The Danish Council for Strategic Research

Danish Council for Strategic Research (DSF) Application Guide, Phase 1 Applications, March 2012

This guide is intended for use for phase 1 applications for strategic research centres, research alliances and research projects under the Danish Council for Strategic Research (DSF).

However, the guideline is also to be used in relation to the preparation of phase 1 applications for SPIR (Strategic Platforms for Innovation and Research), which are offered jointly by DSF and the Danish Council for Technology and Innovation (RTI). For some items special conditions apply to SPIR applications. This is clearly marked in the text.

This guide is also available in Danish at
http://www.fi.dk/dokumenter/dsf/dsfs-ansoegningsvejledning-fase-1-marts-2012.pdf.

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This guide contains information concerning the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation's e-application system, including the contents of e-application form and appendices.

Further information about the e-application system is found under "FAQ" and "About the e-application system" at http://en.fi.dk/e-application.

For detailed instructions concerning the contents of and formal requirements for applications, please refer to the call text itself, which is available at http://en.fi.dk/dcsr/calls and under the relevant funding opportunity at http://en.fi.dk/funding.

Please note that the call and the e-application form may contain information pertinent to the application that is not stated in this guide.

1. Changes since 2011

Please note: applicants who applied to the Danish Council for Strategic Research in 2011 are advised that the following changes have been made to forms and requirements since last year:

A Amendments to rules on overhead rates
The rules regarding the types of institutions eligible for overheads of a given size have been amended and made more explicit. Please refer to the overview in the call text's section on financial information. The new rules should clarify the requirements, but the secretariat is naturally available to answer any queries about which overhead a given entity is required to itemise in its budget.

B The option for a proportion of the funding not to have been distributed to the partners at the time of grant award – now applicable to all instruments
In 2011, DSF eased the requirement for applicants for grants for strategic research centres to have distributed the full grant amount among the partners from the outset. In 2012, as described in the call text, this option has been extended to all instruments (grant types) in the interests of allowing for flexibility during the grant period.
"Comments on budgets and finances" in this guide, section 5.1, explain how to deal with this in the budgets.

C Other changes reflected in the call text
This year's call text is essentially unchanged since the 2011 call. Applicants should however note that certain adjustments have been to the requirements regarding the content of the project description. Equally, adjustments may have been made to the description of the objectives and prioritised areas under individual research themes. Finally, minor adjustments have been made to the wording in other sections, including the sections on special strategic aspects, on instruments and on responsibilities, publication, etc. Applicants are therefore urged to read the entire call text before drawing up their application.

2. Getting started

The e-application system is accessible from both the Danish and English versions of the website (i.e. from pages with Danish/English Help text) via the following links:

Danish: www.fi.dk/e-ansoegning

English: en.fi.dk/e-application

Note:

- Before using the system, you need to set yourself up as a user via the "Register as user" link at the top of the page. Shortly after registration, you will receive an e-mail containing the password needed to access the system.
  Please note that acknowledgement of receipt of the application will be sent to the e-mail address used as your user name in the system.
  Applicants who have previously submitted an application via the system will be able to use their previously created user name and password. If you have forgotten your password, you can request a new one on the system's logon page.
- To start a new application, you must select "Calls currently open for application" at the bottom of the page and then select "The e-application form" under the relevant call.

- Once you have started an application form, you can break off from it and resume work at any time by accessing “Edit your e-application”, at the top of the page.

3. How to use the e-application form

On the e-application form you will be entering various kinds of information (see description of contents below). In addition, you must attach appendices to the e-application form.

After having accessed the application form, you should start by entering the application title in Section 1 of the form and then press “Save all”. This saves your application to a ‘library’ called “My applications” which you can access at any time via the “Edit your application” link. Only the applicant has access to this library and to non-submitted e-application forms and appendices.

You can quit working on your application at any time, save and close, and resume work on it later on.

Each field on the form can only contain a limited number of characters (see the instructions on the form). If you exceed this maximum and try to save or submit the form, this field will be framed in red with a message that the text is too long and has been abbreviated. You will then have to edit the text further yourself until the red frame disappears. ***Note: you should be especially aware of this limitation if you paste whole sections of text into the form by copying from another document.***

Note that the numbering of the individual sections in the e-application form omits some numbers. This is intentional and is due to the fact that the same ‘master’ form is used for all calls issued under the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation. Some sections of the ‘master’ form are not relevant to all applications, which is why they have been omitted from the forms.

