

Ubiquitous Data and Services – Collaborative Project

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Application type: Collaborative and Knowledge-building Project

Funding scale: NOK 3 000 000-16 000 000

Application deadline: Open-ended

Amount of funding presumed available for this call for proposals:

NOK 270 000 000

Relevant thematic areas for this call: [Enabling technologies](#)

Target groups: Research organisations

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Project start-up must take place within six months of the approved funding allocation.

If you are seeking support for a project in which all cooperating partners are research organisations, you should apply for funding under the call for proposals for [Ubiquitous data and services – Researcher Projects](#).

 We will have a new, revised version of this call for proposals available from February. The new call for proposals will give priority to artificial intelligence, robotics and autonomy with associated systems. We will also prioritise projects that focus on collaboration across sectors or across fields and disciplines.

From the time when the new call opens for the submission of grant applications, the existing call will be open for the submission of grant applications for 6 weeks before it closes in mid-March. The new, revised call will also have an open-ended deadline.

Purpose

The objective of this call is to enhance research efforts and to encourage and support collaboration between research groups and users in the thematic priority area “Ubiquitous data and services”. Research activities must seek to move the research front, promote essential competence-building and create new opportunities in the short and long term.

[Call for proposals](#)

[Application results](#)

Shortcuts

[About the proposal](#)

[Who is eligible to apply?](#)

[Who can participate in the project?](#)

[What can you seek funding for?](#)

Archiving of research data
Relevant thematic areas
Enabling technologies
Practical information
Requirements for this application type
Assessment criteria
Administrative procedures

About the call for proposals

The objective of this call is to strengthen ICT research within priority areas related to innovation and value creation.

The production, management and use of increasing amounts of electronic data and digital content play a critical role in many societal challenges. In addition, new knowledge and expertise are in great demand in both the business and the public sectors.

The research areas within “Ubiquitous data and services” are grouped as follows:

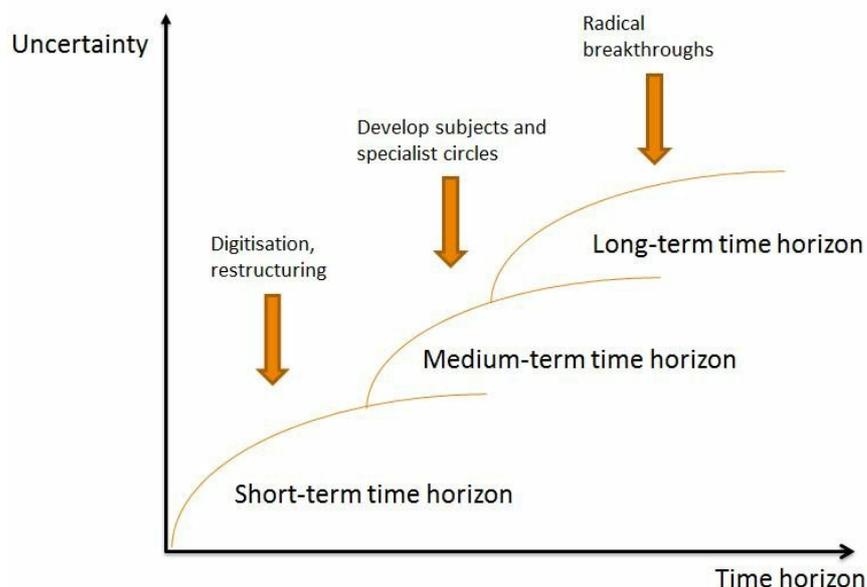
- the Internet of things, mobility and wireless infrastructure;
- artificial intelligence, autonomous and cognitive systems;
- digital interfaces, robotics and virtual environments.

It is also crucial to promote greater understanding of the cross-cutting, transformational effects of ICT and to give adequate consideration to societal needs, sustainability perspectives and accountability. The research areas are open to interdisciplinary approaches and activity from multiple subject areas and actors.

Types of projects encompassed by this call:

Under this call for proposals, funding is available for projects that address challenges within one of three time horizons.

- **Short-term time horizon:** The initiative is seeking projects that lead to innovations in trade and industry, the public sector and other socially beneficial organisations. An example may be solutions in which digitalisation can restructure existing branches of industry or create new ones through advanced production processes.
- **Medium-term time horizon:** The initiative is seeking projects that move the research front and develop subjects and specialist groups within one or more of the research areas stated in this call. Funding is also available for projects in new areas that are an extension of these.
- **Long-term time horizon:** The programme is seeking bold projects that may entail great uncertainty but that have the potential to yield major gains and radical breakthroughs. Here the initiative would like to see new research areas that follow up the thematic priority area “Ubiquitous data and services” as described in this call.



The figure illustrates the main objectives of the various time horizons.

State aid

This call for proposals constitutes a funding scheme that is notified to the EFTA Surveillance Authority with regard to the part of the allocated funding that constitutes state aid. This is support granted to companies (“undertaking”). Funding awarded under this scheme is granted in accordance with Article 25 of the General Block Exemption Regulation for state aid (Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014). In addition, the common provisions set out in Chapter 1 of the regulation must also apply. See the regulation [here](#).

