

International Partnerships for Excellent Education and Research (INTPART)

Programme description for grant applications in 2019

1 OBJECTIVE AND TARGET GROUPS

1.1 Programme objective

The objective of the INTPART programme is to develop world-class research and education in Norway through long-term international cooperation. The programme will create a framework for expanding cooperation between research groups considered to be at the international forefront today or that are believed to have the potential to become world leaders in their fields in the future.

The programme will lay a foundation that enables such research groups to establish/develop long-term relations with strong academic groups in the priority countries of Brazil, Canada, India, Japan, China, Russia, South Africa and the USA. The programme will help to increase the extent and enhance the quality and relevance of scientific cooperation with selected countries, in particular by establishing strong ties between higher education and research cooperation. Cooperation with the business and public sectors is encouraged when relevant. The programme will ensure that its portfolio covers all eight countries and encompasses both new and established partnerships and a broad scientific scope. This is based on the Norwegian Government's Panorama Strategy for cooperation on higher education and research with Brazil, China, India, Japan, Russia and South Africa (2016–2020) and other strategy documents promoting cooperation on higher education, research and innovation with the eight priority countries outside the EU/EEA.

The programme will provide funding for the establishment and further development of formalised institutional cooperation on research and higher education. In addition to including relevant academic partners, the collaborative activities should also involve both strategic leadership and administration, and be reflected in the strategic plans of the applicant institution.

Educational cooperation must be integrated as far as possible in the institution's other educational programmes, and must comprise activities that extend beyond collaboration between individual researchers and doctoral candidates.

In 2019 funding may also be sought for projects with partner institutions in Germany and France.

For information about funding earmarked by country and thematic area, refer to the text of the call for proposals.

1.2 Objectives and performance targets

The INTPART programme is to lead to:

- Enhanced quality of research and education in Norway;
- Long-term international partnerships between Norwegian research and educational institutions and world-class research groups in priority partner countries;
- Strong links between higher education and research within the frameworks of the partnerships;
- Cooperation between the educational and research organisations and the business and public sectors to enhance quality and relevance.

Examples of anticipated results from projects:

- Establishment and institutionalisation of joint courses, seminars and educational programmes within the framework of the partnerships;
- International joint degrees between the partner institutions when a suitable framework for this is in place;
- Mobility of students and researchers, as well as structures that support mobility, within the framework of the partnerships;
- Joint articles and publications between researchers and/or students in the partnerships;
- New research funding applications developed and submitted within the framework of the partnerships;
- Other results that support joint research and educational activities.

It is important that projects demonstrate the impact of funding under the INTPART programme.

1.3 Target groups

Funding from the INTPART programme may be sought by Norwegian universities, university colleges or other Norwegian research organisations.

Applicants must have degree-conferring programmes at the master's and/or doctoral levels, or have a Norwegian partner institution with such programmes.

The call for proposals in 2019 is targeted towards institutions and research groups that serve as the host institution or formal partner in peer-reviewed projects that have received funding under the following schemes and instruments:

- Norwegian Centres of Excellence (SFF);
- Centres for Environment-friendly Energy Research (FME);
- Centres of Excellence in Higher Education (SFU);
- Centres for Research-based Innovation (SFI);
- Research Centres for Petroleum Activities (PETROSENTER);
- Norwegian Innovation Clusters;
- Knowledge-building Projects for Industry funded by the Research Council;
- Researcher Projects funded by the Research Council;

- Researcher projects and centre schemes funded by NordForsk or the Nordic Council of Ministers;
- Researcher projects funded by the EU Framework Programme.

To encourage prioritisation of leading research groups, each applicant institution may submit a pre-determined maximum number of grant applications, as stated in the call for proposals.

The Project Owner (applicant institution) must forward a list of the submitted applications that have been approved by the applicant institution to the Research Council. Applications not included on the applicant institution's list will not be assessed. Please send the list by email to intpart@forskningsradet.no no later than 25 September 2019, 13:00 CET.

2 THE PROGRAMME'S FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1 General

The INTPART programme is administered jointly by the Research Council of Norway (the Research Council) and the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (Diku). The Research Council's online application system will be used in accordance with the Research Council's rules and guidelines. The programme funds will be disbursed from the Research Council. Information about the INTPART programme is available on the websites of both SIU and the Research Council.

2.2 The programme's financial framework

The programme is funded through an allocation of NOK 38.2 million per year¹ from the Ministry of Education and Research to Diku and the Research Council.

In addition, the Research Council will contribute funding from other instruments. Some calls for proposals may therefore set special priorities relating to countries and/or thematic areas in addition to the general requirements for cooperation on higher education and research. (See the text of the 2019 call for proposals.)

2.3 Secretariat

Diku and the Research Council have established a joint secretariat for administering the INTPART programme. The secretariat consists of administrators from Diku and the Research Council with expertise in international research and educational cooperation. External experts may be consulted when necessary.

The secretariat's mandate and tasks include the following:

- Respond to enquiries and questions from applicants and interested parties;
- Assess submitted grant applications;
- Rank the grant applications relative to the assessment criteria, and conduct an overall portfolio assessment;

¹ Allocations after 2018 are contingent upon approval by the Storting.

- Submit a recommendation to the steering committee, which will take the final decision on grant allocations;
- Assess progress reports and final reports from the partnerships;
- Take responsibility for further development of the programme.

2.4 Steering committee

Diku and the Research Council will jointly appoint six to eight representatives to sit on a steering committee. The committee members may be taken from the governing bodies of the two organisations.

The steering committee's mandate and tasks are as follows:

- Assess the ranked list of grant applications and adjust the ranking of projects based on the criteria and an overall portfolio assessment;
- Make the final decision on grant allocations based on the assessment criteria and strategic objectives of the individual call for proposals.

