Guidelines for Nordic Cancer Union Research Grant Applications and Allocations 2025

Requirements

The Nordic Cancer Union (NCU) provides funding to support and stimulate collaborative cancer research within the Nordic countries.

The research project must be a collaborative effort between researchers from research institutions in three Nordic countries or more. However, if the project's Nordic dimension is exceptionally strong, two different Nordic participating countries can be considered sufficient.

The principal investigator of a research project must be employed in a Nordic research institution. The research project must be cancer relevant, and the effect of collaboration should be synergistic.

Funding is restricted to research that is in line with the NCU research strategy. The revised research strategy was adopted by the Nordic Cancer Union Board in November 2022.

NCU research grants are primarily awarded for a duration of one year. The Scientific Committee can recommend projects to receive funding for up to three years to the Board, which holds the final decision-making power. Funding for the 2nd and 3rd year is conditional and subjective to approval of a progress report.

Submission of application

The application deadline is absolute. The web portal will close automatically on **10th of September 2025, at 16.00 CET**.

- Only applications submitted through the web portal will be accepted
- Only applications with strong Nordic dimension will be accepted
- The electronic application form and all the attachments in the form must be completed in English
- The applicant will receive an automatic confirmation by e-mail when the NCU has received the application
- The applicant is responsible for time management in relation to completing and submitting the application. Computer failure, network problems, etc., do not constitute valid reasons for an extended submission deadline
- The application cannot be modified after the deadline, nor attachments sent
- The applicant is advised to download a PDF-version of the submitted project application from the web portal and read it carefully before the application deadline
- Submitted applications may be withdrawn, modified, and re-submitted *before* the deadline. Note that the application must be re-submitted to be registered and evaluated. It is the responsibility of the project manager to ensure that the final application is submitted before the deadline

Please note that it is not possible to apply for:
- Administrative fees and overheads (rent, telephone, lighting, water, etc.) and similar expenses
- Tuition fee, supervision and overheads in connection with PhD studies, and usually not course expenses related to the study
- Computers and computer equipment unless it is related to specialised hardware/software (must be substantiated under 'Detailed budget information')
- Expenses defrayed before the date of application

Collaborators

Information on the Nordic collaborators (from preferably at least three Nordic countries) and their tasks must be completed in step 2. The application will be rejected if there is not sufficient Nordic collaboration involved in the project.

Progress report of on-going projects

A progress report of on-going projects must be completed in step 1. The report must be comprehensive and up to date. An acceptable report is prerequisite for installment of the 2nd and 3rd year funding in the longer projects.

Application review process

All applications will be reviewed in the state they were received. In consultation with the Chairman of the NCU Scientific Committee, the NCU administration may reject applications that are completed incorrectly, clearly do not meet the formal requirements or do not fall under the NCU strategy.

Scientific Committee evaluation

It is the NCU Scientific Committee, who assess the NCU research grant applications. The Scientific Committee consists of one representative with scientific competence from each of the six NCU member countries. The NCU Board appoints the Scientific Committee representatives based on a recommendation from each of the national cancer societies.

Independent evaluation

The members of the Scientific Committee will independently review all applications according to the following criteria:
- Scientific quality
- Quality of researchers involved
- Cancer relevance
- Relevance to prevailing NCU research strategy
- Nordic synergy

All applications that have not been administrative rejected are scored. The following scaled values are applied:

1	1.5	2	2.5	3	4	5
Top (best)			-------->		Bottom (poorest)	

If an application is outside the committee member's field of competence, they may consult with other national scientific resources. In such cases, the committee member is nevertheless responsible for the assessment of the application.

The Scientific Committee members' independent reviews will provide the basis for the plenary evaluation meeting.

Plenary evaluation

In the plenary session, the Scientific Committee discusses each application and agree on a prioritised list of recommended NCU Research Grant recipients. The scientific basis for the recommendation must be documented in the proposal, as well as where the project fits the NCU Strategy.

NCU Board decision

When the Scientific Committee has completed its evaluation of applications, it will present the applications and the prioritised list of projects recommended for funding to the NCU Board. The NCU Board will review the recommendations from the Scientific Committee and determine the final NCU Research Grant recipients.

Impartiality

Members of the Scientific Committee are required to voice concerns regarding their partiality when it is relevant to do so. Committee members are always disqualified from evaluating applications in which they themselves, family members, or other near relations, directly or indirectly, are involved. Furthermore, committee members must not participate in the assessment of applications if they, directly or indirectly, are involved in the applied project. Professional or personal conflicts of interest are also grounds for disqualification. If a member of the Scientific Committee claims partiality on the grounds of personal reasons, this must be respected even if it is not evident that such partiality exists.

Members of the Scientific Committees are not permitted to contact applicants concerning their submitted applications during the evaluation process.

