

## Guidelines for Industrial Postdoc

In force as of 9 March 2015

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### **1. What is an Industrial Postdoc?**

An Industrial Postdoc is an industrially focused research project between one and three years that is carried out by a researcher who has obtained a PhD degree within the past three years. The Industrial Postdoc is employed in a private company, and the project can be conducted in a collaboration with a research institution. The company and the research institution both have a mentor available to the Industrial Postdoc to discuss and provide feedback about the project.

Together with Industrial PhD, Industrial Postdoc comprises the Industrial Researcher Programme. The Industrial Researcher Programme has the purpose of educating and developing research talents into industrial researchers specialised in creating growth and employment in Denmark's business sector through research, development and innovation.

Industrial Postdoc is aimed at PhDs on a high scientific level and without significant experience with research in the business sector.

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### **Significant changes since last Industrial Postdoc call**

#### Guidelines instead of calls

Offers of subsidy for Industrial Postdoc projects are no longer announced in individual calls with corresponding application deadlines. Guidelines are used in their place. The guidelines are in effect until the next edition is publicised. The guidelines contain regulations on requirements, application and subsidy. The application deadlines are established on an ongoing basis and announced at [www.innovationsfonden.dk](http://www.innovationsfonden.dk).

#### Employment in private sector company

An Industrial Postdoc is now employed in the private sector company that participates in the project instead of at the research institution. Find the company requirements and the definition of a private sector company in section 3.

#### New subsidy types and amounts

The Industrial Postdoc subsidy is now longer paid out to the research institution on the basis of the entire project budget. Co-financing requirements have furthermore been removed. Instead, the company now receives a monthly wage subsidy of DKK 22,000 for the Industrial Postdoc, up to a maximum of 50 % of gross wages over a financial reporting period. There is also DKK 30,000 a year for the Industrial Postdoc's travel expenses. The research institution receives a subsidy of up to DKK 150,000 a year on the basis of a budget for the institution's own project expenses which is submitted with the application. Read more in section 6.

#### The Industrial Postdoc candidate cannot have significant experience in industrial research

In order to focus on the development of regular PhDs into industrial researchers, it has been decided that an Industrial Postdoc candidate cannot already have significant experience in industrial research. Read more in section 3.

#### No requirement for a research institution, but a prioritisation criterion

A research institution is no longer a required participant in an Industrial Postdoc project. However if qualified proposals compete for funding, a prioritisation criterion will be how large a part any research institution collaboration has in the project. Read more in section 4.

#### The research institution no longer has to be in the public sector

A research institution must be able to document significant research work within the project field in the form of publications or patents, but it is no longer a subsidy requirement that the research institution is part of the public sector. Find the research institution requirements in section 3.

#### Application within all research fields possible

Industrial Postdoc projects can be within all research fields, as long as one is able to argue convincingly that the project has a commercial potential for the company. Read more in section 4.

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### Quick start now possible

It is now possible to start an Industrial Postdoc project from the date of approval. Read more in section 2.

### No set requirements on time allocation

There is no longer a requirement that the Industrial Postdoc must be a set minimum amount of time in the research institution or the company. Instead the project's requirements will determine the time allocation.

### One status meeting per project

Yearly status meetings and semi-annual research reports are no longer required. Instead, a single status meeting is held 1-1½ year into the project with the participation of Innovation Fund Denmark. Read more in section 8.

## 2. General conditions

### Application

The first step when commencing an Industrial Postdoc is to send an application to Innovation Fund Denmark (the Fund). In the application, the Industrial Postdoc project and the people and organisations that participate must be described. The application must be of a high quality to be approved.

The application is assessed by the Industrial Researcher Committee (the Committee) in Innovation Fund Denmark. Unless the Committee decides to ask for additional information from the applicants for use in the assessment, processing time is max. two months.

### Decision and commencement

The application can be either approved, conditionally approved or rejected.

If the application is approved, the project can start from the date of approval. After the approval the Fund will send a letter of commitment to the company and any research institution. The letter of commitment must be signed and the project initiated no later than half a year after the approval.

If the application is conditionally approved, applicants will receive a letter detailing the conditions for final approval. The conditions must be met within four months of the decision.

If the application is rejected, applicants will given reasons for the rejection, and it will be possible to revise the application and reapply at the next application deadline.

The Fund will make public the title, abstract and participants of approved and conditionally approved applications at [www.innovationsfonden.dk](http://www.innovationsfonden.dk). For this reason applicants should make sure that the title and abstract do not contain any confidential information.

