Funding your PhD

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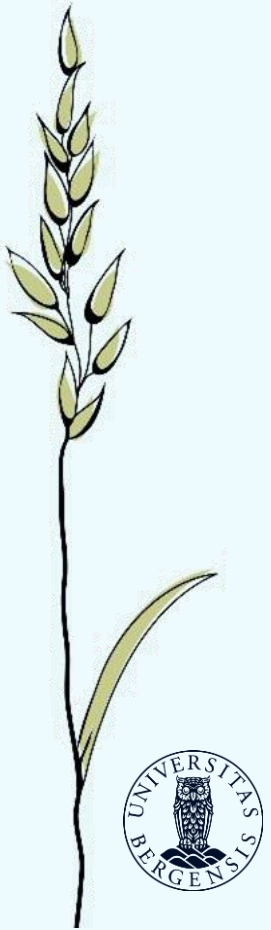
Todays agenda

- Funding opportunities available during the PhD
- How to find opportunities
- Postdoctoral funding
- Pitching your idea
- Your questions!



Funding is more than money

- Go on research stays abroad
- Attend conferences
- Learn new methods
- Strengthen your CV
- Prepare for future grant applications
- Have fun!

Funding opportunities during the PhD

- Mobility grants
- Travel support (conference, summer schools)
- Small project funds (often local)

Mobility grants

Faculty mobility funds – 1.Feb

- Anywhere outside of Norway.
- Duration of at least 4 consecutive weeks (max 6 months).

Erasmus+ staff mobility for training UiB – 15.feb/15.nov

- For stays within Europe.
- Minimum of two days excluding travel, and a maximum of two months.

Fulbright – 1.Oct

- To the USA.
- Minimum 4 months.

Travel & training

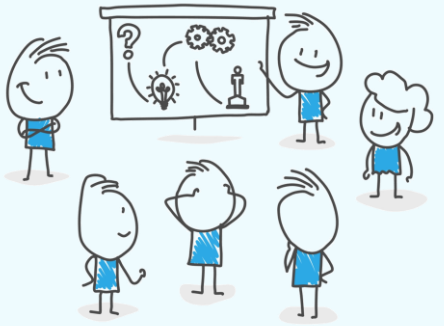
Conferences

- Support for meeting attendance (societies)
- Usually only for members and those who present

Summer schools/awards

- Some summer schools (societies) offer stipends
- Some journals (societies) offer rewards for papers etc.

Do you have any tips to share?



Small project funds (UiB)

Meltzerfondet – 1.Dec

- Project funding (professional travel, field work, equipment, materials etc.).
- Maximum 75,000 NOK

Olsens legat – 1.Dec

- To help to strengthen the link between education and research at UiB
- Maximum 100 000 NOK

Signy og Ellert Wallendahls legat – 1. Dec - educational grants.

UiB Ide – 14.feb. 2027.

- Support for innovative ideas at an early-stage (materials/equipment, external expertise, rent of incubator space, costs associated with prototyping)
- Main program: up to 500 000 NOK, Early idea: up to 100 000 NOK

Finding the funding

- UiB FERD newsletter
- Faculty newsletter - «BOA-brevet»
- ECR Central – https://ecrcentral.org/ (by eLIFE)
- EURAXESS (for mobile researchers)
- Professional societies
- Ask senior colleagues what they have applied for

Schedule a monthly “funding check-in“?

Postdoctoral funding

What are my options?

- Apply for an announced position
- Apply for a fellowship grant
  - Emphasis on career development
  - Facilitate research independence
  - Often includes mobility

"O.K., let's slowly lower in the grant money."

FRIPRO Researcher Project with International Mobility

Purpose: funds curiosity-driven and bold research across all disciplines

Project Duration: two years abroad, one year in Norway

Eligibility: PhD thesis submitted before proposal submission

Deadline: open

Forskningsrådet

UNIVERSITAS BERGENSIS

Marie Curie postdoctoral fellowship

Purpose: mobility, career development, and research excellence

Two calls: European = move within Europe; Global = go outside Europe and then return

Project Duration: 1-2(3) years

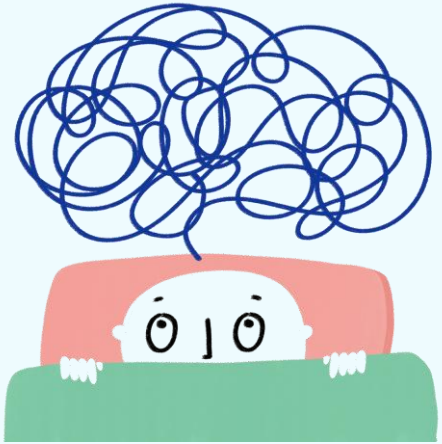
Eligibility: PhD by the call deadline

Mobility rules apply

Deadline: Mid-September

What can you do now?

