

The final submission deadline for this call has expired.

Call deadline

02.11.2022 13:00

Available budget:

NOK 300 million (NOK 100 million from NordForsk and NOK 200 million provided by the institutions)

Maximum amount of funding that may be sought

MNOK 20 (MNOK 4 annually)

Duration:

5 years, 01.01.2024 – 31.12.2028



Each university consortium must provide resources equalling twice the amount of funding sought from NordForsk. The own contribution can be cash or in-kind as long as the expenses are necessary for implementation of the university cooperation.

Please note that NordForsk may make changes to the call text until 6 weeks before the deadline. Any such changes will be stated clearly.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding, the following conditions must be met:

- The contractual partner for a University Cooperation Grant must be a Nordic university, university college or university of applied sciences.
- The consortium must include universities, universities of applied sciences or university colleges located in at least three Nordic countries/ autonomous regions (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland Islands).
- The cooperation partners are obligated to contribute twice the amount sought from NordForsk. The contribution must be guaranteed through a letter of commitment signed by the rector or a dean with the authority to assume obligations on behalf of the university, university of applied sciences or university college.
- The Project Leader of the university cooperation must be a qualified researcher employed by the host institution during the grant period.
- The grant application and all attachments are to be submitted in English via the NordForsk Call and Application Portal.

Applications that do not fulfil the above eligibility criteria will not be processed.

Aim of the call

The aim of the call is to strengthen international competitiveness and facilitate the development of excellent Nordic research environments. The call is initiated to support research-based university cooperation across the Nordic region, to increase researcher mobility, enhance capacity and competence building and thereby the excellence and significance of Nordic research cooperation.

The call is open to all themes and disciplines.

Nordic added value

Nordic research collaboration can create outcomes and impact of greater value than what could be achieved through national activities alone. Applicants should elaborate on how the proposed university cooperation will contribute to Nordic added value by enhancing Nordic strengths, enhancing scientific excellence and Nordic competitiveness in international research, and/or addressing needs or problems that are of special relevance to the Nordic countries. Means to achieve such effects could for example be building critical mass and/or expertise, cost-efficiency by sharing resources and infrastructure, researcher mobility and networking, competence and capacity building in the Nordic region. Nordic added value can also be about building on unique Nordic phenomena (e.g., geographical, climatic, cultural, linguistic or social), data or collections. Read more about Nordic added value [here](#).

Financial framework

The total NordForsk funding allocated to the call is maximum NOK 20 million annually and will be available for 5 years, 2024. Each university consortium may receive NOK 4 million in NordForsk funding per year. Each university consortium must provide resources equalling twice the amount of funding sought from NordForsk.



Activities that can be funded:

- mobility and networking activities
- guest researchers
- PhD students and post-docs
- workshops, seminars and conferences
- research training (e.g. intensive courses, field courses, summer schools and joint courses);
- communication and dissemination activities
- other activities that promote the cooperational framework and are necessary for implementation of the collaboration

Consortium partners from outside the Nordic region must fund their own participation; however, expenses related to mobility may also be covered for international partners.

The contribution from the university cooperation partners must be documented in the budget specified in the application form. The own contribution can be cash or in-kind as long as the expenses are necessary for implementation of the university cooperation.

Communication and knowledge exchange

To ensure impact, knowledge sharing, interaction, and communication with key stakeholders in the Nordic countries is important. Applicants invited to phase 2 will be asked to submit a communication and knowledge exchange plan.

Data Management

The research cooperation should pay special attention to implementing good data management practices when managing, sharing and linking data across borders. The [FAIR principles](#) could serve as inspiration.

Gender balance and gender perspectives

Gender awareness improves the quality of Nordic research and research collaboration. Gender balance among researchers as well as gender perspectives in research content are important aspects for the quality of research, contributing to excellence, relevance, and impact.

Gender balance aims at a balance between men and women. NordForsk encourages gender balanced research teams, acknowledging that this is a challenge in research disciplines that have a significantly skewed gender ratio. Gender balance, or plans to achieve better balance, will be assessed as part of the criteria for quality of the research consortium.

Gender perspectives in research content aim at exposing gender-based differences because they often impact the research results significantly. Integrating gender perspectives is about including both biological, social and cultural aspects of gender and gender identity in the methods, analyses and results of research, when relevant. NordForsk encourages applicants to consider gender perspectives as part of the proposed research when relevant. The NordForsk's gender policy can be found [here](#).

Submission of proposals

The Project Leader must submit the proposal form and the annexes on behalf of the research consortium electronically through NordForsk Application Portal no later than 13.00 CET (Oslo Time) on 2 November 2022. It must contain all supporting documents as requested below:

- NordForsk pre-proposal form in application portal.
- Plan for the university cooperation including a description of the expected Nordic added value (max five pages including references).
- Description of the planned consortium (max one page).
- An overall budget detailing the expected costs for the cooperation, including the consortium's total contribution (cash and in-kind).
- A budget for the contribution from each cooperation partner.
- CV, including a short list of max ten publications (max three pages for Project Leader and max one page for each key researcher).
- Letters of Commitment guaranteeing the contribution and signed by the rector or a dean with the authority to assume obligations on behalf of the university, university of applied sciences or university college.

