



Tips for InnoExplorer applicants from DTU

This document is intended to support applicants from DTU when applying for InnoExplorer. Although the InnoExplorer programme is owned by Innovation Fund Denmark, there is a mandatory process for applicants from DTU before the submission of the final application with Innovation Fund Denmark.

DTU Skylab will assist applicants in the application process, but ultimately, the applicant is responsible for the application and for adhering to guidelines from Innovation Fund Denmark.

Internal DTU qualification process before the application deadline

DTU must sign a declaration of support to applications. To ensure a consistently high quality of applications under the InnoExplorer programme, DTU has implemented an internal qualification process with the following actions and deadlines:

- Internal DTU deadline (usually up to 4 weeks before the final deadline): By this date you must notify your DTU Skylab Innovation Partner to enrol in the qualification process. The Innovation Partner will guide you on whether your project is a fit for InnoExplorer.
- Internal DTU pitch (usually up to 3 weeks before the final deadline): You must prepare a draft slide deck according to the InnoExplorer guidelines and pitch it before the DTU Skylab pitch panel. The panel will select the applicants to be enrolled in the application process for InnoExplorer.
- The Selected applicants will receive support from DTU Skylab's Innovation Partners in refining the application for Innovation Fund Denmark.
- DTU Skylab will follow the development of the application and will only sign the declaration of support after critical review at the end of the preparation period.

Application

In the InnoExplorer application process, you are required to submit the following:

- The e-grant application form
- Your Budget
- A Declaration of support from your institution
- A Presentation of your project (slide deck) to be submitted before the panel meeting

The e-grant application form

- Start the process early to make sure you have time to gather all required information.
- Find the application form by creating a profile on e-grant and select "InnoExplorer application".
- Invite the DTU Skylab funding team as viewer/ co-worker in e-grant, so we can follow you and upload DTU declaration of support.



- Make sure your application answers all questions posed in the guidelines from Innovation Fund Denmark (content of the application).
- When you are sure that all questions are answered, go through the list of assessment criteria in the guidelines by Innovation Fund Denmark and make sure that your application fulfils each of the points under assessment criteria.
- Refer to the “learnings” section of this document to leverage the experience from previous InnoExplorer application rounds.

The slide deck

- When building your slide deck, please refer to our InnoExplorer Presentation section below for guidance on what you should include
- Animations/video may be included in the slide deck, but we generally recommend not to as there is a risk that it fails at the meeting
- Check your slide deck against the assessment criteria and make sure your presentation answers all the questions stated there.

Budget

- Note that Overhead constitutes 44%, leaving 1,042 mio. DKK for your project cost (assuming no patent cost)
- Remember to get the signature of your head of department

Declaration of support from DTU

- You must attach a declaration of support from your head of department
- Remember to obtain the signature in due time for us to check it and for us to obtain the official DTU signature

Get Assistance!

- Make sure that you carefully read through all available material for the programme you are about to apply to
- Involve your DTU Skylab Innovation Partner in the application process
- Consult with the person responsible for innovation at your department
- Check DTU Skylabs page on Inside. Select **Examples of Grant applications** and find examples of slide decks from previous rounds of InnoExplorer for inspiration.

InnoExplorer presentation (slide deck)

The presentation is used when presenting before the InnoExplorer panel and must just like the e-grant application answer the same questions as well as clearly communicate that the project fulfils the assessment criteria.

The presentation gives the possibility to present the project in a more lively manner and to give the panel a deeper impression of you and your team. Use the opportunity to show the competences of your team, by inviting team members involved in the commercial aspects (and consider letting them conduct



parts of the presentation) and possible external collaboration partners which can give credibility to the need for the projects results.

The presentation (slide deck) must include the following:

Project description

- ✓ A presentation of the idea or solution
- ✓ The scientific results/data on which the project is based
- ✓ An account of the research or innovation excellence of the idea.

Project plan

- ✓ Overview of activities and milestones
- ✓ Outline of the expected activities after the conclusion of the InnoExplorer project

Commercialisation strategy

- ✓ An account of the plan for taking the product further in the development process towards full utilisation of the research results.
- ✓ A description of the expected end-product and the commercialisation plan for ultimately reaching the market
- ✓ A plan for IP (if relevant)

Business potential

- ✓ An account of the market and the demand for the solution
- ✓ An overview of the competitors and how your solution differs from theirs
- ✓ An account for the value proposition of your solution

Team

- ✓ Present your team and their competences and experiences
- ✓ Describe the profiles and competences not currently present in your team and how you will onboard them.

InnoExplorer assessment criteria

If the application meets the formal requirements, the project will be assessed based on three main criteria as described in the guidelines from Innovation Fund Denmark;

- Quality of the idea
- Impact
- Quality of execution



Each of these criteria is elaborated further on Innovation Fund Denmark's website. It is recommended to carefully read through the criteria to ensure that they are addressed in the application and presentation (slide deck).

We further recommend that you test your application and presentation on externals to get their unbiased feedback on which elements of the application/presentation that are difficult to understand for someone not involved with the project. This could be colleagues, other researchers who have applied to the same programme or people who are involved in other startups.

InnoExplorer at DTU – Learnings from previous application rounds

The purpose of this short analysis is to maximise learning from previous InnoExplorer application rounds

Recommendations

Research results must be sufficiently explained:

The InnoExplorer programme is about commercialising research results and hence the underlying research results must be explained. Research results shall include an explanation of the concept as well as supporting data. It is not enough to refer to general experience or general knowledge within the field of research.

Adequate data or test results must be presented:

Often, InnoExplorer projects are rejected due to insufficient data or test results. Hence it is recommended to obtain sufficient data or test results from activities in Discovery Grants and/or DTU PoC Grants before applying for InnoExplorer.

No background knowledge about the technology should be taken for granted:

Even though the InnoExplorer panel members are selected for their domain knowledge and experience, they cannot necessarily be experts in the exact field of the project. Hence it is important that prior knowledge is not taken for granted in the application and presentation.

Application knowledge must be demonstrated:

InnoExplorer projects are often rejected because the applicant failed to demonstrate convincing knowledge of the user situation or the context in which a product should operate. Without a clear understanding of this, the applicant may find it difficult to present a convincing value proposition.

A business model, if at least preliminary:

It should be clear from the presentation how the project will be commercialised and how you will make money. Not necessarily in all details, but your application and presentation should demonstrate your basic ideas about the commercialisation path

Focus on a single application / market:



To convince the panel, researchers often present many possible application areas for a solution. In our experience, it is much more convincing to select one application area and focus the development towards this particular application and resulting market. This proves that you have reflected on where the solution will have the biggest impact. If later in the project it appears that the original target was not optimal and more attractive application areas are found, then it is ok to shift focus.

Regulatory requirements must be addressed for medtech/pharma projects:

Regulatory requirements constitute an extensive task, with a big impact on market possibilities and speed to market, and therefore this issue must be addressed. You don't need to have all details in place, but you must demonstrate awareness of the regulatory challenges and the impact these may have on the project implementation.

Engage with users / customers:

A project developed without the involvement of users has a high risk of failure. Evaluators are aware of this and will notice if a project team have little contact with their end-users. Hence it is important to engage with users and buyers in the project and to demonstrate this involvement in the presentation. User-involvement will also make it easier for you to develop your value proposition.

The project team should include market-oriented profiles:

Project teams including one or more person who is oriented towards the market are often perceived to be stronger than project teams consisting of only researchers. It is important to convince evaluators to that input from the user situation and the markets have been considered in the project and involving someone with experience from the target market can be a compelling way to do it.