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Support for Research Schools to Follow Up National Subject Evaluations

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Financial scheme: Coordination and Support Activity

Application deadline: 4 June 2025, 13:00 CEST

Relevant thematic areas for this call: Ground-breaking research

Target groups: Research organisations

Funding scale: maximum NOK 16 000 000

Amount of funding presumed available for this call for proposals: NOK 80 000 000. The estimated funding available under this call is up to NOK 80,000,000. A total of NOK 100 million has been set aside for the follow-up of the four academic evaluations (EVALNAT, EVALBIOVIT, EVALMIT and EVALMEDHELSE). The amount is tentatively divided into NOK 64 million for this call and NOK 36 million for the call for funding for network activities. The actual distribution may be different if there are not enough qualified applications for one of the calls.

Project duration: 96-96 months

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Important dates

23 Apr 2025: Open for applications

04 Jun 2025: Application deadline

01 Dec 2025: Earliest permitted project start

01 Jun 2026: Latest permitted project start

31 May 2034: Latest permitted project completion date

Purpose

The Research Council of Norway is announcing funding to establish new research schools as part of the follow-up of the subject evaluations of natural sciences (EVALNAT), mathematics, ICT and technology (EVALMIT), life sciences (EVALBIOVIT) and medicine and health sciences (EVALMEDHELSE). The research schools will give research fellows access to doctoral courses of high scientific quality and academic networks. The research schools should contribute to renewal, development and collaboration aimed at new research needs within the evaluated subject areas.

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About the call for proposals

The Research Council has recently carried out subject evaluations of natural sciences (EVALNAT), mathematics, ICT and technology (EVALMIT), life sciences (EVALBIOVIT) and medicine and health sciences (EVALMEDHELSE). These evaluations identified a number of different needs for Norwegian research, including increased strategic collaboration between research communities and between research communities and other sectors, such as the industrial sector. The reports also recommended that work be done on the development and renewal of the disciplines, aimed at new research needs. As part of the follow-up of the subject evaluations, the Research Council is announcing funding to establish new research schools that will contribute to both collaboration between and renewal of the research communities.

[We are also announcing funding for network activities.](#)

About national research schools

National research schools are to raise the quality and relevance of Norwegian doctoral education through renewal, quality development and high-quality academic training. This will be achieved by offering a coordinated education of good quality through national and international academic networks. The research schools are intended to qualify candidates for research and other work that requires a high level of scientific insight and competence.

Network structure and hosting responsibilities

National research schools function as a national and/or international network of academic communities consisting of universities, university colleges, research institutes and other enterprises, e.g. actors from the industrial sector or the public sector. The research school supplements the institutions' own doctoral programmes. Candidates complete their doctoral degree at their own educational institution. The research school must be rooted in a strong academic community that also has the responsibility of hosting.

Academic delimitation

The call only applies to subjects and research areas that were evaluated in the subject evaluations EVALNAT, EVALBIOVIT, EVALMIT and EVALMEDHELSE.

The call for proposals is available in both Norwegian and English. The Norwegian text is legally binding.

Who is eligible to apply?

Norwegian universities and university colleges with the right to award doctoral degrees can apply. The application must come from [an administrative unit](#) that was evaluated in one of the four subject evaluations. One administrative unit can send in maximum one application.

Who can participate in the project?

Requirements for the research school

A national research school is a binding collaboration between Norwegian universities and university colleges, which can also enter into collaboration with research institutes, health trusts, foreign universities, the industrial sector and/or the public sector.

In this call, collaboration between at least three Norwegian research organisations, including the Project Owner, is required. See the list of approved Norwegian research organisations.

The research school must have:

- a clear organisation with its own acceptance process for doctoral candidates
- a structured academic programme for the graduate courses
- a scientific and administrative management
- a board that ensures representation from the partner institutions and doctoral candidates

Requirements for participants and management:

- The research school must include a minimum of 20 doctoral candidates at full operation.
- The scientific manager (project manager) and the board have the overall responsibility for developing the academic activities at the school.
- The scientific manager (project manager) and the chair of the board must represent different institutions.

