

AHUS – Internal strategic research funds – routines and criteria for allocation and use of funds

1.0 Purpose

Akershus University Hospital (Ahus) allocates internal strategic research funds every year.

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the application and assessment process and describe how funds are allocated. It also contains information for project managers after funds have been allocated or the application has been rejected.

2.0 Scope

This procedure is relevant for researchers at Akershus University Hospital, or scientific staff at the Institute of Clinical Medicine, Campus Ahus, who intend to apply for or have been awarded Internal Strategic Research Funds for the 2022 budget year.

The procedure is valid for the current period, 2021-2022. The fund allocation process will be completed in the spring of 2021. Allocated funds must be used during the 2022 budget year.

All relevant information related to application deadlines, announcement criteria, application form, routines, deadlines etc. is available online: Ahus.no.

3.0 Work description

3.1 Application

3.1.1 Who can apply

The applicant (project manager) must have an employment relationship with Ahus corresponding to a minimum 20% position or be a scientific employee at the Institute of Clinical Medicine, Campus Ahus, with a minimum 20% position. One can apply for funds for oneself or others (research fellows, support staff etc.). Research fellows/support staff must be employed at Ahus. Applicants must have a doctorate. Exceptions can be made for applicants who have submitted their doctoral dissertation prior to the application deadline.

3.1.2 What can be applied for

The project manager (applicant) can submit 1 (ONE) application.

There are two application categories.

Funds can also be granted for projects that have received support in the past.

Application category:	What can you apply for:	Maximum application amount:
A. Project start or conclusion date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• postdoc.• PhD	NOK 500 000
B. Operations/equipment/personnel costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personnel costs (free purchase)• Operations/equipment/maintenance of equipment	NOK 250 000

3.1.3 Application deadline

The deadline for applying for funds for the 2022 budget year is **15 March 2021** by midnight/24:00. The grant is awarded for one year.

3.1.3 Application requirements

- The application and project description must be written in English
- A template must be used to describe the project (see the appendix)
- The application and project description, collaboration declarations and CVs with a list of publications (for the last five years) for candidates and project managers must be submitted in a single file (PDF format)
- The application and attachments may contain a maximum of 30 pages
- The application can be submitted within **ONE** of the following subject groups (South-eastern Norway Regional Health Authority HSØ-categories 2021):
 - 1) Clinical somatic research, including patient-oriented translational research
 - 2) Clinical research in mental health and substance abuse/addiction
 - 3) Research in public health, epidemiology, health services etc.
 - 4) Biomedical research with a translational perspective (*The subject group includes research on molecular, cellular and biochemical disease mechanisms as well as method development within all subject areas including mental health and substance abuse/addiction*)
- [User participation](#): Ref. Item 8 on the application form. It will be important to include representatives of the user in the project as early as possible. Describe status
- When applying for funding to complete a research fellowship/postdoc, one must justify/document that the project's funding has actually been used. The application must also state that the research cannot be completed without a grant, and that the grant will be sufficient for completion.
- One must specify the budget for the research project on the application form; see Item 7.
- The division director/department head must approve and sign the application, and is responsible for:
 - 1) ensuring that the allocation is used in accordance with the project and time schedule
 - 2) that the researcher can start once the allocation is granted
- The application shall be sent by e-mail to: strategisk.forskning@ahus.no

3.2 Assessment

External peers will evaluate and assess the internal strategic research funding applications.

The peer team must:

- Include expertise, such as a professor or assistant professor (1.amanuensis) and be an active researcher
- Have been employed outside the South-Eastern Norway Health Authority, primarily in Scandinavia
- Have experience and competence to assess applications

Peer expertise and competence are checked by the Department for research support at the Research & Innovation Division before any agreement to assess applications.

The peers receive the applications and practical information about 1-2 weeks after the application deadline has expired. They are given three to five weeks to evaluate the applications and must provide a grade and written feedback on their assessment, in accordance with the assessment criteria.

What do the external peers do:

- Two external peers will evaluate each application
- The peer will be sent a link to all the applications he or she is assigned to assess
- The peer will consider why the applicant will receive or not receive funding
- The peer must state whether he or she is legally competent to assess a project due to conflict of interest etc. (separate form). The application will be sent to another peer for review in the event of conflict of interest/incapacity.
- The peer will provide written comments/feedback on the applications
- The peer will grade the application according to the assessment criteria.
A meeting will be held (digitally) in committee after the individual assessment has been completed, in which all the peers are represented. The meeting is conducted in April/May and organized by the Department of Research Support, FID. In this meeting, the peer committee puts together a Recommendation List of applications which they believe to be eligible for internal strategic research funding. A ranked waiting list will also be created which is used if there are funds available after the primary allocation
- An overview of the committee members is published every year online: ahus.no
- Applicants will not be told which peers have assessed their application

3.3 Allocation of funds

- The Joint Research Committee (FFU) receives information on recommendations from the peer committee in May/June and can then provide input on formal errors.
- SHL will make its final decision on allocations in a meeting held just before or after the summer holidays.
- Both FFU and SHL receive all the applications and the committee's recommendation list in advance of their meetings
- The project must be in accordance with the hospital's Development Plan for 2035.
- Double financing is not allowed. If the project manager is allocated funds from an external source, he/she must relinquish the Ahus internal strategic research funds. This is checked by the Department of Research Support, FID.

3.4 Feedback for applicants

Application received: Applicants will receive an e-mail informing that the application was received and further processed after the application deadline has passed.

Award letter: The applicants will receive notification letters after a meeting held by the Joint Research Committee and SHL in June 2021. The allocation notification letter contains the allocation amount, as well as an order to submit a semi-annual progress report. In the event of failure to report, all future applications will be rejected. The letter will contain comments and justifications from the external peers.

Practical information (project number, info on use of funds etc.) will be sent out in November/December 2021.

Rejection letter: The applicants will receive a letter stating the reason for rejecting their applications, based on the peer reviews, following a meeting by the Joint Research Committee and SHL in June 2021.

After allocation: we will publish a list of allocation recipients on the intranet and inform interested parties by e-mail, also stating allocated amounts and the title of the projects

3.5 Right of appeal

The right of appeal is limited to procedural errors and does not include peer or professional assessments or discretion. The appeal must be in writing and be substantiated. The deadline for appeals is 3 weeks after receiving the decision to reject the application. The appeal is

sent to strategisk.forskning@ahus.no. The appeal must be processed within 2 weeks and discussed by the Research & Innovation Division.

- If appeals are upheld in case processing errors, this will result in a new application processing (one must then anticipate extra time beyond 2 weeks before a new assessment is done): The application is then sent out to new peers for a new assessment
- The average grade for a new assessment is then compared with the lower grade limit for the recipients of allocated funds. If the average grade is lower than the lower limit for allocation, the project will not receive an allocation.
- In the event of an award following an appeal and possibly lengthy case processing, this shall not have an impact on funds for projects that have already been informed that funds will be granted.

3.6 Changes to a project

Research projects must be carried out in accordance with the project description, activity plan and budget as stated in the original application. If there is a need for changes in the project, this must be reported in writing to strategisk.forskning@ahus.no. Normally, no change in project plan or category is approved unless special conditions have been added. Changes will not result in a higher allocation than originally applied for. When changing to a category with a lower framework, the upper limit for the new category is the maximum allocation.

4.0 Appendices

Application form – Internal Strategic Research Funds

Project Description Template

Assessment criteria

Assessment Form