

Call for Applications 2021 – Window 1

Research in Danida priority countries

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1. Introduction

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA) provides grants for development research activities as part of Denmark’s international development cooperation. While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015 constitute an overall thematic framework for development cooperation and research, the overall objective of the Danish support to research cooperation is to contribute to new solutions with new knowledge. In accordance with this objective, grants will be awarded to strategic research cooperation, which generates new knowledge relevant to the needs and strategies of partner countries, to Denmark’s cooperation with these countries as well as including substantive elements of research capacity strengthening.

Within this framework, the MFA invites **Phase 1 applications** for grants related to development research with partners in the Danida priority countries (**Window 1**)¹. Phase 1 is the first step of a process in which applicants submit **project ideas** leading to prequalification. Phase 2 is the submission of a full application by those selected in Phase 1 (“prequalified”).

The total allocation available for development research funding (Window 1 and Window 2) in 2021 is approximately DKK 180 million. The funding is conditional on approval by the Danish Parliament of the 2021 Finance Bill.

The deadline for submission of Phase 1 applications in Window 1 is **26 February 2021 at 13:00hrs CET**. Applications must be submitted in English and electronically via the e-application system (SurveyMonkey Apply).

¹ The Call for research in growth and transition countries (Window 2) is available on [DFC’s website](#).

Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) administers the MFA's support to development research. For questions concerning the application procedures and in general relating to this Call for applications, please contact the Research Management Team at DFC at research@dfcentre.dk.

For introduction to the Call, advice on how to make a good application, and the e-application system, please refer to [DFC's website](#).

2. Eligible countries

The research must be implemented in a Danida priority country. These are currently Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Palestine, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda.

3. Research theme

The thematic focus area of this Call is **Sustainable development and climate change**.

Progress towards the sustainable development goals (SDGs) as defined by the United Nations in agenda 2030 requires renewed research efforts, notably in so far as the consequences of climate change are concerned. There is an urgent need to introduce low carbon development policies, measures and technologies across the globe in order to rapidly and effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, higher temperatures, sea level rise, extreme weather events, droughts and floods are forcing many communities to adapt to a warmer world. Climate change affects sustainable development pathways through impacts on infrastructure and settlements, on ecosystems and biological diversity, on food production and access to water resources, as well as on the patterns and prevalence of disease, etc. Furthermore, persistent poverty and inequalities as well as recurring humanitarian crises impact on sustainable development and in fragile, least developed countries there are risks of leaving millions behind. Introducing sustainable development policies requires thorough understanding of economic, social and environmental constraints and opportunities. In this context, intensified research plays a role in developing innovative solutions, contributing both to mitigate climate change (by reducing emissions) and to enhance resilience (adaptive capacities). Multi-disciplinary investigations may be particularly significant.

4. Project duration and grant

The expected duration of Window 1 research projects is up to 5 years within a maximum grant of DKK 12 million for each project.

5. Main applicant

Applications must be submitted only by universities or by a research-based institution (public or private) in Denmark, which will be responsible for the grant. The project coordinator must have an affiliation with the applying institution.

At the time of submitting the application, the project coordinator must hold a PhD or equivalent qualification, documented clearly in the CV. Documented evidence that he/she is a Professor, Assistant Professor, or Associate Professor is regarded as equivalent to a PhD.

Experience shows that the project coordinator plays a key role in ensuring that a research collaboration project is successful. An effective engagement/ involvement of the project coordinator will entail a substantial workload, noticeably at the beginning of the project.

It is important that the project coordinator and the research team are able to document relevant scientific merits and qualifications as well as a research background within the topic applied for. A person may appear as project coordinator on several applications, but only one project per project coordinator may be approved for this funding window.

6. Project participants

The application must list all partner institutions in Danida priority countries, partners in Denmark, and possibly international partners. At least one researcher from each partner institution (project participant if private sector partner) must be named in the Phase 1 application (Task: Project participants in the e-application form).

Research collaboration is considered an important means to strengthen research capacity of institutions in priority countries. In order for research partners to benefit from the collaboration, partnerships should be equal, and partners must contribute actively in preparing both Phase 1 and subsequent Phase 2 application (if prequalified). Other important aspects of equal partnerships include joint fieldwork, joint publishing, knowledge sharing, access to databases and libraries, etc.

It is strongly encouraged to involve partners from the private sector and national authorities in the partner country or in Denmark in the research project, and grant funding can be used for their direct input to project activities but not overhead expenses. Such partners are encouraged to contribute with additional resources (funding or in-kind) for the projects. International research institutions and research institutions in countries outside Denmark and outside the Danida priority countries can equally be supported by the grant for their direct input to the project activities with no overhead.

Support to PhD students is considered an important part of research capacity strengthening of the partner institutions. The application should indicate the intentions for involvement of PhD students in the project. Danish PhD students may be included for their direct input to the project.

PhD candidates from the priority countries included in the project must seek enrolment at a university in their home country, alternatively at a university in the region of the partner country. Enrolment in Denmark can only be considered if enrolment in the partner country or the partner country region is not possible, and if sufficient justification for this is provided.

