

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



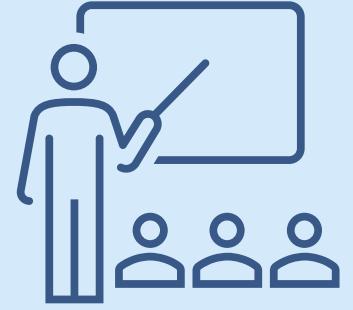
Why this call now?

- 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

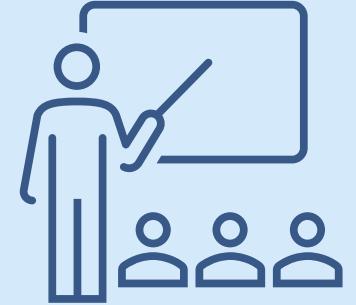


Aim of the call

- 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

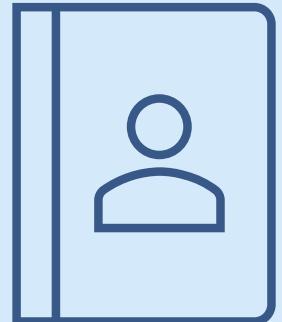
Submission deadline:
22 April, 13:00 CEST

- 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

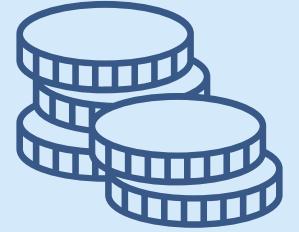


Contact list

- 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.



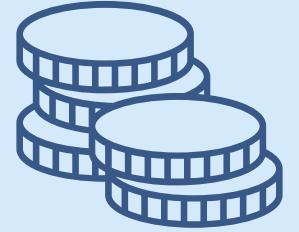
Total available funding



- 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



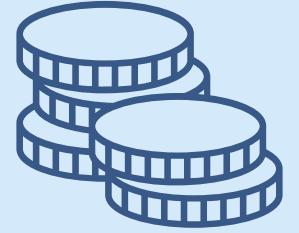
NordForsk eligibility criteria 3/3

- 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:

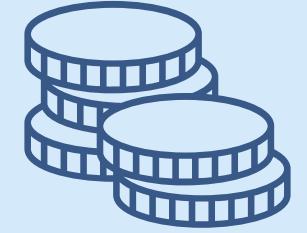


- Salaries of researchers corresponding to the person's activity level in the project
- PhD and post-doctoral positions corresponding to the person's activity level in the project, and not covering salary during teaching or other departmental duties
- Running costs (data collection and analysis, consumables, 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

