Open Discovery Innovation Network ÓDIN

2024 call for **GRANTS**

ÓDIN

UNITES MINDS TO ACCELERATE DRUG DISCOVERY AND IMPROVE DIAGNOSTICS

ODIN breaks down the barriers between industry and academia by supporting precompetitive research in a collaborative, open environment.

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INTRODUCTION

These guidelines describe the process and requirements for the first call for ODIN grant applications in 2024 only.

The newest version of this guideline folder can always be found on our digital matchmaking platform www.worldlabs.org/c/odin.

If you have any questions or need assistance, you are always welcome to contact the ODIN Secretariat. Our contact information is listed in the back of this folder.

INTRODUCTION - CONTINUED

The Open Discovery Innovation Network (ODIN) is a five-year platform anchored at Aarhus University from 2024-2028.

The Novo Nordisk Foundation (NNF) has awarded ODIN 180 M DKK to establish the platform, facilitate co-creation of novel research projects and provide funding for the academic component of joint initiatives between academia and company partners from the pharma and biotech industries.

ODIN's open approach aims to provide a substrate and a catalyst for innovation: ODIN projects must be equal collaborations between academia and industry on the earliest stages of drug discovery and they must address real industrial research needs. ODIN projects must generate the building blocks necessary for developing new innovative therapeutics and diagnostic developments downstream - and they must share their data and results openly with the public to accelerate the drug discovery process and lead to innovative diagnostics.

THE PARTNER UNIVERSITIES ARE:

- Aalborg University
- Aarhus University
- Technical University of Copenhagen
- University of Copenhagen
- University of Southern Denmark

INTRODUCTION - CONTINUED



ODIN projects must be RELEVANT FOR DRUG DISCOVERY AND/OR DIAGNOSTICS:

- All projects must show a clear relevance for industry we aim to help build the knowledge foundation for developing the drugs and diagnostics of tomorrow
- The adressed challenges must be sufficiently generic to ensure that more than one company will benefit from the results



COLLABORATION PROJECTS co-created by academia and industry:

- ODIN supports the matchmaking within the network to make sure that everyone with relevant project ideas can find the best possible collaboration partners
- Faster and easier initiation of projects due to the standard legal agreement (co-created by industry and academia) used in all projects. Find the project agreement on our website.



OPEN SHARING of knowledge and results from our projects:

- All foreground knowledge from ODIN projects must be shared openly with the public with universal use rights (no filing of IPR, and no restrictive licenses or paywalls).
- Everyone (also outside the ODIN network) is welcome to use both knowledge and products for downstream commercialization

THE **SCIENTIFIC SCOPE**

In 2024-2028, ODIN will focus on areas that holds a strong potential for the Danish ecosystem and global health in general.

The main focus will be on drug discovery and better clinical diagnostics within three disease areas that pose major threats to human health:



Cardiovascular diseases



Cardiometabolic diseases



Infectious diseases

Projects within these three areas are expected to explore e.g. new disease models, biomarkers, targets, tools and other precompetitive niches that can lead to improved drug discovery and diagnostics.

THE **SCIENTIFIC SCOPE** - CONTINUED

Up to 1/3 of the funding reserved for research projects will have a broader focus.

Calls within this frame will focus on cross-disciplinary projects exploring disease-agnostic technology platforms and research tools/methods that potentially can lead to improved drug discovery and clinical diagnostics.

The aim is to facilitate projects and approaches that are expected to generate valuable knowledge applicable to more diseases and unmet needs. Such projects can explore, for example, a technology platform or research tools and methods within a single disease area and/or use one disease as model - as long as the project will expectedly provide results that can benefit other disease areas.

As such, projects can be explored through any disease area or approach, including **but not limited to** e.g., regenerative medicine/stem cells, microbiome in relation to human health and rare diseases.

All projects, regardless of call focus, must be precompetitive, open and designed to meet ODIN's selection criteria and aim (see page 27).

