

# Akershus University Hospital — Internal research funding — procedure and criteria for granting and using funds

## 1.0 Purpose

Every year, Akershus University Hospital (Ahus) issues internal research grants.

The purpose of this procedure is to define the application process, the assessment process, and how the funds are distributed. It also includes information for projects managers when an application for funding is granted or denied.

## 2.0 Scope

This procedure is relevant for researchers at Ahus, or academic employees at the Institute of Clinical Medicine, Campus Ahus, who are applying for, or have been granted, internal research funding for the 2024 budget year.

This procedure is valid for the period 2023–2024. The process of granting funds will take place in the spring of 2023. Funds granted must be spent within the 2024 budget year.

All relevant information related to application deadlines, invitation criteria, application forms, procedures, dates, etc., can also be found at [Ahus.no](https://www.ahus.no).

## 3.0 Specifications

### 3.1 Application

#### 3.1.1 Who can apply?

The applicant (project manager) must be employed at Ahus in, at minimum, a position equivalent to 0.2 FTE, or as an academic employee the Institute of Clinical Medicine, Campus Ahus in, at minimum, a position equivalent to 0.2 FTE. The application may be for funding on behalf of oneself or others (doctoral candidates, support personnel, etc.). The applicant must hold a doctorate. Exceptions may be made for applicants whose doctoral dissertation has been approved by the application deadline.

**Each project manager (applicant) may only submit 1 application.**

#### 3.1.2 What can I apply for?

There are two application categories (A and B), and the applicant may apply for funding under one of these categories.

The project for which the applicant is applying for funding must be carried out at Ahus. The research fellow/support personnel must be employed by Ahus.

You may not apply for funding for project initiation for a PhD/postdoc if you have secured full funding equivalent to 3 FTE from external sources for the project. You may also not apply for funding for project initiation/completion through internal, strategic research funds more than once.

Application category:	What can I apply for?	Max. application amount:
A. Postdoc/PhD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Project initiation Postdoc</li><li>Project initiation og completion PhD</li></ul>	NOK 500,000 (Of which max. NOK 100,000 may be used to cover operation costs)

B. Operation/equipment/personnel costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel costs (salary compensation)</li> <li>• Operations/equipment/maintenance</li> </ul>	NOK 250,000
--	---	-------------

### 3.1.3 Application deadline

An application for funding for the budget year 2024 must be submitted before **10 March 2023** at 24:00. Grants are awarded for one year at a time.

### 3.1.3 Application requirements

- The application and the project description must be written in English.
- The template for project description must be used (see appendix).
- The application, including project description, cooperation agreements and CVs incl. publication lists (for the past 5 years) for the candidate and the project manager, must be submitted as a single file (PDF format).
- The application including appendices must be 30 pages or less.
- The application must be associated with one of the following fields (HSØ categories, 2021):
  - 1) Clinical somatic research, incl. patient-oriented translational research
  - 2) Clinical research on mental health and substance abuse/addiction
  - 3) Research on public health, epidemiology, health services, etc.
  - 4) Biomedical research with a translational perspective (*This category includes research on molecular, cellular and biochemical mechanisms of disease within all fields, including mental health and substance abuse/addiction*)
- The project must be in line with the hospital's [Development Plan 2040](#). The application form must include a description of how the project aligns with this plan.
- [User involvement](#): see section 8 of the application form. It is important to involve user representatives in the project as early in the process as possible. Describe the current status.
- When applying for funding to complete a PhD fellowship, the application must justify/document that project funds have been spent. In addition, the application must specify that the project cannot be completed without the funding, and that the funding will be sufficient to complete the project.
- The application form must specify the budget for the research project, see section 7.
- The division/department director must approve and sign the application, and is also responsible for:
  - 1) ensuring that the granted funds are used in accordance with the project plan and schedule, and that the project manager is employed by Ahus/Campus Ahus
  - 2) ensuring that the researcher is able to start working once the grant has been issued
- Submit the application via e-mail to [strategisk.forskning@ahus.no](mailto:strategisk.forskning@ahus.no)

### 3.2 Assessment

Applications for internal funding are assessed by external peers. Peers must:

- have formal qualifications equivalent to professor associate professor, and must be an active researcher
- not be employed within the Helse Sør-Øst area, or by universities and university colleges in the region
- preferable come from Scandinavia
- avoid conflict of interest in the assessment of the submitted applications

Peer qualifications/CVs are reviewed by the Department of Research Support at the Division of Research and Innovation before an agreement for application assessment is concluded.

