a main applicant with an active *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - National Thematic Collaborative Grant* during the final year, receives a new *National Thematic Collaborative Grant*, the new grant cannot be activated until the existing grant is completed and no longer active.

Other applications to NNF:

In general, a main applicant can only submit one application to NNF for a specific research project per calendar year. However, applicants who do not proceed to Stage 2 in *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - National Thematic Collaborative Grant*, will be able to submit an application of the project in a modified version for *Non-Diabetic Endocrinology - Collaborative Project Grants*, which will open in Q1 2024.

Further, if an applicant, within the same calendar year, has submitted application(s) for different research projects to other calls within NNF, this must be clearly stated in the application. If you submit an application after the application deadline to another NNF call, please notify Fiona Goldizen (fgo@novo.dk) by email.

1.4 FUNDING

A total of DKK 25 million is available for one grant for a five-year project.

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

- **Salary** of a qualified substitute clinician to undertake clinical responsibilities of the main applicant.
- **Salary** for research assistance on every level: postdoctoral researchers, Ph.D. students (including tuition fee up to DKK 80,000 per year - must be specified in the budget) and research-year students (up to DKK 150,000 per budget year).
- **Salary** for technicians, bio-analysts, nurses and other technical and administrative assistance.
- **Salary** for employees or project consultants at all staffing levels, including project management. Salary for co-applicants can be applied for. However, researchers in permanent positions will not receive funding for their own salary.
- **Operating expenses:** consumables, materials, expenses relating to clinical trials, services, access to registries, access to laboratory facilities, databases and infrastructure etc.
- **Equipment;** equipment required for the project, up to DKK 200,000 per budget year.
- **Communication and outreach** in the form of conferences, books, articles and other dissemination directly related to the project.
- **Collaborative activities:** project related meetings, seminars and exchange of personnel that will strengthen the collaboration between partners of the programme.
- **Travel for an extended period** by the applicant, co-applicants or project staff to i.e. carry out experiments at the lab of an international collaborator. The applicant, co-applicant(s) or researcher(s) working on the project can travel to the institution of an international co-applicant or vice versa. Up to 10% of the total budget can be used for travel expenses of this type directly related to the project for travel, relocation costs, and living abroad expenses for health insurance, visa, etc.
- **Travel** expenses related directly to the project, i.e. experiments carried out in other labs for a limited period, workshops etc., up to DKK 50,000 per budget year
- **Conference participation,** directly related to the project
- **Publication cost;** publication of results emanating from the research project, up to DKK 50,000 per budget year.
- **Direct administrative expenses:** of up to 5 % of the total funding applied for and must be included in the budget.

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 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 or collaborating institution has a general bench fee policy should be included in the Hosting Letter or Support Letter(s) from the administrating/collaborating institution(s) enclosed as link or appendix. An unspecified bench fee without documentation will not be accepted.

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

- An example calculation: 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.

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 the main applicant. However, salary for a qualified substitute clinician to undertake clinical responsibilities of the main applicant can be requested



The grant may not be used to cover 'overhead'

1.5 LANGUAGE

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

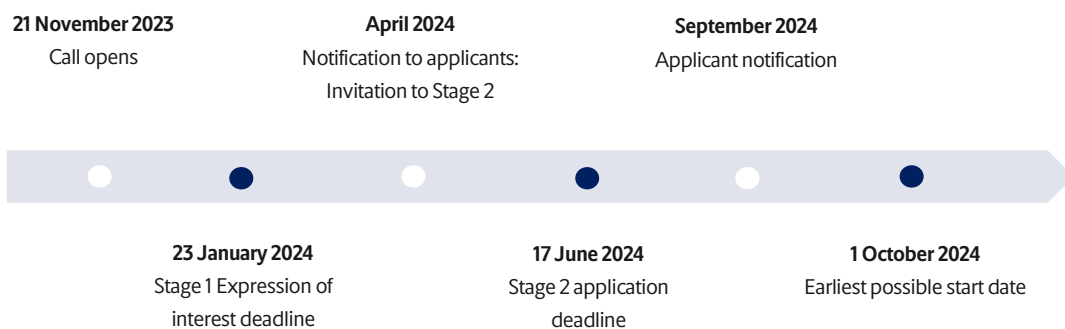
1.6 APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is a two-stage process. The project description for Stage 1 consists of a brief Expression of Interest of the proposed research project, addressing the aim and hypotheses. Budget is not required for Stage 1. Up to three research projects will be invited to proceed to Stage 2, in which the main applicant will be asked to submit a comprehensive application with a detailed project proposal of up to 30,000 characters. As part of the Stage 2 evaluation, the main applicant will be invited to present and discuss their proposed research project with the review committee.