This funding scheme is to be practised in compliance with the EEA state aid rules. This means that conditions and concepts are to be interpreted in keeping with corresponding conditions and concepts in the state aid rules. In the event of conflict between the text of the call and the state aid rules, the latter will have precedence. The text of the call may be adjusted for this same reason.

State aid may not be given to an undertaking which is subject to an outstanding recovery order following a formal decision by the EFTA Surveillance Authority or the European Commission that state aid received is illegal and incompatible with the internal market. Nor may support be granted to an enterprise that is defined as an “undertaking in difficulty” under the state aid rules.

The Norwegian-language call for proposals is the legally binding version.

Who is eligible to apply?

The call is open to approved research organisations. See here for the list of [approved Norwegian research organisations](#).

Who can participate in the project?

Requirements relating to the Project Owner

The organisation listed as the Project Owner in the grant application must be an approved Norwegian research organisation and must have approved the submission of the grant application to the Research Council.

Requirements relating to the project manager

The project manager must have the relevant expertise and experience needed to lead the project.

Requirements relating to partners

Projects are to be carried out by one or more research organisations in cooperation with actors from Norwegian trade and industry and/or other sectors. The project is to be implemented in accordance with the definition of “effective collaboration” in the state aid rules, which entails among other things that the results of the project are to be distributed between the Project Owner and other project partners. “Effective collaboration” is defined as follows:

“collaboration between at least two independent parties to exchange knowledge or technology, or to achieve a common objective based on the division of labour where the parties jointly define the scope of the collaborative project, contribute to its implementation and share its risks, as well as its results. One or several parties may bear the full costs of the project and thus relieve other parties of its financial risks. Contract research and provision of research services are not considered forms of collaboration.”

The combination of partners taking part in the project will depend on the challenge the project seeks to resolve. Applicants are encouraged to include new, closer forms of collaboration between actors (e.g. trade and industry, public entities, users) and across subject areas and disciplines in their projects, when this is relevant for achieving the objectives. This includes collaboration with leading international research and innovation circles.

The Research Council stipulates that partners that are not research organisations must cover at least 10 per cent of total project costs. In addition, partners that are companies must each cover the proportion of their own project costs set out in the state aid rules. The size of this proportion is primarily determined by whether the activity undertaken in the project by the company falls within the R&D category “industrial research” or “experimental development”, as these are defined in the state aid rules.

The ownership of results and issues pertaining to intellectual property rights must be adequately clarified. The parties are to regulate the ownership and user rights of project results that have been produced by several parties in a collaborative effort. This must be regulated in a manner that ensures that the companies taking part in the consortium do not receive indirect state aid from participating research organisations. The regulation of ownership and user rights must therefore be in accordance with [the EFTA Surveillance Authority's guidelines for state aid for research and development and innovation Section 28 \(c\) or \(d\)](#).

What can you seek funding for?

Under this call, the Research Council may cover costs that are necessary for the execution of the project. These costs must be associated with activities that comply with the definition of ["basic research"](#), ["industrial research"](#) and ["fundamental research" in the state aid rules](#).

In order for the Research Council to calculate its amount of support, the grant application must include an overall budget based on the following types of approved project costs:

- Payroll and indirect expenses incurred by the organisations participating in the project (including research fellowships). See here for guidelines for calculating payroll and indirect expenses on [the Research Council's Budget webpage](#).
- Procurement of R&D services. The Project Owner and Norwegian partners may jointly or individually procure R&D services from R&D-performing companies. Suppliers of R&D services for the project may not have the role of partner or be granted any rights to project results developed in the project.
- Costs relating to procurement and use of scientific equipment. See here for [Research Council guidelines for calculating costs of equipment](#).
- Other operating expenses, including support for research stays abroad and travel expenses and other project-related costs not covered under the categories above.

When funding is awarded to a company, all project costs must comply with the detailed description of eligible project costs set out in Article 25(3) of the General Block Exemption Regulation.

If the project is to encompass doctoral or post-doctoral fellows and there are specific plans for research stays abroad for these, an application for Overseas Research Grants may be included in the application. The Research Council also has a separate scheme for Personal Overseas Research Grants for Doctoral and Post-doctoral Fellows. Doctoral or post-doctoral fellows involved in the project may apply through this scheme for support for a research stay abroad during the project period.

Conditions for funding

Support from the Research Council to research organisations participating in the project is to be reserved for the organisation's non-economic activity, since the projects involve research and development activity carried out in effective collaboration with others. According to the EFTA Surveillance Authority's guidelines on state aid for research and development and innovation, such activities are considered to be independent R&D, which is part of the organisation's non-economic activity. As such it therefore does not constitute state aid.

According to the state aid rules, support to an undertaking constitutes state aid. An "undertaking" in this context is defined as any actor that carries out an economic activity consisting of offering products or services on a given market. When an undertaking receives support to cover a portion of its project costs, either in the role as Project Owner or as a partner in the project, this support must be awarded in accordance with Article 25 of the General Block Exemption Regulation for state aid (Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014).

