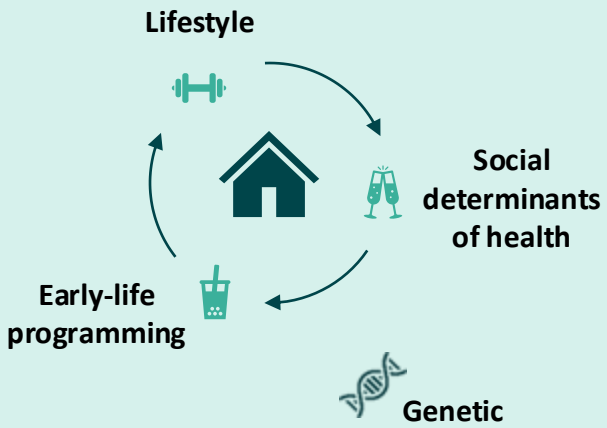
Cardiometabolic Disease Challenge

Join us to create the next Bio Studio project and improve lives for patients.

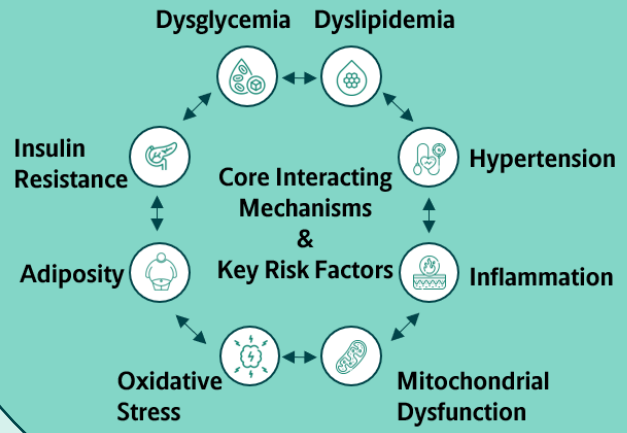
Let’s bring science to life.

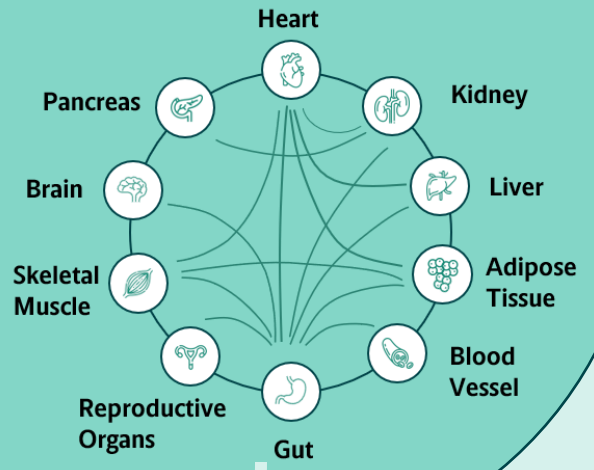
BioInnovation Institute

Cardiometabolic disease is a multifaceted, interlinked continuum resulting from genetic and environmental factors



These diseases share common upstream biology, driving downstream organ complications





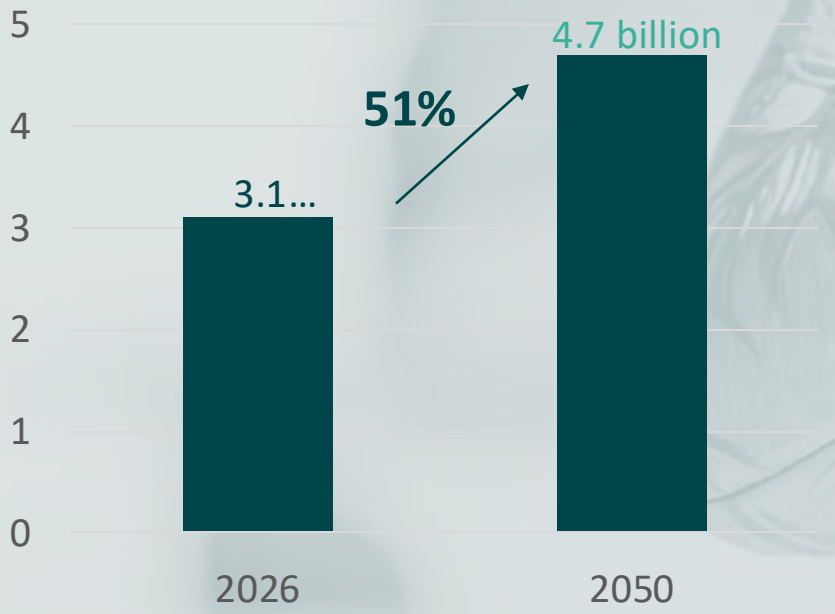
Patients often end up with multiple long-term conditions and multi-comorbidity in late-stage diseases, contributing to increased risk of cardiovascular events

- Coronary artery diseases
- Insulin Resistance & Diabetes
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Cardiomyopathy & Heart Failure
- Obesity
- Metabolic liver diseases

Reference: William H Bestermann (2026)

Bring science to life.

