

Student Entrepreneurship

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Application type: Commercialisation Project

Application deadline: 12 February 2020, 13:00 CET

Relevant thematic areas for this call: [Trade and industry](#)

Target groups: Research organisations

Funding scale: NOK 500 000-1 000 000

Amount of funding presumed available for this call for proposals:

NOK 20 000 000

Project duration: 9-15 months

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The Research Council has expanded the STUD-ENT scheme, and is now open to grant applications from students at Master's or Ph.D. degree levels and in six-year programmes of professional study.

Purpose

The STUD-ENT scheme is the Research Council's national competitive arena in which students, in cooperation with institutions of higher education, may seek financial support for student-driven business ideas within and across different subject fields.

The STUD-ENT scheme aims to help to increase entrepreneurship among students by promoting business ideas that have a close link to promising research results, enhancing the ability to implement projects, and cultivating students as role models to foster an entrepreneurship culture in institutions of higher education.

The educational system has a key role to play in encouraging young people to become innovative entrepreneurs and participants in the work force. In light of this, the ambition of the STUD-ENT scheme is twofold:

1. To encourage entrepreneurship among students and increase the number of entrepreneurs and successful companies based on the knowledge students have obtained through their studies.
2. To promote a culture for innovation and entrepreneurship in the university and university college sector.

The STUD-ENT scheme is intended for individuals who are at the start of their careers and who wish to test their entrepreneurship skills.

This call is open to project proposals within all thematic areas.

Important dates

01 Jan 2020: Date call is made active

12 Feb 2020: Application submission deadline

13 Feb 2020: Review of applications vis-à-vis the formal requirements

28 Feb 2020: Referee review (Phase 1) – Remote assessment

13 Mar 2020: Notification of which projects have been selected for presentation to the panel (Phase 2)

24 Mar 2020: Referee review (Phase 2) - Project presentations, day 1

25 Mar 2020: Referee review (Phase 2) - Project presentations, day 2

15 Apr 2020: Review and decision regarding funding allocations will be taken in April

01 May 2020: Earliest permitted project start

01 Oct 2020: Latest permitted project start

30 Sep 2021: Latest permitted project completion

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About the call for proposals

Project proposals must be able to point to student-driven business ideas that demonstrate clear commercial potential and entail positive benefits for society. The business idea and the students must have a close link to a relevant academic group at a Norwegian educational institution, and the collaboration is to contribute to reducing technological or other critical risks in the project.

The financial support provided is to be used to reduce technology- or concept-related risk to clarify uncertainties that are preventing the project from moving forward in the commercialisation process.

This call for proposals constitutes a funding scheme that is notified to the EFTA Surveillance Authority. Funding

awarded under this scheme is granted in accordance with Article 22 of the General Block Exemption Regulation for state aid (Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014).

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.

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

Who is eligible to apply?

Students at Master's or Ph.D. degree levels or in programmes of professional study may apply in cooperation with a Norwegian university or university college. For more information, see "Who can participate in the project?" below.

Who can participate in the project?

Requirements relating to the project manager

The project manager must be involved in a Master's or Ph.D. degree level programme or a six-year professional study programme.

Project managers currently working on their degrees:

Master's level: submission of

- Master's thesis prior to project start-up;
- Professional study programme: completed at least four years prior to project start-up;
- Ph.D. level: letter of confirmation from the institution that the STUD-ENT project can be completed alongside the Ph.D. programme.

Project managers who have completed their degrees:

- Diploma received no more than 12 months prior to the application submission deadline.

Requirements relating to the core team

- The core team is to consist of students, i.e. the project manager and other students at Bachelor's, Master's, Ph.D. degree levels or in programmes of professional study and/or recent graduates of such programmes who have received their diplomas no more than 12 months prior to the application submission deadline.
- The core team must together own a minimum 80 per cent of the shares in the established/planned limited company, and the distribution/planned distribution of shares must reflect each partner's participation in the project, thereby ensuring that all team members have maximum incentive to succeed.

Requirements relating to the Project Owner

- A division or department at a Norwegian university or university college must support the project and be entered as the "Project Owner" in the grant application.
- An individual who is authorised to approve the project at the institutional level must be listed as the "Project administrator".
- The Project Owner must provide the project with at least one academic mentor and sign an agreement regarding the contributions the institution is able to provide to the project. These contributions must be of scientific/academic relevance and help to reduce technological or other critical risks in the project.
- Students are not required to have studied or completed a degree at the educational institution that is giving its support to the project.