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### During the project

During the project, the candidate is employed in a Danish division of the company. The company pays the candidate's salary and receives a salary subsidy as well as a subsidy for the Industrial Postdoc's travel expenses. If a research institution participates in the project, the institution can get a subsidy for mentoring, equipment and other expenses related to the project.

### **3. Entry requirements**

The Industrial Postdoc candidate and the company must meet certain requirements when jointly applying for an Industrial Postdoc.

#### **The Industrial Postdoc candidate must:**

- have achieved a PhD degree within the past three years at the application deadline (max. 36 months from the date of the PhD degree, excl. paternal leave),
  - It is possible to apply without having submitted the PhD thesis if the application includes a statement from the main PhD supervisor that submission is expected within four months of the application deadline.
- be able to document significant scientific prowess within the project field in the form of publications, research based patents or similar, and
- not have significant experience with industrial research, e.g. by having carried out the PhD in collaboration with a company.
  - This means that an Industrial PhD is not eligible for an Industrial Postdoc grant.

#### **The company must:**

- have a division geographically located in Denmark where the candidate is to be employed,
- be able to provide facilities and financial support for the project for its entire duration,
- attach a mentor to the project, and
- be part of the private sector.

#### Private sector

In the Industrial Researcher Programme, an organisation is either part of the private or public sector. In order to be part of the private sector the company must meet these two requirements:

1. It is neither part of a larger public sector organisation nor an interest group for other public sector organisations.
2. Less than half its revenue is public subsidy (incl. citizen payment as compelled by law).

If in doubt about whether an organisation is part of the private sector, it is possible to have the Fund assess the organisation by sending its articles of association (DK: vedtægter) and the latest annual financial report to [erhvervsforsker@innofond.dk](mailto:erhvervsforsker@innofond.dk).

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### Several companies in one Industrial Postdoc project

It is possible for several companies to collaborate on an Industrial Postdoc project. The Committee will then assess if the companies can support the project together. One of the companies must be the designated co-ordinator for the project and accordingly be the official applicant, employ the candidate, pay out salary and receive subsidy from the Fund.

### **The company mentor must:**

- have general experience with the project subject, and
- have extensive knowledge about the business sector.

It is not formally required for company mentors to have research experience. However, the Committee will assess if in total the mentors are qualified to provide scientific feedback to the Industrial Postdoc about the project.

The company mentor does not have to be employed in the company, but must work in the private sector on a daily basis.

### **The research institution must:**

- be able to document a significant research activity within the project field, and
- attach a research mentor to the project.

The research institution must not be too closely connected to the company financially, and cannot be part of the same company group.

### **The research mentor must:**

- be an acknowledged researcher within the project field,
- be in an scientific working environment within the project area on a daily basis,

### **Third parties:**

The project can also include other relevant organisations in Denmark as third parties. It is possible to apply for attachment of a third party during the project. Third parties do not receive subsidy from the Fund.

## 4. Application

There are three yearly application deadlines. The application deadlines are continuously determined and announced at [www.erhvervsforsker.dk](http://www.erhvervsforsker.dk). The Fund must receive the application no later than 12 noon on the closing date for applications. The application and any other communication must be in Danish or English.

The application is submitted via [www.e-grant.dk](http://www.e-grant.dk) to the Fund and is assessed by the Committee. Read more on [www.erhvervsforsker.dk](http://www.erhvervsforsker.dk) on how to submit an application and what information

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and appendices it must contain. If information is missing or the wrong appendix templates have been used, the Fund can administratively reject the application.

The processing time is max. two months. The Committee may however decide to ask for additional information from the applicant for the assessment. If so, the processing time may be more than two months.

### Scientific requirements

The application must contain a project description of a high scientific standard that accounts for:

- The project's objectives and success criteria
- The project's commercial potential for the company
- The research field's state-of-the-art and theoretical background, incl. references to relevant research literature
- The project's hypotheses and/or research questions
- The project's research methods and empirical data
- The project's allocation of roles, and a phase and time schedule, incl. significant milestones in the project

### Commercial potential

An Industrial Postdoc project must have a significant commercial potential for the company, and it is important that the project has been conceived from the perspective of strengthening or supporting the company's commercial activities.

The project can be within all research fields as long as the project's direct or indirect commercial potential, in the short or long term, can be convincingly argued.

The project description template contains the precise demands for the description of the project's commercial potential.

### Assessment and prioritisation

On the basis of this information the Committee assesses whether all requirements and criteria have been met, and if it is likely that the project can be completed as planned.

