Guidelines:

Industrial PhD

Please be aware that this document is a translation of the legally binding Danish version of the guidelines.

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1. The programme

1.1 Industrial PhD – in brief

An Industrial PhD project is a business-oriented research and education project that is implemented in collaboration between a private or public company, an Industrial PhD student and a university. The project must comprise significant research of high quality and have direct or indirect business-related significance and effect. At the same time, the programme must ensure that the Industrial PhD student obtains a PhD degree. The Innovation Fund funds part of the companys salary expenses, among other things.

The Industrial PhD student is employed in a company in Denmark[1] and at the same time enrolled at a university. The student will divide the working time between the company and the university and spend their full working hours in both places on the project and the education. The Industrial PhD student should have a supervisor at the university and a main- and co-supervisor in the company. The duration of the project corresponds to the duration of the education programme, which in Denmark is three years.

Industrial PhD is one of Innovation Fund Denmark's Industrial Researcher programmes that furthermore include Industrial Postdoc. An application for an Industrial PhD is in competition with other Industrial PhD and Industrial Postdoc applications. Both programmes do overall contribute to ensuring the Fund's objective of creating growth and employment in Denmark and supporting the development of solutions to specific societal challenges. The Industrial Researcher programmes have the following specific objectives:

- To educate and develop research talents to become industrial researchers.
- To contribute to business-oriented research, development and innovation in Denmark.
- To strengthen the collaboration between companies in Denmark and universities or research institutions at home and abroad.

The Fund finances part of the Industrial PhD student's salary and travel expenses in the company as well as the university's supervision, equipment and other expenses for the student's education.

1.2 Who may apply?

An Industrial PhD project is a collaboration between a company, a university and an Industrial PhD student. The partners should together agree on the distribution of the student's time in a way that will suit the project and ensure a significant affiliation to both the university and the company. If the company has subsidiaries or operations abroad, it is important that the Danish part of the company is ensured an appropriate affiliation. It is possible for a company and university to apply for funding without having a candidate for the project.

Innovation Fund Denmark wants to promote diversity in all its aspects. Therefore, all interested parties – regardless of professional area, ethnicity, religion, gender identity or age – are encouraged to apply for funding.

[1]1 If the call text for a specific application round explicitly mentions that Faroese and Greenlandic companies can apply, the Industrial PhD student can fulfill the employment requirement by employment in a company in Denmark, Greenland or the Faroe Islands.

Requirements for project partners:

1.3 Company and company supervisors

The company must meet the following criteria:

- Have a branch with an independent CVR number and geographically located in Denmark[2]. The Industrial PhD student is employed and can perform his or her work for the company here.
- Have the finances and facilities to manage the project throughout the entire project period.
- Be financially independent of the university. This means that:
  - the university may own a maximum of 25 % of the company; and
  - there may not be a significant[3] cash flow from the university to the company.
- Assign a company supervisor and a company co-supervisor to the project.
- Be part of the private sector
  - Must not be an 'undertaking in difficulty' as defined in Article 2 (1), No. 18 of the Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market pursuant to Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty. This condition does, however, not apply to companies that were not "undertakings in difficulty" as of 31 December 2019, but came into difficulties between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2021.
- Have complied with any repayment orders issued by the European Commission in one or more decisions where state aid granted by the Danish authorities has been found illegal and incompatible with the internal market.
- Not be subject to compulsory dissolution, bankruptcy, voluntary liquidation or suspension of payments.

To be part of the private sector, the company must meet the following criteria:

- Be neither a state, nor a regional, nor a municipal organisation or be an interest organisation for public organisations.
- Have a turnover with no more than 50 % coming from public funds (including EU subsidies and payments from citizens as required by law).

If the company is not part of the private sector, public organisations may apply in separate application rounds. Read more about this in section 7.

Supervisors

The company must appoint both a supervisor and a co-supervisor. The supervisor is the company's formal representative in the project and collaborates with the Industrial PhD student and the university supervisor

2 If the call text for a specific application round explicitly mentions that Faroese and Greenlandic companies can apply, the Industrial PhD student can fulfill the employment requirement by employment in a company in Denmark, Greenland or the Faroe Islands. For branches in Denmark, a separate Danish CVR number is required, for branches in Greenland a separate GER or CVR number is required, and for branches in the Faroe Islands a separate Skrásetingar number is required.

3 There may not be any cash flow between the university and the company that causes financial dependency between them. Ordinary trade in products or services, etc. on commercial terms or redistribution of public project funding in collaboration projects is not considered to be a significant cash flow.

on the implementation of the project and the education programme. It is the company supervisor who must create and submit the application in e-grant. The company supervisor is responsible for the vocational supervision of the student and should have sufficient knowledge about the subject of the project to be able to give qualified supervision within the field. The co-supervisor is to ensure anchoring and guarantee the implementation of the project, e.g. if the company supervisor can no longer attend to the task. It is possible to appoint several co-supervisors and third parties.

The company supervisor and co-supervisor should meet the following criteria:

- Have experience within the project theme (research experience is not required).
- Have in-depth industry knowledge.
- As a minimum have a bachelor's degree or considerable experience with the subject area.

The company supervisor and co-supervisor do not have to be employed by the company, but must work in the private business sector on a daily basis in Denmark or abroad.

1.4 University and university supervisor(s)

The university participating in the project needs to meet the following criteria:

- Be a university or a higher educational institution in Denmark or abroad that is officially approved to conduct a PhD programme.
- Appoint a university supervisor to the project.

The university appoints a supervisor to collaborate with the Industrial PhD student and the company on the implementation of the project and the education programme. The university supervisor is the university's formal representative in the project and is responsible for the research-related supervision of the student.

The university supervisor participating in the project must meet the following criteria:

- Be a recognised researcher within the project's subject area.
- On a daily basis be employed in a research-relevant environment within the project's subject area.
- Be employed at the university and affiliated with the PhD school.