If the project is granted funding, the role of Project Owner will be transferred to the limited company that the students establish. Applicants are not required to have established a limited company when they submit their grant application, but the company must be established if funding is awarded. The original Project Owner (division or department at the educational institution) will then become a project partner.

Requirements relating to mentors

- The project must include at least one academic mentor from the educational institution supporting the project. The academic mentor must be affiliated with an academic group of relevance to the project whose involvement contributes to reducing technological or other critical risks in the project. The academic environment at the institution is to provide the team with supplementary expertise relevant to the project, for example critical expertise within a specific subject or technological area, and to help to enhance the ability to implement the project.
- The project must include at least one commercial mentor from the business sector, for example a serial entrepreneur or investor. The commercial mentor must provide the team with supplementary experience from the sector or market, and help to enhance the ability to implement the project.

It is possible to involve multiple commercial and academic mentors that can provide supplementary knowledge to the project. At least one of the academic mentors must be affiliated with the educational institution supporting the project. Any additional mentors may come from other educational institutions. The core team as a whole, with its mentor support, must have the interdisciplinary and relevant expertise needed to perform the project.

What can you seek funding for?

STUD-ENT funding is to be used to realise the business idea or to carry out crucial activities that will mitigate technology- and concept-related risks by providing the answers to uncertainties that are preventing the project from moving forward in the commercialisation process.

Typical project activities include developing, clarifying and demonstrating concepts, verifying technology in a laboratory, conducting user testing, clarifying areas of application and prioritising these based on needs for technological development and market potential.

Project costs that may be covered include technical equipment, travel, advisory services, technical assistance and payroll.

Approved project costs must be included in a budget in accordance with the general requirements and guidelines that apply for projects funded by the Research Council.

Scope of funding

Funding awarded for the project will be disbursed to the limited company. The approved project costs are to be entered in the limited company's project accounts. Procurement of services from, for example, the educational institution or other companies will be invoiced costs to the limited company and can thus be covered by the Research Council's funding. You may apply for funding to cover up to 100 per cent of the budgeted project costs over a period of 12 months. Projects may seek a maximum of NOK 1 million.

Conditions for funding

The latest permitted project start date for projects is 1 October 2020. Projects approved for funding that have not started by this date may lose their allocation.

Support for start-ups

Funding will be disbursed to the limited company that the students have established or will establish if granted funding.

Support for start-ups constitutes state aid according to Article 61 of the EEA Agreement. Support is granted in accordance with Article 22 of the General Block Exemption Regulation: Aid for start-ups.

For limited companies that have been established prior to submission of an application, Article 22 states that support can only be awarded to enterprises that:

- are not listed on the stock exchange;
- have not been registered in the Register of Business Enterprises for five years or more.
- have not taken over the activity of another enterprise;
- have not issued dividends;
- are not the result of a merger.

In addition to the requirements under Article 22, the Research Council stipulates the following requirements:

- The company must not have more than 10 employees.

- The balance sheet of the enterprise is not to exceed EUR 2 million.

When assessing an enterprise's size, consideration must also be given to the number of employees and the turnover/balance sheet for companies with a holding of 25 per cent or more of the capital or voting rights, or in which the enterprise itself has a holding of 25 per cent or more of the capital or voting rights. See the definition of the concept, "small and medium-sized enterprises" or "SMEs", in the General Block Exemption Regulation: Aid for start-ups, Annex I, as well as in the [EU Commission's User guide to the SME definition](#).

Archiving of research data

The Project Owner (company/research 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.

Additional information

Requirements relating to the business idea

- The business idea must have a close link to research in a relevant academic environment at a Norwegian educational institution.
- The business idea and the research results on which it builds must be mature enough to lead to significant improvements in the state-of-the-art.
- The students must have obtained the appropriate rights to the concept, technology or research on which the business idea is based that will be needed to implement the project.
- Project proposals must demonstrate that the business idea is innovative, has been adequately developed and that preliminary market surveys support the business idea as feasible and competitive.
- The business idea does not have to be linked to a specific branch of industry, and STUD-ENT funding may be sought by students in all subject fields.
- There are no requirements relating to market maturity, so the STUD-ENT scheme is just as relevant for, e.g., medical technology projects, which often have a long path to market, as for ICT projects, which in many cases have a shorter path to market.

Requirements relating to projects for which STUD-ENT scheme funding has previously been sought

If an application is rejected, the project manager may reapply one more time, provided that the formal requirements stipulated in the call for proposals have been met. In such cases, applicants are required to state clearly at the beginning of the project description what has changed in the interim since the previous application. The programme administration may reject applications that do not demonstrate sufficient change.