If the Fund receives more qualified applications than it has means to fund, the Committee will prioritise applications by the standard assessment criteria as well as the vision and objectives of the programme.

A significant prioritisation criterion is the extent of any collaboration with a research institution. A research institution is not required to participate in an Industrial Postdoc project, but qualified applications with such a collaboration are given higher priority than corresponding qualified applications without any such collaboration. The larger the extent of the collaboration, the higher the priority given to the application.

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### 5. Decision on applications

An Industrial Postdoc application can either be approved, conditionally approved or rejected. An approved Industrial Postdoc project can begin from the date of approval.

#### Conditional approval

If a project is conditionally approved, the Fund will send the applicants a letter detailing the conditions. Documentation for meeting the conditions is submitted to the Fund. If the Fund finds that the conditions have been met, the project can begin.

The conditions must be met within four months of the decision. The Fund can extend this deadline in special circumstances.

#### Rejection

If a project is rejected, the Fund sends the applicants a letter stating the reasons for rejection. It is possible to reapply. At reapplying, changes in the project description must be clearly indicated, and it must be described how the reasons for the previous rejection have been addressed. All application material incl. new signatures must be resubmitted when reapplying.

### 6. Subsidy

Innovation Fund Denmark pays out subsidy separately to the project's company and any research institution.

#### **Subsidy for the company:**

The company receives DKK 22,000 á month for three years for the Industrial PhD candidate's salary, but max. 50 % of gross salary expenses. This is calculated for every entire financial project reporting period.

For every month the project is set to last, the company can receive up to DKK 2,500 in subsidy for the following of the Industrial Postdoc's expenses:

- participation in project relevant conferences, and
- project relevant stays at non-Danish universities, research institutions and companies not in the same country as the host university or the host company (stays at the company's non-Danish divisions are not subsidised).

This includes a single round trip to the destination, visa, travelling insurance, lodging and university fees. Food, daily/local transportation, books etc. are not covered.

The company must pay all its other expenses for the project itself. This also includes the Industrial Postdoc's personal equipment, e.g. laptop computer, mobile phone, etc.

#### Payment of subsidy and auditing

The company receives subsidy in arrears from the Fund for every financial project reporting period. The company must submit a financial project report every sixth or twelfth month. If the

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company has less than 250 employees it can also submit financial project reports every third month.

If the Fund can approve the financial project report, the earned subsidy for the period is paid out to the Nemkonto (“Easy Account”) registered for the company’s CVR number.

At the final financial project report, an auditor's statement verifying that the receipts declared in the financial report exist, and that the terms for subsidy have been kept, must be included.

Forms for financial project reports and auditor’s statement are available at [www.erhvervsforsker.dk](http://www.erhvervsforsker.dk).

### **Subsidy for the research institution:**

The research institution can receive a subsidy of up to DKK 150,000 per project year from the Fund, incl. overhead. The subsidy can cover the following project expenses:

- the mentor’s work hours spent on mentoring the Industrial Postdoc,
- equipment and materials,
- researchers, technicians and other assistants’ work hours, and
- other expenses for carrying out the project.

When applying one must submit a budget for the subsidy usage. The Committee will assess if the budgeted usage is reasonable and relevant to the project, and has the option of adjusting the budget if individual items and their expenses have not been adequately explained. Unused subsidy is returned to the Fund when the project ends.

### A company as a research institution

If the research institution is characterised as an undertaking in accordance with the regulations of the EU Commission, the Fund can provide subsidy at max. 50 % of the research institution’s expenses for the project. The EU Commission considers an organisation to be an undertaking if it carries out economic activities. The primary criteria for this can be identified as follows;

- that the organisation offers goods or services in the market,
- that the organisation bears the economic risk of the activity, and
- that it has the potential of profiting from the activity.

If the research institution can be characterised as an SME in accordance with EU regulation, the Fund can provide subsidy up to a max. of 60 % of expenses. An organisation is an SME if it has:

- less than 250 employees, and
- a revenue of max. EUR 50 mill. *or* a total balance of max. EUR 43 mill.

### Payment of subsidy to a research institution subject to government auditing

If the research institution is subject to government auditing, 85 % of the subsidy is paid out at project commencement. The last 15 % are paid out when the Fund has approved a single final financial project report from the research institution.