Phase 2: Full proposals (by invitation only)



The call for full proposals (by invitation only) is planned to open February/March and close in May 2023. Invited applicants must submit a full proposal electronically through the NordForsk Application Portal by the call deadline, which will be announced in the invitation. The application must contain all supporting documents as requested below:

- NordForsk full proposal form in application portal.
- Research cooperation plan (max ten pages, including references).
- Management plan (max two pages).
- Communication and knowledge exchange strategy (max two pages).
- An overall budget detailing the expected costs for the cooperation, including the consortium's total contribution (cash and in-kind).
- A budget for the contribution from each cooperation partner.
- CV, including a short list of max 10 publications (max three pages for Project Leader and max one page for each key researcher).
- Description of research partners and roles (standard template).
- Letters of Commitment guaranteeing the contribution and signed by the rector or a dean with the authority to assume obligations on behalf of the university, university of applied sciences or university college.

Assessment criteria

All eligible proposals will be rated using a scale 1-7 (1=poor; 2= weak, 3= fair 4= good, 5= very good, 6= excellent, 7= outstanding) based on the criteria described below, and a written statement will be provided.

Phase 1 (pre-proposals):

The Call Committee, comprising of one member from each Nordic country based on nominations from the national university rectors' conferences and a chair representing NordForsk, will assess the following criteria:



- Relevance relative to the objectives of the call;
- Nordic added value
 - The potential of the proposed cooperation to benefit the Nordic research communities in terms of e.g., capacity and competence building, mobility and networking effects, supporting scientific excellence, global positioning, and branding of Nordic research environments.
 - Complementarity of the participating consortia partners
 - The potential to create benefits for the Nordic societies (providing a useful knowledge base for citizens, policymakers, and other actors to create societal impact, addressing needs or problems that are of special relevance to the Nordic countries)

In addition, the call committee will pursue a balanced portfolio of proposals invited to the second phase in terms of research disciplines.

Phase 2:

An international expert panel will assess the following criteria:

- Quality of the cooperation
 - Long-term strategic significance and sustainability of researcher network
 - Significance nationally and internationally

- Expected scientific and societal added value
- Originality and novelty of the research collaboration
- Potential for capacity building
- Feasibility
- Quality of the consortium
 - Experience, expertise, and merits in relation to the proposed cooperation
 - Complementarity of the participating institutions and researchers and extent to which the consortium as whole brings together the necessary expertise
 - Gender balance or appropriateness of plans to reach gender balance
- Management and organisation
 - Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk management
 - Task distribution and resources, including the extent to which resources are assigned in line with the objectives and deliverables 
 - Mobility 
- Dissemination of knowledge and results from the collaboration
 - Quality of plans for knowledge exchange and communication, including the extent to which such activities align with the objectives of the research collaboration
 - Appropriateness of plans to make research data and results openly available in accordance with [NordForsk's Policy on Open Access](#).

The Call Committee will assess:

- Contribution to the objectives of the call with particular attention to the Nordic added value of the university cooperation.

Processing of proposals

[NordForsk's guidelines on impartiality](#) will be applied to handle possible conflicts of interest. The process of evaluating the proposals will be administered by NordForsk. The process leading up to a funding decision includes the following steps:

Phase 1: Pre-proposals

- **Eligibility:** Pre-proposals will be examined to check eligibility and adherence to the requirements of this call. Only applications which meet all the conditions set out in this call text will be eligible and will be included in the evaluation procedure.
- **Assessment:** Eligible pre-proposals will be evaluated by the call committee. The call committee will use the phase 1 assessment criteria described above. Based upon this assessment, the call committee will write a joint statement and recommend to NordForsk which proposals in phase 1 to invite to phase 2. Approximately 20 applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal in phase 2.

Phase 2: Full proposals (by invitation only)

- **Eligibility:** Full proposals will be examined to check eligibility and adherence to the requirements of this call. Only applications which meet all the conditions set out in this call text will be eligible and will be included in the evaluation procedure.
- **Peer review panel:** The proposals will be evaluated by an international expert panel. The panel will use the phase 2 assessment criteria described above.
- **Call committee:** The call committee will make a final funding recommendation based on the panel evaluation and criteria described above.
- **Funding decisions:** Based on the recommendation from the call committee, the NordForsk Board will make a final funding decision in Q4 2023.

The funding decision will be announced in Q4 2023. All applicants will receive written feedback from the expert panel.

NordForsk will initiate contract negotiations with the host organisations for the proposals selected for funding.

Management and monitoring of the research projects

NordForsk is responsible for the administrative follow-up of the University Cooperation. All participating institutions in the consortium must commit to the collaboration. One of the institutions is to serve as host institution and the legal contractual partner vis-à-vis NordForsk. NordForsk negotiates and signs the contract with the contractual partner. A consortium agreement regulates the rights and obligations between the consortium partners. A management group consisting of the funding partners (i.e.

universities/university colleges/universities of applied sciences) will manage each consortium.

Contact

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