Global prevalence of cardiometabolic diseases is projected to affect 4.7 billion aggregated condition counts by 2050



In 2050, it is projected to contribute to

860.1 million DALYs

&

23.4 million death

globally

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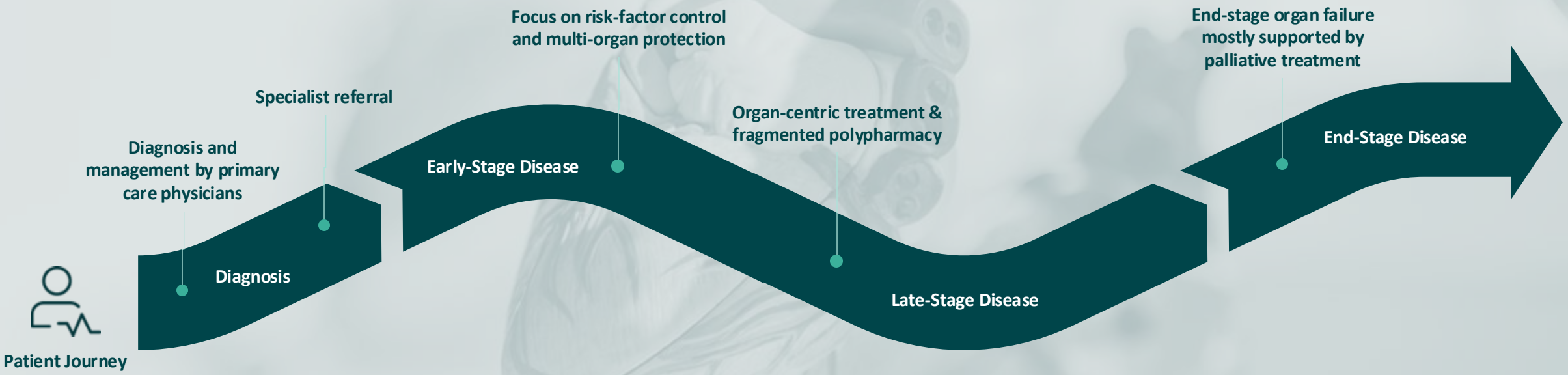
Abbreviation: Disability-Adjusted Life Year

References: J. Jayabaskaran et al. (2026)

*definition of cardiometabolic disease refers to cardiovascular-kidney-liver-metabolic disease

Non-responders, tolerability, and late-stage organ damage remain an urgent innovation gap to be solved

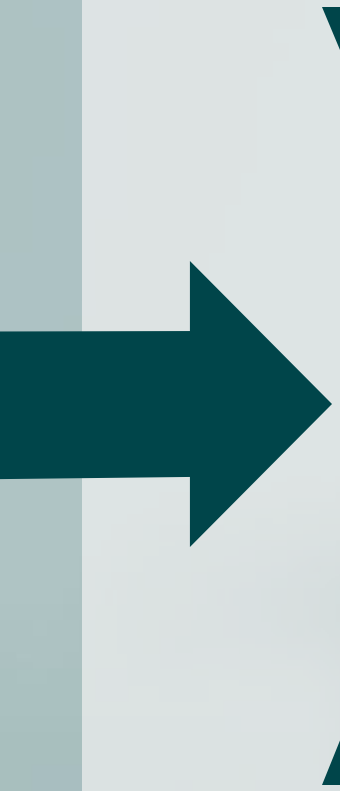


High percentage of undiagnosed patients due to incoherent diagnosis

Lack of treatment options to cover patients of:
- Current treatment non-responders
- Treatment intolerance and discontinuation
- Residual risks due to non-optimal treatment

Most treatments are symptomatic and not disease-modifying.
Past development has failed due to:
- Compensatory pathway override
- Endpoint insensitivity,
- Organ-level safety failure.

Cardiometabolic Disease **Challenge**



Novel mechanisms addressing upstream disease biology

Mechanisms addressing root causes across cardiometabolic indications through biology distinct from the incretin class.

Closing remaining treatment gaps of downstream organ complications

Projects focusing on organ-level disease progression, where metabolic correction alone is insufficient to reverse damage or restore function.

