The Danish Cancer Society allocates up to DKK 60 million for strategic cancer research and development projects

As the number of people living with and beyond cancer continues to rise, the complexity of their needs is also increasing. This call, therefore, encourages research that not only advances our understanding of cancer biology and treatment but also addresses the unique challenges faced by older patients and those with multiple health conditions. We particularly welcome projects that seek to reduce social inequality and vulnerability, for example, by developing innovative interventions or integrating new technologies such as artificial intelligence. Furthermore, we recognise the importance of bridging the gap between laboratory discoveries and clinical practice, and of harnessing the potential of large-scale health data to support more precise and personalised care. Finally, we aim to strengthen the organisation and delivery of cancer care by supporting research that improves collaboration and continuity across the healthcare system, ensuring that patients experience seamless transitions and high-quality support throughout their cancer journey.

Read more about the four focus areas and specific requirements below.

Which projects are eligible for funding

Funding is granted to **high-quality projects** lasting 1 to 3 years, with a **clearly defined and relevant purpose that enhances and strengthens our knowledge of cancer and clinical, psychosocial, preventive or method-improving efforts**.

Projects should ideally involve collaboration from a geographical and interdisciplinary perspective to benefit patients across Denmark, particularly in clinical trials.

In 2026, the Danish Cancer Society supports research and development projects, focusing on the following four Knæk Cancer focus areas

1. Multimorbidity, Ageing, Vulnerability and Cancer

More people today are living longer and surviving cancer. This means that cancer patients may also suffer from other co-existing conditions requiring treatment, such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes, in addition to their cancer. Having multiple chronic conditions simultaneously – known as multimorbidity – leads to complex challenges that require new approaches to cancer treatment and patient care. Multimorbidity can complicate treatment pathways and negatively affect patients' quality of life. In addition, social inequalities and vulnerability may exacerbate these challenges or act as barriers, making it necessary to develop innovative solutions to help mitigate these factors.

This focus area supports research and development projects that address the specific challenges faced by older patients with cancer and those with multimorbidity. The aim is to support projects that strive to improve patient care, treatment, and quality of life for older individuals with and after cancer and for those living with multiple conditions. Projects may also include interventions aimed at compensating for social inequality and vulnerability through innovative approaches, such as integrating artificial intelligence (AI) technologies.

Examples of projects eligible for funding include (this list is not exhaustive)

- Development of integrated treatment strategies that consider multimorbidity and ageing among cancer patients
- Interventions designed to compensate for social inequality and vulnerability in the target group
- Projects focusing on improving the quality of life for older and/or multimorbid cancer patients
- Implementation of AI-based tools to personalise and enhance treatment pathways and optimise care for older cancer patients and those with multimorbidity

When applying for AI-related project applications, it is mandatory to include an ethics section.

Both research and development projects are eligible for submission in this focus area.

2. From Pre-clinical Discoveries to Clinical Application

Preclinical research plays a central role in the discovery of new cancer treatment options. However, translating preclinical findings into clinical trials and clinical application is challenging and resource-intensive. To break down this barrier and ensure that promising preclinical discoveries are rapidly and effectively made available to patients, it is necessary to support projects that bridge the gap between laboratory research and clinical research.

This call aims to support research projects that focus on demonstrating proof of concept, conducting evaluations, clinical trials, and studies investigating existing drugs for potential new uses in cancer treatment (drug repurposing) based on preclinical findings. Projects should aim to improve treatment outcomes through innovative approaches and foster collaboration between basic scientists, translational researchers, and clinical researchers.

Examples of projects eligible for funding include (this list is not exhaustive)

- Development of new cancer treatments based on preclinical discoveries that have shown promising results in the laboratory
- Clinical trials testing the effectiveness of existing drugs for cancer treatment
- Evaluation and clinical trials of innovative treatment methods that bridge the gap between laboratory findings and clinical practice

Only research projects are eligible for submission in this focus area.

3. Better Utilisation of Existing Data to Improve Cancer Treatment

The Danish healthcare system is under increasing pressure, making it crucial to fully exploit the potential of existing data. Existing datasets such as registries, biobanks, and electronic health records contain vast amounts of information that can transform and improve the way we treat and care for cancer patients. By optimising the use of these resources, we can achieve more precise and effective treatment strategies tailored to the needs of individual cancer patients.

