

To the national organisations of the Association of Nordic University Rectors Conference
Nordic Institute for Theoretical Physics (NORDITA)
Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS)
Nordic Vulcanological Center (Nordvulk)
Scandinavian Institute of Maritime Law (NifS)

12 May 2021

Nordic research cooperation 2024-2028 - new instrument

NordForsk is planning a new instrument for Nordic research cooperation aiming at supporting networks, mobility, PhD courses etc. We have recently prepared an outline of the suggested new instrument, and we would welcome your comments to the attached draft before 15 September 2021.

Background:

The main goal of NordForsk is to facilitate effective and trustful research cooperation in the Nordic Region, and ensure that NordForsk funded research has the highest international quality and realises Nordic added value [NordForsk strategy 2019-2022 | NordForsk](#).

NordForsk funds research projects, research infrastructure, and research mobility and networks. NordForsk aims at funding a balanced portfolio of research activities, providing funding instruments meeting the demands of the Nordic countries, developing programmes and calls generally based on proposals from the National Research Funding Organisations in the Nordic Region, and ensuring that the Nordic added value is realised in all activities. Furthermore, NordForsk will ensure that the NordForsk contribution for research is maximum 1/3 of the total cost of the activities. As an integral part of the research that is financed, NordForsk will support mobility, researcher education and similar activities strengthening Nordic research and research infrastructure collaboration.

NordForsk has since 2018 funded 6 university networks through the University Hubs programme. The overall objective of this programme is to strengthen international competitiveness and facilitate the development of world-leading Nordic research environments [Nordic University Hubs | NordForsk](#). These projects will finish in 2023 or 2024, however 2023 is the last year the University Hubs programme will have an impact on the NordForsk budget.

The Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) decided in 2019 to transfer the four Nordic cooperation bodies NORDITA, NIAS, Nordvulk and NifS to NordForsk, and the transfer was implemented from 2021. Nordic funding will be provided to the 4 cooperation bodies by NordForsk to the end of 2023. NordForsk has been given the task to develop a call or programme



relevant to the cooperation bodies which could provide funding opportunities from 2024, if funding is made available for from the NCM.

The new instrument

NordForsk has drafted the text for a new instrument aiming at providing funding of networks, including support to mobility, researcher education and similar activities. The plan is to develop the instrument in 2021, open a call early 2022 and have a funding decision around New Year 2023, which will provide funding from 2024.

Tentatively NordForsk will allocate NOK 20 million per year for 5 years to this instrument. Five projects will be funded, each receiving maximum 4 million NOK per year for up to 5 years. Each project has to provide at least twice as much funding from other sources as they will receive from NordForsk.

The attached document outlines the main structure of the new instrument. We will hereby invite you to comment on all the 9 principles described. As you will see, two alternatives are presented for principle 3, 4 and 9:

Principle 3 Organisation and distribution of budget between partners.

Alternative A is in line with how the University Hubs programme operates today whereas alternative B is in line with how the Nordic cooperation bodies operate.

Principle 4 Themes

NordForsk being an institution under the NCM, is also seeking to develop instruments, programmes and calls underpinning the main priorities of the NCM. The prime ministers of the Nordic Countries decided in 2019 an ambition vision for the NCM: *"The Nordic region will become the most sustainable and integrated region in the world in 2030. The co-operation in the Nordic Council of Ministers must serve this purpose"*.

An Action plan for Vision 2030 has been approved by the ministers of Nordic Co-operation in 2020 and will run for the years 2021 to 2024 [Action plan for Vision 2030 | Nordic cooperation \(norden.org\)](#). The Action Plan is centred around 3 main areas: A green Nordic Region, a competitive Nordic Region and a socially sustainable Nordic Region.

We have in alternative A presented a text reflecting the prime ministers' 2030 vision. In alternative B, there are no thematic priorities, and all themes are equally prioritised.

Principle 9 Assessment process

Alternative A opens for a two-stage process where only pre-proposals passing stage 1 will be invited to present full proposals. This will reduce the total time and effort invested in the development of detailed plans and writing proposals. Whereas Alternative B will be more time consuming for the teams proposing and also for the experts who will read and assess the proposals.

NordForsk welcomes comments and suggestions before 15 September 2021. Please send your comments to marianne.minge@nordforsk.org.



The NordForsk administration will present a final version of this instrument for the NordForsk board for decision mid-October 2021. We thereafter establish a programme committee which will help us finalise the call and implement the new instrument.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Arne Flåøyen".

Arne Flåøyen
Director

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Copy: Nordic Council of Ministers, Secretariat