GRANT TYPE DETAILS 2024

SIZE: Medium or large interdisciplinary projects

PURPOSE: To address complex research problems - inspired by industry needs

LENGTH: Up to 3 years

BUDGET: Up to 7 M DKK

The ODIN Steering Group has reserved up to 30 M DKK for the 2024 funding call in total. This includes up to 20 M DKK for the first focus areas (CMD/CVD and infectious diseases) and up to 10 M DKK for the focus on disease-agnostic platform technologies.

SETTING YOUR TEAM

ODIN projects must have participants from both academia and industry to be eligible.

All projects must include at least one or (preferably) more companies - and relevant collaboration across partner universities will be favorably assessed. The parties co-create the project application and co-execute the research project, if granted.

WHO CAN BE MAIN APPLICANT?

The main applicant must be a tenured or tenure-tracked researcher from one of the five partner universities:

- Aalborg University
- Aarhus University
- Technical University of Denmark
- University of Copenhagen
- University of Southern Denmark

Furthermore, the main applicant must be the researcher responsible for the main part of the work to be performed.

WHO CAN BE **PROJECT PARTICIPANTS**?

- Researchers from the five partner universities
- Any interested company (see next page)
- Researchers from non-partner universities (see next page)
- Not-for-profit organizations
- Hospitals

WHO CAN RECEIVE FUNDING?

Only participants from not-for-profit organizations such as universities and hospitals can receive funding (see page 18).

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SETTING YOUR TEAM - CONTINUED

INCLUDING RESEARCHERS FROM NON-PARTNER UNIVERSITIES/RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

A main applicant from a partner university can add team members from non-partner universities/hospitals/ research institutions in an ODIN application. To be eligible for a share of the project's budget, the team member's host institutions must accept and be able to comply with ODIN's open approach to e.g., collaboration and publishing as well as the requirement not to file IPR.

As all other parties, the non-partner organizations must sign the Project Agreement in case the project application receives funding – in accordance with their local rules of delegation. The Project Agreement is the same for all ODIN projects and is based on the principles of openness agreed upon by partner universities and company partners in the overall programme application for the NNF. The Project Agreement template can be found at the ODIN website.

COMPANY PARTNERS

In ODIN, companies and university/hospital researchers co-create and co-execute research projects based on needs, challenges and ideas derived from the partners. The projects cannot be designed to benefit one company exclusively - but must demonstrate a broadness in value creation by being relevant to many companies.

Also, university researchers cannot propose or be part of research projects with their own spinout companies as the sole or main company participant/beneficiary of the project's results.

GETTING STARTED

In ODIN, all ideas and applications must be submitted online on our matchmaking platform. When you have registered at the platform, you'll have access to the online form and several templates, which you will need to submit applications.

You can **JOIN THE MATCHMAKING PLATFORM** at: www.worldlabs.org/c/odin Should you need any help, you are more than welcome to contact the ODIN Secretariat for help at odin@au.dk.

We also recommend that you **PARTICIPATE IN AN INFORMATION MEETING**, which is held at the partner universities and online prior to the launch of the call round. At these meetings, the ODIN Secretariat will go through the details of the full application process and provide details about the aim and scope of ODIN.

On the following pages, you will find an overview of the steps in the application process as well as a complete list of materials that you will need in order to apply for grants within ODIN.

Please make sure to familiarize yourself with the ODIN templates found on our matchmaking platform well ahead of the submission deadline.

STEPS IN THE **APPLICATION**PROCESS

Once you have joined the online matchmaking platform, you are ready to join the facilitated matchmaking and ideation processes in ODIN.

The ODIN secretariat will host a range of meetings including:

- kick-off meeting with matchmaking
- information meetings
- researcher pitches
- company pitches

On the following page, you will get an overview of the steps in the application process, including the matchmaking and ideation.



