Guidelines for the DDEA grant review process and evaluation criteria for grants

This document includes an overview of the grant schemes and information about the review process and the evaluation criteria in the Danish Diabetes and Endocrine Academy's (DDEA) fellowship programme for 2026.

DDEA grant schemes

The DDEA fellowship programme in diabetes and endocrinology in 2026 covers three grant schemes: PhD scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships, and visiting researcher grants. ***Table 1*** below shows the different grant types within the fellowship programme.

Table 1. DDEA fellowships in 2026

Grant schemes	2026
2/3-financed PhD scholarships with no specific theme (DKK 1.1 million each)	8
2/3-financed PhD scholarships in classical endocrinology (DKK 1.1 million each)	3
2/3-financed Industrial PhD scholarships (DKK 1.1 million each)	2
2-year Postdoctoral fellowships with no specific theme (DKK 1.2 million each)	8
2-year Postdoctoral fellowships in classical endocrinology (DKK 1.2 million each)	3
2-year 50%-financed Industrial Postdoctoral fellowships (DKK 600,000)	1
Visiting researcher grants (max. DKK 400,000 each)	6

Review process

All applications for PhD scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships and visiting researcher grants will be assessed according to the review process (see ***Table 2***) and evaluation criteria as set out by the Board of Directors (see below in the section *Evaluation criteria for the Danish Diabetes and Endocrine Academy's fellowship programme*).

Table 2. Review process and timeline for the DDEA fellowship programme 2026

Process	Time
Call	30 April
Deadline for application	18 August
Review	September - November
Final decision Board of Directors	18 November
Replies to applicants	26 November

Parties involved in the review process and their responsibilities

The review process is managed by the *DDEA Secretariat*.

Applications will be reviewed by the *DDEA Grant Review Committee*. This committee consists of a number of internationally renowned and dedicated scientific experts. A list of members and terms of references of the Grant Review Committee are available at the DDEA website. The Grant Review Committee will perform an objective, professional and comprehensive peer review of applications for all grant types.

A chair is appointed for each type of grant. The *chairs of the Grant Review Committee* will make a final evaluation of all applications for each grant type and recommend eligible applications to the Board of Directors.

Finally, the *DDEA Board of Directors* will decide which applications will receive funding. The final decision of awardees made by the Board of Directors cannot be appealed.

The review process is anonymous. Applicants will receive the reviewers' overall assessments of their application excluding their scores. Also, reviewers will not see each other's scores. Reviewers are requested to treat all aspects of the review as strictly confidential.

Administrative check and selection of assessors

The Secretariat will conduct a pre-screening of all applications received for completeness and eligibility (administrative check). Incomplete applications or applications not meeting the DDEA requirements for grants as stated in the call for applications will be rejected without further review. All other applications will be assessed by the Grant Review Committee as described below.

Review by the Grant Review Committee

For the review, the Secretariat will select appropriate reviewers among the members of the international Grant Review Committee. The Secretariat will match reviewers and applications according to scientific topics and keywords related to the applicants' research fields, as described in their applications.

When applying for a DDEA grant, applicants will be asked to indicate whether their PI or Co-PI (or any other members of their project team) have a conflict of interest with the reviewers on the DDEA Grant Review Committee (e.g. joint publications or close collaborations within the last five years). Similarly, the reviewers will be asked to report any conflict of interest with members of the applicant's project team within the last five years to the secretariat. In cases of conflict of interest, the reviewer will not review the application, and another reviewer will be assigned to the application in question.

Each application will be assessed by three individual reviewers. Each reviewer will assess a maximum of 10 applications.

The reviewers will use the DDEA web-based electronic system when submitting their reviews.

Each reviewer must provide a complete review of each application according to the evaluation criteria (see below). This includes scoring each of the four evaluation criteria, providing an overall impact score of the application, and describing strengths and weaknesses for each criterion and overall.