1.5 Industrial PhD candidate

A company and university can apply for an Industrial PhD project both with and without a named candidate. If the application is submitted without a candidate and the project is approved, the company and the university must find a candidate who meets the requirements within six months from the date the grant is awarded.

It is also possible to apply with a candidate who has no more than eight months remaining of their studies at the time of application. If the application is approved, the candidate must complete their studies and meet the grade requirements within six months from the date the grand is awarded.

The Industrial PhD candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Have a project-relevant education completed with a master's degree.

- Have a grade of at least 10 (or equivalent for foreign educations) in the thesis/final project.
- Have grades that meet the below requirements.

Grade requirements for Danish educations

As an Industrial PhD candidate, you need to achieve one of these two requirements for grade-point averages:

- Master's and bachelor's degree combined: Weighted average of at least 8.2 on the 7-point scale or 9 on the 13-point scale.
- For a two-year master's degree alone: Weighted average of at least 9.5 on the 7-point scale or 9.4 on the 13-point scale.

As a rule, the candidate is expected to have a two-year master's degree or a corresponding foreign master's degree (see below). A Danish one-year master's degree with a prior bachelor's degree will not directly qualify, but if the candidate can document compensatory experience, this may qualify the candidate (see section 'Exemption from grade requirements'). A Danish one-year master's degree without a prior education at bachelor level cannot in itself qualify for an Industrial PhD project.

If a master's degree programme is completed without a thesis grade, a supplementary written assessment of the thesis or final project should be submitted. The assessment should be approved by the educational institution's study board.

The candidate is assessed on the basis of full diplomas and a completed grade calculation form. The form can be found on the Innovation Fund Denmark website.

Grade requirements for foreign educations

An Industrial PhD candidate with a foreign education must have a maters degree equivalent to a Danish masters degree. An Industrial PhD candidate with a foreign education does not have to comply with a specific grade requirement. Instead, the candidate must be among the top 30 % in his/her year group for the master's and bachelor's degree programmes combined. Documentation for the candidate's year group placement should therefore be submitted with the application. If the Master's and Bachelor's degrees were obtained from two different universities or countries, a class ranking must be submitted for each of the two institutions. The documentation must be signed by the institution where the education was completed. The documentation must be in Danish, English, Norwegian or Swedish. Please note that if the candidate holds a Danish two-year Master's degree that meets the grade requirements, it is not necessary to document the relative ranking of any non-Danish Bachelor's degree, as the Danish Master's degree in itself is sufficient for eligibility.

In case it is not possible to obtain information on the candidate's yearly ranking, e.g. because the university does not rank the students, documentation must be uploaded that this information cannot be obtained (e.g. an e-mail). In addition, the candidate's foreign grades must be converted to grades on the Danish 7-step scale, and a grade conversion form must be submitted. In this case, the candidate must meet the Danish grade requirements.

Exemption from grade requirements

A candidate with a grade point average, thesis grade or year group placement at a slightly lower level than required may be approved on the following conditions. The candidate may compensate for *either*

- a grade point average which is at most 1.1 grade points too low (applies only to Danish educations), or
- a thesis grade of at least 4 on the 7-point scale, or
- a thesis grade of at least 7 on the 13-point scale, or
- a year group placement that is at most 20 % too low (applies only to foreign educations), or
- a one-year Danish master's degree, while otherwise meeting all grade requirements

Provided that the candidate has either:

- as lead author published at least one peer-reviewed, project-relevant article in a recognised scientific journal and/or at a recognised scientific conference, or
- at least one year of professional experience with the subject area and also, as co-author, published at least one peer-reviewed, project-relevant article in a recognised scientific journal and/or at a recognised scientific conference.

Publications and work experience that are expected to be taken into consideration as compensatory factors should be included in the candidate's CV. Also, a brief statement must be given about the academic relevance and reputation of the journal/conference.

Pre-assessment of candidates

Innovation Fund Denmark does not offer pre-assessment of candidates. However, candidates who have a foreign education and cannot obtain information about their year group placement, may enclose a pre-assessment from the PhD school that the candidate wishes to apply to. The pre-assesment must state that, should the grant be awarded, the PhD school will enroll the candidate, and that the candidate therby meets the PhD school's admission requirements. The pre-assessment should cover no more than one page, and it must be signed by a relevant person at the PhD school, giving the full name and title of the signatory. Please note that not all PhD schools offer preliminary assesments, and it is therefore not a requirement to attach a preliminary assesment to the application.

Several companies share an Industrial PhD project

It is possible for several private companies and/or public organisations to collaborate on an Industrial PhD project. An assessment will be made of whether the companies/organisations jointly have the financial capacity to carry out the project. One of the companies/organisations must act as the main applicant, responsible for employing the candidate, paying their salary, and receiving the funding.

1.6 Thematisation of Industrial PhD

Based on the political agreement "Agreement on Research and Innovation 2026-2029," dated November 6, 2025, the Innovation Fund can support Industrial Researcher projects that fall within at least one of the four themes listed below. If the project does not align with a theme, non-thematic funding can be applied for. If an application submitted under one of the four thematic areas is recommended for funding, but the

respective thematic fund has been fully allocated, the application will automatically be considered under the non-thematic funds

Green research, technology, and innovation

Cf. The Future Green Solutions – Strategy for Investment in Green Research, Technology and Innovation (2020), Innovation Fund Denmark invests in research and innovation projects that can develop green technologies and solutions needed to transition society towards a sustainable future, with a focus on climate, climate resilience, nature, biodiversity, the environment (including the aquatic environment), as well as growth and employment. This includes, among other priorities, strengthening Denmark's position in the expansion of renewable energy and increasing opportunities for market adoption through new cross-border energy systems.