Terms and conditions of the NCU Research Grant
- The NCU Research Grant can only be used for the purposes stated in the application. If the funds have not been used as specified in the application, repayment is required
- The NCU Administration must approve any project changes that deviate from the original application
- Leaves of absence are not considered project deviations but must be approved by the NCU Administration. The NCU does not compensate for any additional costs due to leaves of absence
- A yearly progress report must be submitted until the project is completed. Upon project completion, a final report must be submitted
- A final report must be accompanied by a layman report that may be published and by the NCU or any of the cancer societies forming the NCU
- The principal investigator is obligated to mention the NCU's contribution to the project in all external communication related to the project, including lectures, posters, and publications
- It is the grant holder's responsibility to obtain permissions/approvals and have it ready

for inspection from, e.g. the Data Protection Agencies, Ethics Committees and Animal Research Authorities before the start-up of the project

- Grants are awarded under the provision that the grantee has not received, does not receive, or does not expect to receive support for the project from companies/groups/foundations whose production or turnover to a large extent includes current income from production and sale of obvious carcinogens, in particular tobacco

The electronic application and reporting system

The electronic application and reporting system is here:
https://www.efond.dk/ansogning/index2.php?fondnr=80&ansoeger_sprog=44

The applicant can complete the application in several sessions before submitting it. Corrections and updates to the application form can be made on the page 'Overview' by pressing 'Edit'.

Remember to save the information or corrections you have entered before leaving the step. **Press 'Save changes', which can be seen both at the top and the bottom of each step.**

In each step, you will be able to see the mandatory boxes, which have not been completed, partly by the red/green square in the heading and also by the missing boxes being marked red in the left margin. All mandatory boxes must be completed before submitting the application.

A maximum number of characters are allowed in several boxes (including word-spacing). It is not possible to submit the application if this is exceeded.

Please note that Word and the application form does not count characters in the same way, for example Word does not count 'enter'/'return'.

The electronic application form

The application form is divided into 6 steps
Step 1-4 concerns the actual application
Step 5 offers the possibility to see the whole application and print a PDF file
Step 6 is used to submit the application form

Step 1 - Personal information and reporting of ongoing projects

Only one profile per person can be created, and once the application is created, it is not allowed to change profile. In such cases, a new application must be created in the right applicant's name.

The personal data are used for quick and secure identification of the application and to communicate with the applicant. The data may be reused and updated later.

Examples of positions are registrar, head nurse, professor, postdoc, etc.
Examples of basic education are Master of Science in Medicine, Master of Science in

Medical Engineering, nurse, etc.

Step 2 - Project description

The project title will, e.g. be used in connection with the announcement of a grant.

Collaborators

Collaborators who are set up will automatically get an e-mail, to confirm that they agree on being mentioned as collaborators on the project. The confirmation is done by clicking the link in the attached e-mail. If collaborators after the set-up do **not** receive an e-mail, it might have been caught in a spam filter. If this is the case, they can be deleted and re-established on an alternative e-mail address, or the applicant may request collaborators to send an e-mail to ncu@kreftforeningen.no.

Management approval
The manager of the institution, where the project is to take place, must be set up for electronic managing approval of the application. If the applicant is the head of the institution, the electronic management approval must be made by another executive on the same or a higher level than the applicant.

The project title, project description and a short project description, must be filled in and saved before the electronic management approval.

The management approval is done by clicking on the link in the attached e-mail. If the executive does **not** receive an e-mail after the set-up, it might have been caught in a spam filter. If this is the case, the executive can be deleted and re-established on an alternative e-mail address, or the applicant may request the executive to send an e-mail to ncu@kreftforeningen.no.

Project description
If the project description has been prepared as a word document, the text can be copied into the application form. Any pictures and figures can be attached to the application form Step 4.

How to copy text into the application form:
Open the Word document and mark the text you want to copy. Press Ctrl+C to copy the text. In the application form, you click the box into which you want to paste the text and press Ctrl+V.

If you are unable to copy the text from Word into the application form, you can save the Word file by following the instruction below. You will then be able to copy the text into the application.

1. Save the application as plain text. Chose the menu Files > Save as and select the type of file: regular text (*.txt) (plain text).
2. Select the text format Windows or MS_DOS or press OK
3. Close the document. This is important as the document has lost the text formatting and will look different, even though this is not directly visible

4. Open the document - this version is plain text
5. Copy the text by pressing Ctr+C, Ctr+V, as described above.

Step 3 - Budget and CV

Budget

The budget consists of a number of budget items (step 3) which will be accumulated into a budget overview.

Budget items must be allocated to the actual project year the funding is applied for from the NCU. Please also indicate all other current and pending funding support for the project. **All amounts must be in EUR.**

The detailed budget should be specified in the following cost categories:
- salaries
- operation costs
- equipment, purchase and leasing
- travel and long-term study abroad
- other

Salaries should be specified in:
- own salary
- salary for scientific assistants/PhD students
- salary to non-scientific assistance
- salary for guest researchers
- other salaries and fees (type must be indicated)

Step 4 - Figures

Figures (pictures, documents, etc.) are not inserted in the project description but are separately transferred as detailed in step 4 of the application itself.
All documents and pictures can only be attached as jpg files. Other file types can be changed to jpg files using a scanner or electronically.

12 figures/pictures can be appended to the application form. Only use figures if it is necessary for the assessment of the application.

Remember to write text to all figures. Characters with accompanying text are not included in the maximum number of characters in the project application.

Step 5 – The application in its entirety

All the information is collected, and the applicant can see the application as a printer-friendly PDF document.

Step 6 – Complete the application

It is possible to see if the application form has been correctly filled in. If the application is ready to be submitted press the send button. Remember to check the box and press 'OK' at 'I have read the guidelines' (you might have to press 'OK' twice).