

Guidelines for applicants

2026

**POSTDOC
FELLOWSHIPS FOR
RESEARCH ABROAD**

BIOSCIENCE AND BASIC BIOMEDICINE



Facts about the call

Total amount available for granting:
DKK **15** million

Amount available per grant:
Up to DKK **5** million

Call opens:
21 October 2025

Call closes:
13 January 2026 at 14:00 (CET)

Applicant notification:
March 2026

Earliest start date:
1 April 2026

Latest start date:
1 April 2027

Review committee:
Committee on Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine

Contact:
Kristina Rohde Larsen
Grant Manager
E-mail: kro@novo.dk



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

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

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



1 POSTDOC FELLOWSHIPS FOR RESEARCH ABROAD

Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine

1.1 Purpose

The purpose is to support internationalisation of promising and ambitious young researchers and enable them to do post-doctoral research abroad and facilitating the return to, and integration in, the Danish academic research environment. The fellowship offers an opportunity to carry out a research project within bioscience and basic biomedicine, where 3 years are dedicated to work at a university, hospital or other research institution abroad, followed by up to 1 year at a university, hospital or other research institution in Denmark.

1.2 Areas of support

The overall goal is to support fundamental research in bioscience and basic biomedicine relevant for understanding the human organism and/or basal mechanisms underlying health and disease. The research fields include, but are not limited to: molecular biology, cell biology, bioinformatics, modelling of biological systems, genetics, microbiology, pharmacology, experimental physiology, biophysics, biochemistry, biology, and biostatistics etc. The research will typically be carried out in animals, cellular or subcellular model systems, or in silico.

1.3 Eligibility

- A research institution in Denmark must employ the applicant for the entire fellowship period and this institution must administrate the fellowship grant.
- The start date of the applied project should be after April 1, 2026 and no later than April 1, 2027.
- An applicant can submit one application to a Novo Nordisk Foundation Postdoc Fellowship call and cannot submit a new application for a Novo Nordisk Foundation funded postdoctoral fellowship while the first application is under review.

Please note that if your foreign research institution is located outside the EU, you may not be entitled to the same employment conditions during your stay abroad as those at your home institution. Specifically, privileges in connection with parental leave may differ significantly. You are therefore encouraged to familiarize yourself with relevant rules and regulations (at your home institution, at the institution abroad, at the relevant municipality of residence in your home country etc.).

The successful candidate:

- will carry out research for at least 3 years abroad, followed by up to 1 year in Denmark.
- has obtained a PhD degree within 5 years of the fellowship start date (excluding leave of absence).
- has considerable prior association to the Danish education or research community, e.g., by having a Danish master's degree or PhD or several years of research experience at a Danish institution and has a clear intention of returning to Denmark after the stay abroad.
- has at least one first author paper accepted for publication or published.
- can apply as a PhD-student if the supervisor signs a declaration stating that the applicant is expected to graduate before the start date of the fellowship.
- can apply if a postdoctoral stay abroad has already started. However, the time spent as postdoc abroad must not exceed 1 year at the time of application.
- has established contact with the laboratory abroad and has support from the principal investigator/lab head at the foreign research institution.

1.4 Funding

A total of up to DKK 15 million is available for grants. The total duration of the fellowship is 4 years. The Novo Nordisk Foundation awards up to DKK 1.25 million per year, for a total of up to DKK 5 million per grant.

Payout of the fourth and final grant year is conditional on the grantee returning to Denmark.

Up to three fellowship grants will be awarded in 2025.

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

- **Salary;** for the applicant, including pension, according to current agreements and regulations at the Danish host institution (please consult with the Danish host institution to make sure you request the appropriate salary). Salary for other people than the applicant (scientific or administrative) employed on the project cannot be covered by this grant.
- **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, however not exceeding 20% of the budget total.
- **Conference participation;** Up to DKK 50.000 per budget year can be requested 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;** Expenses related to travelling and relocation to and from Denmark. A supplement of up to DKK 55,000 during the first and last years for recipient and possibly family (in total up to DKK 110,000).
- **Relocation;** Expenses related to living abroad (up to DKK 70,000 per year for the years spend abroad, for health insurance, visa, etc. for recipient and possibly family. Additional DKK 55,000 per year abroad can be requested if the applicant has children.
- **Project supplement** for research grants (Danish universities only) and only for time spent at the Danish university
- **Bench fee** (not applicable to Danish universities)
- **Administrative support** (not applicable to Danish universities)

Full-time equivalents (FTEs)

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

Bench fee (not applicable to Danish universities)

Bench fee can be included in the budget for support of individual researchers to cover expenses needed to conduct the proposed research.