When the reviewers have submitted their reviews, an average of the individual scores (five scores) will be calculated (*total score*) for each review. Subsequently, a *total average score* of the *total scores* of each review will be calculated for each application. All applications with a *total average score* below 3.0 will be discarded.

Recommendations to the Board of Directors by the chairs of the Grant Review Committee

Based on the *total scores* and the reviewers' comments, the chairs of the Grant Review Committee will make a final evaluation of all applications with a *total average score* of 3.0 or higher and recommend eligible applications to the Board of Directors.

The chairs will have access to the applications and the reviewers' evaluations of the applications, ranked according to the calculated *total average score* of each application. In case of identical *total average scores* of two or more applications, the chairs will be asked to consider the *overall impact score* given by each of the three reviewers and rank the applications accordingly.

The chairs will include a summary of the assessments made by the reviewers, the chairs' overall judgement of the applications (based on the reviewers' evaluations), and a prioritised list of the applications in their final recommendation.

The chairs must recommend twice as many candidates for each grant scheme than the number of grants available, if possible.

Decision of awardees by the Board of Directors

The Secretariat will forward the final recommendation to the Board of Directors, which will have access to all the applications and the reviewers' evaluations (scores and comments).

During a Board meeting, the Board of Directors will make the final decision as to which applications will receive funding based on the recommendations made by the Grant Review Committee.

A videoconference between each chair and the Board of Directors will be arranged in connection with the Board meeting to discuss the final recommendations.

In case of conflict of interest by one of the members of the Board of Directors, the member in question will abstain from participating in the final decision-making. See the guidelines on conflicts of interest for the DDEA Board of Directors in respect to allocation of DDEA grants at the DDEA website.

Award notification and rejection of applications

Based on the decision made by the Board of Directors, the Secretariat will finalise the process.

A rejection letter will be sent to the candidates who will not receive at grant. The letter will include the reviewers' comments.

A grant notification letter containing relevant information about the grant will be sent to the candidate and their supervisor who will receive a grant. The letter will include the reviewers' comments.

Evaluation criteria for the Danish Diabetes and Endocrine Academy's fellowship programme

Introduction

Each reviewer must provide a complete review of each application assigned to her/him according to the following four evaluation criteria: 1) the applicant; 2) the project; 3) the research environment; and 4) the four DDEA funding focus areas (elaborated below); as well as an overall impact score.

The reviewers must give separate scores for each of the four evaluation criteria and an overall impact score on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 being highest), as shown in **Table 3 below**. The reviewers must also describe strengths and weaknesses for each criterion and overall.

Table 3. Reviewer scores

Score	Descriptor
5	Excellent
4	Very good
3	Good
2	Satisfactory
1	Unsatisfactory

Note: Applications are submitted by candidates from different fields of research (e.g. clinical research, basic research, epidemiology), and medical candidates may apply for part-time clinical postdoctoral positions allocating time to research and time to clinical work/specialisation simultaneously. The evaluation of the applications should therefore take into consideration the different backgrounds of the candidates (e.g. the applicant's prior research experience may vary for clinical researchers in particular), the position applied for, and the nature of the project described in the application.

Below you can find the specific evaluation criteria for the three types of grants in the Danish Diabetes and Endocrine Academy's (DDEA) fellowship programme:

- PhD scholarships
- Postdoctoral Fellowships
- Visiting Researcher Grants

Evaluation criteria for PhD scholarships

The following evaluation criteria are applicable for all the DDEA PhD scholarships.

1. Applicant

The ideal candidate has relevant research experience from her/his master studies including the following:

- Publication of research results in peer-reviewed journals in relation to the candidate's research area and years of experience in diabetes or other endocrine research (accepted or published)
- Participation in national or international conferences and research meetings
- Exposure to an international research environment locally and/or through a research stay abroad
- Demonstrated technical or clinical skills with relevance to the PhD project.

Furthermore, the ideal candidate expresses high motivation and commitment, has received high grades during her/his master's studies and has followed extracurricular activities or obtained other relevant qualifications improving her/his skills with relevance to the PhD project.