It is not possible to reapply for STUD-ENT funding if the project has previously received funding under the scheme, or if the project manager has previously been awarded STUD-ENT funding.

Termination of contract

It is important for projects awarded funding to meet the approved milestones by the stipulated deadlines. This will be given particular weight when assessing whether to continue providing support or to terminate the contract.

Other examples of key issues that can lead to amendment or termination of a contract include the following:

- The conditions set out in the call and the approved prerequisites for funding are not met.
- The project is not progressing according to plan.
- Key partners are no longer involved in the project.
- The project no longer has access to critical and necessary resources or equipment.
- New results or new information become available that substantially diminish the commercial potential of the project.
- The Project Owner no longer owns, or has at its disposal, the intellectual property rights, which substantially diminishes the commercial potential of the project.

Relevant thematic areas for this call

This call is open for project proposals in all areas, but we ask applicants to assign one or more of the branches of trade and industry listed below to their applications:

Trade and industry

Health, Animal health, ICT industry, Fisheries and aquaculture, Forests and wood, Agriculture, Food industry, Oil, gas, Energy, Processing industry, Manufacturing industry, Building, construction and mining, Transport and communications, Travel and tourism, Finance and banking, Media and culture, Other services, Telecommunications, Aviation, Space exploration, Shipping, Police, fire and rescue, defence, Smart city, Gaming and entertainment, Sports, training, Education, Textile industry, Industry-independent sector

Please remember to select the topics/trade and industry most relevant to your project proposal in the grant application form.

Requirements for this application type

A complete application consists of the online application form and the mandatory attachments submitted by the project manager via My RCN Web.

Also see our: [STUD-ENT Guidelines for how to complete the eSøknad application form.pdf](#)

You may revise and resubmit your grant application form multiple times up to the application submission deadline. We recommend that you submit your application as soon as you have filled in the application form and uploaded all mandatory attachments. After the deadline, it is the most recently submitted version of the grant application that will be processed.

- The grant application, including all attachments, must be submitted in English.
- The application must have been approved by the Project Owner (division or department/institute at the university or university college supporting the project).
- All attachments must be uploaded in PDF format.

The designated templates are found at the end of this call for proposals.

- A project description of maximum 10 pages using the designated template. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Project description".
- CVs for the project manager and other key participants on the project team, using the designated template. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Curriculum vitae (CV)".
- Declaration from the shareholders using the designated template. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Other items".
- Declaration of rights using the designated template. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Other items".
- Project approval from the university/university college using the designated template or a template used by the educational institution. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Other items".
- Additional information about the project, using the designated template. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Other items".
- A one-page project summary using the designated template. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Other items".

Optional attachments

- Letters of intent from any customers, industrial partners or other project partners may improve the merit of an application if they describe specific commitments that will contribute to reducing concrete risks in the projects. General statements will be of little value. This is to be uploaded as attachment type "Other items".

Links to websites and documents, as well as other attachments than those specified above, will not be included in the application review process. Please make sure to use the designated template for attachments where indicated. 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

Project proposals will be assessed by a referee panel in relation to three criteria:

Excellence

This criterion gives an indication of whether the project is based on promising R&D results that are mature enough to contribute to significant improvements relative to the state-of-the-art.

This criterion will be assessed in relation to the following points:

i. Research results:

- To what extent is the research base underlying the project adequately described?

ii. Degree of innovation:

- To what extent will the product/process/service contribute to significant improvements over existing solutions (state-of-the-art) within the same area?

Impact

This criterion gives an indication of the project's long-term potential for value creation as well as the likelihood of its successful realisation.

This criterion will be assessed in relation to the following points:

i. Market insight and areas of application:

- To what extent are potential branches of industry/markets targeted by the project quantified and accounted for?

ii. Strategy for realisation:

- To what extent does the application outline a realistic long-term strategy for realising the innovation, including quantification of anticipated revenues, investment needs, human resources needs, logistics distribution, etc.?

iii. Conditions and rights:

- To what extent does the application explain the conditions that must be in place for successful commercialisation?

iv. Benefit to society and sustainability:

- To what extent are the relevant societal challenges and the potential impacts of the project accounted for?

Implementation

This criterion assesses the concrete results and risk relief that this project will achieve – which will increase the likelihood of triggering the next phase in the commercialisation process.