The themes relate to green projects within:

- Energy production and energy efficiency, including innovation in sector coupling, interaction between different parts of energy systems, and hybrid projects (e.g., energy islands)
- Agriculture and food production, including solutions aimed at climate-efficient, sustainable and resilient agricultural- and food systems.
- Sustainable transport, including behaviour, technology and regulation
- Environment and circular economy
- Nature and biodiversity
- Air pollution
- Sustainable behaviour and societal consequences of climate change, including understanding behaviour in relation to climate challenges and the green transition, as well as tools that can support the transition
- Sustainable construction, to transform the sector to be sustainable throughout the entire value chain, including behaviour
- Bioeconomy and cascading use of resources
- Use of artificial intelligence in solutions for the green transition

Central to the project that may receive funding is that they contribute to the green transition, and that expectations regarding these contributions are clearly articulated in the applications. Applicants are further encouraged to focus on bringing interdisciplinarity into the project. This may, for example, include projects that combine natural science and technological research with humanities and social science research, which can contribute valuable knowledge related to, for instance, behaviour, incentives, regulation and market conditions.

Life science, health, and welfare technology

The theme aims to support strategic and challenge-driven technology development and innovation within life sciences, healthcare, and welfare technology.

The funding can help leverage Denmark's strong knowledge- and research position in the field, transforming it into inventions, products, and technologies that will benefit Danish citizens, the healthcare system,

corporate profitability, and Danish export. The research should therefore, as far as possible, be carried out in close collaboration between research institutions and industry.

The innovation can contribute to the development of e.g.:

- Development of new medicines, including personalised medicine
- Development of the digital health sector, including the health data domain and medical devices, including in relation to treatment in the home
- Use of artificial intelligence in solutions for the healthcare sector
- Strengthening primary and community healthcare, as well as the development, testing and application of welfare technology within, among others, elderly care and the social- and healthcare sectors
- Digital prevention and treatment solutions for people with physical and mental health conditions
- Clinical outcomes and economic impact of whole-genome sequencing, etc.
- Solutions that promote a personalised, precision or stratified approach to medical prescribing

The funding must contribute to creating societal value and economic growth for private and public enterprises and/or beneficiaries in society. Where relevant, supported projects must take data ethics principles into account, including the responsible use of data and transparency.

Critical and digital technologies

The theme supports strategic research and innovation within critical and digital technologies that are essential to strengthening Denmark's and the EU's position in the international technological race, to the benefit of national security and competitiveness, as well as the functionality and social cohesion of the welfare society.

Critical technologies are understood as those areas identified by the European Commission as being critical to the EU's security and competitiveness[4].

The theme is intended to ensure a strengthening of both foundational and application-oriented research and innovation within manufacturing technologies, as well as within areas assessed by the EU as being of particular critical importance and which are highly applicable to civil, military and dual-use purposes, including:

- Biotechnology and BioSolutions
- Semiconductors
- Robotics and drone technology
- Materials technology
- Innovation in artificial intelligence not tied to specific sector or industry

[4] https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-10/C_2023_6689_1_EN_annexe_acte_autonome_part1_v9.pdf

- Cybersecurity and information security, including intensified use of data, secure data sharing, cryptography, software development and human behavior
- Big data and methods for citizen engagement and digital inclusion, aimed at supporting the development of the digital welfare society, where citizens trust and active citizenship are central
- Quantum technology
- Methods for citizen engagement and digital inclusion
- Particle physics research
- Research into nuclear power, including both fusion and the new fission technologies such as small modular reactors

Finally, the theme supports projects that strengthen technological research at Danish universities and companies through collaboration in the international research environment in which Denmark participates (Including CERN, ESO, EMBL, ESRF, EU-XFEL and ESS), thereby enabling Danish knowledge to be applied internationally through active participation in the development of new technologies.

The initiative may, among other things, support Danish companies and Danish knowledge in gaining an international presence and actively participating in the development of new technologies. Where relevant, the research carried out must take data ethics principles into account, including the responsible use of data and transparency.

Space

The theme is intended to strengthen application-oriented research and innovation in space technology and to build capacity within Danish research and innovation environments in the space sector. The theme supports applied research as well as testing and demonstration projects.

- Support may be provided for space technology projects in areas such as:
  Space-based green solutions related to climate, environment, and nature (including land use and monitoring)
- Quantum and space-based communication
- Defence and security
- Utilisation of space data in combination with artificial intelligence, digital twins, and supercomputing

Emphasis is placed on interdisciplinary approaches in the implementation of the programme, including, for example, initiatives described in the Strategy for Space Research and Innovation (2024).

Non-theme specific funds

This funding is aimed at projects that do not fall within the four themes above. These projects may, e.g., be within the humanities or social sciences research. Grants awarded in the form of non-theme specific funds should meet exactly the same requirements that apply to the projects applying within the themes. When submitting the application, you need to argue why the project does not fall within one of the four themes above.

2. What can an investment be used for?

Innovation Fund Denmark finances part of the company's expenses for the Industrial PhD student's salary and travel activity and the university's expenses for the project. Innovation Fund Denmark will pay out funding to both the company and the university. The funds may only be used to cover the respective project-related expenses of the company and the university, and only within the project period as defined in e-grant.

2.1 How large an investment can I apply for?

Funding for the company

Innovation Fund Denmark finances up to DKK 17,000 per month of the Industrial PhD student's salary for three years. However, a maximum 50% of the total salary (actual salary expenses calculated on the basis of the annual gross salary, including pension, insurance and holiday pay) can be covered. Bonuses cannot be included in the gross salary.

The company will also have DKK 100,000 available for the Industrial PhD student's

- travels (the Industrial PhD student's participation in project-relevant conferences at home and abroad as well as stays abroad) and
- participation in PhD courses that yield ECTS points and are not offered at the host university.

The above includes one return trip to the destination per stay, visa, travel insurance, accommodation and university fees. Meals, daily/local transport, books, etc. are not covered. Up to DKK 5,000 of the DKK 100,000 may be spent on the company supervisor's project-relevant travel expenses. An additional DKK 5,000 may be spent on the supervisor's project-relevant travel expenses. The cost must be incurred during the project period as defined in e-grant.