2. Project: PhD plan, scientific quality, approach and innovation

The ideal project plan includes a well-reasoned description of the overall strategy, methodology and analyses. The strategy should be appropriate for accomplishing the specific aims of the project and should ensure a robust and unbiased approach.

Furthermore, the project plan should challenge, seek to change or improve current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilising up-to-date theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions.

Finally, the project plan should have sufficient scientific weight and research training for the PhD study and should describe any potential problems, alternative strategies and milestones for success.

3. Research environment: Supervisors and collaborators

The ideal research environment includes supervisors and collaborators that have demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s) (recent publications, international standing).

The supervisors and collaborators have complementary and integrated expertise i.e. affiliation of collaborators from other research disciplines (e.g. basic science, clinical science, epidemiology, psychology), from abroad or from other sectors.

The supervisors and collaborators can sufficiently contribute to the completion of the PhD study, (have experience with supervision of PhD students), and offer a substantially international network for the applicant.

The leadership approach and governance and organisational structure of the involved PhD student, supervisors and collaborators are appropriate and transparent.

4. DDEA funding focus areas: Internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, collaboration across sectors, and patient and/or public involvement

The DDEA grants must promote the four funding focus areas of DDEA: 1) internationalisation; 2) interdisciplinarity; 3) collaboration across sectors; 4) patient and/or public involvement (PPI), as described below.

1. ***Internationalisation***: The application includes affiliation of collaborators from abroad and/or a planned research stay abroad during the PhD study (accepted by the host). The international collaboration must create actual value for the project and the applicant. For the Strategic Partnership PhD scholarships, it is particularly important that contributions of the partnership are detailed and that the collaboration between the Danish and the international partner is clearly delineated.
2. ***Interdisciplinarity***: The application includes affiliation of collaborators from other research disciplines (e.g. basic science, clinical science, epidemiology, psychology) with a clear description of how the synergy of research disciplines contributes to achieving the research goals of the project. The application describes a planned change of research/work environment (accepted by the host).
3. ***Collaboration across sectors***: The application includes affiliation of collaborators from other sectors e.g. industry, general practice, university hospitals or formalised agreements with collaborators from other sectors. The application describes a planned change of research/work environment (accepted by the host). The collaboration should result in synergy between the collaborators. For the industrial PhD scholarships, it is particularly important that the contributions of both the academic and the industry partner are detailed and that the collaboration between them is clearly delineated.
4. ***Patient and/or public involvement (PPI)***: The application includes a separate paragraph that reflects on and outlines explicit plans and strategies for PPI in the study. It should be discussed how PPI can improve and contribute to this particular study and detail the benefits and relevance of the study for patients/users and society. PPI requires different approaches in various contexts, such as basic research, epidemiological research, and clinical research. Given the diverse nature of research disciplines and methodologies, the extent and manner of meaningful PPI will vary in applications from different research areas. However, it is imperative that all applications adhere to a baseline level of PPI.

Regarding items 1-3, collaborations can be documented by collaboration agreements or an e-mail from the collaborators describing the nature of the collaboration including e.g. joint publications based on affiliation and educational background of authors, joint and funded applications, patent applications or spin-off companies.

5. Overall impact score

The overall impact score should reflect the reviewer's overall assessment of the application in consideration of the four scored evaluation criteria, including strengths and weakness of the entire application.

However, this score does not need to be an average score of the four other scores, as a total average score of all five scores will be calculated automatically (*total average score*).

An application does not need to be strong in regard to all four evaluation criteria to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential for advancing a field.

Evaluation criteria for postdoctoral fellowships

The following evaluation criteria are applicable for all the DDEA Postdoctoral Fellowships.

