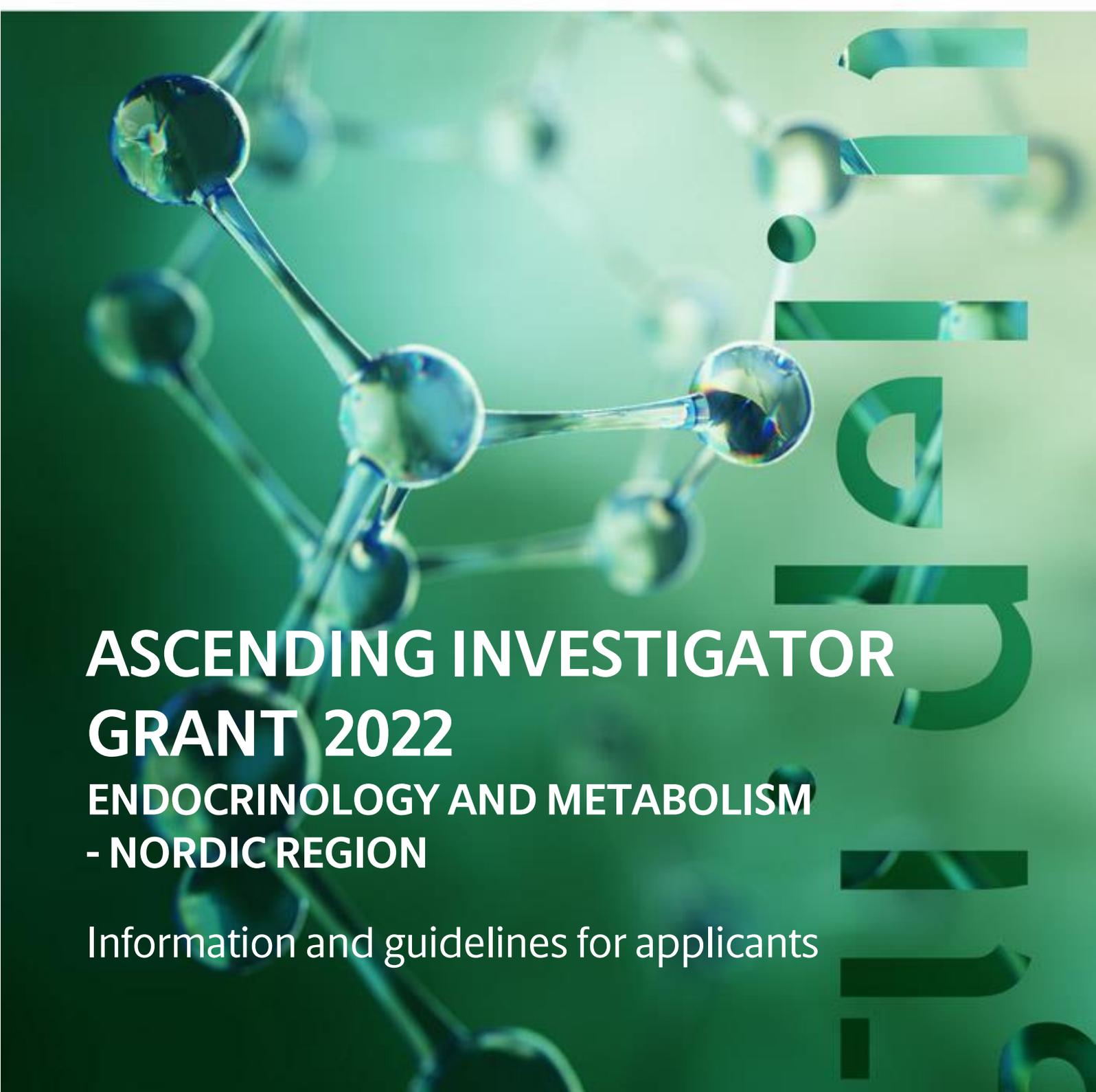


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**ASCENDING INVESTIGATOR
GRANT 2022
ENDOCRINOLOGY AND METABOLISM
- NORDIC REGION**

Information and guidelines for applicants

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Information about the call

Grant capital:
DKK 30 million

Award amount
Up to DKK 10 per grant

Application form opens:
15 October 2021

Application deadline:
13 January 2022

Applicant notification:
End of April 2022

Earliest start date:
1 May 2022

Latest start date:
1 April 2023

Review committee:
[Committee on Endocrinology and Metabolism](#)

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1 ASCENDING INVESTIGATOR GRANT – ENDOCRINOLOGY AND METABOLISM – NORDIC REGION

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

To stimulate the continued development of excellent research leaders, and promote Nordic research at a high international level, NNF seeks to support the consolidation of accomplished associate professors with ambitious projects within endocrinology and metabolism to understand the human organism and the mechanisms underlying health and disease at a basic and clinical level. Three grants are available for funding in 2022.