- **Networking:** conferences, research stays, summer schools
- **Practice:** presentations, apply for small grants, project development
- **UiB FERD course**: Navigating the research funding landscape
- **Reflection:** *what ideas do I want to own?*



The proposal pitch

- For reviewers outside your exact field
- Use language that non-specialists can follow
- Avoid too much detail and excessive jargon
- Communicate novelty and potential

You’re selling an idea - make them want to read more!

A simple recipe

Problem → Knowledge gap → Approach → Advancement

Motivtaion

Plan

Destination

Translating the recipe into a story

Set the Stage
- Contextualize your research (the big picture)
- What is the problem
- Why is the proposal of interest, and why now?

Introduce your project idea
- Describe the core idea and how you will test it

Create a Vision – *why is this exciting?*
- What difference can the project make if you succeed

AI-generated text

How cancer cells become metastatic

Metastasis, the spread of cancer to distant organs, causes most cancer-related deaths. Yet we still do not understand how tumour cells acquire metastatic potential. Leveraging recent advances in single-cell technologies, this project will identify the cellular changes that occur before cancer spreads. By revealing the earliest steps of metastasis, the project could transform our understanding of cancer progression and lay the foundation for new approaches to predict, prevent, and treat metastatic disease.

Problem → Knowledge gap → Approach → Potential advancement

Adapting your pitch to the audience

Who are you writing for?

Audience	**Language**
Field experts	Precision
Grant review panels	Clarity, significance, rigour
Public	Relevance, accessibility

AI-generated text

Characterising metastatic transition through multimodal single-cell analysis

Metastatic dissemination remains the principal cause of cancer-related mortality. However, the spatiotemporal dynamics underpinning phenotypic plasticity during metastatic progression remain incompletely resolved. Emerging evidence suggests that epithelial-mesenchymal transition, chromatin remodelling, and tumour microenvironmental interactions jointly contribute to metastatic competence.

We will employ longitudinal multimodal single-cell transcriptomics, epigenomics, and spatial proteomics integrated through deep-learning architectures to characterise metastasis-associated state transitions. Bayesian inference models will be used to identify latent cellular trajectories and infer causal regulatory networks associated with dissemination potential.

The project will generate mechanistic insights into the molecular determinants of metastatic competency and establish a scalable framework for integrative multi-omic characterisation of tumour evolution across heterogeneous disease contexts.

Field expert

AI-generated text

Understanding how cancer cells acquire the ability to spread

Metastasis, the spread of cancer from a primary tumour to distant organs, is responsible for most cancer-related deaths. Yet we still do not understand how tumour cells acquire the ability to spread. Recent advances in single-cell technologies now allow us to track individual cancer cells in unprecedented detail, creating a unique opportunity to address one of cancer biology's most fundamental questions: *how and when do cancer cells become metastatic?*

This project will investigate the cellular changes that occur before metastasis begins. By combining single-cell analyses, functional experiments, and computational modelling, we will track how tumour cells transition from a localised to a metastatic state.

By revealing the earliest steps of metastasis, the project could transform our understanding of cancer progression and provide a foundation for future strategies to predict, prevent, and treat metastatic disease.

Generalist review panel

AI-generated text

Understanding why cancer spreads

Cancer causes millions of deaths each year, not because of the original tumour itself, but because cancer cells can spread to other parts of the body. We still do not fully understand how some cancer cells acquire this ability while others do not. Recent methodological advances now allow us to observe cancer cells in extraordinary detail. This creates a unique opportunity to uncover the mechanisms that enable cancer to spread.

This project will investigate how cancer cells change their behaviour before they begin to spread. We will combine advanced laboratory experiments with artificial intelligence-based analyses to track how individual cancer cells evolve over time.

By identifying the earliest warning signs of spreading cancer, we hope to reveal previously unknown processes that drive disease. If successful, this project could fundamentally improve our understanding of how cancer becomes life-threatening, and may open entirely new avenues for future treatments and early prevention.

The public

When applying for funding

✓Write for the intelligent non-specialist researcher

- Not your closest colleague or field experts
- Not the general public

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