1. Applicant

The ideal candidate has relevant research experience from her/his PhD studies or from previous postdoctoral studies including:

- Publication of research results in peer-reviewed journals, including publication in high impact journals and first authorships in relation to the candidate's research area and years of experience in diabetes or other endocrine research (accepted or published)
- Oral and poster presentations at important and relevant national or international conferences
- Assessment and review activities
- External funding record and receipt of awards
- Demonstrated technical or clinical skills with relevance to the postdoctoral project
- Research stays abroad
- Research stays at another institution and/or demonstrated mobility from PhD to postdoctoral studies, i.e. the applicant carries out her/his postdoctoral studies at an institution different from that at which the PhD was completed.

Furthermore, the ideal candidate has shown progress in her/his academic career path, expresses high motivation and commitment, has received high grades during her/his PhD studies and has followed extracurricular activities or obtained other relevant qualifications improving her/his skills with relevance to the postdoctoral project.

2. Project: Scientific quality, approach and innovation

The ideal project plan includes a well-reasoned description of the overall strategy, methodology and analyses. The strategy should be appropriate for accomplishing the specific aims of the project and should ensure a robust and unbiased approach.

Furthermore, the project plan should challenge, seek to change or improve current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilising up-to-date theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions.

Finally, the project plan should describe any potential problems, alternative strategies and milestones for success.

3: Research environment: Supervisors and collaborators

The ideal research environment includes supervisors and collaborators that have demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s) (recent publications, international standing).

The supervisors and collaborators have complementary and integrated expertise i.e. affiliation of collaborators from other research disciplines (e.g. basic science, clinical science, epidemiology, psychology), from abroad or from other sectors, and they offer a substantially international network for the applicant.

The leadership approach and governance and organisational structure of the involved postdoctoral fellow, supervisors and collaborators are appropriate and transparent.

Finally, the ideal research environment offers a clear plan for career development for the postdoctoral fellow.

4. DDEA funding focus areas: Internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, collaboration across sectors, and patient and/or public involvement

The DDEA grants must promote the four funding focus areas of DDEA: 1) internationalisation; 2) interdisciplinarity; 3) collaboration across sectors, and 4) patient and/or public involvement (PPI), as described below.

1. ***Internationalisation:*** The application includes affiliation of collaborators from abroad and/or a planned research stay abroad during the postdoctoral study (accepted by the host). The international collaboration must create actual value for the project and the applicant. For the Strategic Partnership Postdoctoral Fellowships, it is particularly important that contributions of the partnership are detailed and that the collaboration between the Danish and the international partner is clearly delineated.
2. ***Interdisciplinarity***: The application includes affiliation of collaborators from other research disciplines (e.g. basic science, clinical science, epidemiology, psychology) with a clear description of how the synergy of research disciplines contributes to achieving the goals of the project. The application describes a planned change of research/work environment at another institution (accepted by the host).
3. ***Collaboration across sectors***: The application includes affiliation of collaborators from other sectors e.g. industry, general practice, university hospitals or formalised agreements with collaborators from other sectors. The application describes a planned change of research/work environment in other sectors (accepted by the host). The collaboration should result in synergy between the collaborators. For the industrial PhD scholarships, it is particularly important that the contributions of both the academic and the industry partner are detailed and that the collaboration between them is clearly delineated.
4. ***Patient and/or public involvement (PPI):*** The application includes a separate paragraph that reflects on and outlines explicit plans and strategies for PPI in the study. It should be discussed how PPI can improve and contribute to this particular study and detail the benefits and relevance of the study for patients/users and society. PPI requires different approaches in various contexts, such as basic research, epidemiological research, and clinical research. Given the diverse nature of research disciplines and methodologies, the extent and manner of meaningful PPI will vary in applications from different research areas. However, it is imperative that all applications adhere to a baseline level of PPI.

Regarding items 1-3. Collaborations can be documented by collaboration agreements or an e-mail from the collaborators describing the nature of the collaboration including e.g. joint publications based on affiliation and educational background of authors, joint and funded applications, patent applications or spin-off companies.

5: Overall impact score

The overall impact score should reflect the reviewer's overall assessment of the application in consideration of the four scored evaluation criteria, including strengths and weakness of the entire application.