In the project description (under the item Relevance to the call for proposals), you must describe how the research school addresses needs described in one of the national reports from the subject evaluations. You must also describe the expected results, impacts and effects in the short and long term and how these can be documented.

Furthermore, you must describe how the research school will ensure that the candidates acquire

- theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills to conduct research at a high academic level
- general skills that are relevant to research and to high-level positions in academia and in working life in general
- academic communities and networks
- insight into one's own competence and the knowledge and skills required to achieve one's own goals and ambitions
- a good understanding of innovation and how research can be used

The research school must ensure that the individual candidate receives an offer of training that is adapted to where they are in the course of their studies and provide the opportunity for personal follow-up. The school must ensure that the candidates participate in active and good interaction with the teaching staff, so that they have influence over their own learning. The candidates must be able to influence the planning of the school's activities.

You must prepare a plan for which training elements will be included in different phases of the course of study.

We expect the research schools to establish their own website that describes roles, responsibilities and activities, in addition to goal attainment, effects and effects of the activities.

We also encourage the research schools that are awarded funding to cooperate with each other. The Research Council will invite to annual gatherings with a view to the exchange of ideas and experiences.

Requirements relating to the Project Owner

The organisation responsible for hosting the research school is the organisation that is listed as the Project Owner in the application form. The application must be strategically anchored with the Project Owner. The responsibility of hosting must be fulfilled by a degree-conferring institution that can demonstrate research of high scientific quality in the area in question. The Project Owner must have participated in one of the four subject evaluations. Responsibility for the school's management and operation cannot be delegated.

Requirements relating to the project manager

The project manager must have an approved doctoral degree and achieved associate professor qualifications before the application deadline. The project manager must also have experience with research management, doctoral education and national and/or international collaboration. The project manager's academic competence and suitability will be assessed by a panel. The project manager may only be the project manager for one application and must be employed by an administrative unit that was evaluated in one of the four subject evaluations.

Requirements relating to partners

The application must be supported by all partners. All partners must actively contribute to the planning and implementation of the research school's activities. The commitment to cooperation must be confirmed in collaboration agreements.

The partners may be research organisations, health trusts, foreign universities, companies and/or from the public sector. We do not award state aid through this call. This means that companies and other enterprises cannot receive support to cover their costs in the research school, but must cover them themselves.

What can you seek funding for?

You can apply for support to cover costs related to the administration of the research school's activities, which will typically be operating costs and personnel costs for administrative follow-up.

- Training activities
- Professional development work
- Networking and interaction activities
- Management and administrative facilitation

In the cost plan in the application form, you can only use the items **Payroll and indirect expenses** and **Other operating expenses**. The items **Procurement of R&D services** and **Equipment** cannot be used.

You cannot apply for support to cover doctoral scholarships, operating expenses for the implementation of doctoral projects, personnel and indirect expenses for the collaborating institutions' researchers and teaching staff, investments or coverage of other expenses related to the institutions' ordinary doctoral education.

You can find detailed and important information about [what to enter in the project budget](#) on our website.

Scope of funding

You can apply for a maximum of NOK 16 million spread over an eight-year period.

Prerequisites for funding

The projects must start between 01.12.2025 and 01.06.2026. The latest permitted project completion date is 31.05.2034.

We do not award state aid under this call, and companies are therefore not eligible to receive funding to cover project costs.

The Research Council's prerequisites for funding can also be found in our general terms and conditions for R&D projects on the information page [What the contract involves](#).

In addition, you must be aware of the following if you should receive funding from us:

- Grant recipients in research organisations and the public sector (Project Owners and partners) must have [action plans for gender equality \(GEPs\)](#) available on their websites. The requirement does not apply to the private sector, interest groups or the voluntary sector.

Relevant thematic areas for this call

The call only applies to subjects and research areas that were evaluated in the subject evaluations EVALNAT, EVALBIOVIT, EVALMIT and EVALMEDHELSE.