1. SHARE YOUR RESEARCH NEED OR PROJECT IDEA (MANDATORY) - OR GET INSPIRED

If you have an idea for a research project within the ODIN scope, you must showcase it using a short template at the online platform. Find the instructions on how to create ideas (and how to use the matchamking platform in genereal) in the 'How to get started' learning course. As openness and crowd sourcing is a central element in ODIN, it is mandatory to **upload ideas no later than 7 August 2024** on the site before developing it into an application later on.



2. FIND COLLABORATION PARTNERS

We recommend that ou take the time to browse through the members of the ODIN network on the online platform. Here it is also possible to actively search for collaboration partners with specific competencies or knowledge, or offer yourself as a partner if you do not have a project idea. ODIN hosts a series of network events to spur ideation and we offer handheld matchmaking with the help of both academic and industrial ambassadors - to help you find partners or be found by others.



3. DEVELOP PROJECT IDEAS TOGETHER

When you are set with a good idea and the right team to match it, you and your partners from industry and academia must collaborate to translate the idea into a co-created ODIN project, where everyone plays an active role.



4. WRITE THE ABSTRACT - THEN AN APPLICATION

Before writing up the application abstract, we recommend that you take a close look at the selection criteria in this folder.

As stated in the section "Steps in the review process", project ideas are first selected based on an extended abstract. Applicants with the best abstracts are asked to submit a full-length application. On the following page, you will find a list with all the materials needed for writing both the abstract and eventually a full application. Templates are found on the online matchmaking platform.

MATERIALS FOR A FULL APPLICATION

For abstracts, a single template is available on the digital matchmaking platform www.worldlabs.org/c/odin.

The full application requires the following:

- APPLICATION FORM TEMPLATE will allow you to prepare for the online submission (available in June)
- CV from the primary researcher/employee of each partner university/organization/company. Max. 1 page/ person
- LETTERS OF SUPPORT from each involved company confirming its involvement (and the nature thereof) in the
 project
- **DOCUMENTATION FROM NON-PARTNER UNIVERSITIES** (if relevant) that any participating researchers can, in fact, work within the open framework of ODIN and comply with its open approach to IP
- TOTAL AND INDIVIDUAL BUDGETS signed and approved by all relevant Heads of Department or similar to ensure that the proposed individual budgets align with local budgeting rules
- GANTT CHART filled out according to the provided template
- BENCHFEE CALCULATION(S) as budgetted in the application

Any application that is not in accordance with the law and the administrative requirements of these ODIN guidelines will be rejected without peer review. Therefore, please check your application for all the required information, materials and signatures before submitting.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

The budget must only include direct project costs, i.e. costs directly attributable to the project following the NNF guidelines for eligible project costs. Due to the rules and regulations of the Foundation, **no funding can be allocated to company partners**.

- Salaries for scientific and technical personnel for the time dedicated to the project.*
- Operating expenses
- Minor equipment (up to 200,000 DKK for Grant Type 1 recipients)
- Conference participation
- Organization of meetings / smaller conferences
- Travel for project activities.
- Publication costs (including costs for storage in open databases and open publishing).
- Costs for subcontractors*
- Direct administrative expenses (5% fee) (encoded in the budget template)
- Bench fee**

^{*} Subcontractors cannot be partners, and the costs for subcontractors are only eligible insofar the acquired competencies/services are not available from partnering universities and companies. The option to include subcontractors can thus not be used to ensure company partners financial support from ODIN.

^{**}For more information, please see the following pages.

ELIGIBLE COSTS - CONTINUED

PRINCIPLES REGARDING THE FUNDING OF SALARIES

Direct salary costs include actual salary costs, calculated on the basis of the annual gross salary, incl. pension, insurance, and holiday pay. Compensation of costs for overtime, sick pay, leave of absence etc. may not be included in the budget. Parental leave follows the rules of the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