If the host university for the Industrial PhD programme is located outside Denmark, up to DKK 122,000 will be given as an additional grant for travel and accommodation at the university. This includes one round trip ticket to the destination, visa, travel insurance and accommodation. Meals, daily/local transport, books, etc. are not covered. The host university is the university that enrols the student during the entire programme, is responsible for the primary supervision, is responsible for the educational programme and issues the PhD degree upon completion of the PhD education.

The company must pay all other expenses for the project, including equipment, materials and data collection. This also includes personal equipment for the Industrial PhD student, such as laptop and mobile phone.
Please note that a maximum of 50 % of a company's total expenses for an Industrial PhD project may be financed by public funds.

Funding for the university

Innovation Fund Denmark gives the university a fixed amount of DKK 360,000 (incl. overhead) to cover:

- Supervision of the Industrial PhD student.

- The Industrial PhD student's work facilities at the university, including equipment, materials, apparatus (acquisition and/or use) as well as external services necessary to complete the university part of the project.
- The Industrial PhD student's participation in relevant PhD courses at the host university.
- Assessment of the PhD thesis.
- Dissemination of results, including printing of the thesis (Costs for proofreading cannot be covered).

The funding for the university corresponds to DKK 10,000 per month.

2.2 What can be covered by the investment, and how long may the project last?
The financing from Innovation Fund Denmark may cover a maximum of 50% of the project costs in the company within the above stated limits.

The duration of the project corresponds to the duration of the education programme, which in Denmark is three years. If the project exceeds three years, for example in the case of a foreign PhD programme, Innovation Fund Denmark will only finance the project for the final three years. This means that the project period funded by Innovation Fund Denmark will be the last three years of the PhD programme, and that both the company and the university will receive funding from Innovation Fund Denmark exclusively during this period.

Innovation Fund Denmark reserves the right to discontinue the project if the PhD degree has not been achieved within five years after the start of the project (excluding leaves of absence).

3. Application
The application deadlines are determined on an ongoing basis and published at https://innovationsfonden.dk/en/programmes/industrial-researcher. The application and all communication must be in Danish, English or a combination of the two languages.

3.1 How do I apply?
Your application must be created and submitted via the electronic application system: www.egrant.dk

It is the main supervisor at the company who must create and submit the application (by pressing submit from their own e-grant account). This is crucial, as it is the company supervisor's responsibility to ensure the application is accurate. At the same time, the company supervisor will automatically be designated as the "Kontaktperson ved bevillingshaver" on the project once the submit button is pressed.

The university supervisor must also register at www.egrant.dk. Once the application has been created, the company supervisor should add the university supervisor participating in the application. The same applies to the Industrial PhD candidate if applying for a specific candidate. This is done by clicking the "Tilføj ny deltager" button in the application on e-grant. These steps are necessary for the application to be processed.

Prior to the application being created, applicants should register as a user of the system with either a username and password or with MitID.

You create a new application by locating the correct call under 'Search options' and press 'Start your application'.

3.2 What should the application include?

It is a requirement for all applications that the formal criteria listed below are met. If an application does not comply with these requirements, the Innovation Fund Denmark may reject it without further assessment. In this context, the application consists of: 1) an application form in e-grant, 2) a project description template (available on the website and to be attached to the application in e-grant), and 3) various appendices.

Re 1: Application form in e-grant

All fields in the form must be completed. The form includes, among other things, sections on:

- Project title and period
- How the project aligns with the theme under which the application is submitted
- Abstract in Danish
- University
- Company/companies – including the project budget and the company's financial situation. If the company has a foreign branch, the financial details of the Danish part of the company must be provided. If the company is a recently established company and therefore cannot provide financial statements for the past three years, a statement of the company's financial situation must be submitted. This document must not exceed two A4 pages (2,400 characters including spaces per page).
- Declarations
- Supervisors
- Candidate (if a candidate is included in the application)
- Objectives and success criteria
- Exit strategy (only for applications in the private sector). An exit strategy is a description of how the candidate can complete the project and the degree, in the event that the project cannot be completed in the applying company. For example, describe another party that could take over the project (e.g. another company that could assume responsibility – including the cost of the candidate's salary – Documentation of expressed interest must be attached. Such documentation may, for example, take the form of email correspondence demonstrating interest in taking over the project.
- Time allocation (it must be specified how the candidate will divide their working time between the company and the university to ensure a significant affiliation with both environments)
- PhD courses, conferences, and international stays (international stays are not mandatory)
- Publications (expected publications resulting from the project), conferences, and plans for other dissemination activities

Re 2: Project Description Template
It is a requirement that the Innovation Fund's official project description template is used. The template is available on the Innovation Fund Denmark´s website and is updated regularly. The most recent version must be used, and all formatting requirements stated in the template must be followed (including character count requirements).

The template contains the following main sections, all of which must be completed:

- State of the art (including references)
- Project description (including references)
- Structure and timeline
- Dissemination plan
- Commercial significance and impact (for private companies) or usefulness of the project (for public sector organisations)

Re 3: Appendices
The following documents must be attached:

- CVs of supervisors**:**
    - CV of the company supervisor (max. 2 A4- pages 2400 characters including spaces, per page)
    - CV of the company co-supervisor (max. 2 A4-pages 2400 characters including spaces, per page)
    - CV of the university supervisor (max. 2 A4-pages 2400 characters including spaces, per page)
- If a named candidate is included in the application, the following must be attached:
    - CV of the candidate (max. 2 A4-pages, 2400 characters including spaces, per page)
    - Complete Bachelor's and Master's degree certificates for the candidate (the front page alone is not sufficient). If the candidate has not yet completed the degree, a transcript of records for completed courses must be uploaded.
    - If the degree is Danish: a grade point average calculation using the Innovation Fund's grade calculator must be submitted.
    - If the degree is from a foreign institution: year placement of the candidate must be provided. If this is not possible, see "Grade requirements for foreign qualifications" in section 1.5.
- Signatures: A template is available on the Innovation Fund Denmark´s website. The following parties must sign the application (electronic signatures with verified identity are accepted):
    - Company supervisor
    - University supervisor

If the application does not comply with the formal requirements and deadlines stated above, as well as those specified in the application form in e-grant, the project description template, and in the appendix templates, or if incorrect templates have been used, Innovation Fund Denmark may reject the application without active

consideration, i.e. without assessment of the academic content of the application, cf. Article 5 in the Ministerial Order on the grant function etc. under Innovation Fund Denmark.

