Novo Nordisk Foundation
Young Investigator Awards
2021
Information and guidelines for applicants
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Information about the call

Grant capital:
DKK 100 million

Award amount
Up to DKK 25 million per grant

Application form opens:
09 September 2020

Deadline for stage I application:
21 October 2020

Applicant notification:
Ultimo December 2020

Earliest start date:
01 October 2021

Latest start date:
01 July 2022

Review committee:
Committee on International Research Leader Grants
(found at https://novonordiskfonden.dk/)

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1 NOVO NORDISK FOUNDATION
YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARDS 2021

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

NNF Young Investigator Awards are for outstanding younger scientists to come to Denmark to expand their groundbreaking research programs. These awards provide funding for independent early- to mid-career researchers who are ready to conduct larger and more ambitious studies.

1.2 AREA OF SUPPORT

The NNF is seeking to support exceptional scientists working within any area of biomedical and/or biotechnological sciences.

1.3 ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility – An applicant:

- must be a principal investigator with an independent research group that s/he has directed for less than 7 years in total (taking into account any Leave of Absence).
- must be employed as a scientist outside of Denmark at a public or private research institution, or at a commercial organization.
- must, if awarded a Young Investigator Award, establish her/his principal research group in Denmark as soon as possible within two years of receiving the grant.
- may have any nationality.
- may have visiting faculty status in Denmark that must end by May 1, 2021.
- may be associated with a Danish university as an affiliated professor not receiving salary from the institution.
Ineligibility – An applicant:

- may not have an employed position in Denmark or a completed contract for employment in Denmark during the entire two-stage application process.
- may not apply for another NNF Investigator Grant (e.g., Distinguished Investigator or Ascending Investigator) ‘Start Package Grant’ or ‘RECRUIT Grant’ during an overlapping application and review period. However, if an applicant for an NNF Young Investigator Award receives a rejection in stage I, the researcher may then apply for a different NNF Investigator Grant for which the researcher is eligible.
- may not concurrently be a member of a Novo Nordisk Foundation expert review committee.
- may not have applied for a 2020 NNF Young Investigator Award unless the stage I or stage II notification mail from the NNF specified that it was possible to apply for a 2021 NNF Young Investigator Award. Unsuccessful stage I and stage II NNF Young Investigator Award applicants must wait until the application round following the next one before applying again unless stated otherwise in an NNF notification mail.

General rules relevant for this grant

- 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 1.3 under ‘Eligibility’.
- If an applicant submits applications exceeding the allowed in points a-c, the latter application(s) will receive administrative rejection.
- Points c are relevant only if you currently hold an active NNF grant.

a) 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.

b) It is not possible to hold more than one active grant of the following Novo Nordisk Foundation grant types: ‘Laureate Research Grant’, ‘Young Investigator Awards’, ‘Start Package Grant’, or ‘RECRUIT Grant’.

c) It is permitted to hold two or more active grants of different types, i.e., researchers with an active grant of a specific type, e.g., Project grants, may apply for a new grant of a different type, e.g., Laureate Research Grant.

d) Please refer to our general terms and conditions for further information that apply when applying for/receiving a grant from NNF (https://novonordiskfonden.dk/en/conditions-for-grants/).
1.4 FUNDING

Up to 4 NNF Young Investigator Award will be awarded in 2021.
- The researcher may apply for a grant of up to DKK 25 million (EUR ~3.4 million, USD ~3.7 million) for a period of 7 years. Up to DKK 7 million may be utilized for establishment of the laboratory during the first year, with following years funded at up to DKK 3 million per year.
- NNF Young Investigator Award holders can apply for additional funding from other NNF grant programs, both during and after the Young Investigator Award period.
- To assess the establishment and progress of the NNF Young Investigator Awardee’s laboratory and research program, there will be a midway evaluation following the first half of the grant period.

Applicants may apply for funding for the following types of expenses:
- salaries, including for the grant recipient
- direct project costs, including materials/consumables and purchase of services
- equipment costs
- travel expenses in relation to relocation and the research program
- costs to publish and present the results of the program
- direct administrative expenses for the grant (up to 5% of the total budget)

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
- 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
- other indirect costs

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

1.5 HOST INSTITUTION

Can be anywhere in Denmark and must be a university, university hospital, public research institution or other non-profit organization.

1.6 LANGUAGE

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

Application stages
The application process consists of two stages. Up to six selected applicants will be invited to stage II. Stage II applicants prepare a comprehensive research proposal that will be assessed by the review committee and by external peer reviewers.

Stage I
Major aspects of the stage I application are:
- the scientific achievements and track record of the applicant
- the goals and significance of the proposed research program
- the scientific questions to be addressed and an outline of the research to occur
- a description of the benefits of conducting the research in Denmark and consideration of a potential host institution if known

Please refer to Chapter 3 for details about Stage I application.

Letters of reference will not be considered during stage I and should not be submitted.

Stage II
Stage II applicants will need to identify a host research institution within Denmark that is suitable and beneficial for their research. Discussions between the candidate and the host institution must result in a letter of commitment from a host institution to be used as part of the stage II application.

The major elements planned for the stage II application are:
- a comprehensive research program proposal, including a description of the planned research group and plans for research collaboration
- a letter of commitment from the host institution within Denmark.

Detailed guidelines for Stage II application will be provided to the Stage I successful applicants latest in December 2020.