Bench fee is calculated per academic employee actively working on the project. It may only be used for expenses related to the research project which cannot be included within another individual budget category. Bench fee may account for a maximum of DKK 8,000 per month per FTE. The budget must specify the expenses covered by the bench fee, which may include:

- Common or shared laboratory expenses and consumables
- Laboratory utilities (electricity, gas, water)
- Maintenance of essential equipment
- Service contracts
- Technical and IT support

PLEASE NOTE that bench fee cannot cover rent, administrative support, representation, social contributions etc. A valid bench fee policy in line with the Foundation's requirements must be available at the time of application, and this official

documentation from the administrating/co-applicant's institution must be provided upon request.

Project supplement for research grants: (Danish universities only)

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

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

Administrative support (not applicable to Danish universities)

Administrative support may account for a maximum of 5% of the total budget and must be included therein. The administrative support:

- can cover expenses such as for accounting, payment of salaries, purchasing, hiring, as well as auditing and financial reporting on the project
- cannot cover administrative expenses that are not directly related to the project
- can via the host institution be shared between the institutions of the main- and co-applicant(s), as detailed in the application budget
- is not automatically included in the grant and must be stated/applied for in the application budget but should not be specified in detail

The Foundation will not award funding for:

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

1.5 Language

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

1.6 Application process

When all applications have been assessed, applicants will be notified about whether they have been awarded a grant. The notification e-mail will be sent from norma-noreply@novo.dk to the e-mail address used when creating a profile in NORMA.

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

1.7 Assessment criteria

NNF's Committee on Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine will primarily assess the applications based on the following criteria:

- Quality (scientific originality and relevance) and impact
- Scientific approach
- Scientific environment and collaboration
- Investigator track record (background, training, expertise)

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



2 The application and grant management system NORMA

2.1 Creating and submitting an application

The Foundation uses the application and grant management system NORMA:
<https://norma.novonordiskfonden.dk>

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

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

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

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



3 Application content

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

3.1 Applicant

The **Applicant** tab pertains to information about the Main Applicant.

CV can be maximum 4,000 characters.

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

Applicants should include a link to an updated profile with a full publication list for the applicant on either Google Scholar, Web of Science, or Scopus. Below state up to the 10 most relevant publications for evaluating your merits. Include a complete specification of all authors for each publication with your own name highlighted.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT GRANTS FROM NNF

If you have submitted other applications to NNF you must list them in the table **ONLY** if they are still under review and thus a granting decision has not yet been made, if so, summarize how the(se) application(s) are related to the current application.

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.

3.2 Institution

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



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

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

3.3 Proposal

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

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 2,000 characters, including spaces, line breaks and special characters).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please describe your proposed research project in detail – including purpose, background, state-of-the-art, methods, implementation, collaborations, the significance of the project.

Please include a paragraph for your plan for reintegration in the scientific community in Denmark, and how you see your research unfold beyond this grant (maximum 20,000 characters, including spaces).

Abbreviations should be defined the first time they are used, and preferably a list of abbreviations should be included in the project description.

ILLUSTRATION UPLOADS

A maximum of four illustrations can be uploaded here.

The following file formats for illustrations are accepted in the system: JPG, JPEG, PNG and BMP. The maximum accepted size for each illustration is 50 MB and 1050*1650 pixels.

LITERATURE REFERENCES

Please provide the reference information for the literature cited in the project description (maximum 8,000 characters, including spaces, line breaks and special characters).

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 1,000 characters, including spaces, line breaks and special characters).

3.4 Budget

Enter the project grant period, and the budget template will become available.

Only budget information submitted via the **Budget** tab will be considered in the review process. Any additional budget information attached under **Appendices** (or any other tabs) will not be considered.

3.5 Appendices

- A **hosting letter** from the Danish administrating institution, signed by the head of the institute, confirming that
 - the institution will administer the grant throughout the duration of the grant period, including during the stay abroad and during the one year back in Denmark.
 - in case the applicant is promoted to a position in VIP group A, cf. the [Project Supplement Agreement](#), during the project period, the institution will not receive Project Supplement in this period. The submitted budget must reflect the promotion (i.e., no Project Supplement included in the project's budget during the time where the applicant holds a position in VIP group A).
 - in case additional insurance is required (i.e., in addition to the Danish Government's Travel Insurance (*Statens Tjenesterejseforsikring*)) — either by law because it is required by the foreign institution or due to specific risks in the host country—the Danish administrating institution must ensure and confirm in the hosting letter that the applicant is covered. Expenses related to additional insurance must be included in the project's budget under the budget category “Expenses related to living abroad”.
- A **support letter** from the institution abroad and signed by the head of the laboratory abroad, confirming that the institution will host the applicant throughout the 3 years abroad and provide laboratory and office space.
- A short **CV** of the **head of the laboratory abroad** (max. 2 pages)
- If relevant: A statement confirming expected completion of Ph.D. before fellowship start date from current Ph.D. supervisor (only in case the applicant has yet to complete her/his Ph.D.)

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