It is possible for a company and a university to apply to the Industrial PhD programme without a specific Industrial PhD candidate. If the application is approved, the partners should find and have an approval for a qualified candidate within six months of receiving the approval.

The Fund publishes titles, summaries and participants in approved projects on hte Innovation Fund Denmark website. Therefore, you need to make sure that the title and summary do not contain information that you wish to keep confidential.

4. Assessment

4.1 How does the assessment process take place?

The first step in the assessment is an evaluation of whether your application meets the administrative requirements described in these guidelines.

The second step is an academic assessment of the application. The basis for the assessment is the material which you as an applicant have submitted via e-grant, and which falls within the framework of the Industrial Researcher programme guidelines. In addition, the assessors will rely on the prior knowledge they possess, i.e. the reason why they can be appointed as assessors, as well as knowledge that can be obtained through publicly available sources (e.g. literature and article databases, patent databases and company databases).

4.2 Who assesses the application?

The Innovation Fund Denmark Industrial Researcher Committee, comprising recognised researchers as well as research and business experts within various disciplines, will assess the applications. The Committee makes a recommendation to the management of Innovation Fund Denmark that will make the final decision. You can find more information about the Industrial Researcher Committee on the Innovation Fund Denmark website.

The Committee may decide to obtain external assessments in cases where additional professional or academic competencies are needed for the assessment – in such cases, the external assessment will be submitted to the applicant for consultation. The applicant need to be aware that if an external assessment is used, the assessment submitted to the applicant for consultation will only constitute part of the overall assessment basis. Thus, the final assessment may yield a different result than what is indicated in the submitted external assessment. Also, academically qualified employees at Innovation Fund Denmark may, as well, take part in the assessment of the application. An assessment made by an Innovation Fund Denmark employee will not be sent for consultation.

4.3 How will the application be evaluated?

The application will be assessed on the basis of the following assessment criteria:

The quality of the idea

The project must generally be at PhD level and it should realistically be possible to complete the project within the project period. Specifically, the quality of the project will be assessed in relation to:

- Research-relevant novelty
- Quality of the description of state-of-the-art within the area
- Relevance and level of the theoretical basis
- Quality of hypotheses and/or research questions
- Relevance and concretisation of selected methods and data basis

Impact

The project must have a clear business significance and effect for the Danish part of the company and be assessed specifically in relation to:

- The expected contribution of the results to the company's business foundation and/or earnings.
- Plan for and probability of implementation and commercial realisation of the results.

Quality in execution

The application must demonstrate that the project is well structured, and that the partners are competent and relevant. The following will be specifically assessed:

- Feasibility and organisation of the project (including structure and time schedule, role distribution, student time distribution, plan for dissemination and publications).
- The establishment of a significant association between the student and both the company and the university.
- The quality of the project partners' qualifications.

4.4 How do I receive a response to my application?

An Industrial PhD application may be approved, conditionally approved or rejected. The applicant will receive a response through e-grant.

Approval

If the project is approved and given a letter of commitment, the project must start at the earliest on the day the letter of commitment is awarded and no later than six months after the letter of commitment is awarded.

Conditional approval

If the application is conditionally approved, you will receive a decision outlining the conditions for final approval in e-grant. If, e.g., you have applied without a candidate, it will be a condition that you find a qualified candidate. You submit documentation for having satisfied the conditions to the Fund via e-grant. Only when the project has met the condition for final approval will you receive the letter of commitment. It is also only when the project has received final approval that the project can start and it must start no later than six months after the final approval is given. The condition must be fulfilled no later than six months after the decision is issued.

Rejection

If the application is rejected, you will receive a reasoned rejection in e-grant. It is possible to reapply at the next application deadline, choosing the same or a different theme (see section 1.2). When re-applying, you need to explain how the reasons for rejection have been dealt with. All material, including new signatures, must be resubmitted upon re-application, and the application must be re-created in e-grant.

4.5 When will I receive a response to my application?

The Innovation Fund Denmark aims to process applications within 13 weeks. The Committee may decide to obtain more information from the applicant for the assessment. In that case, the processing time may be longer.

5. From approval to start-up of project

5.1 What happens after my application is approved?

An approved Industrial PhD project starts from the date on which the university enrols the candidate as a PhD student. The enrolment date must fall on or after the date of the granting of the letter of commitment for the project. As a general rule, an approved project must start no later than six months after the approval. If the project has received a conditional approval, the condition must also, as a general rule, be fulfilled within six months. If an approved project has not started within six months, or if the condition is not met within six months, e.g. because no candidate has been found, or because the candidate has not completed his/her education programme, the Fund reserves the right to withdraw the grant.

If the project is approved, the Fund will create a grant case on www.e-grant.dk. You must also submit financial accounts, reports and other written documents to Innovation Fund Denmark via e-grant, depending on your obligations in the project. Likewise, you ask for approval of project changes and otherwise communicate with the Fund's employees via e-grant. All project partners should be entered into the grant case in e-grant. It is the responsibility of the project parties that the relevant people are connected to the case in e-grant.