This call aims to support research focused on optimising the use of existing large datasets (registries, biobanks, electronic health records, etc.). Research should concentrate on developing methods to integrate and analyse data from multiple sources to support precision treatment, patient guidance, and decision-making. This may involve the use of AI tools (artificial intelligence) to extract insights from large datasets and thereby improve clinical practices.

Examples of projects eligible for funding include (this list is not exhaustive)

- Development of AI tools to analyse data from biobanks and electronic health records to identify new treatment opportunities
- Research on integrating data from national health registries to improve diagnostic processes and treatment planning
- Projects focusing on using data analysis to predict patient outcomes and optimise treatment decisions

When applying for AI-related project applications, it is mandatory to include an ethics section.

Only research projects are eligible for submission in this focus area.

4. Health Services Research in Cancer

Cancer treatment is complex and often involves multiple parts of the healthcare system. Transitions between different sectors and healthcare disciplines can create challenges for continuity and collaboration throughout the cancer care pathway. To ensure that cancer patients receive the best possible care and treatment, it is essential that the organisation of the healthcare system supports smooth transitions between different healthcare sectors and disciplines.

This focus area aims to support research and development projects within, among other things, health services research and health economics. Projects should aim to improve transitions between sectors and disciplines, with particular emphasis on primary care, late effects, and palliative care. Projects focusing on the implementation of new methods and technologies to ensure better cross-sector collaboration and continuity of care for cancer patients are encouraged.

The purpose is to improve patient care and treatment outcomes for cancer patients, ensure accessibility and quality, and promote effective collaboration across the healthcare system.

Examples of projects eligible for funding include (this list is not exhaustive)

- Projects focusing on improving collaboration and continuity of care between primary care and specialised cancer treatment centres
- Implementation of innovative solutions to ensure smooth transitions between different healthcare sectors and disciplines, for example, transitions to palliative care or management of late effects after cancer treatment
- Health economics research that can increase knowledge about, for example, resource allocation and efficiency throughout the cancer care pathway

Both research and development projects are eligible for submission in this focus area.

Projects must be relevant to cancer and, at a minimum, fall within one of the following five effort areas

More knowledge about cancer

New knowledge brings new possibilities, so we must find more answers to how cancer occurs and develops

More people need to avoid cancer

Approximately 4 out of 10 cancer cases are preventable, so we need to work towards more people living cancer-free lives

Cancer must be detected in time

Cancer detected early can be cured, so we must improve early detection

Better treatment

Effective treatment improves survival rates, so we must find the best treatments as quickly as possible

A better life with cancer

Cancer is challenging, so we must be better at helping everyone and ensuring a well-functioning cancer course

Assessment

Applications will be assessed by the Danish Cancer Society's scientific committees - People & Society (KBVU-MS), and Biology & Clinic (KBVU-BK) – as well as relevant ad hoc committees. The scientific committees may be supplemented with relevant expertise depending on the subject areas of the applications received. The assessment process is expected to be completed by the end of June 2026.

Applications will be assessed, among other things, based on the project's quality, originality, and feasibility. Results from granted research projects are expected to be published in relevant scientific and professional journals in addition to being disseminated to relevant stakeholders and the general public. Results from, for example, development projects are expected to be disseminated to relevant stakeholders and professional environments nationally and, if possible, internationally as well as to the general public.

Practical information

Applicants must meet the requirements set by the Danish Cancer Society's ethical guidelines.
Any grants awarded will be subject to the Danish Cancer Society's standard funding and accounting terms, which can be found on our website. See below.

Funding will be conditional on sufficient Knæk Cancer 2026 funds being available.

Application deadline

Thursday, 22 January 2026, 15:00

Application form and guidelines

The application must be completed according to the 'Funding possibilities and guidelines' via the electronic application form on our website, www.cancer.dk/kc-midler.

Be aware that

- Funds cannot be re-applied for the same project or fellowship within the same year, regardless of the pool and applicant
- Re-application of a project or fellowship the following year cannot be sent without significant relevant changes

If you have questions about the application form, please contact funding coordinator Anne Mette Bak at amb@cancer.dk or 35 25 72 57.

The Danish Cancer Society
Funding & Follow-up