

NordForsk call webinar Sustainable Futures of Forests 3.3.2025

FAQ

Question: Is the requirement of having 2 to 7 years of post-PhD experience absolutely mandatory, with precise month-to-month accuracy? Are there any extenuating circumstances that are taken into account, such as mobility periods for scientists returning to their home countries or temporary research breaks before securing their first research grants for new emerging groups?

Answer: See call text: *Eligible researchers must have completed their PhD between two and seven years before the deadline for this call, 27 May 2025. Any deductible time must be stated in the application form. The PhD age is calculated as the period of time between acquiring the PhD (the date as it appears on the PhD diploma) and the date of the application deadline.*

Consideration will be given to leaves of absence such as parental leave, illness, family care leave, military service, humanitarian aid work, etc.

Moreover, consideration will be given in cases of significant career-relevant circumstances, that can be considered a necessary step in a career path, but during which the time for research has been very limited.

Leaves of absence, which the applicants request to be taken into consideration, must be documented upon request. The actual number of weeks of leave will be deducted from the applicant's PhD age. The period of leave of absence, including exact starting and ending dates, must be stated in the candidate's CV.

Question: Can business clusters be partners together with research partners in a project?

Answer: See call text:

1. *The host institution (project owner) for the research project must be an established research-performing organisation such as a university, university college, or research institute based in one of the countries co-funding the call: Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Sweden.*
2. *Other provisions for participation from non-research organisations*

In addition to the participation from research-performing organisations requested above, non-research organisations may participate as partners in the project and receive funding to deliver other project activities. Consortia partners are partners necessary for implementing the proposed research project and all partners must sign a collaboration agreement. NordForsk funding may not be used to support economic activities, which is defined as all activity where goods or services are offered on an open market. Organisations pursuing both non-economic and economic activities must have a formal separation in place between economic and non-economic activities. This may be achieved by either organising the economic activities as a separate legal entity or by keeping separate accounts for economic and non-economic activities. Funding for an assignment will be awarded as de minimis aid.

Question: What is the timeline of decision making?

Answer: *The NordForsk administration assumes that the funding decisions are ready by December 2025*

Question: If a company is included in the project, can they get any finance or they should contribute with their own finance?

Answer: See the call text: Other provisions for participation from non-research organisations

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See also Annex 1 for Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Swedish special conditions.

Question: I am wondering how to involve Nordic partners (e.g., Iceland or Denmark) even though their research councils are not contributing to this call. Could they be full partners or would they need to be subcontractors?

Answer: See the call text: *The consortium must include research-performing organisations* from at least four Nordic or Baltic countries of which two must be Nordic countries. Nordic countries are defined here as Åland, Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.*

Question: I am not sure if it is specified in Annex 1, can you explain shortly how the money is divided between partners if the leader is in FI, and partners in SE, NO, LV?

Answer: *The maximum amount to apply is 11 million NOK. See Annex 1 for limits for Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Swedish researchers.*

Question: About the newness of the team: what if the researchers in one organization have collaborated before, but not with the partners in the project? So there is a new project level collaboration, but not within a research organisation.

Answer: See the call text: *Novelty of the research team, which should involve at least one new research partner who has not previously collaborated with other consortium members and who is from a different academic discipline than the other members of the consortium. The partner is considered as a person.*

Question: Can some of the applied money be budgeted for research institution overheads? In some Nordic countries, research institutions don't allow you to apply from them unless you can guarantee a certain proportion of the project funding can be allocated to cover admin costs related to job contracts or generic lab bench fees?

Answer: See the call text under Financial framework:

Funding may be used for costs that are necessary for the implementation of the project, such as:

- *Indirect costs and overheads*

Question: Is co-financing required? Or is it 100%?

Answer: *No co-financing is required, funding is 100%*

Question: Is requirement for 2-7 years after PhD only for main applicant? If it is not Norway/Finland does it mean that it should be two researchers with 2-7?

Answer: *This requirement applies to project leaders. Keep in mind, that it is not enough to fulfill the eligibility criteria. One of the evaluation criteria is how the proposal addresses the aims of the call. One of the aims are "The purpose of this call is to improve the skills and abilities of early-career scientists in forest-related research in the Nordic and Baltic countries"*

Question: The call seems to encourage interdisciplinary research. I am wondering if participants in this call are interested in collaborating in sharing our research areas, thus enabling collaboration that can stimulate cutting edge research.

Answer: *The NordForsk administration has a page where you can share your interests and contact information. Join the contact list by filling in [this brief form](#).*

Question: "The project leader must be a qualified early-career researcher (PhD) with at least 2 but not more than 7 years of experience since completing their PhD. ... Consideration will be given in cases of significant career-relevant circumstances, that can be considered a necessary step in a career path, but during which the time for research has been very limited."

Could you elaborate on what kind circumstances are taken into account and in what extent?

Answer: *Please see the call text and document accordingly:*

Leaves of absence, which the applicants request to be taken into consideration, must be documented upon request. The actual number of weeks of leave will be deducted from the applicant's PhD age. The period of leave of absence, including exact starting and ending dates, must be stated in the candidate's CV.

Question: Can the government department be involved in giving social impact opinions? Do they also need to be contractors?

Answer: *State actors are considered stakeholders and can also be partners, but not always.*

Question: Which e-mail to reach Thorbjorn Gilberg with any followup questions?

Answer: thorbjorn.gilberg@nordforsk.org

Question: How can we involve researchers from Nordic partners (e.g., Iceland or Denmark) whose research councils are not contributing to this call. Could they be full partners or would they need to be subcontractors?

Answer: *The Icelandic and Danish partners are fully financed but they cannot be project leaders.*

Question: The aim of the call seemed clear from the point of view of "forging new collaborations within the Nordics and Baltic region," but things weren't very specific from a "science" perspective as the call text was very broad. Is the idea of this call more about "networking" and "career development"? Is there any examples of previous successfully funded projects?

Answer: *The call is as described in the call text. We do not have any examples that suit this call.*

Question: Is there a link, from which we can check in which formats the documents are needed and what elements they should contain?

Answer: *Yes, there is an application preview form here:*
<https://funding.nordforsk.org/portal/#call/3765/details>

Question: Is there a specific meaning of "a research project that focuses on a specific forest research theme"? Is a forest research theme a disciplinary one? Or something like 'climate change' or 'forest cultures'?

Answer: *The theme is defined by the applicant.*