5.2 Terms of employment and education for the Industrial PhD student

Employment

In an Industrial PhD project, the Industrial PhD student must be employed full time in the company and thus work under the conditions that apply for private employment. The student's work assignments and time must be fully allocated to the Industrial PhD project and programme, and the employment contract must explicitly release the student from assignments that are not directly related to the project. Also, the student's time must be distributed between the company and the university in way that is appropriate for the project, ensuring affiliation to both environments. The employment must, as a minimum, be subject to the general terms and conditions for salaried employees. Other terms of employment may follow from a collective agreement, if any, or from an individual agreement.

Non-compete clauses or the like in the employment contract must not limit the possibility for the student to obtain employment elsewhere. In addition, the employment contract must not contain education clauses or the like that require the student to reimburse the company's expenses for the educational programme upon termination of the programme or in the event of a change of job after a completed Industrial PhD project.

Pay

The Industrial PhD student's total salary (the sum of salary and pension) must at least correspond to the total salary for PhD fellows employed in the state as determined in the relevant collective agreement. Questions about specific salary levels may be directed to the unions.

6. During the project

All communication with the Innovation Fund's staff takes place via www.e-grant.dk. This is also where you must submit any requests for changes to the project (e.g. leave of absence or change of supervisor), as well as mid-term evaluation and final reports. Deadlines for submitting the required documents will always be stated in the case file in e-grant. If the documents are not submitted within the specified deadlines, the Innovation Fund may terminate the project, revoke the remaining grant, and demand repayment of the full amount already disbursed.

The company supervisor is responsible for the company's communication with the Fund via e-grant, including the company's submission of required documents via e-grant. The university supervisor is responsible for the university's communication with the Fund via e-grant, including the university's submission of required documents via e-grant.

All communication between the Innovation Fund and the project takes place via e-grant. It is the project participants' own responsibility to ensure that the relevant persons are assigned to the case at all times.

6.1 Kick-off meeting and Industrial PhD course

All new Industrial PhD projects must participate in a joint kick-off event. This takes place on the same day and at the same location as Module 1 of the Industrial PhD course. It is mandatory for the following persons to attend:

- The Industrial PhD student
- The main supervisor at the company
- The main supervisor at the university

Co-supervisors do not attend.
The programme includes various activities designed to foster good collaboration and provide insight into others' successful ideas for cooperation and project content.

Industrial PhD Course

Industrial PhD student must attend the Innovation Fund Denmark's mandatory Industrial PhD course, which is split into 2 sessions of 2 days each.
The course corresponds to 5 ECTS credits, and participation is considered part of the student's working hours.
The student will be invited to the course during the first year of their studies.

Dissemination obligation

In a Danish PhD programme, the student must gain experience with knowledge dissemination related to the PhD project, cf. Chapter 3, Section 7 of the Danish PhD Regulation. The dissemination may consist of articles, lectures, teaching and other exchange of knowledge in the company, at the university or elsewhere. The scope, nature and content of the dissemination of knowledge is agreed between the company, the student and the university.

The Industrial PhD candidate is not employed by the university and therefore has no collective agreement based teaching obligation. The university can therefore not require the Industrial PhD candidate to teach as part of the education programme. However, if all project parties agree, teaching at the university may be part of the dissemination of knowledge. All dissemination activities should be mutually agreed within the project and included in a collaboration agreement before the start of the project. If an agreement about dissemination includes teaching, this must be evident from the application.

6.2 How will the investment be paid out?

Company

The company receives 85 % of the total company grant when the project starts. The company receives the grant on the NemKonto linked to the company's CVR number.

The company receives the last part of the total grant when – at the end of the project – Innovation Fund Denmark has received and approved:

- The final accounts
- An auditor's statement
- A final project evaluation

The company's grant expenditures during the project period must be stated in the final accounts. InnovationFund Denmark will then settle with the company. Be aware that this may mean that the company must pay back some of the prepaid grant at the end of the project.

At the same time, the company must declare in good faith that the total public subsidies to the company do not exceed 50 % of the company's total project costs, cf. section 8.

The final evaluation assesses the project with regard to impact, results and process in the company. Innovation Fund Denmark does not need to receive other academic reporting during the project.

The Innovation Fund Denmark reports disbursements of grants and investments to the Danish Tax Agency in accordance with the requirements set out in the Guidelines on Effective Grant Management (section 2.6.2). Reporting is carried out using the grant recipient’s CPR, CVR, or SE number for identification purposes. Reporting is undertaken regardless of whether the grant is taxable and serves solely as an information obligation between Innovation Fund Denmark and the Danish Tax Agency. Grants awarded to

state, regional, or municipal authorities, as well as certain associations, foundations, and institutions, are exempt from the reporting obligation.

University

The university receives 85 % of the university grant when the project starts. The last 15 % is paid out when Innovation Fund Denmark has received documentation that the student has obtained the PhD degree. If the student does not obtain the PhD degree within five years of the project start date (excluding leaves of absence approved by the Fund), the last 15 % will be retained.

6.3 Do I have to submit a financial statement or report during the project?

The university supervisor and PhD school will ensure the ongoing academic follow-up of the project, while the company supervisor ensures the anchoring of the project in the company. The Fund's follow-up therefore focuses on the collaboration, results and impact.

Eighteen months after the start of the Industrial PhD project, the student must complete a questionnaire about the status of the project and collaboration within the project. The answers give Innovation Fund Denmark an insight into the collaboration practices in Industrial PhD projects. Based on this, the Fund may conduct follow-up meetings in selected projects to learn more.

At the end of the project, the company must complete a final report that evaluates the project in terms of impact, results and process. Submission of a final report is one of the prerequisites for the Fund to make the final payment to the company.

The Fund will not need to receive other academic reporting during the project. The Industrial PhD student's achievement of the PhD degree will be documentation that the project has lived up to the academic requirements for a PhD programme.

