



LEO FOUNDATION

LEO Foundation Grant Strategy 2030

Continuing commitment, enabling
collaboration, pioneering new discoveries



Breakthroughs in skin research continue to transform our understanding of both healthy and diseased skin, paving the way for better diagnostics and new treatments. But despite significant progress, there is still much to be done – advancing knowledge is essential to help tackle the personal and global consequences of skin diseases.

Anne-Marie Engel
Chief Scientific Officer at the LEO Foundation



Excellence



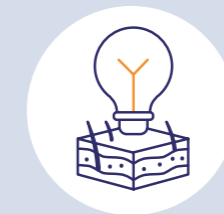
Nurture



Collaboration



Pioneering



Innovation

A close-up photograph of a person's arm with severe skin peeling and a hand touching the affected area. The skin is dry, cracked, and has large areas of white, flaking peeling. A hand is shown from the right, with fingers gently touching the peeling skin. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light brown color.

What's at stake?

Skin diseases are among the most common human diseases – affecting one in three people globally at some point in life. Children and adults live with itch and pain that may last for years. While often very visible on the skin, the burden goes much deeper. Skin diseases can make people feel stigmatized, isolated, anxious or depressed, and they can lead to lost days at school or work.

New knowledge and insights from research transform our understanding of the skin and how we may improve the treatment of its diseases. Yet skin diseases remain complex. Despite significant advancements, many of the over 3,000 skin diseases still have no adequate treatment and skin research continues to be underfunded.

There is still much to be done – to improve diagnoses, develop innovative treatments and ultimately find cures.

Let's pave the way for curing skin diseases.



Grant Strategy 2030

Recognizing the global burden of skin diseases and building on our longstanding commitment to skin research, we are evolving our philanthropic approach, as outlined in Grant Strategy 2030. Anchored in the LEO Foundation's overall purpose – Let's pave the way for curing skin diseases – Grant Strategy 2030 sets the direction for the Foundation's philanthropic efforts for the coming five years.

As one of the largest private funders globally of independent skin research, we are committed to helping as many people as possible, as effectively as possible – by supporting research and talents that pioneer new discoveries and that hold the potential to transform our understanding of the skin and its diseases.

Grant Strategy 2030 sets out five strategic tracks – Excellence, Nurture, Collaboration, Pioneering and Innovation – each designed to help strengthen the global skin research ecosystem. Together, they aim to advance scientific excellence, support areas of unmet need and research talents worldwide, foster collaboration across disciplines and sectors, enable bold frontier research, and translate discoveries into new ways of preventing, diagnosing, and treating skin diseases.

With this grant strategy, the LEO Foundation aims to increase its annual funding to more than DKK 500 million (EUR 67 million) by 2030 – driving progress towards better understanding, treatments and, ultimately, cures for skin diseases.



Anne-Marie Engel
Chief Scientific Officer
at the LEO Foundation



We wish to support the transformation of scientific discoveries into benefits for people living with skin diseases

The LEO Foundation is entering a new chapter, with plans to increase its annual funding to over DKK 500 million by 2030. Chief Scientific Officer at the LEO Foundation, Anne-Marie Engel, shares the thinking behind the new grant strategy and its ambitions.

Why launch a new grant strategy now?

We've supported excellent research for many years, but to fulfil our ambition to support a thriving global ecosystem for skin research, we must develop our philanthropic ways of working to cover other types of support as well. With Grant Strategy 2030, we are setting an ambitious direction for the next five years – one that will help accelerate breakthroughs and help pave the way for curing skin diseases.

What's the big ambition behind Grant Strategy 2030?

We want to be able to support the transformation of scientific discoveries into real benefits for people living with skin diseases. That means not only supporting the very best research in existing research environments but also contributing to a thriving global ecosystem for skin research. And we're putting serious weight behind it: by 2030, our annual funding will rise from around DKK 300 million (EUR 40 million) in recent years to over DKK 500 million (EUR 67 million). That's a big step up and a clear sign of our commitment.

How does this new chapter build on what you've already done?

Our current grant strategy has laid strong groundwork by strengthening

and acknowledging excellence in skin research worldwide and by introducing new funding instruments for excellent research. With Grant Strategy 2030, we take it further. It's about broadening our scope – supporting emerging talent, investing in bold new ideas, and making sure that discoveries with translational potential don't just stay in the lab but actually get to make a difference for people living with skin diseases.