- **NON-TENURED RESEARCHERS** at universities (such as postdocs and other scientific personnel to be hired for the project): Full salary (cost price for time spent on project), plus bench fee and 5% admin cost.
- TENURED APPLICANTS at universities cannot cover their own salary through ODIN (no double funding).
- CLINICIANS in special cases only, a maximum of two months' salary/year for project management and
 supervision can be applied for (incl. bench fee, and 5% admin cost). This only applies for personnel who must
 secure their own salary from external sources in order to be part of research projects: For instance, clinicians
 without employment at a university who do not have research activities as part of their job description. This
 opportunity has been introduced to ease collaboration with clinicians/hospitals.
- **TECHNCIANS/TAP** can be included in the budget when the application's project plan demonstrates that the technician will be performing specific project tasks. Bench fee for technicians/TAP is not applicable.
- **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION**s, can apply for projects as co-applicants with a partner university and receive funding similarly to the partner universities (using cost price salaries).

Please note that ODIN will not cover salary posts that are already covered by existing base salary or any other funding. Also, ODIN cannot fund PhD students.

ELIGIBLE COSTS - CONTINUED

EXPLANATION OF THE BENCH FFE

The fee can constitute a maximum of DKK 8,000 per month per FTE academic employee (not including technicians/TAP) 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:

- Common or shared laboratory expenses and consumables
- · Laboratory utilities (electricity, gas, water)
- Maintenance of essential equipment
- Service contracts
- Technical and IT support

The bench fee does not 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 applicants' institution(s) and it must apply for all employees independently of funding source. To this end, applicants need to include documentation of their bench fee policy as appendices to their project applications.

We refer to and comply with the Novo Nordisk Foundation's rules on bench fee.

ELIGIBLE COSTS - CONTINUED

DISCONTINUATION OF PROJECTS

Project applications must include relevant milestones. If the project is funded, the project participants will report on the milestones' progress to the Secretariat on a halfyearly basis. The milestones will form the basis for 'stop/go' evaluation points in these reports. If a project fails to make the necessary progress or it is discovered that its aim is not achievable, the Steering Group can choose to terminate the project and discontinue funding.

In the unlikely event that the ODIN Steering Group is forced to terminate a project, ODIN cannot cover salaries for the personnel employed in the given project after its termination.

OTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE BUDGETING FOR ODIN PROJECTS

Applicants must aim for cost-effective study designs where the proposed budget is proportionate to the scope, activities, deliverables and potential impact of the project. In the assessment process, the ODIN governing bodies can choose to make funding recommendations contingent on changes in the budget and study design.

ROLE OF THE **SECRETARIAT**

The ODIN Secretariat does not play a role in the scientific evaluation of the incoming applications. However, the Secretariat can administratively reject any application that:

- has not been presented as an idea at the matchmaking site no later than 7th August 2024,
- does not have both university and company partners,
- does not use the ODIN application templates found at the matchmaking site,
- lacks central documents (i.e. approved budget)
- does not comply with ODIN's overall purpose to share scientific outputs and results openly (and without use restrictions) with the public through open databases, scientific publications and the likes.

STEPS IN THE **REVIEW PROCESS**

The review process is divided into three steps. A series of selection criteria, as described on the following page, will form the basis for the review. Read more about the review organs in the folder "Governance".



1. ABSTRACT EVALUATION (LATE SUMMER)

When a call for applications opens, project teams can submit an extended abstract for an initial selection of project applications. A template for the extended abstract will be available on the digital matchmaking platform.

The members of the Project Review Committee will score all abstracts on a 1-5 grading scale based on the ODIN selection criteria.

The top 50% of applications or 20 best applications (whichever is the lowest number) will be encouraged to prepare a full-length application. The decision is based only on the scores given by the Project Review Committee. All applicants will be informed about the outcome by email.



2. FULL-LENGTH REVIEW (FALL)

Applicants, who have submitted a selected project abstract, will be contacted by the ODIN Secretariat and offered further handheld matchmaking and assistance in the development of the project idea, if required. A new standard application form will be provided on the online matchmaking platform by the ODIN Secretariat. The full-length application must also include the required documents as listed in the section "Application materials".