7. Description of project idea

The description of the **project idea** must be structured according to the indicated headings and in the stated order. All headings must be used and none added. It is important to ensure that the application is clear and focused, and although there are no requirements regarding the length of each section in the project description, the project description as a whole must not exceed 10,000 characters (including spacing) plus references.

Heading 1: State of the art, rationale, and relevance

Background to project objectives:

- Based on a state of the art literature review and a broader development rationale, explain how the research project will provide new knowledge in the scientific field concerned;
- Highlight how the proposed project relates to prior and on-going research in the specific field about which the applicant is aware;
- Present a rationale for the selection of partner country/countries. If more than one partner country is chosen, the rationale for this and added-value and importance for the project should be clearly argued.

Describe the project's importance in relation to:

- Specific Sustainable Development Goal(s);
- The development strategies and specific development challenges of the involved country or countries;
- Danish priorities in the country in relation to development cooperation;
- Relevance towards the public and/or private sector where appropriate.

Heading 2: Objectives and results expected

- Describe project objectives, including clearly identified research questions and possibly research hypotheses;
- List the main expected scientific results and an indication of the research capacity strengthening.

Heading 3: Indicative project methodology

Outline the methodology, research design, and approach to research capacity strengthening in general terms.

8. Assessment

The Consultative Research Committee for Development Research (the FFU) in Denmark is assisting the MFA by providing professional and scientific advice in relation to research applications.

Relevant Danish embassies are in Phase 1 invited to assess the relevance of the project idea to national development priorities and Danish development assistance prior to the FFU assessment.

The FFU assesses the Phase 1 applications on the basis of three equally weighted criteria as described below: i) scientific quality; ii) relevance; and iii) the potential effect of the research.

The scientific quality of the proposal is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- *The research experience and qualifications of the project coordinator and the team;*
- *The originality and innovative nature of the project, in terms of generating new knowledge.*

The relevance of the proposal is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- *The focus of the project is well-defined with respect to the theme;*
- *The project responds to national development priorities relevant for Danish development assistance;*
- *Opportunities for enhanced public and private sector development.*

The effect of the research is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- *The potential direct effects with respect to the selected sustainable development goal(s);*
- *The effects of the project in terms of the partnerships with public and private sector which could take the research to the next level;*
- *The contribution of the project to strengthened research capacity.*

It must be clear that the proposal constitutes a genuine research project rather than being registration of data, commissioned research, a product development, demonstration project, technology transfer, consultancy, or development project.

On the basis of the FFU assessment, MFA makes a decision on which applicants should be invited to apply in Phase 2 of the application process. In Phase 2, feasibility of the proposed research project will also be a criterion for assessment. Refer to “Useful links” for Phase 2 guidelines from 2020.

International peer reviewers are involved in the assessment of scientific quality only in Phase 2. The final scientific quality assessment is conducted by the FFU and approved by the Innovation Fund Denmark, cf. § 5, subsection 2 of the Act on Innovation Fund Denmark no. 306 of March 29, 2014, amended in Act no. 384 §35 of April 26, 2017.

If the total number of qualified applications exceed the available funding allocation, the MFA will select the best projects based on the FFU assessment of the above criteria. If and when required, the MFA will conduct a hearing process in accordance with § 19 of the Danish Public Administration Act.

MFA may make the processing of new applications by the project coordinator conditional on compliance with the terms and conditions of previous MFA grants.

9. Application process Window 1

Phase 1 – 2021	Feb	Deadline for Phase 1 applications: 26 February 2021 13:00hrs CET
	March	DFC administrative screening and administrative rejections Embassy assessment of relevance Applicant hearing process, if and when required (§ 19 of the Danish Public Administration Act)
	April - May	The FFU assessment of applications Selection by the MFA - prequalification Reply to applicants Invitation and instructions to a full Phase 2 application

Phase 2 – 2021/22	Aug	Deadline for Phase 2 applications: 20 August 2021 13:00hrs CET DFC administrative screening and administrative rejections
	Sept - Oct	Peer reviewing and applicant hearing
	Nov	The FFU assessment of Phase 2 applications
	Dec	Innovation Fund Denmark's approval of FFU's scientific quality assessment MFA selection Reply to applicants Letters of Commitment to approved projects
	Jan - Feb	Agreement on budget, etc. Letters of Grant
	Jan - Feb	Granted projects endorse Letter of Grant and can start up project activities

10. Project costs

In the Phase 1 application an estimate of the grant applied for must be indicated. The total grant is maximum DKK 12 million for a five-year period. Other funding sources and an estimated total project cost should be indicated.

The percentage of the budget to institutions in Denmark vis-à-vis institutions in Danida priority countries must reflect the importance given to the research capacity strengthening in the priority country, e.g. by providing around 60% of the budget to partner institutions in the Danida priority countries.

For international research institutions, partners in countries outside the Danida priority country, national authorities, and private sector partners, the budget can only include salaries and travel expenses covering their direct input to the project activities, and no administration fees can be covered. These costs are not included when calculating the DK-South partner budget shares.