Note specifically that while you are in the process of completing the form, you must save your input continuously to avoid losing data. There are “Save all” buttons at several points in the form – these save the ENTIRE form and not just whichever section you happen to be in.

One applicant may have multiple applications in progress simultaneously.

Applicants can delete “incorrect” applications in the “My applications” library. However, applications that have been submitted cannot be deleted.

The form can be viewed in both Danish and English language versions (switch language by clicking the button at the top of the form). Whether you use the Danish or English version of the form does not affect the final application, and at any time while working on the application you can switch between Danish and English views. But the text you enter must be in ENGLISH (except in the “Popular-science description” field which must always be in Danish).

4. Contents of the e-application form

The e-application form features Help texts to explain the contents required in all the fields. Please follow the instructions carefully.

The application form contains the following sections:

Section 1 of the form: Application

Application title: Must be in English, must contain an acronym, and must not contain special characters, e.g. @, §, [and %

Theme/Instrument: One or more themes must be selected, but only a single instrument.
Note that your selection will not be registered until you have pressed "Add".

Note that the form states under which call applications may be made. If the form state a wrong call title, you will have to start a new application by selecting "Calls currently open for application" at en.fi.dk/e-application and then selecting "The e-application form" under the correct call.

Section 2 of the form: Applicant

This section is for entering the applicant's data.

Specifically for SPIR applications: Please note that while the applicant in an application for strategic research centres, research alliances and research projects is a person, the applicant for a SPIR platform is a legal entity, e.g. a university or an enterprise. Additionally a SPIR application must include information about a contact person in relation to the application procedure – including e-mail address.

Section 3 of the form: Applicant's workplace or affiliated institution/company during the project period

This section is for entering details of where the applicant works or the institution/enterprise to which the applicant is affiliated in the context of this particular application.

Specifically for SPIR applications: Please note that the e-application form for SPIR applications does not contain section 3.

Section 6 of the form: Duration

The duration entered for the activity applied for must correspond to the nominal duration of the instrument selected – see the conditions set out in the call text.

Section 7 of the form: Finances

In a Phase 1 application form, the anticipated amount applied for must be entered. The amount must match the grand total incl. overheads entered at the bottom of column B of the outline budget (Appendix A).

Note that the amount must be stated as the full DKK amount (i.e. not rounded to millions as in Appendix A)

Note also that English number format is used (example: 2,000,000 for two million)

Section 8 of the form: Research training

This section is for entering the total number of PhD students and postdoctoral researchers and the anticipated aggregate time they will be devoting to the activity.

Note that the figures must match those stated in Appendix A, cf. the description in section 5.1 below.

Section 9 of the form: Project description

Scientific keywords: Please state up to 5 scientific keywords to describe the research activity. The keywords are used by the secretariat for initial screening of the applications received.

Popular-science description: Also used in the secretariat's initial screening. In a Phase 1 application, the popular-science description will in general not be published.

Section 15 of the form: Other information

Any supplementary information: This field may be used for providing information about any other matters concerning the application.

Note

- If the Phase 1 application is a revised version of a previously submitted application to DSF, this **must** be stated here – incl. the file number of the previous application.
- If the Phase 1 application has been submitted to other councils/funding bodies it **must** be stated here.

Proposals for researchers to contribute to peer review: This section is for proposing the names of three internationally renowned researchers to contribute to peer review of any final application. These must normally be researchers working outside of Denmark, and they must – to the best of the applicant's knowledge – be impartial in relation to the application.

Applicants should note that Phase 1 applications are not referred for peer review, and are assessed solely by the Programme Commission. The peer reviewers proposed in the e-application form will thus only be considered by the Programme Commission for any final application. The process of contracting the services of peer reviewers commences very shortly after a decision has been made regarding which applicants are to be invited to submit a final application. Consequently, if, during the application process, the applicant becomes aware of circumstances that would not make it feasible or appropriate to retain the services of the peer reviewers originally proposed – e.g. questions concerning impartiality – the matter must be notified as soon as possible to the Danish Council for Strategic Research's secretariat.

