## Project description template

## Centre for sustainable area and nature use

**This project description template consists of**

**A:** Overview of the chapters and sections to be used as the structure of the centre description

**B:** Guidance on the content in each chapter and section

## A: Chapters and sections to be used

**Centre title**

### Excellence

* 1. State of the art, knowledge needs and centre objectives

1.2 Research questions and hypotheses, theoretical approach and methodology

1.3 Ethical issues

1.4 Novelty and ambition

### 2. Impact

* 1. Potential impact of the proposed research

2.2 Measures for communication and exploitation

### 3. Implementation

3.1 Centre manager and project group

3.2 Centre organisation and management

3.3 International cooperation

3.4 Researcher training and recruitment

3.5 Collaboration with other centres

## B: Guidance

The proposed research should be presented clearly, using language understandable to individuals with a general scientific understanding of the field. Please note that the referees in the panel where your application is reviewed do not necessarily work in precisely the same area as you.

Complete the chapters and sections in the template, following the order of the items as given in part A, and delete the guidance (part B). The template is designed to address all the elements of the assessment criteria. **The applicant is strongly advised to read the assessment criteria and the call text carefully and refer to the** [**Guidelines for Centre for sustainable area and nature use**](https://www.forskningsradet.no/siteassets/utlysninger/vedlegg-utlysninger/retningslinjer/retningslinjer---senter--for-barekraftig-areal--og-naturbruk-norsk.pdf)**.**

**The project description must cover the entire lifetime of the centre (8 years), but the Implementation section should clearly explain how the work will be divided into two phases (5 + 3 years) (see guidelines and the call text). The mandatory overall budget attachment should also reflect this.** This project description is not to exceed 20 pages, including the list of references. It is not possible to upload an attachment that exceeds this page total. The page format must be A4 with 2 cm margins, single spacing and Arial, Calibri or Times New Roman 11-point font. It is permitted to use 9-point font for the list of references and figure captions. Links that are listed in the project description will not be included in the assessment.

When submitting this project description in the RCN portal, please make sure all other mandatory and relevant attachment is submitted simultaneously: CV of the project manager, maximum 10 CVs of the most relevant project participants, letters of intent from the Project Owner's organisation, all registered partners and members of advisory/scientific/reference groups) and an overall budget. Templates for these attachments can be found on the call site.

### Centre title

Use the same title as in the application form.

### Excellence

This chapter should provide a description of the planned project to enable an assessment of its excellence, i.e., the quality/solidity and novelty/originality of the proposed work.

* 1. **State of the art, knowledge needs and objectives**
* Summarise briefly the national and international state-of-the-art of the relevant research topics. Describe how the proposed centre will generate new knowledge beyond the current state of the art, that will be significant for promoting scientific development in areas of relevance.
* Describe the societal/technological and/or innovational challenges the centre aims to address.
* Describe the underlying knowledge needs and the added value of having a research centre
* Describe how the centre will utilize existing knowledge in the field and how it will complement or strengthen ongoing administrative, regulatory, and political initiatives both nationally and internationally.
* Describe how the proposed centre will expand upon, complement or cooperate with other established centres or large-scale initiatives.
* Provide a primary objective for the centre. Provide a bullet list of verifiable secondary objectives that will lead to the achievement of the primary objective.
	1. **Research questions and hypotheses, theoretical approach and methodology**
* Identify and describe in detail the research questions and/or hypotheses. Describe the theoretical approach and/or methodology chosen to address the centre’s objectives, research questions and/or hypotheses.
* Describe the main research tasks and why they will be important for achieving the objectives of the centre and the objectives of the call.
* Describe how research activities at the centre will be organised, e.g., in work packages. Describe the scientific context between the work packages and how they will help achieve the overall goals of the proposed centre.
* Describe how the centre will ensure inter- and transdisciplinarity in both the approach to and the performance of its activities– how the centre will contribute to collaboration in research, and between research organizations, the public sector, industry, and other societal actors, across sectors, policy objectives, and administrative levels.
* Give a brief account of possible risks that might endanger achieving the objectives and describe how to manage these risks.
* Describe how relevant stakeholder/user knowledge will be involved/used.
* If relevant, describe how gender perspectives will be taken into account in the research content.
* If relevant, describe how potentially undesirable effects from carrying out the project, on human and animal health, climate and the environment and society at large, can be avoided.
	1. **Ethical issues**

All applicants are required to provide a brief description on how ethical issues will be dealt with, to ensure the panel that there is an appropriate plan for management of ethical issues. If a more detailed description is needed, this may be included in other sections of the project description, such as in the methods section or in the data management plan to be submitted if the project receives funding.

The responsibility for ensuring that the research ethics standard is followed lies with the individual researcher and research institution (cf. Research Ethics Act).

The panel's assessment and the Research Council's funding decision do not entail any research ethics approval. See more information and guidance on the following website: ethical standards in research.

* 1. **Novelty and ambition**
* Describe the potential for development of new knowledge beyond the current state of the art, including significant theoretical, methodological, experimental and/or empirical advancements.
* Highlight any particularly novel, original or ambitious aspects of the proposed centre, e.g., in the objectives, research questions/hypotheses, approaches and/or methodology.
* Describe how the centre will function as a cohesive and organizing force (a “hub”) for research within its defined scope.

**Excellence -** **please note:**

Provide enough detail to enable reviewers to understand what you are proposing, how it will be carried out and whether it is feasible.

Make sure that the theoretical approach and/or choice of methods is well accounted for and described in detail, and that it is clear how the methods are adequate for addressing the research questions, hypotheses, and centre objectives.

