DISTINGUISHED INVESTIGATOR 2020
BIOSCIENCE AND BASIC BIOMEDICINE
Information and guidelines for applicants
# Table of contents

1 DISTINGUISHED INVESTIGATOR - BIOSCIENCE AND BASIC BIOMEDICINE ........4
1.1 PURPOSE ..................................................................................................................4
1.2 THE RESEARCH LEADER PROGRAMME .................................................................4
1.2.1 ‘DISTINGUISHED’ PROFILE ...........................................................................4
1.3 ELIGIBILITY ..............................................................................................................5
1.4 RESEARCH FIELDS ...............................................................................................5
1.5 FUNDING ..................................................................................................................6
1.6 LANGUAGE ...............................................................................................................7
1.7 APPLICATION PROCESS ........................................................................................7
1.8 SELECTION PROCESS ............................................................................................7
1.9 IMPORTANT DATES ...............................................................................................7
1.10 IMPORTANT INFORMATION WHEN COMPLETING THIS APPLICATION ............8
2 THE NOVO NORDISK FOUNDATION APPLICATION AND GRANT
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - NORMA .................................................................9
2.1 USER REGISTRATION ............................................................................................9
2.2 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS ....................................................................................9
2.3 IDENTIFYING THE CORRECT OPEN CALL IN NORMA .........................................10
2.4 CREATING AND COMPLETING AN APPLICATION .............................................10
2.4.1 APPLICATION TEXTS .......................................................................................11
2.4.2 ILLUSTRATIONS ...............................................................................................11
2.4.3 BUDGET .............................................................................................................11
2.4.4 CO-APPLICANTS ...............................................................................................12
3 GENERAL RULES FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS ..............................................12
Grant information

Grant capital:
Up to DKK 10 million per grant.
A maximum of two grants can be awarded.

Application form opens:
October 30, 2019

Application deadline:
January 8, 2020, 2pm

Applicant notification:
Ultimo April 2020

Earliest start date:
May 1, 2020

Latest start date:
April 1, 2021

Review committee:
Committee on Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine

Contact:
Kirsten Klüver
Senior Administrator
Phone: +45 3527 6674
E-mail: kekv@novo.dk
1 DISTINGUISHED INVESTIGATOR - BIOSCIENCE AND BASIC BIOMEDICINE

1.1 PURPOSE
The purpose of the ‘Distinguished Investigator – Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine’ grant is to support outstanding professors with ambitious projects relevant to understanding the human organism and/or basal mechanisms underlying health and disease thereby catalysing Danish fundamental research impacting better health through knowledge.

1.2 THE RESEARCH LEADER PROGRAMME
To support the best and the most talented research leaders at all steps of their careers from start-up to established principle investigators, the Novo Nordisk Foundation offers three specific grants within the Research Leader Programme¹ (schematized below) to stimulate excellence and the possibility to pursue original and ambitious five-year projects. The calls ‘Emerging’, ‘Ascending’, and ‘Distinguished’ each target principle investigators at specific career-stages, and applicants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the requirements in each call, to ensure they are eligible and apply for the appropriate call.

1.2.1 ‘DISTINGUISHED’ PROFILE
The Distinguished Investigator grant is for outstanding professors who have demonstrated the ability to execute and lead research at the highest international level. The Distinguished Investigator grant is for professors of all ages. Key is that the project is novel, excellent, has potential high impact and is of a character that justifies a five-year grant of this magnitude.

¹ Read more about the programme and previous recipients at [https://researchleaderprogramme.com/](https://researchleaderprogramme.com/)
1.3 ELIGIBILITY

• Applicants must be professors (MSO included).
• The project must be anchored at a university, hospital or other non-profit research institution in Denmark.
• Applicants must, during the project, be employed and have their primary research group in Denmark (only minor and/or time-limited affiliation with institutions abroad are allowed).
• The project must be anchored at a university, hospital or other non-profit research institution in Denmark. It is a requirement that the host institution confirms that the project will take place at the given institution and that the institution will provide the required infrastructure, such as laboratory and office space, and administration of the grant. A letter of commitment, signed by the head of the institute, must be included in the application.
• Recipients of this grant must contribute to the pre-graduate teaching environment at their host institution. A Distinguished Investigator grant must not be used to cover a teaching substitute for the applicant.
• Distinguished Investigator grants are individual grants at the disposal of the grant recipient. If the applied project involves collaboration, the collaboration and the nature of the collaboration should be described in the project description, but the grant recipient must be the clear driver of the project. Invitation of co-applicants is not possible within this call.
• This Distinguished Investigator - Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine call is intended for ‘full-time’ researchers (teaching obligations included) i.e. researchers with clinical obligations cannot apply for this grant.

