UCPH internal procedure for review and approval of Innoexplorer applications.

Background:

The Innoexplorer program: '*..is targeted at employees at public research and educational institutions and hospitals, that have achieved research results with commercial potential and aim to establish a business based on these results.*'

According to guidelines by Innovation Fund Denmark (IDF) for the program:
"...*The investment is paid to the institution with which the main applicant is employed, and it is, as a rule, a precondition for receiving funding that the institution is involved in the application process and has assured the quality of the entrepreneurial idea.*"; and "*.....The application must, as a rule, include a statement of support signed by the person responsible for Innoexplorer projects at the main applicant's institution.*"
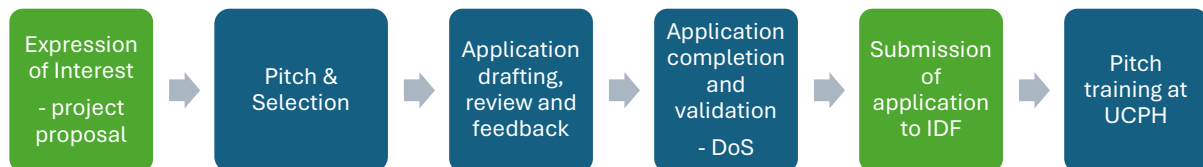
It is the University of Copenhagen's (UCPH) experience that successful applicants must put in a significant work effort to be approved by IF. Please note there is a heavy emphasis on business development and commercialization, which differs from other programmes.
Common denominators for successful applications are:

- A clear and concise description of the product/service, and of the relevant market (e.g. uniqueness, market fit and market size).
- Team has the needed skills and competences to execute the Innoexplorer project as described and furthermore are mindful of additional competence needed to create a successful startup/spin-out (e.g. non-scientific skills and team members with scientific complementary skills).
- A clear outline of the timeframe and strategy following the end of the Innoexplorer project (i.e. next steps).
- Sufficient time is devoted in making an application and subsequently in preparing the pitch for a commercially-oriented Innovation Fund Denmark panel

The internal UCPH review procedure (see below) is the responsibility of and anchored within the Innovation Center Lighthouse.

The procedure aims at selecting and supporting applicants in developing competitive applications for the program.

Expression of Interest - project proposal → Pitch & Selection → Application drafting, review and feedback → Application completion and validation - DoS → Submission of application to IDF → Pitch training at UCPH

All applicants must send an 'Expression of Interest' to Lighthouse briefly describing the proposed Innoexplorer project. All proposals are reviewed by an internal Innoexplorer panel. Applicants are invited to present their project to the panel and if selected by the panel, applicants are offered guidance and feedback when drafting a full application. Applications which are adequately developed will receive a Declaration of Support. After submission of a full InnoExplorer applications to Innovation Fund Denmark, applicants who are invited by IFD to pitch, will be offered pitch training at UCPH Lighthouse (for detailed process see below).

Current deadlines are available at the homepage of UCPH Lighthouse and the Research Portal.

Procedure in detail

1. 'Expression of Interest'

All applicants must send a short project proposal expressing the interest in applying to the program, which briefly describing what the project concerns ('Expression of Interest').

All applicants must use the 'Expression of Interest' template, which is available at UCPH Lighthouses homepage https://lighthouse.ku.dk/ or at the Research Portal, Offentlige råd og fonde - KUnet .

The 'Expression of Interest' is to be sent to the Lighthouse email Lighthouse@adm.ku.dk with a copy to UCPHs Innoexplorer contact person Hanne Elmelund, hanne.elmelund@adm.ku.dk and applicant's Head of Department prior to the expiry of the internal UCPH deadline.

Please read the Innoexplorer guideline carefully before filling out the template. Guidelines are available at https://innovationsfonden.dk/da/p/innoexplorer.

The internal UCPH deadline for submitting the 'Expression of Interest' is approximately set one month in advance of the Innovation Fund Denmark application deadline to allow for the UCPH internal procedure to be conducted.

Deadlines relevant for any given InnoExplorer application round are announced and available at the homepage of UCPH Lighthouse and at the Research Portal.

If in doubt, contact the Innoexplorer contact person or any member of the Innovation Partner team.

2. Selection of projects

All timely received 'Expression of Interest' are pre-screened. Applicants are invited to pitch their project to the Innoexplorer panel (approx. 5 min pitch, followed by Q&A and relevant feedback).