Note:

- Fields marked * are required, and **the e-application form can only be submitted if they have been completed**. If, contrary to expectation, it is not possible to provide the required information, some other text/symbol must be entered in the fields. However, it should be emphasised that this must not be a normal occurrence.
- After each proposed person, it is possible to write a brief comment – such comments will usually pertain to the special scientific profile of the proposed person.

Section 16 of the form: Appendices

Follow the instructions on the e-application form for attaching appendices.

All appendices must be in PDF and must not be password-protected or otherwise 'locked'.

The PDF files should be generated directly on the computer and not by scanning any paper versions of the appendices. Scanned documents may by unclear and do not necessarily allow text searching.

See Section 5 below for requirements concerning the contents of the appendices.

The total volume of all the appendices must not exceed 25 MB.

The appendix files must be stored on the applicant's own computer and correctly named (see the call for naming conventions) before attachment. This means that you do not have to be logged onto the system while preparing the appendices.

The order in which the appendices are attached must be as stipulated in the call text. Appendices may be uploaded as they are completed, and the order can then be changed afterwards. Further, previously uploaded appendices may be deleted and substituted by new ones as required.

Note:

- **Template:** The link "Templates for appendices" in the e-application form gives access to the template for Appendix A. It is identical to the template provided via en.fi.dk/funding under the relevant funding opportunity.
- **Not all appendix templates are to be used:** The link "Templates for appendices" provides access to a number of different templates – including some templates that are **not** to be used in certain applications.
- By clicking **"Update list of appendices"**, you can generate within the e-application form itself a list of the appendices that are currently attached.

Section 17 of the form: Scientific statistics

The information to be provided in this section is for statistical purposes only and will have no bearing on assessment of the application. However the information will be on the form while processing the application.

Section 22 of the form: Application submission

Follow the instructions on the e-application form. You will find further information in section 6 below.

5. Contents of appendices

5.1 Appendix A - Finances, research training and participants

Naming of the appendix: *"Appendix A – XXXXXX" (XXXXXX is the acronym).*

Appendix A must be prepared on form *"Appendix A - Phase 1 applications, DSF, 2012"*. This form is available via en.fi.dk/funding under the relevant funding opportunity, but can also be downloaded via the link to templates on the e-application form section 16.

The form is in Word format. After the Word file has been completed, the applicant must generate a PDF file from the Word file for submission.

The contents of the form are as follows:

Budget outline and projected financing plan broken down by partners and other sources

Enter an outline budget and a projected financing plan. Amounts must be stated in DKK millions with one decimal.

The upper part of the left column is to be used for entering all partners in the project. A partner in this connection is an institution/company – not a person.

Column A: The total expenditure budget broken down by partners in the project. All costs must be included irrespective of whether the aim is for them to be covered by the grant, the partner institution/ company itself, other partners in the project or external sources.

Column B: State the part of the individual partners' budgets intended to be covered by a grant.

Column C: State the value of the financing covered by the individual partner. This item includes both cash contributions and payment made "in kind", i.e. by making facilities, equipment, staff etc. available for the activity.

Under "Other sources of financing" state the names of other parties who will be contributing to the financing of the activity and (in column C) the size of their contributions. These might for instance be co-financing companies or foundations who will not be partners in the activity.

Comments on budgets and finances:

- For each project partner, the amount in column A may not equal the total of the amounts in columns B and C together. For a partner who covers more than its own costs, A will be less than the sum of B and C and vice versa for a partner who receives contributions from another project partner or from external sources. However, the grand totals on the bottom line of the table indicate the total activity costs and how these are covered by the various sources of financing, so here the total of columns B and C must add up to the total in column A.
- The budget must solely cover the activity for which part-funding is being applied for from the grant. If projects funded by other public-sector sources are to be "slotted into" the activity (e.g. in the interests of synergy, or if the projects form part of the overall activity) they must then NOT be included in the outline budget. However, it is possible to enter limited information on these projects under "Any supplementary information" (Section 15 of the e-application form) or outlined in the project description (Appendix B of the application). Projects which in this way are not to be included in the outline budget may for example be EU projects and projects funded by other research Councils, the Danish National Advanced Technology Foundation or the Industrial PhD Programme.
- When preparing the outline budget and projected financing plan, it is important to bear in mind that a number of specific requirements will be made in connection with any future final application concerning calculation of the individual budget items. These requirements are set out in the call's finances section. The outline budget should be prepared in observance of these requirements and should include overheads corresponding to what the individual partners are entitled to, based on their respective status.