This criterion will be assessed in relation to the following points:

i. Project plan:

- To what extent does the application outline a realistic implementation plan, including milestones, deliveries and methods, and to what extent does the application adequately and convincingly describe what will be triggered by a completed project?

ii. Management, team and expertise:

- To what extent is the project considered to have access to the necessary resources and expertise, and to what extent does the project have a plan for involving external actors (mentors, customers, partners, investors, stakeholders, relevant social actors etc.)?

iii. Budget:

- To what extent is the budget and the financing realistic, cost-effective, and clearly rooted in the project's plans and resource needs?

Assuming all factors relating to scientific merit and relevance are essentially equal, priority will be given to projects led by women project managers. The STUD-ENT scheme seeks to achieve full gender balance, with 50 per cent participation of women in projects, and 50 per cent women project managers.

Administrative procedures

- **Preliminary administrative review: 13 February 2020**
Review of grant proposals vis-à-vis the formal application requirements. Grant applications that do not satisfy the formal requirements or that fall outside the target group outlined in the call will be rejected.
- **Referee review (Phase 1) – Remote assessment: 28 February 2020**
Applications that have satisfied the formal requirements are assessed by referees based on the assessment criteria. The individual referees each assign marks to each application and provide written feedback.
- **Ranking of applications: 13 March 2020**
Applicants will be notified whether their projects are advancing to the next phase of the assessment process.
- **Referee review (Phase 2) – Project presentations: 24-25 March 2020**
Applicants with the projects ranked the highest after phase 1 will present their projects to a referee panel. The panel will discuss the projects and assign a final mark for each of the assessment criteria.
- **Decision regarding funding awards: April 2020**
Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the funding decision.

Download templates

	STUD-ENT 2020 Template for Project Description.docx	
	CV Template.docx	
	STUD-ENT 2020 Template Declaration regarding rights.docx	
	STUD-ENT 2020 Template Shareholder Declaration.docx	
	STUD-ENT 2020 Project approval from the university or university college.docx	
	Additional Information for Commercialisation Projects.docx	
	Onepage presentation.pptx	

[Download all templates](#) ↓

About the results of the application assessment process

Total amount sought	NOK 45 200 000
Amount awarded	NOK 17 800 000
Total number of applications	46
Number of approved applications	18

Approved applications

Project number	Project title	Institution/company
311881	ModTech: Lyddempere for jaktrifler	Mohnsenteret for innovasjon og regional utvikling, Høgskulen på Vestlandet
311876	Tracking system for strength training at gym facilities	UNIVERSITETET I STAVANGER
311871	EnableMagic - We are creating an open and connect world of Innovation and entrepreneurship through our platform tailored for entrepreneurs.	TIK Senter for teknologi, innovasjon og kultur
311864	Disputas - An online platform for analysis and critical reflection.	Institutt for informatikk
311859	Mycroft AS - HSE-enhancing shift schedules through Prefero	NORGES HANDELSHØYSKOLE
311850	Ntention AS - Modular gesture recognition system for customizable Human Computer Interaction (HCI) in AR/VR applications.	Institutt for industriell økonomi og teknologiledelse
311844	Tap IT AS - Data-driven maintenance for the food-service industry	NMBU Faculty of Science and Technology
311835	Polysense - measuring biomarkers in breath	Institutt for elektroniske systemer
311826	WAID: Rapid preparedness and delegate sharing in humanitarian aid organisations	Institutt for industriell økonomi og teknologiledelse
311825	Metaito AS - Factsplat: A customizable intranet for effective navigation of digital tools and services.	NTNU
311813	Ultrasound transducer production technology	UNIVERSITETET I SØRØST-NORGE CAMPUS VESTFOLD
311810	Healthy EATS AS - Efficient, High-Quality & Sustainable Food Delivery	UNIVERSITETET I BERGEN
311809	Sensorita - Data-Driven Waste Management	NORGES MILJØ- OG BIOVITENSKAPELIGE UNIVERSITET (NMBU)
311804	RAS Robotics: Autonomous Cleaning Drones for Land-based Fish Farming	Institutt for industriell økonomi og Teknologiledelse, NTNU
311803	Univance - finding the right way	UNIVERSITETET I OSLO
311800	Snowroller AS - Commercialization of a complete circular business model (CCBM) for the fashion industry	Institutt for industriell økonomi og teknologiledelse
311795	Rubato Booking - Digital booking platform connecting artists and music event organizers	Institutt for industriell økonomi og teknologiledelse
311791	SlideDrain AS - Innovative drains for an easy, quick and safe installation.	Institutt for industriell økonomi og teknologiledelse
311780	Tryio - Connecting food companies with the right consumers for sensory consumer testing	Institutt for informatikk
311767	Ocean Access - Autonomous communication system for remote offshore monitoring	Institutt for industriell økonomi og teknologiledelse