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 norma-noreply@novo.dk to the e-mail address entered on initial registration.



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

1.7 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

NNF's *Committee on Non-Diabetic Endocrinology* will primarily assess the applications based on the following criteria:

- Scientific quality and potential of the project.
- Close and strong cross-institutional collaboration and synergy.
- Potential national/international impact of the research project on patients/persons at risk and clinical practice.
- Creativity, novelty, feasibility and ambition.
- Relevance and timing.
- Scientific excellence and merit of the applicants.
- Potential for implementation in clinical practice.

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).

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.

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.

3.2 CO-APPLICANT(S)

For this call, a number of 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 enter their details in the system. Please follow the instructions in NORMA on how to invite co-applicants to your application.



Note that inviting co-applicants can be time-consuming. Please start the invitation process as soon as possible and well in advance of the submission deadline

When the co-applicant accepts his or her invitation and has registered as a user in NORMA, they will gain access to the application. In addition, they will be assigned an APPLICANT DETAILS-task, available under MY TASKS from the APPLICANT PORTAL in NORMA. With this task, co-applicants should input details such as their institutional affiliation, work and publication history, application history with NNF and will be able to upload supporting documents such as a short CV (maximum two pages) or an endorsement from the institution.

Co-applicants will only be able to edit their own APPLICANT DETAILS-task, as well as make changes to the main application. The main applicant, on the other hand, can review and edit all Applicant Details-tasks for the application including those for co-applicants.



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

3.3 INSTITUTION

Please provide information about the institution where the grant will be administered. 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 administering 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 administering institution in good time.

3.4 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

Stage 1. The project description can be up to 10,000 characters including spaces and should briefly describe the following under specific headings:

Background/introduction

The proposed research, including its relevance for the grant aim, and hypothesis to be addressed.

Expected outcome and feasibility

The aim is to strengthen clinical research with a substantial potential for impact on patients and/or people at risk, and the application should describe the expected outcome of the research project, including:

- To what extent and how the project is expected to affect patients/people at risk (include numbers affected).
- The potential and feasibility for changing clinical practice.
- The expected reach of impact; nationally and/or internationally.

Scientific quality and novelty

The application must include a description of:

- The relevance and timing of the project, including a brief overview of existing knowledge on the research subject.

It is encouraged to include preliminary data to support the underlying hypothesis.

Applicants and collaboration

Collaborative research projects are essential for obtaining the grant. The application must therefore describe how the collaboration is pivotal in addressing the challenge, as well as how each applicant contributes to and interacts in the research project, in a way that creates synergy. This collaborative nature should be evident in the description of the project.

The application must therefore include a description of the applicants and their collaboration, including:

- The expertise, role and contribution of each participant,
- How the collaboration between the applicants contributes to synergy and to reaching the common aim,
- An organizational outline of the research project, and how the research groups are particularly well suited to address the proposed challenge. Please also include clearly defined leadership functions and reporting structures.

Research plan

The application must include:

- A project plan including a timeline for the expected milestones of the research project, preferably with specific outputs and outcomes.

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

STAGE 2.

At this stage, invited applicants should submit a comprehensive application of up to 30,000 characters including spaces. The Stage 2 Application will be an elaboration of the Stage 1 Expression of Interest and further address the following:

Applicants and collaboration

- How the collaboration will take place practically, including for instance in experimental or analytical activities, by co-funding, and by sharing of in-kind resources.
- How on-going knowledge sharing, and networking will take place.
- Plans for ensuring the establishment of a learning environment able to foster the next generation of outstanding researchers.

Research plan

The research plan must be elaborated on, and include the following:

- A budget.
- Considerations on risk mitigation strategy.
- Considerations on project continuation after funding has ended.

Scientific quality and novelty

Please include a thorough description of trial design including, where relevant, power calculations and considerations on sample sizes.

PLEASE NOTE

If the applicants make any changes to the project from stage 1 to stage 2, they must be specified and justified in the stage 2 application.

ILLUSTRATION UPLOADS

A maximum of four illustrations of 50 mb each can be uploaded here. Accepted formats are .jpg, .png, .gif, .bmp.

LITTERATURE REFERENCES

Please provide the reference information for the literature cited in the project description (maximum 8000 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.

3.5 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'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.



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

3.6 APPENDICES

STAGE 1

- A hosting letter from the Danish university hospital hosting the main applicant, signed by the management, must be uploaded.

STAGE 2

- Letters of support from all co-applicants, signed by the co-applicants' management, must be uploaded.

If the main applicant or the co-applicants are Head of Department or otherwise part of the management, the hosting letter or letter of support must be signed by someone from the management level above the main applicant/co-applicant.

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.

November 2023

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.