

# Nordic-Baltic education systems and 21st century challenges



NordForsk webinar – 11 February 2026



# Call overview



- Application deadline: **22 April 2026, 13:00 (CEST/Oslo Time)**
- The intention is to fund **5 research projects** under this call.
- Applicants can choose to apply as a **Nordic research project or Nordic-Baltic research project.**
- **Funding decision:** December 2026
- **Project start:** Q1 2027 (project duration: 3 years)



# Funding partners

- Independent Research Fund Denmark
- The Research Council of Finland
- Research Council Faroe Islands
- Rannís Iceland
- The Research Council of Norway
- The Swedish Research Council
- Estonian Research Council
- Research Council of Lithuania
- NordForsk



# Background

- Strong Nordic–Baltic tradition of state-funded education
- Similar systems, different outcomes (achievement, equity, mobility)
- Comparative research helps explain why outcomes diverge
- Nordic/Baltic perspective offers high policy relevance

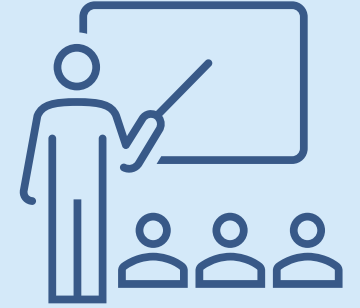


# Why this call now?

- Growing challenges:
  - Democratic resilience & societal polarisation
  - New forms of exclusion linked to migration, inequality, and digital divides
- Rapid technological change (digitalisation, AI)
- Education systems must adapt while preserving equity and inclusion



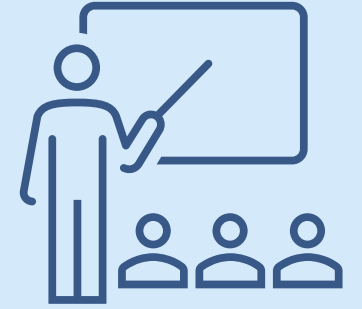
# Aim of the call



- Explore how education can contribute to resilient, equitable, future-ready societies
- Generate new knowledge on Nordic and Baltic education systems
- Strengthen:
  - Nordic and Nordic-Baltic position in educational research
  - Cross-national collaboration
  - knowledge-based policy across the Nordic and/or Baltic countries
  - Dissemination to decision-makers and stakeholders



# Thematic areas



- Democracy, integration, inclusion and/or exclusion in education
- The impact of emerging and/or disruptive technologies in education, including digital tools and AI
- Organisation of educational systems, teacher education, and/or continuous education, competence development and upskilling for teachers
- This call includes research on Nordic and Nordic-Baltic educational systems spanning from early childhood education and care to higher education and lifelong learning.



# Cross-cutting priorities

- **Early-career researchers**
  - Active roles in the project and support their career development
- **Interdisciplinarity**
  - Integration of multiple disciplines
- **Societal engagement and impact**
  - Stakeholder involvement
  - Policy and practice relevance

**Early-career researchers:**  
*PhD awarded no more than seven years prior to the application deadline.*





# Nordic or Nordic-Baltic Added Value



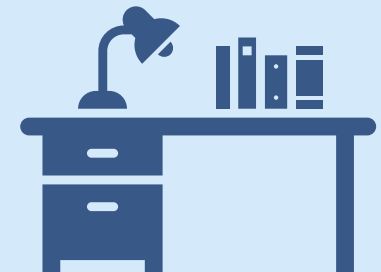
- Applicants must clearly demonstrate Nordic or Nordic-Baltic added value
- Proposals should reflect on how they produce:
  - Added value that contributes mainly to the research ecosystem
  - Added value that contributes to society



# Application process

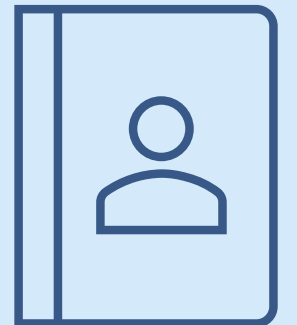
Submission deadline:  
22 April, 13:00 CEST

- Call text: [NordForsk website](#).
- Applications must be submitted in the NordForsk Application Portal
- Applicants must ensure that they fulfil the eligibility criteria described in the call text
- Estonian and Lithuanian researchers: Eligibility criteria in annex 1 in the call text
- Peer review by expert panel: grades from 1 (*poor*) to 7 (*outstanding*)
- Assessment by Call Committee
- Funding decision: December 2026

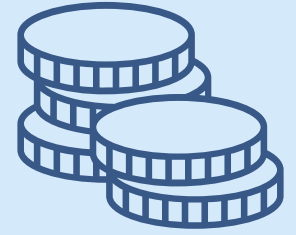


# Contact list

- If you would like to connect with other researchers interested in this call, we invite you to join our contact list.
- Complete [this survey](#) before March 22, 2026, and you will be added to a list where your contact information will be shared with other researchers interested in participating in this call, and their information will be shared with you.