STEPS IN THE **REVIEW PROCESS** - CONTINUED

The submitted full-length applications are reviewed by both the Project Review Committee and the International Review Panel. The two review organs score the applications on a 1-5 grading scale according to the selection criteria on the following pages. The gradings form the basis of an in-depth discussion of each application in the Project Review Committee. Together with overall portfolio considerations, this discussion forms the basis for nominations of applications to the Steering Group.

DEADLOCK SITUATIONS

In case of deadlock situations in the Project Review Committee regarding an application, the review from the International Review Panel will be given extra weight to resolve the situation.

CONSULTATIVE PROCEDURE

In compliance with the Danish Act of Public Administration, consultancy processes will be implemented for all full-length applications. This is to ensure that applicants are given the opportunity to reply to e.g., new actual information is brought into the discussion of an application. One week will be allocated for consultative procedures, in which the ODIN Secretariat contacts the main applicant by email. Based on the main applicant's reply, the Project Review Committee decides whether or not to nominate the application for funding. When the applicant is invited to submit a full-length application, the application will be informed about when the consultative procedure will take place.

STEPS IN THE **REVIEW PROCESS** - CONTINUED



3. NOMINATION AND DECISION (WINTER)

Based on the nominated projects by the Project Review Committee, ODIN's Steering Group has the mandate to decide which projects to offer funding. When deciding which projects to fund, the Steering Group takes into account both the quality of the project proposal, the entire ODIN project portfolio, and the sum of funding allocated for the specific call.

On behalf of the Steering Group, the ODIN Secretariat sends out decision letters to all applicants.

COMPLAINT INSTRUCTIONS

As decisions are based on a thorough review process and a number of other factors described above, it will not be possible to file a formal complaint.

PLEASE NOTE that when a project is funded, all project participants must sign the standard Project Agreement. This agreement is non-negotiable, as the terms and agreement have already been defined by the founding companies and partner universities for the purpose of ease-of-collaboration. The Project Agreement can be found at ODIN's website.

CHECK IN WITH YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPER

In order to help define a precompetitive project, local university business developers can assist the main applicant assess if the project idea is suitable as an ODIN project.

Therefore, all main applicants must contact their local business developer in due time and **no later than**7 August to discuss the idea.

Aarhus University

Conny Tegtmeier, clt@au.dk

Aalborg University

• Gert Spender-Andersen, gsa@adm.aau.dk

Technical University of Denmark

Troels Balmer Christensen, troba@dtu.dk

University of Copenhagen

• Hanne Junker Elmelund. hanne.elmelund@adm.ku.dk

University of Southern Denmark

Liv Thomsen, litho@sdu.dk

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE NECESSARY CONSENTS

It is important that you ensure that any background information and/or personal data made available for the proposed project may be used by your team and/or has the required relevant permissions (eg. the Danish Research Ethichs Committees/VEK, The Danish Data Protection Agency etc.) to carry out the project. Also in order to make sure that GDPR is handled correctly, the TTO, the Research & Innovation office or similar at the main applicant's university must be consulted to review the application with regards to the GDPR set up and draw attention to any GDPR issues that needs to be addressed. All applicants who submit full-length applications, must do this **no later than 15 October**.

If your project is selected for full-lenght application review, the ODIN Secretariat will provide you with the relevant contact details for your own partner university.

SELECTION CRITERIA

BACKGROUND

ODIN projects must be real collaborations between academia and industry on the precompetitive stages of drug discovery and clinical diagnostics – and they must have the potential to generate the building blocks for subsequent innovations for the industry in regards to drug discovery or diagnostics. Company partners must be actively engaged in the project through intellectual contributions and/or by providing materials or technologies to the project. ODIN projects must have an aim that appeals to academic and company partners alike – to the extent that the results can lead to closed research and innovation after ODIN.

ODIN's activities and outputs should act as catalysts or building blocks for subsequent innovation in industry and academia. Although ODIN projects must address research needs that are very relevant to the individual companies involved, the projects must not limit their value creation by focusing too narrowly on one company's specific needs or on niche applications. Applicants should address research needs that are shared by several companies – for instance a methodology that is potentially relevant to other disease areas. Project applications must always document a strong engagement from company partners through letters of support and project designs that clearly shows their interests and contributions.

