



Call for Proposals 2026

NFFR Frontier Research Fellowship Programme



1. Introduction

The [Nordic Foundation for Frontier Research \(NFFR\)](#) invites applications for the 2026 Frontier Research Fellowship Programme.

The purpose of the programme is to support ambitious, original, and curiosity-driven research projects led by excellent early-career researchers with the potential to develop scientific independence and contribute significantly to their research field.

NFFR seeks to support projects that:

- address important scientific questions,
- demonstrate clear originality and intellectual ambition,
- and are carried out through sound and appropriate research approaches.

The programme is open to projects across medicine, health sciences, natural sciences, engineering, and related interdisciplinary fields.

NFFR encourages proposals that combine scientific creativity with clear and realistic project planning.



2. Purpose of the Fellowship

The Frontier Research Fellowship is intended to support the development of promising early-career researchers by enabling them to pursue an independent research project with the potential to advance knowledge within their field.

The fellowship supports both:



- the scientific quality and originality of the proposed research project, and
- the applicant's potential for future scientific development and independence.

NFFR particularly welcomes projects that:

- challenge existing assumptions,
- explore novel approaches,
- or combine methods, concepts, or perspectives in innovative ways.

High-risk/high-gain elements are acceptable where justified by the potential scientific value of the project.



3. Eligibility

Applicants should normally:

- hold a PhD degree or equivalent at the start of the project period,
- and be at an early stage of their independent research career.

The programme is aimed primarily at:

- postdoctoral researchers,
- assistant professors,
- clinical researchers in early career stages,
- and equivalent profiles.

Applications from researchers with interdisciplinary backgrounds are welcome.



4. Funding and Project Duration

The Frontier Research Fellowship supports projects with a duration of up to three years.

For the purposes of this call, applicants should focus primarily on presenting:

- the scientific idea,
- the proposed research strategy,
- and the rationale for the project.

Applicants should focus primarily on presenting the scientific idea, the proposed research strategy, and the rationale for the project. A simplified project budget must be submitted using the NFFR budget template ([section 5D](#)).





5. Proposal Requirements

Applicants should assume that reviewers may not be specialists in the immediate research area and should communicate the project accordingly.

Applications must consist of the following components:

A. Project Summary

Applicants must provide a concise summary of the proposed project. The summary may not exceed 250 words.

The summary should describe:

- the research question or challenge being addressed,
- the objectives of the project,
- the proposed approach,
- and the anticipated scientific contribution.

The summary may be used for reviewer assignment and panel discussions. It should therefore provide a clear and accessible overview of the project's objectives, approach, and expected contribution.

Applicants are encouraged to focus on the significance and originality of the project rather than technical detail.

B. Project Description (maximum 4 pages)

The project description should provide a clear and concise presentation of:

- the scientific background and state of the art,
- the research question(s) and objectives,
- the originality and expected contribution of the project,
- the proposed methodology and research design,
- key risks and challenges,
- and the overall feasibility of the project.

Applicants are encouraged to:

- prioritize clarity over excessive detail,
- explain why the project is important,
- and demonstrate how the proposed work advances beyond current knowledge.

A list of references is not included within the 4-page limit. References must immediately follow the project description and should normally not exceed two pages.





C. Applicant Profile and CV (maximum 1 page)

Applicants must include a short profile describing:

- current position and institutional affiliation,
- educational background,
- key research achievements,
- relevant methodological or technical expertise,
- and how the proposed project contributes to their future scientific development.

Applicants are encouraged to highlight:

- quality and significance rather than quantity,
- contributions relevant to the proposed project,
- and evidence of increasing scientific independence.

Applicants must provide a link to their [ORCID](#) record. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their ORCID profile is current and accurately reflects their academic activities and outputs.

D. Budget and budget justification

For your application to be considered by NFFR, applicants must enclose a budget for the entire project period, which describes the activities to be funded.

Applicants must use the *NFFR budget template*. Download the latest version from the [NFFR web page](#). Budget items must match activities in the project description.

A separate budget justification, briefly explaining each cost item, must be included as a separate appendix and must not exceed one page.

E. Statement on the Use of Generative AI Tools (optional, maximum 100 words)

Applicants are encouraged to briefly describe whether and how generative AI tools were used during proposal preparation.

The use of such tools is permitted. Applicants remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and scientific integrity of the submitted proposal.



6. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the following three criteria:





1. Research Quality and Originality

Reviewers will assess:

- the importance and relevance of the research question,
- the originality and ambition of the project,
- the potential scientific contribution,
- and the extent to which the project advances beyond the current state of the art.

NFFR values proposals that demonstrate scientific curiosity, creativity, and clear intellectual motivation.

2. Feasibility and Research Design

Reviewers will assess:

- the appropriateness of the proposed methods and research strategy,
- the coherence and clarity of the project design,
- awareness of potential risks and limitations,
- and whether the objectives are realistically achievable.
- the appropriateness of the requested resources and budget in relation to the proposed activities

Ambitious projects are encouraged, but proposals must also demonstrate scientific credibility and methodological soundness.

3. Applicant Potential and Project Fit

Reviewers will assess:

- the applicant's competence relative to career stage,
- evidence of scientific potential and developing independence,
- the match between the applicant and the proposed project,
- and the extent to which the fellowship is likely to support future career development.

NFFR recognizes that excellent early-career researchers may follow different career paths and trajectories.



7. Review Procedure

Applications will be evaluated through an international peer review process.

Each application will be assessed by multiple reviewers with relevant scientific expertise. Final funding recommendations will be based on:





- the written evaluations,
- comparative discussions between reviewers,
- and the overall balance of strengths and weaknesses identified during the review process.

The review process is comparative in nature. Strong applications may therefore differ substantially in style, methodology, and scientific approach.



8. Principles for Applicants

NFFR encourages applicants to:

- formulate clear and focused research questions,
- communicate complex ideas as clearly as possible,
- balance ambition with feasibility,
- and present a coherent scientific narrative throughout the application.

A strong proposal is not necessarily the one containing the greatest amount of information, but the one that most convincingly explains:

- why the research matters,
- why the proposed approach is appropriate,
- and why the applicant is well positioned to carry out the project.



9. Submission Format

Applications must be submitted as a single PDF document attached to an email with the subject: *NFFR Fellowship – [applicant name]* to: NFFR@research-lighthouse.com.

Formatting requirements:

- Times New Roman, or equivalent font
- Minimum font size: 12 pt
- Minimum margins: 2 cm
- Page numbers required

Applications exceeding the page limits may be rejected without review.



10. Important Dates

Activity	Date
Call opens	27 May 2026





Activity	Date
Submission deadline	1 July 2026
Review phase	July-August 2026
Funding decision	18 August 2026



11. Contact

For questions regarding the call, applicants may contact:

Nordic Foundation for Frontier Research (NFFR)

Programme Secretariat

Email: NFFR@research-lighthouse.com



DISCLAIMER: This call is intended solely for educational and training purposes within the [GrantLab](#) programme.

