

NordForsk

Webinar for applicants/reviewers in
the Nordic exploratory networks
within the humanities and social
sciences call about distributed peer
review 22.4.2026

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Joint Committee for Nordic research councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NOS-HS)

- ✓ Independent Research Fund Denmark
- ✓ Research Council of Finland
- ✓ Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNIS)
- ✓ Research Council of Norway
- ✓ Swedish Research Council

Funding 33 MNOK for approx. 22 networks (max. 1,5 MNOK / approx. 130 000 EUR for a single project).



DPR timeline:

15 April call closes

23–29 April
check of
potential
conflict of
interest

8 May – 16
June 2026
evaluation

Deadline for
submission of
assessment in
the application
portal: **16 June
2026**

What is distributed peer review?

- Applicants act as reviewers of the call. Those who seek funding also contribute to evaluation.
- DPR allocates the responsibility for evaluation across the applicant community.
- DPR draws on the expertise among the applicants, and by submitting an application, you also agreed to act as a reviewer.



Why DPR?

- Possibility to tackle some of the challenges related to the traditional panel review.
- Increases transparency by making the review structure, roles, and expectations clear in advance.
- Draws on broader range of disciplinary and methodological perspectives from the research community.
- Reduces time and cost compared to traditional panel-based peer review.
- Educational function: improves application quality over time + Learning effects: increases transparency in application review (“opens the black box”)



NOS-HS Call Terms and Conditions:

- By submitting a network proposal, applicants agree to act as peer reviewers and to have their proposal assessed by other applicants to the call.
- Each project leader will be assigned up to ten proposals to review.
- Some individual participants of the consortium may also be asked to carry out a limited number of reviews.
- Applicants who fail to complete and submit all assigned assessments by 16 June 2026 will have their proposal automatically rejected.
- If reviewer's assessment are found to be of consistently poor quality, their own proposal may be removed from the competition.



Review system

- DPR conducted using the NordForsk Application Portal.
- Emails from no-reply@nordforsk.org will notify you of the proposals assigned to you. Please log in to the [NordForsk application portal](#) and ensure you have access to applications and the assessment form.
- Clicking “Continue workflow” at the top of the review form, will submit your assessment. Further details on the portal’s functionality are available upon logging in.
- In case of technical difficulties, please contact NordForsk technical support: support@nordforsk.org



Rules and guidelines for reviewers:

- Throughout the entire review process, **you are expected to act in an ethical manner**. This includes maintaining confidentiality as well as ensuring that the feedback you provide on each assigned proposal is responsible and appropriate.
- Reviewers must carefully read all assigned proposals, evaluate and rank them, and provide written feedback that will be shared with the applicants, in accordance with the [Nordforsk funding guidelines](#) and the call specific rules and guidelines. Assessments must be submitted within the deadline set by NordForsk.



Rules and guidelines for reviewers:

- As a reviewer, you are required to submit your comments anonymously.
- The use of generative AI tools such as OpenAI ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, or others in the preparation of reviews is not allowed due to the confidentiality requirements of the review process.



Conflict of interest

- NordForsk will consider conflicts of interest when assigning proposals to reviewers.
- In the first stage of the DPR, reviewers will have the opportunity to identify and report any conflicts of interest. The reviewers may not have a vested interest in the applications or a close relationship with the applicants (see NordForsk's [Guidelines on Impartiality](#)).
- The declaration of conflicts of interest must not be used as a means of lowering the number of reviews you are required to complete within the specified deadline.



Guidelines for the written feedback

- Provide constructive feedback using clear, factual, and respectful language. **NB.** Your comments will be shared with applicants exactly as submitted, without any editing.
- All application materials and reviews are **confidential and must be handled, stored, and destroyed securely.**
- Reviewers must not disclose any information about the applications or the review process to third parties (if contacted don't engage).
- Misappropriating ideas, results, observations, or data from applications constitutes research misconduct.



Assessment criteria

- 1. Contribution to the aim and thematic framework of the call
- 2. Network quality
- 3. Nordic added value
- 4. Quality of the research team
- 5. Feasibility
- 6. Communication and dissemination
- 7. Overall grade

Grade for each criterion, with written feedback explaining the underlying strengths and weaknesses.



To write a review

- Begin by **carefully reading the aim and thematic framework of the call.**
- Focus on describing both the proposal's key strengths and weaknesses.
- Be concise + Do not summarise the application. Instead, provide evaluative comments.
- Always use appropriate and respectful language.



To write a review

- Be objective: Keep your evaluation impartial. Comment on the proposal as specifically as possible and avoid general or vague remarks that could apply to almost any proposal.
- Tactical scoring(!): Proposals will be assigned to reviewers in a way that a **reviewer's assessment of other applications has no influence on the outcome of their own proposal.**
- Proposals are divided into two separate application pools, which do not compete with each other. Reviewers are likewise divided into two groups. Reviewers' evaluations are independent of the funding allocation in their own pool.



The NordForsk grading scale

- 7 Outstanding: Exceptionally strong application with negligible weaknesses. The proposal makes an outstanding contribution to the aims of the initiative.
- 6 Excellent: Very strong application with negligible weaknesses. The proposal makes an excellent contribution to the aims of the initiative.
- 5 Very good: Very good application with minor weaknesses. The proposal makes a significant contribution to the aims of the initiative.
- 4 Good: Good applications with some weaknesses. The proposal makes a good contribution to the aims of the initiative.
- 3 Fair: Some strengths, but also moderate weaknesses. The proposal makes some contribution to the aims of the initiative.
- 2 Weak: A few strengths, but with at least one major weakness or several minor weaknesses. The proposal makes limited contribution to the aims of the initiative.
- 1 Poor: Very few strengths, several major weaknesses. The proposal makes little or no contribution to the aims of the initiative.



After completing your reviews

- Read carefully through all your comments. If they do not seem helpful and constructive to the applicant, revise them.
- Ensure that the strengths and weaknesses you mention align with the quality reflected in the score. Avoid situations where no weaknesses are identified despite assigning a low score.
- Remember to submit your evaluations before the deadline.



**Thank you,
Kiitos,
Tack!**

Further questions: NOSHS26-QA@nordforsk.org

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