

The Norwegian Fund for Post-Graduate Training in Physiotherapy

Grants for research and knowledge development in physiotherapy (PhD/postdoc /researcher)

Application deadline September 1, 2025 at 2:00 PM

Objective

The grants will contribute to strengthening and further advance knowledge development in physiotherapy. Applications can be made for research projects at doctoral and postdoctoral levels aimed at improving the competence of physiotherapists.

The grants will help strengthen physiotherapists' research expertise, increase knowledge in physiotherapy, stimulate interprofessional research collaboration, document effect and benefit, and contribute to theory development in physiotherapy. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods can be used.

The grants will also contribute to knowledge exchange and collaboration between research, education and physiotherapy practice. Applications with relevance to clinical practice where several professional environments and educational institutions collaborate and applications that are rooted in primary health care will be prioritized when applications are otherwise equally ranked in the assessments.

Who can apply?

The project manager/applicant must have a doctoral degree and be employed at an institution responsible for the application in at least a 20% position. The project manager is responsible for submitting the application, implementing the project and reporting to Fysiofondet.

Institutions eligible to apply are:

- Universities and colleges
- Research institutes subject to Guidelines for basic government funding of Research Institutes (cf. Research Council)
- Health institutions/hospitals with statutory tasks within research and development tasks
- Public sector entities that conduct research, including municipalities.

The institution responsible for the application and the project manager must be approved by Fysiofondet before an application can be created. For applicants who have not previously been approved, see separate announcement: *Godkjenning som prosjektleder i prosjektansvarlig institusjon. (Approval as a project manager in the institution responsible for the project.)*

The institution responsible for the application must:

- fulfill the conditions set by Fysiofondet when granting
- ensure professional progress and implementation of the project
- provide a workplace for project participants

What can be applied for?

The grants are allocated to the project responsible institution.

For a doctoral project, applications must be made for funding of four full-time equivalents for a PhD fellow, including one full-time equivalent (25% of the grants) for work obligations.

For a postdoctoral project/research project at postdoctoral level, three or four full-time equivalents can be applied for, 25% of the grants must be used for work obligations.

The scholarship may be distributed over a period of up to eight years.

Applications can be made for a lump sum amount that includes salary, social costs, indirect costs and general operating funds for a position as a doctoral fellow or postdoctoral fellow.

In this year's allocation, the lump sum amount for a doctoral fellow is NOK 884.000 per year and a postdoctoral position is NOK 994.000 per year.

Work obligation

25% of the grants, i.e. one full-time equivalent, shall be used for work obligations. Work obligations shall contribute to strengthening the candidate's competence in teaching and administration. Work obligations shall be carried out in relevant bachelor's and master's programs or directed towards the health service to contribute to interaction between research and physiotherapy practice.

The applicant is responsible for creating a plan for the work obligation in collaboration with the employer.

Requirements for a fellowship position

The allocation of funds to a doctoral fellow will be subject to the condition that the candidate has been admitted to the doctoral program before taking up the fellowship position. The name of the candidate is not a requirement in the application.

For applications for postdoctoral/research fellowships, the candidate's name and qualifications shall be stated.

For applications for support for a postdoctoral/research position, the thesis shall be submitted by the end of 2025, and confirmation that this is realistic must accompany the application. The confirmation shall be signed by the candidate and supervisor(s).

Awarding a scholarship to a postdoctoral fellow/researcher requires an approved thesis before taking up the position.

Fysiofondet only supports one postdoctoral project per candidate.

Fysiofondet does not initially require that positions be advertised but may impose such a condition when awarding positions.

The fellowship position will start during 2026.

Language

The application must be written in English.

Ethical approvals

Medical and health research and quality assurance work are regulated by the Norwegian Health Research Act with regulations and guidelines, the Research Ethics Act, the Personal Data Act and other legislation that is relevant to the individual project. Applicants shall be familiarized with the legislation and describe in the protocol how requirements for organization, ethical approval, privacy

and user participation are met. Payment of commitments requires that the necessary approvals (Regionale komiteer for medisinsk og helsefaglig forskningsetikk (REK), Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt), Norwegian Medical Products Agency (SLV) etc.) have been obtained.

The application shall explain any ethical issues associated with the research project, and how they will be handled in the research work. If there are no ethical issues associated with the project, this must be justified.

Utility value

Benefit means that the knowledge acquired is applicable and can be put into use. The utility of the individual project may be directed at specific target groups, or lead to knowledge development that contributes to evidence-based practice and health policy. The application shall provide a description of the project's expected utility for the patient/user, the physiotherapy service, the health service, education and / or society in the short and long term.

The description should define target groups and describe how the project contributes to filling knowledge gaps in an existing knowledge chain, whether it has potential for improving existing practice and whether new knowledge can be generalized.

The benefit to primary health care will be given special emphasis when grants are allocated.

User participation

The application must include a plan for user participation. User participation is a statutory requirement and a health policy priority. Users can contribute in several different ways to the projects and in different phases of the research, planning, implementation and dissemination of the results from the project.

Dissemination

The application shall describe a plan for dissemination. This includes which target groups are relevant and which activities will disseminate the results from the project so that they contribute to knowledge-based practice for physiotherapists.

Scientific articles from the project should be published openly available so that the knowledge will benefit as many physiotherapists as possible. Articles are considered openly available when they are published in indexed journals with Open Access or when the article is archived in subject-specific digital archives with unrestricted public access after publication.

Assessment of the application

The applications are evaluated by an external expert committee with Nordic representation. The final decision of the Fund Board will be made on the basis of quality, relevance and usefulness. The assessments will focus on:

- Scientific quality:
 - research question
 - whether relevant knowledge gaps are covered
 - choice and description of method
 - feasibility
- Project benefit:
 - for patients and relatives
 - for professional development needs in the physiotherapy service, including the benefit of education and contribution to evidence-based practice
 - for the health service, and especially primary health care
 - in relation to health policy objectives
- Plan for how work obligations will be fulfilled
- Dissemination and user participation

- plans for dissemination of the project (scientific and popular science)
 - how user participation is ensured
- Ethics
 - ethical assessments and plan for regulatory approvals
- Applicant and research community
 - project manager qualifications
 - for applications for postdoctoral projects, the candidate's qualifications are also considered
 - Contributions from partners

The expert committee's assessment of submitted applications, together with strategic priorities and the financial framework for the grants, forms the basis of Fysiofondet's decision to grant or reject the grant.

Applications must be submitted electronically in the Fysiofondet application portal. The application portal is available from the Fysiofondet website, www.fysiofondet.no. Applications submitted in any other way will not be processed.

The application deadline is September 1, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Responses can be expected in early December 2025. Further questions can be directed to the secretariat.