6.4 What will happen if I cannot comply with the plan?

Duty to inform and approval of changes

The company and the university must immediately notify the Fund if there are significant changes in the premises for the grant. This includes, among other things, a change of supervisor, leave of absence, major interruptions or delays and significant academic changes. Significant academic changes are changes that are so extensive that the project cannot be immediately recognised when compared to the project that was originally approved.

The project may only continue when and if the Fund approves the changes. If the duty to inform is not complied with, the Fund may decide to discontinue the grant and ask for funding paid out to be paid back. The change request must be submitted via e-grant.

Leave of absence

The Industrial PhD student may ask for leave of absence. The request must be submitted via e-grant. Innovation Fund Denmark need to approve the request before the leave may start. The Fund does not provide

grants during part time or leave periods, incl. parental and sick leave. The end date of the project will be postponed in accordance with the leave period and the grant will instead be provided during the extended period. If the company receives reimbursement from another public sectors due to, e.g. parental leave or long-term illness of the student, you should apply for leave from the Industrial PhD project.

If a project is terminated

If an Industrial PhD project is interrupted, the project participants must prepare a joint statement about the project project and the reason for the interruption. The statement must be signed by the company, the university and the student and reach the Fund no later than three months after the interruption. Thereafter, the Fund will prepare an opportunity for the parties to be heard.

In case a project is interrupted before time, both the university and the company can be ordered to repay part of the funding paid in advance, although only for the part of the project period not completed.

6.5 What do I need to do at the end of the project?

The university must approve the entire PhD programme and award the PhD degree after the PhD thesis has been deemed suitable and defended in a public forum. If the Industrial PhD student is enrolled at a foreign university, this university must award the PhD degree in accordance with the national regulations of that country.

After approval of the PhD thesis, the Fund awards an Industrial PhD diploma to the student. The Fund must have documentation for achievement of a PhD degree via e-grant in order to issue the Industrial PhD diploma and pay out the last part of the university's grant.

Requirements for the retention of supporting documentation

Accounting records relating to the grant must be retained in accordance with the Accounting Regulations for the State and, for private companies, the Danish Bookkeeping Act. For private companies, the retention period for accounting records is ten years from the date of the grant, as the grant is awarded pursuant to Article 25 of the EU General Block Exemption Regulation (see section 8).

7. Industrial PhD in the public sector

If an organisation, cf. section 2, is not categorised as a private company, it is – in the context of an Industrial Researcher programme – considered to be a public organisation.

The organisation may apply for an Industrial PhD in the public sector in connection with the call for Industrial Researcher for public companies. Please check the website regularly for notices and deadlines for public Industrial PhD. The grant amounts are the same as for private companies. The thematisation of the Industrial Researcher programmes described in section 1.6 also applies to Industrial PhD projects in the public sector. See further at https://innovationsfonden.dk/en/programmes/industrial-researcher.

The purpose of Industrial Researcher in the public sector is:

- To support research, development and innovation in the public sector through targeted and application-oriented research projects.

- To develop researchers with insight in research, development and innovation in the public sector.
- To build networks and support knowledge sharing between public organisations and research institutions.

7.1 Special conditions

Public organisations that have the authority to issue PhD degrees may not act as a host company in a public Industrial PhD project, but may act as a university at any time. Other public institutions, e.g. university hospitals, may only function as a host company in a public Industrial PhD project within the research-relevant main areas (social sciences, health sciences, etc.) in which they do not already have permanent research activities.

The company supervisors must work in the public sector on a daily basis rather than in the private sector.

7.2 Special assessment criteria

No financial impact is required for the applicant company in connection with a public Industrial PhD project. Instead, the project will be judged on the novelty and use-value it has for the organisation.

The use-value for the organisation may, e.g. consist of:

- streamlining
- knowledge building that directly increases the organisation's competencies
- systematic dissemination of knowledge, and/or
- strengthening the quality of the organisation's work or services.

In addition to the use-value of the organisation, a public Industrial PhD project must be of benefit to society. The project is therefore also assessed on its broader societal benefit.

A broader societal benefit might, e.g. be that the institution’s use-value from the project:

- is disseminated to other similar organisations
- leads to improved living conditions for citizens in the community, and/or
- leads to improved conditions for the business community.

In addition to the above special assessment criteria, the criteria for the quality of the idea and the quality of execution, cf. section 4.3, also apply to public Industrial PhD applications.

8. State aid

Investments in the Industrial Researcher programme are provided in accordance with article 25 of the General Block Exemption Regulation (Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 on certain categories of aid and their compatibility with the internal market pursuant to Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty), in as far as the part of the project receiving funding must in its entirety fall within “industrial research” as defined in the General Block Exemption Regulation article 2 (84) and (85).

The company can receive funding to cover up to DKK 17,000 per month for salary as well as DKK 100,000 for travel expenses. If the project is carried out in collaboration with a university abroad, travel expenses may be

covered up to a limit of DKK 222,000. Irrespective of those limits, the public funding for the company may not exceed 50 % of the company's eligible project costs.

9. Information management

9.1 Registration of information

The e-grant application system will automatically register selected information. When you register as a user, e-grant registers your identity, IP address and the time when the application was created or edited.

9.2 Applicant's responsibility

It is the applicant's responsibility that the information in the electronic application is correct, that the necessary appendices are attached to the application, that the content of the appendices is correct, and that the application is submitted prior to the expiration of the application deadline.

Innovation Fund Denmark will normally not ask for further information for use in the processing of the application unless this is indicated in other sections of the guidelines. Likewise, material and other documentation attached to the application and submitted further to the specified application material will generally not be included in the application assessment.

The applicant is obliged to inform Innovation Fund Denmark immediately if there are significant changes in the submitted information, including if funding has been received for the project or parts of it from third parties.

Classified information covered by the Security Circular on the Protection of Classified Information (including Danish or NATO-classified material) must not be uploaded to e-grant. If the applicant is in doubt as to whether such information is necessary for its evaluation, the Innovation Fund Denmark must be contacted before submitting the application.

