

## **Guidelines for applicants**

# **Call for proposals Postdoctoral Fellowships Dementia 2026**

## **The Norwegian Health Association**

**Application submission deadline: Monday September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, at 07.00 CET (07.00 am).**

The purpose of this document is to provide instructions to potential applicants and others to ease the application process and to ensure openness regarding the processing and assessment of applications.

We strongly recommend applicants to read this document carefully as part of their application preparation. Please be aware that some additional information is requested in the online application portal. We therefore also advise you to log in and familiarize yourself with the application form.

### **General information about the Norwegian Health Association and the Dementia Research Programme**

The Norwegian Health Association is a voluntary, humanitarian organization working with public health, research into cardiovascular diseases and dementia and promoting the interests of people with dementia and their next of kin. In our effort to combat dementia we have funded high-quality research within the field of dementia since 2001.

The Norwegian Health Association has established a national, comprehensive and coordinated Dementia Research Programme. Through this programme, we aim to fund high-quality research and strengthen the connection between basic and clinical research by building networks between dementia researchers and research groups in Norway.

### **General information about the funding initiative**

#### ***What to apply for***

Through this funding scheme, the Norwegian Health Association offers financing of postdoctoral fellowships related to research projects focusing on causes, prevention, diagnosis and treatment (pharmacological and non-pharmacological) of dementia. Care research is outside the scope of this call.

The postdoctoral candidate is offered salary and running costs corresponding to three year's full position. The annual lump sum is 1 000 000 NOK/year (full position), out of which 100 000 NOK/year is intended for running costs. Running costs may include general costs related to the project (supplies,

analyses, laboratory animals, equipment, relevant network building activities, conference fees, project specific services etc.).

The candidate may apply for funding for the first or second postdoctoral period. If the position at the research institution has a higher total cost frame than the defined lump sum, the project owner institution must bridge the gap.

**The Norwegian Health Association does not offer overhead costs; thus, the project owner institution must cover all institutional costs beyond the granted amount.**

#### ***Who can apply?***

Applicants must be employed at a Norwegian research institution or be guaranteed an employment if the project is granted, to be eligible for funding. Norwegian universities, university colleges, research institutes, hospitals and institutions with research as part of their activities are eligible grantee institutions.

The applicant must hold a doctoral degree or have submitted their doctoral thesis prior to the application submission deadline.

#### ***Project period***

The project must start between January 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup> 2026. We recognize that in some cases there may be a need for a reduced research position. The project may therefore last for up to 72 months from start date.

#### ***Institutional overhead costs and employer responsibilities***

The project owner institution has the employer responsibilities for the postdoctoral fellow. When a grant is awarded, the project owner institution must ensure that the candidate is employed in accordance with the institution's recruitment and selection policies.

The Norwegian Health Association does not compensate for costs related to leave of absence.

#### ***User involvement***

It is expected that applicants present a plan for user involvement. If engagement with user representatives is not relevant, the applicant must provide rationale for this decision. Relevant user involvement will be positively weighed. Please contact us if you have questions in relation to user involvement.

## Definitions

**The project manager** is the postdoctoral fellow candidate who is responsible for submitting the application, securing scientific progression, completing the project, and submitting requested reports.

**The project owner institution** is legally and economically responsible for fulfilling the terms and conditions of the contract if a grant is awarded.

**The project administrator** is an employee at the project owner institution who has the authority to commit the institution to fulfil the legal and economic obligations on behalf of the project owner. The project administrator must approve this application by providing an approval letter.

## Attachments

**All attachments must be written in English and converted to PDF format. Font and alignment instructions: Times New Roman 12 font size (9 for reference and figure texts), margins 2.0 cm, spacing 1.0. More information about the attachments is provided in the online application form.**

1. ***Project description English*** - maximum 7 A4 pages plus reference list  
It is mandatory to use the template for project description available in the application portal under the heading "Project description and budget".
2. ***CV with track record of the applicant***, maximum 4 pages  
It is mandatory to use the CV template available in the application portal under the heading "Project administration".
3. ***Recommendation letter (for the candidate) from the institute leader or another relevant local leader***- maximum 1 page
4. ***Letter of approval from the project administrator*** - maximum 1 page
5. ***Collaboration statements*** for all key external project collaborators not affiliated at the project owner institution.