The strategy introduces five strategic tracks. What do they mean in practice?

They're really five lenses through which we'll shape our funding. The five strategic tracks are: Excellence, Nurture, Collaboration, Pioneering and Innovation. Excellence is about continuing to support outstanding science globally. Through the Nurture track, we focus both on addressing unmet needs and on helping future researchers thrive while strengthening public understanding of fact-based health information. Collaboration means building strong research partnerships across institutions and disciplines to tackle grant challenges within skin research. Pioneering is about encouraging high-risk research, based on unconventional ideas that could lead to big leaps forward. And Innovation is about making sure

that support is available to help new knowledge move from academic discovery to real-world impact.

Skin research spans many disciplines and moves in multiple directions – how will the strategy keep pace with that?

Flexibility is key. Instead of locking ourselves into a fixed plan, we have created an adaptive framework that allows us to develop new funding programs, experiment with different approaches, and respond to unmet needs and global developments as they happen. The world of science doesn't stand still – and neither can we.

Can you already reveal what new funding programs we can expect?

Not yet. The strategy is a framework, and the concrete programs will be developed step by step as we move into implementation. We will announce new initiatives along the way towards 2030, which allow us to adapt to the needs and opportunities we see emerging in the research landscape.

Five strategic tracks



Excellence

The Excellence track provides competition-based funding for the best skin-related research projects – proposed by outstanding researchers at all career stages.

This track offers funding for the most talented and innovative skin researchers globally. It is designed to strengthen excellent research environments and support the global skin research ecosystem in its ability to attract, develop, and retain top scientific talent.

The LEO Foundation's long-standing commitment to supporting research excellence remains central to this track.



Nurture

The Nurture track supports skin research in areas of unmet need – across both geographies and skin disease types.

This track is designed to help build capacity and provide research funding opportunities in parts of the global skin research ecosystem where such opportunities are presently limited. By fostering research in less-studied skin diseases and regions with limited access to funding, we aim to close knowledge gaps and promote greater equity in skin research.

In Denmark, the Nurture track will also continue to fund projects that strengthen the pipeline of future researchers within the fields of medicine, chemistry, and pharmacy, and raise awareness about science, including skin and skin diseases.



Collaboration

The Collaboration track supports ambitious, cross-disciplinary research – bringing together leading researchers from different areas of expertise and institutions. Together, they will have the opportunity to address complex challenges within skin research and skin diseases.

This track is designed to strengthen the global skin research ecosystem by supporting collaboration across disciplines and sectors and initiatives that bridge theory and practice. By integrating expertise from both within and beyond traditional biomedical and skin research fields, we help advance knowledge and foster innovative solutions that can accelerate understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of skin diseases.



Pioneering

The Pioneering track supports bold, high-risk research that explores new frontiers in science and technology relevant to the skin and its diseases.

This track is designed to spark breakthrough discoveries by enabling researchers to test unorthodox ideas, tackle poorly defined challenges, and apply cutting-edge methods in new ways. By supporting exploratory research at the boundaries of disciplines, we aim to strengthen the global skin research ecosystem and open new pathways for understanding skin biology in health and disease – with potential impact beyond dermatology.



Innovation

The Innovation track supports the translation of discoveries in skin research into practical applications by funding early-stage projects with the potential to bridge the gap between academia and commercial implementation of new knowledge.

This track is designed to lower barriers for translation and open opportunities to explore the commercial potential of research results. By supporting efforts that mature new ideas into pre-clinical leads, proof-of-principle studies, and investigator-initiated trials, we help strengthen the global skin research ecosystem – and the pipeline of people and projects turning research into improved treatments, technologies, and solutions for patients.

The LEO Foundation, established in 1984, is one of Denmark's largest enterprise foundations and an engaged majority shareholder of the pharmaceutical company LEO Pharma. The Foundation's main objective is to ensure the company's long-term development and success in becoming a global leader in medical dermatology and delivering outstanding results.

Besides its ownership of LEO Pharma, the LEO Foundation provides philanthropic grants to support the best international research that pioneers new discoveries and transforms our understanding of the skin and its diseases. Over the past decade, the LEO Foundation has contributed more than DKK 1.5 billion (EUR 200 million) to independent skin research.

www.leo-foundation.org



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