To this end, ODIN applications will be reviewed based on the set of criteria listed on the next page.

SELECTION CRITERIA - CONTINUED

Potential for DOWNSTREAM INNOVATION

- Does the project address an unmet industrial/medical need that is relevant for drug discovery and/or diagnostics?
- Does it have potential for short-term innovation?
- Does it have potential for long-term innovation?
- Is it likely to deliver research results supporting downstream product development or process innovation in the industry?
- Will it open new innovation opportunities for the academic partner(s)?

ENGAGEMENT OF INDUSTRY and other relevant stakeholders

 Does the project have sufficient and active industry engagement (with intellectual, material, and/or infrastructural contributions)?

SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE

- Does the project offer novel scientific objectives and/or approaches to obtain the objective compared with state of the art?
- Will it create novel, fundamental knowledge?
- Is the choice of scientific methodology and technological solutions sound?
- Does the application sufficiently explain state of the art?
- Does the project have a competitive edge (scientific and technical level) compared with adjacent technologies?

SELECTION CRITERIA - CONTINUED

INTERDISCIPLINARITY

- Does the project include both academic and company partners?
- Does the project include partners across partner universities (not mandatory, but it will be favorably assessed, if meaningful)?
- Does the project include relevant partners across scientific disciplines and industrial expertise?

Broadness in VALUE CREATION

- Is the project (and/or the project output) relevant to a broader range of companies than the project partner(s)?
- Does the project's concept/output benefit other projects or research and disease areas within drug discovery and/or diagnostics?

OPENNESS

- Is the project precompetitive?
- Does the project benefit from being open?
- Does the project have a sound plan to openly share its output and results with the public in compliance with GDPR and e.g., licenses on shared software?
- Are there any factors in the project design that limit open sharing and third party use of the project output?

BUDGET

- Is the budget cost effective?
- Is the budget proportionate to project aim, activities and expected output?

In addition to these selection criteria, the reviewing bodies must take the overall call budget and project portfolio into consideration when selecting projects for funding with regards to e.g., project themes, participants, gender, and risk profiles.

RESEARCH CODE OF CONDUCTS & PRIVACY POLICIY

RESEARCH CODE OF CONDUCTS

All Projects must comply with the NNF policy for research integrity and -freedom, as well as the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

OPENNESS - HOW TO SHARF YOUR KNOW! FDGF AND DATA

All funded ODIN projects must share their results and data across the network as quickly as possible.

They can do this through channels such as, but not limited to:

- the ODIN network
- relevant databases
- open publishing in preprint archives and journals

Sharing of data must be in accordance with the practices described in the ODIN Framework Agreement and in the grant notification for individual projects - incl. explicitly stating support from the NNF (incl. reference of the ODIN grant number) in all written and oral presentations of the project.

To assist grant holders, the ODIN Secretariat will provide a manual for the open sharing of project output.

PRIVACY POLICY - NOTE ON HANDLING OF YOUR DATA

Please consult ODIN's Privacy Policy (on our website) for more information on how the applications and your personal data are handled.

IMPORTANT **DATES AND EVENTS** (2024-2025)

THE FUNDING CALL OPENS

INFORMATION MEETINGS

universities or watch online.

KICK-OFF CONFERENCE

PITCHES

their ideas and needs.

POSTING OF IDEAS

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

FIRST DECISION LETTER

OCT- PROJECT MATURATION

APPLICATION DEADLINE

FINAL DECISION LETTER

All applicants receive decision made by the Steering Group.

PROJECT PREPARATION

MAR EXPECTED PROJECT START

date of the projects selected for fundina.



For more information, please visit www.open-odin.dk.
For detailed information regarding governance principles
and ODIN's IP model, please consult the "ODIN Framework
Agreement", which is also available on our website.