JOINING FORCES FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

MISSION A SUSTAINABLE DANISH ENERGY SYSTEM

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: SEED FUNDING OPPORTUNITY 2027



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PURPOSE OF SEED-FUNDING OPPORTUNITY 2027

- The purpose of the seed funding opportunity is to support the maturation and external funding of mission projects that contribute to the Energy Mission's North Star and move at least one of its three tipping points.

- The North Star is a citizen-involved, resilient and sustainable energy system in Denmark by 2045. The tipping points are the observable shifts in how energy decisions are made that the mission tracks on the way there (see next page). Seed funded projects are expected to name the tipping point they address and the evidence they can deliver.

- More specifically, the purpose is to support research teams and partners in developing an innovative and robust project description and proposal for a larger-scale funding opportunity. Seed funding can be used for exploring innovative ideas, conducting preliminary research and for developing partnerships and should lead to one or more applications for funding.



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THE ENERGY MISSION'S TIPPING POINTS

North Star: A citizen-involved, resilient and sustainable energy system in Denmark by 2045

- **Tipping point I, Citizen-involved.** By 2030, major energy investments in at least one supply region include formal citizen participation and opportunities for citizen ownership, with local knowledge and concerns demonstrably influencing decisions on design, siting and value sharing
- **Tipping point II, Resilient.** By 2030, a national resilience plan for sustainable energy is operational and used to guide planning, investment and decisions based on documented system capacity, flexibility and vulnerabilities
- **Tipping point III, Sustainable.** By 2030, energy investment decisions in at least one supply region systematically document societal value, fossil fuel displacement and security of supply alongside technical and financial performance as key considerations in the prioritisation and selection of investments

A project contributes to a tipping point when its results can change how an external actor plans, invests, implements or operates, documented in a real-world, operational or partner-based setting. Laboratory results alone do not count as evidence of a shift. The full description and the evidence the mission tracks are on the mission website.



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Assessment Criteria (Scored 1-5, equally weighted):

- **Quality of the Idea**

  Is the concept innovative and original, or merely an extension of existing operations? Does it present a clear scientific hypothesis or a unique methodological approach?
- **Potential Impact**

  Does the project address significant societal challenges? Does the project aim to increase the TRL & SRL, and is it clearly described how this is achieved?, see the MiREL model for inspiration.
- **Research and Partner team**

  Is the team interdisciplinary (e.g., demonstrating an understanding of the need for cross-departmental collaboration)? Are relevant external partners or industrial collaborations mentioned?
- **Use of Seed Funding**

  Is there a well-defined budget, and is it clear how the activities will strengthen the long-term goal? Is it realistic that this project will lead to a substantial external funding application? Have specific calls or a strategy for future project applications been identified?
- **Fit to Mission Roadmap and Impact Framework**

  Does the project align with the tipping points for the mission? Does it support the mission's overall strategy and roadmap?



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SEED FUNDING 2027

Requirements:

- Projects applying for seed funding must contribute directly to the Energy Mission's North Star as defined in the Mission Impact Framework and support progress towards one or more mission tipping points.

- Applications should demonstrate how the proposed activities address a significant research and innovation challenge, contribute to measurable mission impact, as reflected through progress in Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) and Societal Readiness Levels (SRLs) within the MiREL framework, and strengthen collaboration across disciplines and stakeholder groups.

- Furthermore, applicants must outline a clear strategy for leveraging seed funding into larger external funding opportunities. The proposed project should serve as a catalyst for future research and innovation activities and lead to one or more competitive external funding applications.



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SEED FUNDING 2027

FUNDING:

- It is possible to apply for three different pools of funding with different expectations of project maturity.
  - **IGNITE**: Apply for **up to DKK 200,000 per project**. This pool is to initiate new ideas and establish early-stage collaborations with external partners. This pool has a higher level of acceptable risk but further emphasis on the novelty of the idea.
  - **CULTIVATE**: Apply for **up to DKK 400,000 per project**. This pool is to expand and strengthen existing and committed partnerships. The partnerships should already have demonstrated collaboration and have a clear plan for further development and funding.
  - **ELEVATE**: Apply for **up to DKK 600,000 per project**. This pool is to advance mature projects with global reach and interdisciplinary and intersectoral networks. The partnerships should be consolidated, and specific calls should be identified and targeted explicitly.

  If the project is targeting calls with a deadline after 31/12-2027, then the application should include how this is expected to be executed by the project team without the project funding.



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SEED FUNDING 2027

FUNDING (Continued):

- The funding can be used for buy-out of staff or research assistance, expenses for meetings, travel, workshops and other infrastructures needed to enhance the project.
- The funding cannot be used to pay for expenses for external partners (State Aid Rules).
- Awarded projects take part in the mission's follow-up on tipping points in August 2027 and a final evaluation against the assessment criteria.
- The awarded projects must be submitted to VBN/Pure and connected to the mission VBN page Energy Mission. If the project is already submitted and connected, the seed funding should be included under "Funding" for the project



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SEED FUNDING 2027

PROCESS

- Launch of the seed funding opportunity October 9th, 2026
- Application deadline: November 22nd, 2026, at the end of the day
- Notification no later than December 11th, 2026
- Project start: January 1st, 2027
- The funding must be spent before 31.12.2027. This cannot be exceeded or postponed.

APPLICATION

- Fill out and send the application form to seedfunding@aau.dk
- Assessment of applications by Mission Management group represented by Jakob Stoustrup, Henrik C. Pedersen, Laura Bang Lindegaard and Yariv Taran, and the Vice Deans for research and innovation
- The title and participants of the awarded project will be published on the mission webpage

QUESTIONS

- Mission officers Paw V. Mortensen (pvm@adm.aau.dk) or Andreas Nyeboe Munk (andreasnm@adm.aau.dk)



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APPLICATION FORM OVERVIEW

- Full name of main applicants (PI)
- VBN links of applicants (PI)
- Project title (max 250 characters)
- Names of all researchers in the research team and their affiliation and names of external actors and organizations in the partnership and maturity level of the partnership (max 1000 characters)
- Related projects and grants on the same topic (max 500 characters)
- Project description, background, idea, problem and how it contributes to the mission's North Star, objectives, tentative research questions and brief outline of design/work packages (max 4000 characters)
- Expected impact, during the project period and the societal impact the project aims for, including how it moves the project towards a partner-based or real-world setting e.g. tipping points (max 2000 characters)
- Funding plan with at least one named funding call and deadline in 2027 or 2028 (max 1000 characters)
- A tentative budget with total amount applied for and a description of how the funding will be spent (max 2000 characters)