Peers receive the applications and practical information 1–2 weeks after the application deadline. They have 3–5 weeks to assess the applications before they are asked to grade the applications and provide a written report in English on their assessment in accordance with the assessment criteria.

A list of peers is announced every year on ahus.no. The applicants will not be informed of which peers have assessed their application.

What do the external peers do?

- The peer will notify Ahus if they are not impartial (separate form). If the peer is not impartial, the application will be assigned to another peer.
  - Each application will be assessed by two external peers.
  - The peer is provided with a link to all applications up for assessment.
  - The peer must assess why an application is granted/denied.
  - The peer assigns a grade in accordance with the assessment criteria.
- Once the individual assessments are completed, the committee will host a (digital) meeting where all peers are represented. This meeting will be held in April/May, organized by the Department of Research Funding at the Division of Research and Innovation. At this meeting, a peer committee will prepare recommendations for which applications they believe should be granted. The committee will also prepare a ranked waiting list, which will be used if funds become available after allocation.
- The peer will also prepare a collective written report on the applications.

### 3.3 Allocation of funds

- The Joint Research Committee (FFU) receives collective recommendations and applications from the peer committee in May/June and will provide feedback on any formal processing errors based on these documents.
- Hospital management (SHL) will decide on the final allocation in a meeting shortly before the summer holiday.
- SHL will receive the applications and the committee's recommendations in advance of this meeting.
- Double funding is not permitted. If a project manager is granted funding from an external source for the same project, no internal funds are allocated. This will be verified by the Department of Research Support, Division of Research and Innovation.
- Applications for operating funds for projects that have funding from an external funding source must be well documented. The need for additional operating funds must be described and specified in the budget.
- Post doc funds can be withdrawn if the person has not defended PhD.

### 3.4 Feedback to applicants

**Application received:** The applicant will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of the application and information about the process once the application deadline has expired.

**Allocation letter:** After the Joint Research Committee and SHL has held their meetings in June 2022, the applicant will receive a letter of allocation and the assessments of the two peers. The letter of allocation specifies the amount allocated, as well as information about requirements for the semi-annual progress report. If no such reports are submitted, next year's application will not be assessed. Practical information (project number, information about use of funds, etc.) will go out in November/December 2022.

**Rejection letter:** After the Joint Research Committee and SHL has held their meetings in June 2022, the applicant will receive a letter of rejection and the assessments of the two peers, including information of why the application was denied.

**After allocation:** Information will be posted on the intranet and communicated via e-mail outlining who has been granted funding, how much each project has been granted, and the titles of the projects.

### 3.5 Appeal

The right to appeal is limited to processing errors and does not extend to peer assessments or discretionary decisions. The appeal must be made in writing and the basis for appeal must be specified. The term of appeal is 3 weeks from the date on which you received notice of the decision. Submit your appeal to [strategisk.forskning@ahus.no](mailto:strategisk.forskning@ahus.no). The appeal will be reviewed by the Division of Research and Innovation within 2 weeks.

- If the appeal is successful, the application will be reviewed. The application will be assigned to 2 new peers for a second assessment.
- The average grade of the second assessment will then be compared with the lowest grades of projects that have had funds allocated. If the average grade is lower than the lowest grade, the project will not be accepted.
- If an appeal leads to additional funds being granted, this will not affect projects that have already had funds allocated.

### 3.6 Changes in project after allocation

The research project must be executed in accordance with the project description, activity plan and budget outlined in the original application. If there is a need to change the project after allocation, the project manager must send a written notification to [strategisk.forskning@ahus.no](mailto:strategisk.forskning@ahus.no). Normally, changes in project plan or category are not accepted, unless special circumstances have arisen to make such changes necessary. Changes cannot result in a higher amount than originally applied for being granted.

When announcing a position and employment based on internal research funds, funds for starting a PhD, there is an opportunity to use the position code "scientific assistant" where the announcement applies for a maximum of one year and further funding of the PhD course is not known at the time of the announcement and employment. The purpose of the employment shall be a 3-year PhD. In the announcement, a requirement must be made that the candidate has a master's degree.

## 4.0 Appendices

Application form internal research funding

Template for project description

Assessment criteria

Assessment form