NB: In the 2018 and 2019 calls for Distinguished Investigator grants, there was a quarantine rule that applicants who applied unsuccessfully for the call two years in a row were excluded from applying the third year – THIS RULE HAS BEEN ANNULLED!

The general conditions that apply when receiving a grant from the Novo Nordisk Foundation can be found on our webpage.

1.4 RESEARCH FIELDS

The fundamental research should be bioscientific and/or basic biomedical and the project relevant for understanding the human organism and/or basal mechanisms underlying health and disease. The research fields could be within, but are not limited to: molecular biology, cell biology, bioinformatics, modelling of biological systems, enzymology, genetics, microbiology, plant biology, animal models, pharmacology, experimental physiology, biophysics, biochemistry, biology, and biostatistics etc. The research will typically be carried out in animals, model systems, cellular or subcellular systems, or in silico.

Projects and researchers within the below research fields are NOT eligible to apply for this call, as there are near identical calls from NNF for research within these fields, applicants must apply for those instead:
• Endocrinology and metabolism
• Biotechnology-based synthesis and production
• Clinical and translational medicine (for active clinicians)

1.5 FUNDING
A total of DKK 20 million is available for funding of up to two 5-year grants, each of up to DKK 10 million with approximately DKK 2 million per year. Annual budget amounts can diverge from DKK 2 million per year if needed due to e.g. equipment costs.

Funding can cover expenses related to:
- **Salary**; for research and technical assistance, including postdoctoral researchers, PhD students, technicians and research-year students. *Please note, that salary for the applicant cannot be covered by this grant.*
- **Tuition fee**; 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, however not exceeding 20% of the budget total.
- **Conference participation**; travel and registration expenses in relation to presenting the project at conferences and workshops (up to DKK 50,000 per budget year).
- **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 (up to DKK 25,000 per budget year).
- **Bench fee**; To include a bench fee in the budget, the fee must be part of the general expenses policy of the institute/institution. Further, if bench fee is included in the budget applied for, it must be elaborated in the budget what exactly it covers, and it may only be used for lab consumables and access to lab space and facilities that cannot be included within ‘operating expenses’ or another budget category.
- **Direct administrative expenses**; (up to 5% of the funding applied for):
  - can cover non-scientific, administrative expenses in relation to the project, such as accounting, administration related to payment of salaries and purchasing, hiring, as well as auditing and financial reporting on the project
  - *cannot cover administrative expenses that are not directly related to the project*
  - is not automatically included in the grant, and must be stated/applied for in the application budget, but should not be specified in detail

The Novo Nordisk Foundation does not allow double funding of projects.
- If the applicant has received funding for the project or parts of the project from others, this must be included in the budget. There can be no budgetary overlaps, and it must be clearly described in the project description how the project proposed in this application is different from and/or coherent with the project already funded.
- If an identical or overlapping project proposal has been or will be submitted (prior to the grant notification of this call) to other funding institutions than the Novo Nordisk Foundation, it must be described clearly in the ‘supplementary information’ for the budget. It must be noted to what extent the project and what budget posts are overlapping. In the case of an applicant being successful in obtaining both grants of overlapping project applications the grant may be annulled or reduced to the non-overlapping project parts and budget posts of the applications.
- If the applicant, post application submission, receives funding for the project or parts of the applied project from others, the Novo Nordisk Foundation must be contacted as soon as possible.
1.6 LANGUAGE
The application must be in English.

1.7 APPLICATION PROCESS
The application must be completed and submitted using the foundation’s 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. It is important, that applicants carefully read these guidelines before initiating the application process, as this document contains the complete call text as well as instructions regarding the completion of the application.

1.8 SELECTION PROCESS
The Novo Nordisk Foundation’s Committee on Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine evaluates the applications.

The committee will include in their assessment the quality, novelty and feasibility of the project and the merits, potential and commitment of the applicant.

End of April 2020, at the latest, recipients of the ‘Distinguished Investigator 2020 – Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine’ grant will be announced.

1.9 IMPORTANT DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 30, 2019</td>
<td>Application system opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January–April 2020</td>
<td>Evaluation of applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of April 2020</td>
<td>Applicant notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 8, 2020, 2PM</td>
<td>Application deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1, 2020</td>
<td>Earliest possible start date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

IMPORTANT! The foundation does not provide feedback in case the application is not selected for funding.
1.10 IMPORTANT INFORMATION WHEN COMPLETING THIS APPLICATION

CV can be maximum 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.
- An overview of your current grants and indicate how much of your research time (in %) is committed to each of the projects.

