

Guidelines for Novo Nordisk Foundation Committee Members

Thank you for accepting the assignment to act as an expert committee member at the Novo Nordisk Foundation (NNF). We have prepared these short guidelines to assist you with your committee activities. Expert committee review is of paramount importance to the work of NNF as a funding organization and is primarily used for evaluation of applications submitted in response to open calls. All expert committees at NNF operate under Mandate Letters and Rules of Procedure approved by the Foundation's Board of Directors. The Mandate Letters and Rules of Procedure will be provided to all committee members in connection with each funding round or when otherwise relevant.

1. Guiding principles of committee reviews

Funding decisions are made based on joint committee reviews and committee members must therefore always act under the guiding principles described below:

Confidentiality

NNF's review processes are carried out under confidentiality to protect the work and research ideas proposed by the applicants. You are therefore obligated to maintain the confidentiality of applications and reviews as a committee member at NNF. This means that all material is confidential and must be treated as such. You may not discuss evaluation matters with anyone, including applicants, colleagues or other experts before, during or after a review. You are only to discuss applications with

your fellow committee members during committee meetings. After a review process, all documents, whether paper or electronic, must be returned to NNF, destroyed or deleted.

Objectivity

Your reviews are to be made in regard to the application and in compliance with NNF's evaluation criteria as explained in the Mandate Letters, irrespective of the identity of the applicant. Be aware of the potential risk for any unconscious bias and how this may impact your review. Please also bear in mind that you, as a reviewer, represent NNF and not your place of work.

Consistency

You must consistently apply the same standards of assessment to all proposals that are allocated to you for review.

Diversity

NNF proactively promotes diversity and inclusion in all our grant awarding activities. As a committee member you must aim to secure a fair and equal evaluation of all applicants regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, nationality and the like.

Conflict of interest

Before starting the review process, committee members must declare any conflict of interest related to their allocated applications. Kindly refer to NNF's *Rules for Eligibility* for further instructions. If you are in doubt as to whether you have conflicts of interest regarding a given application, please contact the NNF secretariat.

NNF's Cornerstones and Code of Conduct

In addition to these guiding principles, NNF awards all its grants based on three established values or Cornerstones: Commitment, Quality and Respect. An example of how we use the values is in our interaction with our applicants, one of NNF's most important stakeholder groups. We strive to give the applicants a positive experience, respecting the time and effort they spend in preparing proposals for NNF whether it be during the application phase, at a committee interview or post award and irrespective of the outcome. As a committee member at NNF you represent the Foundation and act as an ambassador for our Cornerstones. Please visit the Foundation's website to read more about *NNF's Cornerstones*. Furthermore, all persons associated with NNF must adhere to the Novo Nordisk Foundation Code of Conduct consisting of 15 principles designed to ensure a culture of integrity driven by respectful and ethical behavior.

2. Review process and scoring scale

Review process

The review process generally follows the path illustrated below with some variation depending on the funding round and grant instruments. Some rounds are two-staged, while for other rounds, applications may be sent for external peer review prior to the committee's final recommendation. For yet other funding rounds, the review process includes face-to-face interviews with applicants. You will be informed of the relevant process and timeline by NNF's secretariat prior to a review round.

Scoring scale

Evaluation and scoring of applications is carried out using NNF's web-based application system, NORMA. Committee members assign an overall score to applications using a scale from 1 to 6 – with 1 being the best score. Alongside the score, you are expected to provide brief comments substantiating your scores. Comments are for the committee's review use only and are not made available to applicants.

The scores are interpreted as follows:

Score	Description
1 Excellent	The application fully meets or exceeds the assessment criteria and is considered of exceptional quality and novelty.
2 Very good	The application meets the overall assessment criteria, but minor short-comings are present. However, these constitute no critical weaknesses for the project.
3 Good	The application addresses the assessment criteria well, but the application contains several shortcomings and/or weaknesses.
4 Fair	The application meets the assessment criteria to some extent but shows significant weaknesses.
5 Unsatisfactory	The application meets the assessment criteria inadequately, and there are critical weaknesses.
6 Poor	The application fails to meet basic assessment criteria. The application contains major weaknesses unlikely to be resolved.

After the review

The secretariat manages any contact and feedback to applicants after the completion of the review process. The level of feedback given to applicants depends on the specific grant and call.

3. Practical information

Committee meetings

Being a committee member at NNF requires some meeting activity over the year and it is mandatory for all committee members to participate in the scheduled meetings. Meeting frequency depends on the committee of which you are a member. Committee meetings are primarily held at

the NNF offices in the Copenhagen area in Denmark. Meeting dates will be provided in good time for planning.

Honorarium and reimbursement

As a committee member at NNF you receive an honorarium for your time and effort. The honorarium is stated in the letter of appointment that you receive when appointed. The honorarium is paid out to you personally by the end of the year. Please be aware that your honorarium is liable to taxes in Denmark and/or your country of residence if you live outside Denmark. Committee members residing outside of Denmark can receive assistance with Danish tax matters provided by NNF via external advisors.

In addition, NNF reimburses documented and reasonable travel expenses in connection with committee meetings.

Important documents

NNF will provide you with the following documents that you must read before taking on the task of reviewing applications:

- Mandate letter for each grant
- Committee Rules of Procedure
- Rules for Eligibility
- NNF Cornerstones
- NNF Code of Conduct

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the officers at the NNF secretariat responsible for the committee of which you are a member.

Review process

