

10 June 2025

MH Grants Office: Funding Updates

Welcome to the June funding newsletter from the MH Grants Office. You can expect our newsletter in your inbox on the first Friday of the month, at most monthly and every 2nd or 3rd month during periods with fewer announcements to share.

Check out the [MH Grants Office website](#) to read more about the support services we offer, see an [overview of funding opportunities](#) available to health researchers in Norway, and more.

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Horizon Europe

ERC Starting and Consolidator Grant eligibility periods widened from 2027!

Starting in **2027**, the European Research Council is widening the eligibility window for ERC Starting and Consolidator grants to account for the diversity seen in academic career trajectories. The following eligibility windows will apply:

ERC Starting Grants:

- From 2027 applicants are eligible to apply 0-10 years following their PhD defence.

ERC Consolidator Grants:

- From 2027 applicants are eligible to apply 5-15 years following their PhD defence.

From **2026**, applicants who have been victims of gender-based violence qualify for an extension of their eligibility window. This is in addition to currently existing criteria for extensions including parental leave, clinical training, extended illness, national service, disability etc.

Details about eligibility extension criteria applicable in 2025 are found in [the 2025 ERC Work Programme](#).

More information about these calls and available support is available through the [Grants Office](#).

Future Call: Innovative Health Initiative (IHI European Partnership).

The IHI partnership has recently updated the draft texts of their upcoming call for funding (IHI Call 11). IHI calls fund large interdisciplinary, industry-inclusive consortia. The following topics are being considered for a **2-stage call** that is scheduled to launch before the summer:

- ☐ Towards precision medicine: platform for transdiagnostic stratification of brain dysfunction
- ☐ Understanding how infections foster and induce non-communicable diseases
- ☐ AI-powered signal detection in pharmacovigilance
- ☐ Leveraging Europe's expertise to accelerate cell therapy for type 1 diabetes
- ☐ Establishing ortho and cardiology ambulatory surgical centres in Europe

[Click here for more information about IHI and each topic.](#)

IHI is organizing online info days for this call from 23 – 30 June. You can see the detailed programme and register here.

If you have any questions about these calls, send an email to the MH Grants Office at: soknadshjelpen@mh.ntnu.no and we are happy to help.

Join Cost Networks and find collaborators

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) Networks, are international networks of researchers that cover all fields, disciplines, and sectors.

Participants contribute their own research to the network, and COST provides support for meetings, seminars, and conferences within the network, as well as summer schools and short-term scientific missions. COST does not fund research activities directly.

The Research Council of Norway has observed that the networks have been valuable for forming consortia for Horizon Europe proposals and participants in these networks have an increased chance of success in the EU's Horizon Europe programme.

There are two ways to participate in COST Actions:

1. Norwegian researchers and companies can now apply to join **70 new COST networks starting in 2025.**

[You can find an overview of the new networks on the COST website.](#)

Please contact [Trude Dypvik](#) and [Hilde Garegg Gårdsmoen](#) at the Research Council of Norway as soon as possible if you wish to join. To be considered in the first round of appointments to these new networks, you must contact the Research Council no later than **13 June**.

[Link to Application form](#)

2) The [2025 call to propose new COST networks](#) is now open, with a **deadline of 21 October 2025.**

Individual researcher grants from the ERC and the RCN: What are they and how do they differ?

Who are these grants for and how to know whether one of them is a good fit for your project idea.

While each scheme offers a wider variety of grants for groundbreaking research, in this issue we compare the basic early career and experienced researcher grants offered by each.

How are they similar?

1. ERC (Horizon Europe) and FRIPRO (NRC) are both funding schemes to promote and **support cutting-edge groundbreaking research** irrespective of topic or discipline, yet they are not entirely equivalent.

They both fund basic and applied research that has the potential to significantly advance knowledge and/or science. This includes projects that may, among other things:

- Use novel approaches (theories, methods, processes) that overcome barriers in your field, and perhaps beyond, and/or lead to scientific breakthroughs.
- Develop (and test) new theories or methods.

If successful, these projects may:

- Impact how researchers think about, or approach an issue/topic
- Open a new avenue of research

These are **not** the correct funding schemes for expanding your existing research and projects leading to incremental advancements. However, remember that what a scientific break through looks like may differ between different fields, and between applied and basic research. You can always [send an email to the MH Grants Office](#) if you're unsure whether your project is a good fit.