Eligible costs

It will be possible to apply for funding for the following budget items:

- Salaries and emoluments;
- Tuition Fees and educational grants to PhD students from the Danida priority countries;
- Expenses for trips abroad and fieldwork;
- Project and research materials and equipment;
- Publication, dissemination and communication;
- Administration fees (overhead);
- Study stays in Denmark of PhD students from Danida priority countries;

- External audit.

Guiding principles for budgeting in Phase 2 are available under “Useful links”.

11. E-application system

Submission of a Phase 1 application must be done via the e-application system SurveyMonkey Apply (SMA). The e-application system is accessible [here](#).

It is necessary to create an SMA account, and once this step is completed, the programme “Window 1 - Research in Danida priority countries 2021” can be accessed.

After submitting the application, the applicant will receive an e-mail acknowledging receipt. It is also possible to see whether an application has been submitted or not under “My applications”. If any doubt occurs as to whether an application has been submitted or not, the applicant should send an e-mail to research@dfcentre.dk to enquire whether the application has been submitted. This must be done before the deadline, since applications will not be accepted after deadline.

The Phase 1 application must comprise the completed **e-application form, including CVs and endorsements**.

CVs: The CVs must specify the scientific qualifications, managerial skills, and experience from developing countries, and must include a list of key publications and patents relevant for the application. The length of the CVs must be no more than 2 pages per person. Signature on CVs is not required.

Endorsements: The endorsements are mandatory by the Head of the responsible institution/department and project coordinator as per the e-application form.

All tasks in the e-application form must be completed, and the application including appendices must be written in English. Only the required appendices will be considered. The appendices must be named "CV - Name of the researcher/project participant". It is advised not to wait until the last minute before deadline to submit the application, to account for any unforeseen issues on the applicant's side.

12. Obligations

Applicants should familiarize themselves with the following before using the e-application system and submitting an application.

The responsibility of the applying institution

The applying institution is responsible for ensuring that all information in the e-application is correct, that the required appendices are uploaded with the e-application, that the contents of the appendices are correct and that the e-application has been submitted before the set deadline of the Call.

It is not possible to make corrections to an e-application after it has been submitted, except for corrections related to personal information, such as change of e-mail address.

In the event of any subsequent substantive changes affecting the submitted application submitted, the applying institution must immediately notify the Research Management Team at DFC at research@dfcentre.dk.

The application must reflect possible legal, regulatory or ethical issues and considerations, including required standards or authorization requirements (such as production standards, quality systems, scientific ethics, data handling and protection, use of animals), as well as research permits, provision of information to relevant authorities, etc., and a plan for obtaining these.

Storage of information and data protection

When the e-application system is used, the system will automatically register the applicant's identity, IP address, and the time at which the application was created or last edited. All personal data will be processed, stored and deleted in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and [DFC Privacy Policy](#). We also refer to the [privacy policy of Innovation Fund Denmark](#) being the institution approving the scientific quality assessment made by the FFU in the subsequent Phase 2 of the application process.

Technical disclaimer

DFC is obliged to inform prospective applicants of any system errors that make the e-application system unavailable, affecting the applicant's possibility of submitting e-applications within set deadlines. Information regarding such unavailability or other unforeseen events will be posted on [DFC's website](#).

DFC accepts no liability for incorrect information due to software errors, calculation errors, transmission errors and similar errors, or for any claims for damages due to incorrect use of the e-application system.

Rejection of applications without substantive consideration

An application will be rejected by DFC without substantive consideration by the FFU and the MFA if the requirements concerning the eligibility of applicants and countries, the application format and attachments, and the deadlines as set out in this Call for applications are not met.

Other data which may be obtained by official bodies

The MFA and the FFU reserve the right to obtain information about any previous and current applications an applicant may have submitted to the FFU, and this information may be included in processing of the application.

In the event that project funding has been or will be applied for from elsewhere, the MFA and the FFU reserve the right to obtain information as to whether the amount has been granted.

Use of funding for other purposes

The MFA may, at its discretion, decide that a proportion of the funding available is to be used for other research cooperation.

Announcement

Once the submitted Phase 1 applications have been processed, an announcement will be made on [DFC's website](#), as to who have been invited to submit a Phase 2 application. In support of that announcement, the following information may be published on the internet: applicant name, title,

workplace, title of application, and expected application amount. The purpose of this is to enable applicants to apprise themselves of other prospective programme applicants and research activities and possibly form their own networks with a view to submitting joint applications.

Information about applicants who are not invited to submit a Phase 2 application may be disclosed in the event that access is applied for according to the Danish Public Records Act (Offentlighedsloven). Access to such information may be granted in the form of lists of who has applied and for what purpose (applicant names and application titles). Applicants should, therefore, ensure that their application title does not reveal information about the activity that they wish to keep out of the public domain.

13. Useful links

[Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[Country policies](#)

[The Consultative Research Committee \(FFU\)](#)

[Guide to making a good application by FFU](#)

[Guide to the e-application system SurveyMonkey Apply](#)

[Guiding principles for budget making in Phase 2 – Window 1](#)

[Invitation and guidelines for Phase 2 applications 2020 \(for reference\)](#)