However, this score does not need to be an average score of the four other scores, as a total average score of all five scores will be calculated automatically (*total average score*).

An application does not need to be strong in regard to all four evaluation criteria to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential for advancing a field.

Evaluation criteria for Visiting Researcher Grants

The following evaluation criteria are applicable for the DDEA Visiting Researcher Grants.

1. Applicant

The ideal candidate has relevant research experience including:

- Publication of research results in peer-reviewed journals, including publication in high impact journals and first/last authorships in relation to the candidate's research area and years of experience in diabetes or other endocrine research (accepted or published)
- Oral and poster presentations at important and relevant conferences
- Assessment and review activities
- External funding record and receipt of large awards
- Demonstrated mobility including research stay abroad and/or other visiting researcher stays abroad with relevant outputs.

Furthermore, the ideal candidate has shown progress in her/his academic career path.

2. Project: Scientific quality, approach and innovation

The ideal project plan includes a well-reasoned description of the overall strategy, methodology and analyses. The strategy should be appropriate for accomplishing the specific aims of the project and should ensure a robust and unbiased approach.

Furthermore, the project plan should describe any potential problems, alternative strategies and milestones for success, and the project plan should challenge, seek to shift or improve current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilising up-to-date theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions.

Finally, the project plan includes a description of the extent to which the visit will strengthen the scientific research capacity in Denmark.

3. Research environment: Investigators and collaborators

The ideal research environment at the host institution includes a principal investigator and collaborators that have demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s) (recent publications, international standing).

The host principal investigator and collaborators have complementary and integrated expertise i.e. affiliation of collaborators from other research disciplines (e.g. basic science, clinical science, epidemiology, psychology), from abroad or from other sectors.

The leadership approach and governance and organisational structure of the involved visiting researcher, principal investigators and collaborators are appropriate and transparent.

4. DDEA funding focus areas: Internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, collaboration across sectors, and patient and/or public involvement

The DDEA grants must promote the four funding focus areas of DDEA: 1) internationalisation; 2) interdisciplinarity; 3) collaboration across sectors, and 4) patient and/or public involvement (PPI), as described below.

1. ***Internationalisation***: The application contributes to knowledge exchange between the host institution and the applicant's home institution, i.e. agreements of change of research environment for PhD students or postdoctoral students, joint publications, joint applications for funding. The collaboration must create actual value for the project and the applicant.
2. ***Interdisciplinarity***: The application includes affiliation of collaborators from other research disciplines (e.g. basic science, clinical science, epidemiology, psychology) with a clear description of how the synergy of research disciplines contributes to achieving the goals of the project.
3. ***Collaboration across sectors***: The application includes affiliation of collaborators from other sectors e.g. industry, general practice, university hospitals or formalised agreements with collaborators from other sectors. The collaboration should result in synergy between the collaborators.
4. ***Patient and/or public involvement (PPI)***: The application includes a separate paragraph that reflects on and outlines explicit plans and strategies for PPI in the study. It should be discussed how PPI can improve and contribute to this particular study and detail the benefits and relevance of the study for patients/users and society. PPI requires different approaches in various contexts, such as basic research, epidemiological research, and clinical research. Given the diverse nature of research disciplines and methodologies, the extent and manner of meaningful PPI will vary in applications from different research areas. However, it is imperative that all applications adhere to a baseline level of PPI.

Regarding items 1-3. Collaborations can be documented by collaboration agreements or an e-mail from the collaborators describing the nature of the collaboration including e.g. joint publications based on affiliation and educational background of authors, joint and funded applications, patent applications or spin-off companies.

5: Overall impact

The overall impact score should reflect the reviewer's overall assessment of the application in consideration of the four scored evaluation criteria, including strengths and weakness of the entire application.

However, this score does not need to be an average score of the four other scores, as a total average score of all five scores will be calculated automatically (*total average score*).

An application does not need to be strong in regard to all four evaluation criteria to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential for advancing a field.