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### Payment of subsidy to a research institution not subject to government auditing

If the research institution is not subject to government auditing, the subsidy is paid out in arrears upon the approval of a financial project report. The research institution must submit a financial project report every sixth or twelfth month. If the company has less than 250 employees it can also submit financial project reports every third month. If the Fund can approve the financial project report, the earned subsidy for the period is paid out to the Nemkonto ("Easy Account") registered for the institution's CVR number.

At the final financial project report, an auditor's statement verifying that the receipts declared in the financial report exist, and that the terms for subsidy have been kept, must be included.

Forms for financial project reports and auditor's statement are available at [www.erhvervsforsker.dk](http://www.erhvervsforsker.dk).

## **7. Salary, IPR and leave**

### Salary

The candidate's gross salary must at least correspond to the current gross pay rate for Postdocs employed in the Danish state. Questions regarding salary levels can be made to a relevant labour union or the research institution's HR department.

### IPR

The Industrial Postdoc is subject to the provisions of the Danish act on employee inventions while mentors at Danish universities and other Danish public research institutions are subject to the provisions of the Danish act on inventions at public research institutions. Questions regarding intellectual property rights should be resolved before signing the employment contract.

### Leave

The Industrial Postdoc may request a leave of absence. The Fund must approve the request before the leave can commence. The Fund does not provide subsidy during periods of leave, incl. paternal and sick leave.

The request must:

- state the project's reference number,
- state the reason for the request,
- state the start and end date of the leave requested,
- state the new end date of the project – the end date is extended by the period of leave,
- be signed by the Industrial Postdoc, the company and any participating research institution.

The request is emailed as a PDF file to [erhvervsforsker@innofond.dk](mailto:erhvervsforsker@innofond.dk).

## 8. Other obligations

### Information meeting

After application approval, the Fund holds a joint information meeting for the Industrial Postdoc and mentors. The information meetings are held in Copenhagen and Aarhus after each application round. Read more about the information meetings at [www.erhvervsforsker.dk](http://www.erhvervsforsker.dk).

### Status meeting and status reporting

For Industrial Postdoc projects that last more than a year, the Fund will arrange a status meeting with the Industrial Postdoc, the company mentor and any research mentor 1-1½ year into the project. As a starting point, the closest university will host the meeting.

The Industrial Postdoc must submit a short status report to the Fund no later than two weeks before the status meeting. At the meeting, the candidate will give a presentation on the project's status for the other participants. The purpose with the meeting is to see how the project is progressing and to initiate a dialogue about how the results are incorporated into the company's business development.

Additionally, the Industrial Postdoc must submit a written evaluation of the project to the Fund no later than three months after the project has ended.

### RRI and Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

Innovation Fund Denmark emphasises Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) which aims to strengthen the connection between research and innovation processes and results, and the values and needs of society. The Fund promotes RRI in its overall strategies and via projects, and the Fund follows the EU Commission's definition and implementation of RRI.

The Fund also supports the principles described in the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. The Fund expects that the projects it invests in follow the guidelines in the RRI and the code of conduct.

Read the code of conduct here: [The Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)

### Open Access

Innovation Fund Denmark has agreed to the regulations in the "Open Access policy for public research councils and foundations". This means that publicised scientific articles that are the result of complete or partial funding from the Fund must be made publicly available for everyone via Open Access, if so permitted by the journal.

Read the entire policy here: [Open Access policy for public research councils and foundations](#)

### Duty to disclose all material facts and approval of changes

As recipients of subsidy, the Industrial Postdoc, the company and the university must uphold their duty to disclose all material facts to the Fund. The Fund must be informed as soon as possible in case of changes in the basis for payment of subsidy. This would include mentor changes, leave, major disruptions and delays, and significant project changes.

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It is not possible to objectively define what constitutes a significant project change. But as a main rule these are changes of a magnitude that make the project not immediately recognisable as the one originally approved.

The project can continue only if and when the Fund approves the changes. If the duty to disclose all material facts is not upheld, the Fund has the option to cancel subsidy and require repayment of any paid out subsidies.

### **9. Legal basis and right to information**

Industrial Postdoc is authorised by the Danish Act no. 306 of 29 March 2014 on Denmark's Innovation Fund.

Applicants should be aware that information can be passed on to other parties if they apply for right of access in accordance with the Danish Act on public information (DK: offentlighedsloven). Right of access can for instance be given in the form of lists of who has applied, and for what (applicant names, application titles and amounts applied for). With regard to the applications themselves, the Fund will ensure in consultation with the applicant (incl. companies etc.) that business sensitive information is not passed on, nor any other information which cannot be passed on according to the law.