The Research Council's allocation for the first year and any pledges for subsequent years will otherwise be disbursed in accordance with the conditions set out in this agreement and the General Terms and Conditions for R&D Projects.

Archiving of research data

The Project Owner (R&D organisation) is responsible for selecting the archiving solution(s) to use for storing research data generated during the project. The Project Owner must specify the planned solution(s) in connection with the revised grant proposal.

Relevant thematic areas for this call

This call for proposals is open to the broad range of fields that involve ICT as a thematic area. Please select ICT as the only topic for your grant proposal in the application form.

Enabling technologies



Research on ICT development

Requirements for this application type

Please note that it is not possible to revise and resubmit grant applications multiple times for calls operating with open-ended submission deadlines. It is therefore important that your application is completely finished before you submit it.

- The grant application, including all attachments, must be submitted in English.
- All attachments must be in PDF format.

All the templates for attachments are available for download at the end of the call for proposals.

Mandatory attachments

- A project description of maximum 10 pages using the designated template;
- A CV of maximum four pages, including the list of publications, for the project manager. The designated template must be used.
- CVs for the key researchers participating in the project (maximum four pages, including the list of publications). The designated template must be used.
- Confirmation of participation from partners that are not research organisations.

Grant applications that do not satisfy the above requirements will be rejected.

Links in the application form or project description to websites and documents, as well as other attachments than those specified above, will not be included in the application review process. There is no technical validation of the content of the attachments you upload, so please make sure that you upload the correct file for the selected type of attachment.

Assessment criteria

In 2019 the Research Council is introducing three new assessment criteria: Excellence, Impact and Implementation. These criteria have been designed to be applicable for assessing basic and applied research activities alike.

Excellence

The extent to which the proposed work is ambitious, novel, and goes beyond the state-of-the-art

- Scientific creativity and originality.
- Novelty and boldness of hypotheses or research questions.
- Potential for development of new knowledge beyond the current state-of-the-art, including significant theoretical, methodological, experimental or empirical advancement.

The quality of the proposed R&D activities

- Quality of the research questions, hypotheses and project objectives, and the extent to which they are clearly and adequately specified.
- Credibility and appropriateness of the theoretical approach, research design and use of scientific methods. Appropriate consideration of interdisciplinary approaches.
- Where relevant, the extent to which appropriate consideration has been given to ethical issues, safety issues, gender dimension in research content, and appropriate use of stakeholder/user knowledge.

Impact

Potential impact of the proposed research

The extent to which:

- the potential impacts are clearly formulated and plausible.
- the outputs of the project address important present and future scientific challenges.
- the outputs of the project address important present and future challenges for the sector(s).
- the developed competence and expected results will promote future value creation, in the industry and/or development of the public sector?
- the outputs will address relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- the project will be undertaken in a responsible manner, with reference to relevant methodology for achieving this.

Communication and exploitation

- Quality and scope of communication and engagement activities with different target audiences, including relevant stakeholders/users.
- Involvement of the stakeholders/users in dissemination and utilisation of the project results.

Implementation

The quality of the project manager and project group

- The extent to which the project manager has relevant expertise and experience, and demonstrated ability to perform high-quality research (as appropriate to the career stage).
- The degree of complementarity of the participants and the extent to which the project group as a whole encompasses the expertise needed to undertake the research effectively, and provides added value.

The quality of the project organisation and management

- Effectiveness of the work plan, including the extent to which resources assigned to work packages are aligned with project objectives and deliverables.
- Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have a valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role.
- Appropriateness of the proposed management structures and governance.
- Appropriateness of stakeholder and user participation in the implementation and governance of the project.

Overall assessment of the referee/panel

Overall assessment of the referee/panel based, on the criteria Excellence, Impact and Implementation.

Administrative procedures

All grant applications that fall within the thematic framework of the call will be assessed by international referee panels. Grant applications that do not fall within the thematic framework of the call will not be assessed.

Grant proposals that have received an overall mark of 6 or 7 will be awarded funding. Applications with a lower overall mark will not be eligible for funding. The Research Council may make exceptions for applications with an overall mark of 5 provided that they serve to strengthen and balance the project portfolio.

The final decision regarding grant allocations will be taken by the portfolio board for enabling technologies.

Project proposals not awarded funding will not be permitted to reapply for funding for a period of six months from the date the proposal was submitted, but may reapply after that. During this period, no applicants may submit a grant application with the same project proposal to this call.

Grant application processing will start immediately after submission. Notification of the funding decision can be expected 8-12 weeks after this date. Please note that this may take longer during holiday periods.

Download templates



Mal prosjektbeskrivelse Kompetanse- og samarbeidsprosjekt/Project description template Collaborative and Knowledge-building Project.docx



UTGÅTT CV-mal for forskere/CV template researchers.docx



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About the results of the application assessment process

Total amount sought	NOK 241 600 000
Amount awarded	NOK 31 200 000
Total number of applications	17
Number of approved applications	2

Approved applications

Project number	Project title	Institution/company
308904	Machine Learning for the Anonymisation of Unstructured Personal Data	NORSK REGNESENTRAL
305051	Navigation System Integrity Assurance for Safety-Critical Autonomous Operations	SINTEF DIGITAL