2. Both ERC and FRIPRO grants support **individual researcher projects** and have calls for different career stages:

Early Career

ERC Starting Grants
(2-7 years post PhD)

FRIPRO Researcher
Project for Early Career
Scientists (
2-7 years post PhD)

Established Researcher

ERC Consolidator
Grants
(7-12 years post PhD)

Researcher Project for
Experienced Scientists
(6+ years post PhD)

How do they differ?

The devil is in the details and the most substantial difference that may determine the type of project funded under each is the budget. The greater size of the ERC grants lends to larger and possibly more ambitious projects.

ERC Starting Grant

€ 1.5 M (~ NOK 17.2 M)
5 years

FRIPRO Researcher Project for Early Career Scientists

NOK 4 -10 M
3-4 years

ERC Consolidator Grants

€ 2 M (~ NOK 23 M)
5 years

FRIPRO Researcher Project for Early Career Scientists

NOK 4 -12 M
3-8 years

It is wise to think about the scale of what it is you will do in your project and whether the FRIPRO budget is enough / if you can justify the higher ERC budget.

3. The competition is greater for ERC grants.

In 2024, the Norwegian research Council received 177 applications to the FRIPRO for early career, and 206 applications to the FRIPRO for experienced researchers.

Meanwhile, the European Research Council received 3,474 applications for starting grants and 2,534 applications for advanced grants.

The greater competition means that applications usually require a higher degree of originality and breakthrough potential to succeed at getting an ERC grant. A score above the funding threshold isn't always enough (although it can be). There are fundable applications of extremely high quality each year that cannot be funded despite scoring high enough once the EU's budget for ERC grants has been met.

This is not to discourage you! In fact, we encourage all our researchers to become acquainted with the ERC funding scheme and consider applying with a mature project idea when ready. Despite the competition, ERC grants are within reach and we have researchers at MH who succeed at obtaining them.

Consider attending one of our ERC proposal reading days to read successful proposals by other NTNU researchers and get an idea of what a winning project and proposal looks like.

The RCN also organizes ERC reading days in Trondheim every few months. If you are in Gjøvik or Ålesund, contact the MH Grants Office to find out how you can get compensated for travel to Trondheim to attend one.

4. Similar schemes, but different application processes.

FRIPRO has a very detailed template with a great deal of guidance (please read and follow it!) while the ERC offers a bit more flexibility in how you present your proposed project.

FRIPRO proposals have rolling deadlines and after submission, you will receive a decision within 6-8 months. You receive support in preparing the project budget form your local project economist.

For **ERC** applications, you submit **two versions of your project proposal** by the application deadline. Preparation of an ERC application can therefore be a greater time investment than FRIPRO. A more general version of your proposal in part **B1 is assessed in a first stage by generalists**. If you score high enough then a longer and more detailed version from part **B2 is assessed in a second stage by experts**, in addition to an interview with a review committee. You receive support in preparing the project budget form the EU project economist at the faculty level.

More information about these calls and available support is available through the [Grants Office](#). Send us an email if you have any questions and we are happy to help!

Other Calls for Funding

Call for Proposals: Clinical Academic Groups (CAG).

Deadline: 12 September, 3:00 PM

CAG are interdisciplinary collaborations between universities, health trusts and other relevant stakeholders, aiming closer collaboration between research, innovation and education.

The aim of these groups is to solve specific challenges in the health service through new knowledge and practice which requires interdisciplinary beyond the healthcare sector.

The call is thematically open, but Helse Midt-Norge (HMN) encourages applications within the following topics:

- Digital Health Solutions
- Primary and secondary prevention
- Multimorbidity

To apply, groups require the participation of health trusts within HMN, including St. Olavs University Hospital.

[You can read more about the upcoming call here \(in Norwegian\).](#)

NB: Applications are submitted in English.

More information about these calls and available support is available through the [Grants Office](#). Send us an email if you have any questions and we are happy to help!

Call for Proposals: Joint Research Committee (FFU).

Deadline: 12 June, 3:00 PM

FFU has published its 2026 for proposals for:

1. Two-year research projects (up to 1.500.000 kroner)
2. Researcher positions 50% (up to 3 years)

The research projects must be strategically relevant to the health sector, i.e. current research- and innovation strategies for Helse Midt-Norge RHF, St. Olavs Hospital HF and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, NTNU.

Researchers in academic environments that need strengthening within the research area are encouraged to apply. It is recommended to have strong environments as partners in the project application. If strengthening the academic environment is the purpose of the application, this should be stated both in the application text and in the management commitment form from the clinic and institute.

[You can read more about the upcoming call here](#)

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soknadshjelpen@mh.ntnu.no