Ground-breaking research

Practical information

Requirements for this funding scheme

You can change and submit the application several times until the application deadline. We recommend that you submit your application as soon as you have completed the application form and uploaded the mandatory attachments. When the application deadline expires, it is the version of the application that was submitted most recently that we process.

- The application and all attachments must be written in English.
- All attachments must be in PDF format.

Mandatory attachments

- Project description of a maximum of 10 pages. Use the template that you can download at the bottom of the page.
- CV for project manager. Use the template that you can download at the bottom of the page.
- Declarations of intent/confirmation from partners.

Applications that do not meet the requirements above will be rejected.

Optional attachments

- CV for key participants in the project.
- Proposals for up to three peers who are presumed to be impartial to assess the application.

All attachments to the application must be submitted with the application. We do not accept attachments submitted after the application deadline unless we have requested additional documentation.

We will not consider documents and websites linked to in the application, or attachments other than those specified above. Be careful to upload the correct attachment type, as there are no technical restrictions on what kind of templates it is possible to upload in the application form.

About the budget tables in the application form

The maximum number of budget years in the budget tables in the application form is 8 years including the earliest permitted starting year. If the project period in the application spans over more calendar years than what the table has space for, the figures for the last two calendar years should be entered in the last possible budget year in the tables. Use the specification field below the table to explain the distribution of the numbers.

Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed in light of the purpose of the call and the following criteria:

Excellence

Originality/Novelty

- The extent to which the concept is sound, credible and novel.

Solidity

- The extent to which the project objectives are clear and relevant.
- The quality of the proposed deliverables from the project.

Impact

Potential

- The extent to which the expected effects are specified.
- The extent to which expected impacts on the system and societal levels are specified.

Knowledge sharing and exploitation

- The quality of the proposed communication and dissemination activities.
- The extent to which it is credible that the proposed outputs will contribute to the specified effects and impact.

Implementation

Project Manager and project group

- The extent to which the Project Manager and project group are qualified and have the necessary expertise and are positioned to implement the project.
- The extent to which management structures and procedures are appropriate.

Plans and management

- The extent to which the work plan is clear and understandable, and the time table realistic
- The extent to which objectives and measures are coherent.
- The extent to which the project has the support of the leadership of the Project Owner and any partners, and the allocation of roles in the project is clear.
- The extent to which the budget is realistic and appropriate, and resources are allocated so that each of the partners can fulfil their role.
- The extent to which potential risks have been discussed.

Relevance to the call for proposals

The extent to which the project satisfies the guidelines and stipulations set out in the call for proposals.

Administrative procedures

Pre-assessment

Applications that do not satisfy the formal requirements will be rejected.

The Research Council may reject applications where the Project Owner or partner has materially breached its obligations in other projects funded by the Research Council in the two years prior to the submission of the application.

The application may be rejected if the project manager has been appointed to the Joint Integrity Committee or the Investigation Committee in the last two years prior to the submission of the application.

Panel assessment

The applications are then assessed by referees with broad expertise, who later gather in a panel meeting and together agree on final marks for the assessment criteria and prepare a unified written assessment for each application they assess. An application is only processed in one panel.

Threshold

If the average of the marks is lower than 5, the application will not be eligible for funding. If the application for one of the main criteria has received a mark of 3 or lower, it will also not be eligible for funding.

Assessment of relevance

The administration will carry out a relevance assessment based on how well the application addresses the needs described in the national reports from the four subject evaluations.

Decision on funding

The administration prepares a recommendation based on

- the panels' assessments
- the administration's relevance assessments
- distribution of research schools by subjects and topics







The portfolio board for Ground-breaking research then makes a decision regarding funding.

Response to the application


An answer to the application is expected in November 2025.

See also: [How we process applications.](#)

Download templates

	Template for project description - National researcher schools.docx	
	Template for CV researchers.docx	
	Template for CV.docx	

★ MANDATORY ATTACHMENT

Download all templates 

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