

Plan for Project Development and Writing Research Proposals at CEFH

This document describes the goals for developing new research proposals and the central principles for project planning. The document is continuously updated and is used as a reference document when supporting new proposals/projects in the Centre for Fertility and Health.

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Aims

Goal 1: Develop new projects and write high-quality research proposals

Subgoal 1.1: Gain a thorough understanding and interpretation of call texts in the academic community.

Measures:

- The application advisor thoroughly familiarizes themselves with the requirements and thematic perspectives of the call.
- The application advisor invites one or more researchers to participate in webinars or similar events offered by funding sources on thematic calls, where the researcher contributes their academic interpretation of the thematic perspectives in the calls.
- Conduct seminars on relevant calls where the application advisor and researcher collaboratively communicate the key guidelines of the call, aiming to ensure a good understanding of how CEFHs research areas can align with the thematic perspectives of the calls.

Subgoal 1.2: Provide pre-deadline application development and support processes for various funding sources.

Measures:

- Launch and inform plans for application support leading up to a specific deadline at CEFH by the application advisor, ensuring a collective starting point for application work.
- Organize seminars with reviews and discussion/interpretation of call texts regularly leading up to major shared deadlines (e.g., ERC and NFR), adapting the process for applications to other funding sources based on individual cases.
- Application idea pitching, with opportunities for feedback, is included in the seminar series for major shared deadlines.

- Experience-sharing sessions among researchers on research proposals as a "genre" are included in the seminar series for major shared deadlines.
- Applicants continuously share their application drafts with relevant colleagues during the writing process to receive input on methodological choices, including the "correct" use of registry data, health survey data, power calculations, and appropriate analytical methods that lead to answering research questions, etc.
- Examples of successful proposals and/or funded projects are made accessible to all in the workspace on SharePoint ("Project Proposals @CEFH"). The application advisor uses parts of these proposals as examples in their guidance to ensure that previous successful work is highlighted and utilized.
- One-on-one application guidance is provided through scheduled meetings and continuous contact between the advisor and the applicant.

Goal 2: Build project development and proposal writing competence in the long term.

Sub-goal 2.1: Training of Ph.D. candidates, postdocs, and early-career researchers in project development and proposal writing.

Measures:

- Identify a "proposal apprenticeship" group consisting of Ph.D. candidates, postdocs, and early-career researchers who have not written proposals before or have limited experience.
- Include "proposal apprentices" as observers in the support provided in CEFH.
- Invite "proposal apprentices" as observers in a specific proposal process—a project leader for a proposal ensures inviting an apprentice to meetings with contributors/partners, copying them on email correspondence related to the development of the proposal, giving them ongoing access to drafts of the proposal to see all development stages in a proposal writing process, and participating in one-on-one counseling the project leader receives from the application advisor.

Goal 3: Seek funding from a wide range of funding sources.

Sub-goal 3.1: Seek funds from the Research Council of Norway.

Measures:

- Conduct application development and support processes leading up to the deadline, as described under Goal 1 and Sub-goals 1.1 and 1.2.
- From 2023: New FRIPRO-scheme. Ensure that proposals are thoroughly checked before submission to FRIPRO.

Sub-goal 3.2: Seek funds from the European Research Council (ERC) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA).

Measures:

- ERC workshops are held monthly where eligible researchers can share experiences and pitch ideas to get feedback. The ERC workshops are organised in a collaboration between CEFH and the Department for Research Administrative Support at NIPH (FAS).
- The application advisor conducts short interviews with all ERC candidates to assess their past experiences with ERC, desires, and future plans, what they consider the biggest barriers to applying for such grants, and what they see as opportunities. The information is used to shape academic and research administrative support.
- Establish ERC "eligibility map" for CEFH members to provide guidance to determine which call one can apply for and to raise awareness of opportunities applying for ERC.

- MSCA: The ERC eligibility map also includes Ph.D. candidates and their timeframe for applying for MSCA projects.

Sub-goal 3.3: Seek funds from Nordforsk and other Norwegian and Nordic funding sources.

Measures:

- The application advisor and researchers regularly monitor relevant calls and investigate the possibilities of obtaining funding from NordForsk, DAM foundation, Ministry of Health and Care Services, Cancer Society, and other foundations/organizations where FHI is an approved applicant institution.
- Through established collaborations with other institutions, we seek to obtain funding for research activities from foundations/organizations where FHI is not an approved applicant institution (Helse Sørøst, Trond Mohn Foundation, etc.)

Sub-goal 3.4: Be an international partner in NIH (R01 announcements).

- Researchers with established collaborations with researchers in the United States actively work with them to identify relevant R01 announcements within the NIH system that they can develop a project proposal for.
- The application advisor initiates some or all of the measures defined in Goal 1 and Sub-goals 1.1 and 1.2 as part of an application support process for individual applications to NIH.

Sub-goal 3.5: Seek funds from other funding mechanisms within the EU/Horizon Europe—beyond ERC/MSCA.

Measures:

- The application advisor assesses the interest and plan of researchers with ongoing projects to apply for thematic calls (missions) in Horizon Europe in the status meetings with project leaders held twice a year in CEFH.
- The application advisor includes project leaders/researchers in reviewing drafts of calls that FAS centrally distributes to research communities via FAS contacts at FHI.

Budgeting

Budgets should be tailored according to 1) the rules and guidelines of the call, and 2) internal budgeting principles.

The internal budgeting principles include:

- Salary for the PI must be included
 - o 20 % at a minimum
 - o Consult the plan for funding for the PI in question and assess the timeframe and degree of their current funding. Include the percentage of their salaries that is missing in the plan (from 30 %- 100 %) in the project budget.
 - o If the call requires a set time commitment (e.g. NFR Young Research Talent, ERC) the budget must cover the relevant percentage
- Costs for requiring new data must be included
 - o Include costs for data (refer the price list for each register/health survey) if the project plans to obtain data from registries/health surveys that is not already available in the established data sets in the centre.
 - o If a project plans to use existing data sets, a lump sum of minimum 100.000 should be budgeted to cover running costs.