1.2 AREAS OF SUPPORT

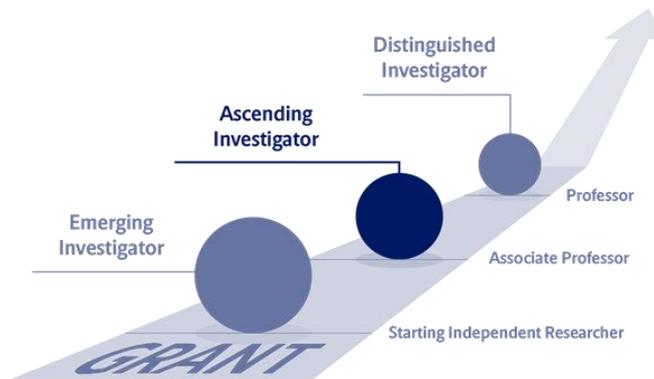
The overall goal is to obtain new knowledge and better treatment or prevention of disease relevant to the human organism within the areas of endocrinology and metabolism, relating to cellular energy homeostasis, and hormonal disorders of the endocrine system.

Areas supported include research involving patients and/or clinical practice but could also include animal models, model organisms, cellular- or sub-cellular systems (with clear whole-body relevance) as well as in silico analysis, with the overall purpose of solving challenges related to endocrinology and metabolism in health and disease. **Please note that endocrinology is not restricted to diabetes. Research projects within all subfields of endocrinology, e.g., thyroid, reproduction, or bone and calcium metabolism can be supported.**

Projects within cancer research will not be approved, however projects on e.g., endocrine tumours where the topic is focused on signalling or crosstalk (not strictly related to cancer development) will be taken into consideration.

1.3 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 principal investigators, NNF offers three specific grants within the 'Research Leader Programme'. The calls 'Emerging', 'Ascending', and 'Distinguished' each target principal investigators at specific career-stages, and applicants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the requirements in each call.



1.3.1 'ASCENDING' PROFILE

The Ascending Investigator grant is for excellent and independent associate professors who have the ambition and potential to rise to the highest international level within their research fields, and who already have demonstrated their research leader potential. Applicants should have their own research group and individual research profile. In addition, they are expected to have a documented track record of peer-reviewed research with a high impact and must at the time of application have senior authorships. Key is that the project is novel, excellent, has the potential of high impact and is of a character that justifies a five-year grant of this magnitude and that the applicant has momentum in the current research track. After their PhD degree, applicants should ideally have approximately 7-18 years of subsequent research experience (parental leave excluded).

1.4 ELIGIBILITY

- Applicants should be associate professors, senior researchers or at an equivalent level. Applicants must have their own research group. Professors, including MSO, cannot apply for this call – but can apply for NNF's 'Distinguished Investigator' grant.
- Applicants can be clinicians or basic/experimental researchers.
- The project must be anchored at a hospital, university, or other non-profit research institution (administrating host institution) in a Nordic country (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway or Sweden). It is a requirement that the Nordic administrating host institution confirms that the project will take place at the given institution. A letter of commitment, signed by the head of the institute, must be uploaded with the application.
- For basic/experimental researchers, recipients of this grant must contribute to the pre-graduate teaching, classroom lectures or similar at their host institution. An Ascending

Investigator grant cannot be used to cover a teaching substitute for the applicant.

- For clinicians, recipients of this grant must commit 20% (1 workday) to clinical duties.
- Ascending 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.

You may only submit one application to NNF for an investigator grant for granting in 2022 within all NNFs funding areas. If you submit more than one, the first application submitted will be evaluated, while subsequent applications will be administratively rejected.

If you hold a project grant within endocrinology and metabolism or a project grant within other funding areas, you may apply for an investigator grant.

1.5 FUNDING

A total of DKK 30 million is available for grants of up to DKK 10 million for projects with a duration of five years, approximately DKK 2 million per year.