9.3 Correction of application information

It is not possible to correct the content of the application after the application deadline, except for correction of possible personal information.

9.4 Procuring other information

If funding for the project has been applied for or will be applied for elsewhere, Innovation Fund Denmark reserves the right to obtain information on whether the amounts have been granted.

9.5 Privacy policy

The privacy policy of Innovation Fund Denmark concerns our treatment of your personal data when we have the obligation as data controller.

We treat your personal data in compliance with existing legislation, including the general data protection act and the law on data protection.

Link to Innovation Fund Denmark Privacy Policy.

10. Publication of information

Innovation Fund Denmark publishes a list of applications that have been awarded funding. With some exceptions, the list will typically include the organisational project participants, the project title, the project description, the amount awarded, the project's total budget, and the project duration.

In addition, information about the participating project partners (company/university), the project title and duration, key figures from the investment and the size of the investment may be published on the Innovation Fund Denmark website (www.innovationsfonden.dk), in the Danish National Research Database (www.forskningsdatabasen.dk) as well as in Innovation Fund Denmark's publications.

Applicants should furthermore be aware that Innovation Fund Denmark on request (due to e.g. the Danish Open Administration Act) may without any further notice to the applicants pass on lists containing information about the name of the company, project title, the investment applied for, the final decision (rejection/approval) as well as, in some cases, the actual investment for all submitted Industrial Researcher applications.

If a request for access into specific applications and possibly other relevant case documents is made in accordance with the Danish Open Administration Act, Innovation Fund Denmark will, in dialogue with the applicants, ensure that no business-sensitive information and/or any other information that cannot be disclosed according to law, is disclosed.

Open access

Innovation Fund Denmark has adopted the provisions of the 'Open Access-politik for offentlige forskningsråd og fonde'. This means that published scientific articles which are the result of full or partial funding from Innovation Fund Denmark, must be made freely available to everyone via Open Access, if the scientific journal allows it.

RPI and the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

Innovation Fund Denmark emphasises Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), which aims to create a better connection between research and innovation processes and results and society's values and needs. In Innovation Fund Denmark, we promote RRI both in the Fund's overall strategies and through our projects, and we adhere to the EU Commission's definition and implementation of RRI.

Read more about RRI and our requirements on the Innovation Fund Denmark website (under rules of procedure, rules concerning competence to act, etc.).

Please note that the projects in which Innovation Fund Denmark invests should involve relevant stakeholders and institutions in the research and innovation process. This implies, among others, that projects that have or may have a great impact on society and/or the individual citizen, ethically or technologically, must enter into direct dialogue with the general public to ensure the dissemination of information and relevant discussion in society.

Innovation Fund Denmark reserves the right to set up specific requirements in this regard for the projects in which the Fund invests. In cases where the project deals with technologies or processes that may have a significant impact on society, the consequences of the technology or processes must be clearly described in the application. It is therefore expected that these projects include all relevant competencies and methods, and that socially relevant research angles are integrated – e.g. anthropology or similar.

Innovation Fund Denmark also supports the principles set out in the national code of conduct for integrity in Danish research. Innovation Fund Denmark expects that funded projects adhere to the instructions in the RRI and the Code of Conduct.

Data management

Innovation Fund Denmark encourages that handling of project-generated data takes place in accordance with the FAIR principles (FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable), as described in the EU 'Guidelines on FAIR Data Management in Horizon 2020' (version 3.0, 26 July 2016).

In this way, it is, for example, possible to build on previous research results, verify results by other researchers, avoid duplication of work, accelerate innovation and create transparency and credibility about results.

11. About these guidelines

11.1 Legal basis

These guidelines are issued pursuant to section 18(2) of Act No. 156 of 13 February 2025 on the Innovation Fund Denmark, and section 2(4) of Executive Order No. 1150 of 25 October 2017 on the grant function etc. under the Innovation Fund Denmark.

Investments in the Industrial Researcher programme are provided in accordance with the framework of the General Block Exemption Regulation (Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 on certain categories of aid and their compatibility with the internal market pursuant to Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty), Chapter 1 (Articles 1-12) and Chapter 3 (Article 25).

11.2 URIS Guidelines

We inform applicants that Innovation Fund Denmark adhere to the guidelines for international research and innovation (URIS). For more information, see: https://ufm.dk/publikationer/2022/afrapportering-udvalg-om-retningslinjer-for-internationalt-forsknings-og-innovationssamarbejde.

The applicant guarantees that receipt and use of the investment from Innovation Fund Denmark does not violate existing national or international sanctions, including sanctions on freezing funds or bans on direct or indirect control. The applicant should be aware that in connection with the conflict between Russian and Ukraine, EU has considerably restricted the access to making funds and economic resources available for specific physical or legal individuals, entities or organisations according to EU Council Regulation No 269/2014 "concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity,

sovereignty and independence of Ukraine", and the applicant shall guarantee that receipt and use of the investment from Innovation Fund Denmark does not violate this regulation. A consolidated list of person, groups and entities subject to EU sanctions is available on "Consolidated list of persons, groups and entities subject to EU financial sanctions - Data Europa EU".

11.3 Technical disclaimer

The Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science is responsible for e-grant and has a duty to inform about errors that make e-grant so inaccessible that it affects the applicant's ability to submit e-applications within the application deadline. Information on inaccessibility will appear on Uddannelses- og forskningsministeriets hjemmeside/Drift status.

In particularly serious cases, Innovation Fund Denmark may extend the application deadline for all relevant applicants. This will likewise appear on Uddannelses- og forskningsministeriets hjemmeside/Drift status as well as the Innovation Fund Denmark website.

Innovation Fund Denmark and the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science are not liable for incorrect information as a result of software errors, calculation errors, transmission errors and similar errors, or for any claims for compensation as a result of the incorrect use of e-grant.