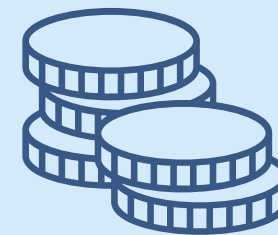
# Total available funding



- Nordic funds: NOK 65 million
- Estonian funds: EUR 600 000
- Lithuanian funds: EUR 300 000
- The intention is to fund 5 research projects under this call.



# Funding per project



- Amount of funding that may be sought to Nordic partners in a project: up to 13 MNOK
- Amount that may be sought by Estonian partners in a project: up to 150-300 000 EUR (depending on role and composition of consortium)
- Amount that may be sought by Lithuanian partners in a project: up to 150-250 000 EUR (depending on role and composition of consortium)
- Own contribution from the consortium is optional



# NordForsk eligibility criteria 1/3

**The research consortium must include:**

- research performing organisations from at least three Nordic countries

**OR**

- research performing organisations from at least two Nordic countries and one research performing organisation in Estonia or Lithuania.

**The host institution (Project Owner):** must be an established research performing organisation, based in one of the countries co-funding the call:  
*Denmark, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Estonia, or Lithuania.*



# NordForsk eligibility criteria 2/3

- **The project leader** (i.e. coordinator of the transnational project) must be a qualified researcher (PhD) and be employed by the host institution (Project Owner) for the duration of the project.
- **Nordic and Estonian researchers** may participate in multiple applications under this call, but a researcher may serve as **project leader for only one application** under this call (i.e. coordinator of the transnational project).
- **Lithuanian project partners or project leaders** (i.e., *pagrindinis projekto vykdytojas*) may apply for **only one proposal** under this call.
- **Please consult annex 1** for special requirements for Estonian and Lithuanian researchers.
- **A signed Letter of Commitment** from the Project owner



# NordForsk eligibility criteria 3/3

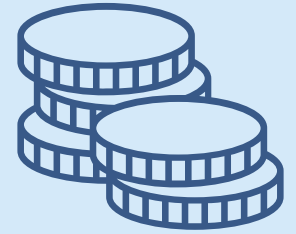
- If the project owner is based in Estonia or Lithuania, the project must appoint a **Nordic co-host organisation in either Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Norway, or Sweden**. NordForsk will enter into a contract with the co-host organisation concerning the Nordic part of the project.
  - A person must be appointed from the co-host organisation to serve as NordForsk's administrative contact person. The Nordic contact person must be a qualified researcher (PhD).
- NordForsk cannot co-fund projects that collaborate with the Russian Federation or Belarus under this call.





# Eligible costs

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

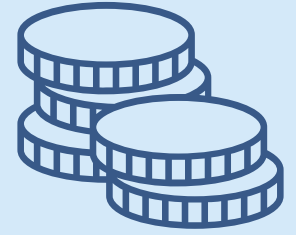


- Salaries of researchers corresponding to the person's activity level in the project
- PhD and post-doctoral positions corresponding to the person's activity level in the project, and not covering salary during teaching or other departmental duties
- Running costs (data collection and analysis, consumables, minor equipment, premises)
- Mobility and research stays, travels
- Dissemination, outreach, and knowledge exchange activities (including open access charges)
- Stakeholder involvement/activities
- Indirect costs and overhead

**Estonian and Lithuanian researchers:**  
Please also consult annex 1 in the call text for eligible costs.



# Indirect costs and overhead



## Nordic researchers:

- NordForsk does not apply any fixed rate or model for calculating indirect costs for research projects with Nordic partners.
- Such costs should be determined by the participating institutions according to their own rules and models, and applicants are advised to consult these for further guidelines.

## Estonian and Lithuanian researchers:

- Please consult Annex 1 in the call text for indirect costs (overhead) rates.



# Assessment criteria

- Contribution to call aims
- Scientific quality
- Nordic or Nordic-Baltic added value
- Quality of the research team
- Feasibility
- Communication and dissemination



# Questions after this webinar?



Please contact:

**education-qa@nordforsk.org**

- Questions and answers will be anonymized and published on the [NordForsk call page](#).
- We update the Questions & answers section continuously, and you will shortly find a reply to your question below.



# Q/A session