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

- **Salary** for the applicant for all or part of the project period in case the applicant is not tenured or otherwise guaranteed his or her own salary in all or part of the project period.
- **Salary** for research and technical assistance, including postdoctoral researchers, PhD students (incl. tuition fee up to DKK 80,000 per budget year, which must be specified in the budget), technicians and research-year students.
- **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** directly related to the project, i.e., conference and workshop participation and presentation of research results, including travel up to DKK 50,000 per budget year.
- **Travel expenses** directly related to the project, i.e., experiments carried out in other labs for a limited period.
- **Publication** of results emanating from the research project, up to DKK 50,000 per budget year.
- **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. The budget must specify the expenses covered by the bench fee, which may include:
 - o Common or shared laboratory expenses and consumables
 - o Laboratory utilities (electricity, gas, water)
 - o Maintenance of essential equipment
 - o Service contracts
 - o Technical and IT support

Note, that bench fee cannot cover rent, administrative support, representation, social contributions etc.

To include a bench fee in the budget, the fee must be a part of the general expense policy of the administrating institution, and it must apply for all employees independently of funding source. Documentation that the administrating institution has a general bench fee policy must be included in the Letter of Commitment from the administrating institution enclosed as link or appendix. An unspecified bench fee without documentation will not be accepted. Maximum **DKK 8.000 per month** per FTE working on the project.

- **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



The grant may not be used to cover 'overhead'

1.6 LANGUAGE

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

1.7 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.



After the final granting decision, applicants will be notified by e-mail. The e-mail will be sent from noreply@norma.novonordiskfonden.dk to the e-mail address entered on initial registration in NORMA. In addition, a list of all grant recipients will be posted on NNF's website.



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

1.8 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

All applications will be evaluated by the Novo Nordisk Foundation's [Committee on Endocrinology and Metabolism](#). In the evaluation, the project and the applicant are weighted equally. The project is assessed based on quality, novelty, state-of-the-art and feasibility. The applicant is assessed on her/his merits relative to age and career stage, potential and commitment to the applied project and contributions to the scientific community in general.

If you apply, while having active grants from NNF or other funders, you must state these grants in your CV including your time-commitment to them, and you should describe the synergy of the proposed project with the projects already funded. Failure to disclose active grant information and unrealistic time commitment to the proposed project will adversely affect the assessment.

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 username 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.



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. From the Applicant portal In NORMA, scroll down to the OPEN CALLS section, where all currently available calls are visible. Use the search filters at the top of the section to filter by e.g. overall funding area or geography.

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 Applicant Portal in NORMA. 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 PROPOSAL (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

The applicant tab contains various sections with information about the main applicant as well as any:

- Personal information
- Educational information
- Current institution
- Experience
- Previous and Current Grants from NNF

MAIN APPLICANT

Your **CV** can be maximum 4,000 characters (including spaces and line breaks). 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 an indication of 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.
- For clinicians, please describe your current clinical responsibilities, including how and to what extent these will be continued during the project period.

Publication list. 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). Please describe your terms of employment (where the project is to be carried out). Non-permanent employees should indicate when their current contracts are running out and how their salaries are currently covered. Tenure-track employees should indicate when they are up for tenure. Further, indicate how much of your research time (in %) you intend to commit to the project applied for.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT GRANTS FROM NNF

If you have previously submitted other applications in the same calendar year, summarize how these applications 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 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.

3.3 PROPOSAL

Describe the project using the following fields on 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 2000 characters, including spaces).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please describe your proposed research project in detail – including purpose, background, methods, collaborations, and the significance and potential impact 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. (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.

ILLUSTRATION UPLOADS

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

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 1.8.

3.4 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. The budget must be entered in budget years following the grant period and not calendar years.

GRANT PERIOD

Before you can fill in the budget template, start by entering the start and end dates for the grant. NORMA then generates a grant period in whole years, which is reflected in the budget template. The grant period is the duration of NNF's grant for the project.

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.
- 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.

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. 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, NNF must be contacted as soon as possible.



Applicants may only apply for the types of expenses listed in subsection 1.5.

3.5 APPENDICES

In the final tab of the application form you must upload a letter of commitment from your Nordic administrative host institution, signed by the head of the institute or hospital. The letter must confirm 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.

If you apply for a bench fee to be covered by the grant, you must provide official documentation that the administrating institution has a general bench fee policy. This should be included in the Letter of Commitment from the administrating institution enclosed as link or appendix.

Bench 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, see section 1.5

All other uploads that are not required, e.g., recommendations, offers on equipment etc. will not be taken into consideration.

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.

October 2021

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.