Join the challenge

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Bring science to life.

Cardiometabolic Disease Challenge

Deadline to apply:
HQ: 16th November 2026
UK, DE, IT: 23rd September 2026

Globally, more than 1 billion people are affected by cardiometabolic diseases (CMD), a cluster of chronic, interrelated conditions spanning cardiovascular diseases, metabolic liver diseases, diabetes, obesity, and chronic kidney disease. These conditions share upstream disease biology (e.g., adiposity, insulin resistance and chronic inflammation) that drives downstream organ complications. The breakthrough of incretin therapies in a range of CMD indications has provided immense optimism for the field. Yet, non-responders, tolerability, and late-stage organ damage remain an urgent innovation gap to be solved. This two-part challenge aims to fund innovative translational therapeutic projects that could reshape treatment algorithm and improve patient care:

	Novel mechanisms addressing upstream disease biology	Closing remaining treatment gaps of downstream organ complications
Problem	Despite recent developments, a substantial proportion of patients fail to achieve optimal efficacy, and tolerability-driven discontinuation limits sustained benefit in GLP-1-based therapies. The biology of non-responders remains poorly understood. CMD require chronic treatment, raising the R&D bar to molecule optimization in pharmacokinetics, toxicity, and administration profile.	Metabolic correction is not always sufficient to reverse organ damage, for example the liver in MASH. Drug development in this space has historically failed due to three recurring problems: compensatory pathway override, endpoint insensitivity, and organ-level safety failure.
What are we looking for?	Mechanisms targeting root causes across cardiometabolic indications through biology distinct from the incretin class. We are looking for solutions addressing, but not limited to: • Inflammation-stress remodeling • Non-incretin insulin sensitization and beta cell stress • Metabolic memory reprogramming • Lean metabolic disease Delivery and modality innovation is welcomed to expand target druggability and patient safety.	Projects focused on organ-level disease progression, where metabolic correction alone is insufficient to reverse damage or restore function. We are looking for solutions addressing, but not limited to: • Anti-fibrotic biology: organ-specific (e.g., hepatic and renal fibrosis, post-myocardial infarction adverse remodeling) or cross-organ anti-fibrotic platform • Direct cardiac biology in heart failure, independent of weight loss • Refractory artery disease • Chronic kidney disease parenchymal protection below eGFR 30

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Out-of-scope

- Repurposing of approved assets without mechanistic novelty
- Projects targeting established drug target-modality pair (including GLP-1RA, GIP/GLP-1, incretin co-agonists, SGLT2 inhibitors, fix-dose combinations)
- Exploratory projects lacking grounding mechanistic data
- Symptomatic management without disease modification evidence
- Med-/HealthTech (diagnostic, surgical, monitoring) and pure AI projects

3-Year Funding Model

Bio Studio

Company Creation For Entrepreneurial Academic Researchers

What do we offer?

Funding
Funding up to DKK 16m (~ EUR 2.1m) for up to three years plus access to in-kind support.

Project Team & Incubation
Access to state-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure at BII, where the project team must reside during the project period. An Entrepreneur in Residence (EiR) drives company creation with the Principal Investigator (PI) acting as a scientific consultant.

Accelerated company creation
Maturation of the science and business case. Access to BII's acceleration program, VC and advisor network, and community events.

Intellectual Property (IP)
Support to establish a collaboration agreement with the host institution to ensure licensing options for the future spin-out company. Existing and new IP generated during the project is owned by the university.

What are we looking for?

Principle Investigators
Established group leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset. Incorporated start-ups are not eligible.

Scientific Rigor
Innovative therapeutic solutions with transformative potential. Grounded in evidence-based scientific rationale and mechanistic data.

Commercial Potential
Solutions with defined lead application addressing significant market need. We are interested in applications founded on a broader scientific knowledge base, preferably with a lead asset and options for modular or expandable technology.

Application Scope
Clearly defined project plan, including milestones and key inflection points to be reached within the project timeline.

How do you apply?

Bio Studio Headquarters (HQ) – CMD Challenge
For applicants worldwide
(exc. UK, Italian and German institutions)
Application deadline: 16th November 2026

Guidelines | Book a meeting

Bio Studio UK, DE, IT – CMD Challenge
For applicants from
UK, Italian and German institutions
Application deadline: 23rd September 2026

Guidelines | Book a meeting

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Want to know more?
Check out our guidelines or contact us at
biostudioprogram@bii.dk

Unsure if your project is a fit?
Book a meeting with us

Already a startup? We still want to hear from you!
Check out Venture Lab at
http://bii.dk/programs/venture-lab/