The Innoexplorer pitch presentation day is normally scheduled within a week of the deadline of submitting the 'Expression of Interest'. Applicants should reserve the date well in advance of submitting the 'Expression of Interest' as invites for pitching are assigned by the Innoexplorer contact person as best possible.
Dates for presenting projects to UCPHs Innoexplorer panel (for any given application round) will be announced and available at the homepage of UCPH Lighthouse and the Research Portal. If in doubt, contact the Innoexplorer contact person or any member of the Innovation Partner team.

The Innoexplorer panel is composed of the Innoexplorer contact person (organizer), a vice-dean from SUND, SCIENCE and 'Social Sciences and Humanities' (or a representative appointed by them), respectively and 1-2 members of the Innovation Partner team at UCPH Lighthouse. The panel may vary depending on the projects to be heard and availability.

Based on the pitch, the Innoexplorer panel will select the projects that shall receive assistance in drafting a full Innoexplorer application.

Applicants that are selected will be notified by the Innoexplorer contact person (or an Innovation Partner). If a project proposal is not selected, the applicant will also be informed. If possible declines applicant are offered guidance, with a view to apply in a later round if relevant and desired.

Please note: In the event of a large numbers of project proposals (or as otherwise governed) UCPH Lighthouse reserves the right to select projects based on the 'Expression of Interest' document exclusively and suspend the presentation day.

3. Drafting the Innoexplorer application

Upon selection, applicant is teamed up with an Innovation Partner.
If relevant and, to the extent possible, a representative from e.g. faculty support may also be included (the team).

Applicant is solely responsible for the drafting of the application and all appendices (including budget and slides)

The application for review must be drafted according to the required application format from E-grant. It is suggested that applicant fills out the E-grant formular and downloads a draft version for review/discussion with the Innovation partner assigned. If, however, E-grant is not open, applicant may use a template mirroring the E-grant sections.

Applicant and Innovation Partner (or team) agree on the timeline for the review process. The applicant will however be expected to provide the first draft of the application within a week after the selection notice unless otherwise agreed with the assigned Innovation Partner to allow proper time for development of the application.

The Innovation Partner (or team) will review and provide feedback in one or more feedback session. Reviews and feedback sessions are provided as a service and as resources allow. The applicant should expect one to two iterations during the drafting period.

Applicant is responsible for obtaining necessary signatures on both the Budget and the Declaration of Support (DoS) by Head of Department. Budget template and DoS template are available at Innovation Fund Denmark's homepage and must be used. Please remember always to use the most current version of these documents.

When the Innovation Partner (or team) agrees that the application is of a competitive quality, the application is deemed "validated", and applicant will receive a co-signed Declaration of Support.

Please note that applicant is solely responsible for complying to any pre-award requirement in parallel, if relevant.

Should it, while developing the application, become apparent that the application will most likely not fulfil the Innoexplorer guidelines, the Innovation Partner (or team) may suggest that submission is postponed to a later round, or entirely abandoned. In such cases no Declaration of Support will be provided to applicant.

4. Submission of the application to Innovation Fund Denmark

Applicant is solely responsible for the timely submission of the application and any appendices including DoS, Budget and slides to Innovation Fund Denmark via E-grant.

Applicant must when applying include, at least, the appointed Innovation Partner as member of the team, thereby allowing for participation in the Innovation Fund Denmark pitch (as an observer) should the project be invited, and in case of a rejection of the application by the Innovation Found Denmark, for feedback and future discussion pertaining to potential re-application.

5. UCPH Pitch training

Innovation Fund Denmark selects projects among all applicants and invites the top candidates to pitch in front of an Innovation Fund Denmark appointed panel.

UCPH will continue the support and invite applicants to rehearse their presentation prior to the official IF-pitching event, if so agreed with applicant.

The rehearsal will be conducted before a small group consisting of 2-4 members, and will normally be held shortly before designated pitch weeks as announced by Innovation Fund Denmark.

Important links

Innovation Found Denmark; https://innovationsfonden.dk/da/p/innoexplorer
UCPH funding information ; https://kunet.ku.dk/work-areas/research/applying-for-research-funding/national-councils-and-foundations/Pages/default.aspx
Lighthouse https://lighthouse.ku.dk/