## Submitting the application form

- Applications must be submitted through the Norwegian Health Association's online application portal.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application is submitted before the announced deadline.
- The project manager 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 submission deadline, nor can attachments be sent after the submission deadline.
- Submitted applications may be modified prior to the deadline. In the online application portal, select «My applications», then «Applications in progress», and reopen the application to make the necessary changes. *Please note that the application then must be re-submitted.*

The Norwegian Health Association will only in the event of *force majeure* consider providing a time-limit extension to submission deadline. Please send a request explaining the circumstances to [forskning@nasjonalforeningen.no](mailto:forskning@nasjonalforeningen.no).

## Application processing and assessment

- The applicant will receive an email after submission confirming that the Norwegian Health Association has received the application.
- The application will be reviewed as it is received.
- Applications that clearly do not meet the formal requirements can be formally rejected.
- Formally approved applications are forwarded to two panels: 1) an international scientific peer review committee 2) a user representative panel.
- All reviewers and user representatives must declare impartiality for all proposals.
- To be eligible for funding, the project must be considered *relevant to the call* by the scientific peer review committee.
- There may be requested external scientific reports for selected applications, e.g. in case of conflicts of interest.

### **Scientific evaluation**

The proposals will be reviewed by an international scientific peer review committee and evaluated according to the following criteria:

#### **1. Scientific quality**

- Does the project description demonstrate that the project has a potential for scientific progress, innovation and originality (theoretically, methodologically and empirically)?
- Does the project description contain a clear and well-defined problem and objective?
- Does the project description demonstrate the state of the art and/or the scientific challenges within the project's research area, as well as of the project's potential contributions in this regard?
- Is the project plan and resource requirements adapted to the tasks of the project?
- Are there alternative strategies for conducting the project?
- May it be possible to draw reliable conclusions from anticipated results and selected method(s)?
- Are possible ethical aspects adequately examined?
- Is there an adequate description of the overall considerations regarding the publication/dissemination/patenting of research results?
- Active interdisciplinary collaboration will be positively weighted, when relevant
- Active international cooperation, hereunder mobility, will be positively weighted, when relevant

## 2. Qualification of the applicant and project team

- Has the applicant documented the scientific qualifications necessary, a level of scientific production within the field and sufficient research management qualifications for fulfilling the goals of the proposal?
- Are relevant collaborators involved? Is there a strategy for the organization and management of the project, including an account of the distribution of work between the people involved?

## 3. Possible impact/user involvement (if relevant)

- May the research findings benefit people with dementia or next of kin or other target groups in short or long term?
- Are user representatives involved in the project? Relevant user involvement will be positively weighed when relevant.

The reviewers will consider the overall relevance to the call.

A minimum of three reviewers will conduct an individual evaluation for each research proposal, with one of the three conducting an in-depth evaluation.

### ***Assessment by the user representative panel***

A structured summary of the proposals will be assessed by the user representatives with lived dementia experience according to the following criteria:

1. Language of the lay summary
2. User involvement
3. Possible impact

### ***Assessment processing***

The peer review committee and the user representative panel will conduct their assessments separately. Following these evaluations, a committee meeting will be held where reviewers must reach a consensus on the grading and prioritize the list of proposals.

If two or more proposals are graded to have the same overall scientific quality, the assessment of the user representative panel will guide the recommendation to the Dementia Research Board. This body will then put forward a recommendation to the Board of the Norwegian Health Association who will make the final funding late in November 2025.

All applicants will receive a decision letter hereafter. The decision is final and cannot be appealed.

## **Grant terms and conditions**

The terms and conditions for research grants will be specified in the contract that is to be accepted by all parties. Transfer of funds may take place from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026.

If a project that is funded by the Norwegian Health Association is offered funding for the same project from another source, the project manager is obliged to report this. If the project manager accepts the alternative grant, the Norwegian Health Association will require reimbursement of the grant funded.

The Norwegian Health Association will request annual scientific and financial reports, a final report and a follow-up report after the completion of the project.

#### ***Acknowledgement of the financial support and collaboration***

The Norwegian Health Association must be credited as a contributing funder of the project in all relevant fora. It is expected that successful applicants and research institutions collaborate to spread information and improve the public's understanding of dementia. The Norwegian Health Association encourages the postdoctoral fellows to give lectures within and outside the organization.

### **Ethics**

The project must hold high standards related to ethics. Please see guidelines provided by the [Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics](#) (REC) and [Lov om organisering av forskningsetisk arbeid](#) for more information.

### **Registration of medical and health studies involving human participants**

Prospective registration of studies and rapid publication of results are important to ensure full transparency in medical and health studies involving human participants.

### **Impartiality**

The Norwegian Health Association has established rules related to impartiality that are according to international standards. Any partiality and non-participation will be recorded for the peer review committee members, user representatives and members of the Dementia Research Board.

### **Contact information**

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