A short paragraph on your teaching obligations. If no teaching obligations are presently in place, please provide a short teaching plan for the grant period.

Publications list can be a maximum of 5,000 characters. First, 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.

Supplementary Information (under Applicant Information).
- Describe your terms of employment (where the project is to be carried out). If you are affiliated with multiple institutions, please describe your commitments and your terms of employment. Professor MSO should indicate the timespan of their MSO professorship.
- Indicate how much of your research time (in %) you intend to commit to the project applied for.
- Applicants who do not fit the ‘Distinguished’ profile and/or are borderline concerning the eligibility requirements described, must describe here why they consider themselves Distinguished Investigators.

Project description can be a maximum of 30,000 characters. Please describe your proposed research project in detail – including purpose, background, state-of-the-art, methods, implementation, collaborations, and the significance of the project. Please include a short paragraph on how the proposed project is different from and/or coherent with project(s) already funded. Up to four illustrations can be uploaded to the project description and preliminary data is encouraged.

Layman project description of maximum 1,000 characters should be short and suitable for publishing on the Novo Nordisk Foundation website in case the project is funded.

Uploads: A hosting letter from the administration institution, signed by the head of the institute, must be included. In case the applicant if affiliated with multiple institutions the host institution MUST confirm the commitment of the applicant to the host institution.
Please do not include other appendices.
2. THE NOVO NORDISK FOUNDATION APPLICATION AND GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - NORMA

2.1 USER REGISTRATION

The Novo Nordisk Foundation (NNF) application and grant management system “NORMA” can be accessed through links on NNF’s website or directly at: https://norma.novonordiskfonden.dk

Before you begin, please read the instructions and technical information on the login-page.

It is possible to register as an organization in the application system, however organizations are currently only eligible to apply for open calls within ‘Social and Humanitarian Grants’ and ‘Education and Outreach Grants’.

If you hold an active grant, or if you have applied for funding from NNF recently, you may already exist in our system. You can check this by clicking “forgot password,” enter the email address you used when previously applying and request a new temporary password. If you are registered in our system, you will receive an email within 5-10 minutes with your login details and the temporary password. If you are not in our system, register as a new user.

The user registered, who submits the application(s) is ‘the applicant’; the legal entity responsible for the truthfulness of the content in the application.

If you experience problems logging in, please contact NNF using the contact information on page 3.

2.2 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Filling in the fields

For all applications, the individual fields must be completed in accordance with these guidelines and the instructions supplied in NORMA.

IMPORTANT! To prevent loss of data, it is essential to press “Save Draft” before you leave NORMA or navigate in the system.

Submission

The application in its entirety must be submitted electronically via the application system. 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.

Applications cannot be modified after the submission deadline. If you wish to make changes to a submitted application before the submission deadline, it is possible for you (the applicant) to reopen the application. Be aware that the application must be resubmitted before the deadline to be evaluated.
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, you should contact NNF as soon as possible using the contact details on page 3.

Confidentiality
All applicant and application information will be treated confidentially.

2.3 IDENTIFYING THE CORRECT OPEN CALL IN NORMA

When you are logged into NORMA, you will enter ‘My Applications’, where you will find an overview of the status of your applications (in progress, submitted, approved and declined). In addition, there is a ‘Pending Action’ section where there may be additional requests from NNF regarding your applications.

To initiate a new application, you first need to identify the call and grant you wish to apply for. Go to the ‘OPEN CALLS’ tab, which is located in the upper right corner of the screen.

In the ‘OPEN CALLS’ window, all currently available grants from NNF are visible under different tabs that are sorted by the foundation’s overall grant areas. Search the tabs to find the call that you wish to apply for.

2.4 CREATING AND COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

An application is initiated by clicking the blue “Apply Now” button, once you have identified the call and grant you wish to apply for.

Your draft application is then created, and it will remain a draft version until you actively submit the application. After submission, you can continuously edit or cancel the application prior to the deadline. However, you are responsible for submitting or re-submitting before the deadline.
If you wish to withdraw a submitted application after the deadline you must contact NNF via email, using the contact information on page 3.

To submit the application, it is necessary to read and accept NNF’s standards for good research practice. A link can be found in the top right corner next to your name. Further, the applicant must declare that the information provided in the application is true and accurate.

You can at any time during the application process access a PDF view of your application, and you should always check to ensure that the PDF is readable and formatted appropriately before submission.