Deadline for stage II applications
The deadline for stage II applications will be in early February 2021. Stage II applicants will be informed of the date latest in December 2020.

Stage II candidates will be invited to Denmark for an interview with the Foundation’s review committee in April 2021. Candidates will present their proposed research programs as part of the interview.
Practicalities
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 stage I applications have been assessed, applicants will be notified about whether or not they have been selected for stage II. The notification e-mail will be sent from noreply@norma.novonordiskfonden.dk to the e-mail address entered on initial registration.

1.8 SELECTION PROCESS
Evaluation of both the stage I and stage II applications will emphasize scientific quality, originality and potential impact. Selection of NNF Young Investigator Award awardees will be based on the scientific excellence of both the investigator and the proposed research program. These aspects will be assessed by the review committee and by external peer reviewers.

Following completion of the stage II application process, the evaluations of the external reviewers and the recommendations of the NNF review committee will be submitted to the Board of the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

The Novo Nordisk Foundation will contact stage II applicants by June 2021.

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

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
To apply for grants from NNF you need to be registered as a user in NORMA.

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

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. In NORMA, go to the OPEN CALLS tab, which is located in the upper right corner of the screen. All currently available grants are visible in tabs that are sorted by NNF’s overall grant areas.

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 NORMA front page. 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 PROJECT INFORMATION (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 THE STAGE I APPLICATION

This section provides guidelines on the content required in the sections of the online application form for this call.

3.1 APPLICANT INFORMATION

Complete the fields for the sections: Personal Information, Current Institution and Educational Information.

The following information is for text fields in the Experience section:

CV
Please provide your brief CV. Include:
- Education
- Employment history
- Recent research funding
- Supervision/training/teaching activities
Summary publication & bibliometric information
- total number of peer-reviewed publications
- first/corresponding/senior authorships
- citation information (without self-citations)
- h-index
- Other relevant information if space allows
(max. 4,000 characters)

Publications
Please provide the complete reference information for your most important recent publications (up to 10). Include all authors (or number of authors, if necessary) for each publication and use bold or underline for your name. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a full list of publications in ORCID.
(maximum 5,000 characters)

Summary of own research
Please summarize your own research that is of relevance to this application. Include information regarding your research group.
(maximum 2,000 characters)

Supplementary personal information
In this field, please describe your motivation(s) for applying for an NNF Young Investigator Award. These can be related to scientific opportunities, personal reasons, etc.
(maximum 2,000 characters)

Previous and current grants from NNF
If you have received funding from NNF in the last 5 years as a main applicant or a co-applicant (part of a collaborative grant), provide information about the grant(s) here. Please refer to section 3.4 for more information.

3.2 INSTITUTION
Enter the institution in Denmark that is the planned or desired host institution in Denmark. The Department/Institute and/or Division at the Danish host institution may be included if known.

It is not a requirement to contact a potential host institution or department during the stage I application process.

Information entered for the host institution in stage I is not binding and can be changed for a stage II application.

3.3 PHASE I PROPOSAL
Project information
- Please enter the expected start and end dates for the 7-year grant period. The earliest start date may be 1 October 2021 and the latest start date may be 1 July 2022.
o Project Title - please enter the title of your research program. (maximum 150 characters, including spaces).

**Brief Project Description**
Please summarize the scientific goals, significance, originality, and potential impact of the research program you propose to conduct over a 7-year period at a Danish research institution. (maximum 2,000 characters including spaces)

**Project Description**
Please describe your proposed research program. Elements to be included are:
- The research questions and objectives of the research program
- The most important scientific background
- An outline of the research to be conducted (with an estimated timeline). Include in the outline:
  o The general experimental approaches
  o The main research methods and technologies to be utilized and developed
  o A brief description of the research group and collaborations needed for this program
- Discussion of experimental outcomes and significance
- Consideration of the benefits of conducting this research program in Denmark
  o If you have any existing or planned collaboration(s) with researchers in Denmark, please describe this briefly
(maximum 10,000 characters including spaces).

**Note that budgetary information for the proposed research is not required for the stage I application.**

**Tables:** tables can be created in the field via the table function located in the text editor menu at the top of the field (next to the special character function Ω). If a table from a file is pasted into the field, the formatting of the table may be altered and other formatting for the field may be changed. Tables from files can be uploaded via the “illustration uploads” function below.

**Illustration uploads**
Illustrations (figures/charts/images/tables/etc.) for the project description are uploaded via this function. The illustrations will be integrated in the application PDF.
- Up to 4 illustration files can be uploaded for the stage I application.
- Include the illustration number, title and legend/caption within each illustration file.
- The following file formats are accepted in the system: JPG, JPEG, PNG, TIFF, BMP.
- The maximum size for each illustration is 1050 x 1650 pixels.

**Literature References**
Provide the reference information for the literature cited in the Project description field.
(maximum 4,000 characters including spaces).

**Lay Project Description**
Please provide a summary of the research proposal for non-experts. If the application is awarded a grant, the text may be used for publication.
(maximum 1,000 characters including spaces).
3.4 UPLOADS

There are no uploads for the stage I application other than illustrations for the Project Description. For stage II, a Letter of Commitment from the host institution will be required as part of the stage II application.

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.

3.5 PREVIOUS AND CURRENT GRANTS FROM THE FOUNDATION

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.

If you have previously submitted other applications in the same calendar year, summarize how these applications are related to the current application.

September 2020
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.