### Impact

This chapter should describe the importance of the anticipated results in terms of the potential academic impact and the potential societal and/or industrial impact of the research. The potential impact can be in the short and longer term. The chapter should also specify the planned measures for communication and exploitation of the centre results.

* 1. **Potential impact of the proposed research**
* Describe how the proposed centre will contribute to achieving the goals of a centre specified in the call with main emphasis on the contribution to enable Norway to meet challenges related to area and nature use and strengthen society's ability to solve complex problems.
* Describe how the proposed centre’s outputs may address important present and/or future scientific challenges and have an impact on the research area/field, if successful.
* Describe why and how the centre’s outputs, if successful, have the potential to meet societal, technological and/or innovational challenge(s).
* Describe why and how the centre output will promote future value creation in the public sector and/or civil society and/or in industry.
* Describe how the centre will contribute to long-term, national competence-building in the relevant areas, for instance through the development of cutting-edge expertise and expansion of the knowledge base (in public sector, industry and other societal actors), and enhanced researcher training (PhD students, postdocs) or development of relevant educational programmes (master’s/bachelor’s students etc.)
* Describe how to ensure reproducibility and the potential to reuse the centre’s outputs through open science practice such as FAIR data, software, models, algorithms, etc.
* Describe **how** new knowledge and centre outputs have the potential to address one or more of the [UN sustainable development goals](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/) (SDGs).
	1. **Measures for communication and exploitation**
* Describe the target audiences and stakeholders/users of the centre outputs (in and beyond the scientific community).
* Outline the scope and plan for dissemination, communication and engagement activities, including knowledge transfer to user partners and dissemination to the general public via popular science channels.
* Describe how the centre will play an active, innovative, and visible role in society by promoting research-based dissemination, dialogue, and debate.
* Describe how the centre will facilitate the use of results and knowledge, take an action-oriented approach, follow up on, and make research findings accessible (in and beyond the scientific sphere).
* Describe open science practices to ensure early and open sharing and wide distribution of research outputs.
* Describe how the stakeholders/users are involved in the dissemination and utilisation of the centre’s results.

**Impact - please note:**

The description of the potential impact should be centre specific and related to the planned research. General elaborations on the benefits of research in a wider context should be avoided.

[The 17 UN sustainable development goals (SDGs)](%28https%3A/www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/%29.) provide a global roadmap for a better future for all. Describe how the knowledge and outputs generated in this project can contribute to solving challenges and/or shed light on important issues related to one or more of the UN's sustainability goals.

### Implementation

This chapter should provide a description of the centre’s team and partners, task allocation, organisation and management.

* 1. **Centre manager and project group**
* Describe the expertise and experience, including experience in leading large-scale projects, of the centre manager in the context of the proposed centre to complement the information in the CV.
* Describe the management team.
* Availability and time planned to be spent on the tasks as project manager, work package managers and other key members of the centre management must be stated in the application, fill in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name  | Role in Centre | Availability | Time spent on centre |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

* Describe the project team, including collaborators, to complement the information in the CVs. In particular, describe the constellation and complementarity of the participants in the context of the proposed centre.
* Give an account of the qualifications and research capacity of the participating research organisations (including the project owner), as well as their national position in the field. Describe how the proposed centre conforms to these partners’ internal strategies and plans.
* Give an account of the qualifications and research capacity of user partners who will contribute with research performing activities.
	1. **Centre organisation and management**
* Describe the work plan using Gantt chart(s) or other visual representations of the plan.
* The tasks and objectives included in phase 1 (five first years of the centre period) and Phase 2 (three last years of the centre period) should be clearly reflected in work packages and in the visualisation of the work plan. The description provided here will form the basis for assessing the centre’s progress after Phase 1 (after 5 years). Please refer to the Guidelines for detailed information on centre phases.
* Describe the organisation and management structure for the proposed centre.
* Describe the allocation of tasks to the centre team members, linking the tasks to specific work packages.
* Describe the value added of organising the activities as a centre. Describe how the cooperation at the proposed centre will be organised and why this structure has been chosen.
* Describe the active role of each centre partner (research organisations and user partners) in the implementation and performance of the centre’s activities. Describe the expected contribution of the partners beyond financing. Describe how knowledge acquired through research activities at the centre will be transferred to the individual partners to stimulate innovation and create societal value.
* Describe plans for interaction at the centre as well as plans for exchange of researchers and other personnel among the research partners and user partners.
* Describe the roles, function and participation of potential reference groups, advisory and/or scientific boards.
	1. **International cooperation**
* Describe the centre’s objectives, targets and plans for international cooperation. Describe how the proposed centre will work to facilitate international research cooperation and how such cooperation will benefit its activities. Describe how the international cooperation in the centre will enhance the ability of the partners to create societal and business value, and innovation in Norway.
* Describe how the international partner(s) will help achieve the objectives of the centre and objectives in the call.
	1. **Researcher training and recruitment**
* Describe to what extent the centre will contribute to researcher training and describe and quantify the plans for researcher training (PhD students, postdocs) and other recruitment (master’s/bachelor’s students). Specify any name(s) of the educational institution(s).
	1. **Collaboration with other centres**
* Describe activities for coordination and collaboration with other centres that receive funding through this call and other relevant centres. Detailed plans for coordination and collaboration between the centres must be further developed during the application revision phase, following the decision regarding which centres will receive funding.

**Implementation - please note:**

Avoid repeating information already contained in the CVs. Focus on the concrete roles and tasks, and how the project team, including key collaborators, is suitable and adequate for the proposed centre.

The ambitions of the centre, described in chapter 1, should be realistic in terms of resources such as personnel, expertise, research infrastructure etc., described in this chapter.