- Applicants who are invited to submit a final application will have the opportunity to make changes and adjustments to the budget – e.g. to redistribute budget items among the partners, to adjust the budget to any changes in the scientific work and to correct inaccurate cost estimates. However, in principle, the total funding amount in the final application should not deviate from the amount stated on the Phase 1 application by more than 10-20 per cent. It is a good idea always to contact the Agency secretariat if you wish to make significant changes between the two phases that are not a direct result of wishes or requirements in relation to the evaluation procedure.
- The budget's distribution of costs among the parties helps give an idea of the commitment of the individual partners. However in Phase 1, there will not always be sufficient overview of the distribution of costs among the individual partners to permit a precise break-down of those costs. Similarly, in the interests of flexibility while the activity is in progress, it may be preferable to keep a proportion of the funding in reserve as "undistributed". It is therefore acceptable, to a limited extent, to indicate undistributed items in Appendix A: They can be indicated in the left-hand column as, e.g., "undistributed". In such situations, an estimate must be given of the expected overheads.

If the budget includes major equipment procurements (where the unit price of individual items exceeds approx. DKK 500,000), please provide a brief description and state the estimated price

A designation must be entered for the equipment, and the projected cost.

Overview of anticipated research training (PhD and postdoctoral grants) in the activity

Draw up a statement of the anticipated scope of time-commitment of PhDs and postdocs involved in the activity, irrespective of whether or not they are funded by DSF.

"Number" refers to the number of grants/persons.

"Total duration" indicates the time from the PhD/postdoc programmes that will be allocated to the activity. *Example: A PhD student assigned to the project for half his/her study duration of three years must thus be included for 18 months.* However, no deduction in time may be made for teaching commitments, holidays, etc.

List of project leaders/work package leaders and other key individuals and their anticipated involvement in the activity

The statement must reflect the projected ***total*** time-commitment by the project leaders/workpackage leaders and other key individuals, irrespective of whether that commitment is funded by DSF. On the left, enter the names of the participants, followed by the time each person will be devoting to the project.

Example: A participant intends to contribute two months' work a year to a project lasting five years. The effective time-commitment is thus 2 x 5 = 10 months, which must be entered in the form, no matter who covers the costs.

5.2 Appendix B - Project description

Naming of the appendix: *"Appendix B – Project description – XXXXXX" (XXXXXX is the acronym).*

Appendix B must contain the project description. The detailed requirements concerning its scope, contents and format are set out in the call text.

5.3 Appendix C - CVs

Naming of the appendix: *"Appendix C – CV – XXXXXX" (XXXXXX is the acronym).*

Appendix C must contain a table of contents and the CVs of the applicant and other key individuals. For details, see the call text.

6. E-application submission procedure

Submission must be according to the instructions at the end of the form.

The application cannot be withdrawn electronically after submission, and after submission there is no option to amend the application and/or resubmit it. If the applicant wishes to withdraw a submitted application the DSF secretariat must be contacted.

Note that delays may be experienced when trying to upload the application due to the "queues" that may form around the application deadline. We therefore recommend allowing sufficient time for the submission/upload process itself so you do not miss the application deadline.

7. Signatures

In a Phase 1 application no signatures are required.

8. View the application after submission

After submitting your application, the e-application form system automatically generates a complete PDF file containing the completed application form and all appendices. When the PDF file is ready, the applicant will be notified by e-mail (this can take up to 24 hours after submission). The PDF file containing your complete application can be found in "My applications".

If you do not have time to wait for the PDF to be generated, go to "My applications" and click "Attachments" next to the application you want to view. You can then view your appendices in a new window.