**2.4.1 APPLICATION TEXTS**

Formatted text from e.g. Word can be copied and pasted into most text fields of the application. It is, however, important to check that special formatting and special letters and symbols have not been converted or lost in the text fields after copying and pasting.

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

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

**2.4.2 ILLUSTRATIONS**

In the ‘Project Information’ tab, figures/charts/tables/images, (etc.) related to the project description can be uploaded (maximum four illustrations are allowed). Include illustration number and legend/caption for each illustration file when uploading. The illustrations will be integrated in the final application PDF.

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

**2.4.3 BUDGET**

The budget template will be correctly generated once you have entered the Grant Period Start Date and Grant Period End Date (found under the ‘Project Information’ tab) and pressed ‘Save Draft’. You must provide these dates, before entering any information in the budget. The budget must be entered in budget years following the grant period and not calendar years.

- To access the budget template, press the blue ‘Open / Edit’ icon
- Press the ‘+’ icon to add budget rows
- For each budget row, choose a budget post from the drop-down menu, specify details for the post under “Description”, and enter the amount under ‘Value’.
- All amounts must be stated in Danish Kroner (DKK) without decimals.
- When entering DKK amounts, do not use periods, commas or spaces.
- Save and close the template when the budget is completed.

Supplementary information for the budget requested from NNF can be entered in a separate field.
Funds obtained from other sources must be entered under ‘Additional Contributions for the Project’. Please specify what the additional funding covers and state if there are any overlaps with the budget applied for from NNF.

### 2.4.4 CO-APPLICANTS
For this call co-applicants cannot be included.

### 3 GENERAL RULES FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

The general conditions (a-h) apply to grant applications to NNF:
- The ‘applicant’ in the rules below refers to the main applicant responsible for submitting the application.
- There may be additional application conditions for individual calls, if so these are specified in the guidelines in section 1 under ‘Eligibility’.
- If an applicant submits applications exceeding the allowed in points a-d, the latter application(s) will receive administrative rejection.
- Points g-h are relevant only if you currently hold an active NNF grant.

a) An applicant may submit only one application per call.

b) For the NNF grant type “Project grants”\(^3\), an applicant may submit only one application per calendar year.

c) An applicant may submit one application for the NNF grant type “Investigator Grants”\(^3\) and may not submit another application for this grant type while the application is under review.

d) An applicant may submit only one application for a specific purpose/project per calendar year. Submitting two or more applications for different purposes/projects to different calls is permitted, as long as it is not to the same type of grant\(^4\).

e) When applying for grants that do not allow funding for the applicant’s salary, the applicant must be able to account for own salary during the entire grant period applied for.

f) NNF does not allow double funding of project-specific expenses. If an applicant has applied for, or has received, funding for the project or parts of the project from others, this must be detailed in the budget of the application. If the applicant receives funding for the project or parts of the project from other sources following submission of the NNF application, NNF should be contacted as soon as possible.

g) It is not possible to hold more than one active grant of the same grant type\(^3\). I.e. if you already hold a type ‘Investigator Grant’ you cannot apply for another ‘Investigator Grant’ until the grant is coming to an end. Researchers with an active grant of a specific type may be able to apply for a new grant of the same type during the final year of the grant, however, a new grant cannot be activated until the existing grant is completed and no longer active.

h) It is permitted to hold two or more active grants of different types\(^3\), i.e., researchers with an active grant of a specific type may apply for a new grant of a different type.

---

\(^3\) An ‘NNF grant type’ is defined by the general grant frame and/or support function. Three examples of individual NNF grants that are three different NNF grant types are: ‘Challenge Programme Grants’, ‘Steno Collaborative Grants’ and
'Tandem Programme Grants'. Two examples of NNF grant types that include multiple NNF grants having the same general grant frame and support function are:

3a Type 'Project Grants' includes: Project Grants for Biotechnology-based Synthesis and Production Research; Project Grants in Endocrinology and Metabolism; Project Grants in Clinical and Translational Medicine; Project Grants for Clinical Nursing Research; Project Grants in Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine, Project Grants for Art History Research.

3b Type 'Investigator Grants' includes: Emerging Investigator; Ascending Investigator; Distinguished Investigator; NNF Young Investigator; NNF Laureate Investigator, Investigator Grant in Art History Research, Excellence Project for Young Researchers within Endocrinology and Metabolism, Borregaard Clinical Scientist Fellowship, Research Stipend in General Practice, and Advanced Grant in Endocrinology and Metabolism.

September 2019
The Novo Nordisk Foundation

Please read “Terms and conditions for grants from the Novo Nordisk Foundation”, that all grant recipients must comply with:

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

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.