2.5 Follow-up and reporting

The Research Council and Diku have joint responsibility for following up projects funded under the programme, including assessing and approving project reports and disseminating results from the programme. Designated contact persons in both organisations may be consulted by the institutions.

3 PROJECT FUNDING AND ACTIVITIES

Under the 2019 call for proposals, funding of up to NOK 4.5 million may be sought over a three-year period for new projects (Phase 1). The institutions are expected to contribute own financing amounting to a minimum of 20 per cent of the overall budget for Phase 1 projects. Funding may be sought for Phase 1 projects with the eight priority countries outside the EU/EEA as well as Germany and France.

Projects awarded funded in 2015 and 2016 may apply for an extension as Phase 2A projects for up to NOK 3.5 million over a three-year period. The institutions are expected to contribute own financing amounting to a minimum of 40 per cent of the overall budget for Phase 2A projects.

It is also possible to apply for an extension in the form of a merger of two or more INTPART projects from 2015 and 2016 (Phase 2B) for up to NOK 5 million over a four-year period. The institutions are expected to contribute own financing amounting to a minimum of 40 per cent of the overall budget for Phase 2B projects. Merging of projects will be viewed in a positive light when it will lead to added value and enhanced quality.

Funding is allocated to activities that promote the establishment of or strengthen research and educational cooperation, networks and knowledge sharing between two or more institutions and actors in Norway and at least one partner country. Participants in the networks may be researchers, students, managers and technical/administrative staff, as well as employees in collaborating organisations.

Examples of activities that are eligible for funding:

- Additional expenses relating to short-term or long-term reciprocal mobility stays by students, researchers, managers and administrative staff;
- Development and implementation of workshops, seminars and conferences;
- Development and implementation of intensive courses, field courses, summer schools, etc.;
- Cooperation on curriculum development and development of joint courses, educational programmes and/or degree programmes;
- Planning and development of research cooperation;
- Guest lectures and joint teaching and supervision of students and doctoral candidates;
- Cooperation with the business and public sectors;
- Other activities that encompass international research and educational cooperation.

Up to 20 per cent of the funding sought may be used to cover payroll and indirect expenses for administrative tasks and payroll compensation for personnel for participation in the activities. These costs must be specified in the application and must be proportionate with regard to the institutions' own budget contributions and the overall budget for the project.

Funding may be awarded to establish new international partnerships as well as to strengthen existing cooperation. The activities must encompass both researchers and students to the greatest extent possible.

The research activities encompassed by the collaboration must be funded by other means. Investments related to research infrastructure are not covered by the programme.

Activities related to the participation of international partners in a partnership may be financed with INTPART funds.

4 REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

4.1 Requirements relating to applicants

The following requirements apply to applicants and project partners:

- The Project Owner (applicant institution) must be a Norwegian university, university college or other Norwegian research organisation with a designated project administrator.
- The main partner institution(s) must be a comparable institution in the cooperating country with a designated local project manager.
- Project managers in both countries must have experience with collaborative projects at national and international levels.
- The INTPART project must have thematic relevance for the project currently being funded under one of the schemes listed in item 1.3.
- Key personnel in INTPART projects must be assigned active roles in the project being funded.
- Applicants must have relevant degree-conferring programmes at the master's and/or doctoral levels, or have a Norwegian partner institution with such programmes.

4.2 Requirements relating to the application

The following general requirements apply to the application:

- The grant application form and all attachments are to be submitted in English.
- For funding frameworks and project duration, see the text of the call.

The grant application must include:

- The completed application form, to be submitted online via the *eSøknad* online submission service.
- A project description.
- CVs (using the designated template) and a list of publications for the project manager, the project manager for the partner in the cooperating country, and other key project personnel for all Norwegian and international participants.
- Formal confirmation from the management of each partner institution that provides strategy clarification and explains why the project is important to the institution. This account must include information about the institution's specific commitments for project implementation.
- Grant applications involving Norwegian Innovation Clusters must be approved by the respective cluster's board.

Please refer to the call for proposals for more information.

4.3 Assessment criteria

Grant applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Excellence
 - Relevance
 - The relevance of the project relative to the call for proposals.
 - Originality
 - Appropriateness, credibility and innovativeness of the concept.
 - Solidity
 - The extent to which the project objectives are clearly defined and relevant.
 - The quality of the planned deliverables in the project.
 - For Phase 2 projects: The quality of the completed and planned deliverables in the project.
- Impact (related to the objectives of the INTPART programme)
 - Potential
 - The extent to which anticipated impacts are clearly specified.
 - The extent to which anticipated societal/system-related impacts are specified.
 - Knowledge-sharing and exploitation
 - The quality of planned communication and dissemination activities.
 - The extent to which it is plausible that the proposed measures under the project will lead to the specified impacts and outcomes.
- Implementation

- The quality of the project manager and project group
 - The extent to which the project manager and project group are qualified and have the necessary overall expertise needed to undertake the project.
 - The appropriateness of the management structures and governance.
- The quality of project planning and organisation
 - The effectiveness and clarity of the work plan, including whether the timetable is realistic.
 - The quality of the connection between measures and objectives.
 - The extent to which the project reflects the strategies and objectives of the Project Owner and any partners, and incorporates a clearly-defined distribution of roles.
 - The extent to which the budget is realistic and adequate, and incorporates distribution of resources in a manner that will enable each partner to fill its role.
 - The identification and discussion of potential risks.

Phase 2 applications will also be assessed for the outcomes achieved under the Phase 1 project, viewed in relation to the performance targets and basis for long-term institutional cooperation during the Phase 2 project and after conclusion of the project period. Phase 2 projects are expected to have added value beyond the continuation of activities via new funding.