

## Call for applications 2018 Two-year project funding

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### 1 INVITATION

The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) is pleased to issue this call for applications for funding under the UTFORSK Partnership Programme.

UTFORSK is a measure under the Norwegian Government's strategy [\*Panorama\*](#), targeting cooperation on higher education and research with Brazil, China, India, Japan, Russia and South Africa. The overall aim of the programme is to improve the quality of higher education by establishing and strengthening partnerships between higher education institutions in Norway and the partner countries.

The applicant must be an accredited Norwegian higher education institution. Academic and non-academic partners in Norway and the partner countries can be included in the projects, but applications must include at least one partner that is an accredited higher education institution in one of the partner countries.

UTFORSK is funded by the Ministry of Education and Research and is administered by SIU.

The call is open to **two-year project cooperation** with a project period from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2020. The final deadline for submitting applications is **25 September 2018, at 15:00 Norwegian time**. The applications should be prepared jointly by the applicant institution in Norway and the partner institution(s).

The total funds made available in this call are 5 million Norwegian kroner (NOK). Each application may be awarded up to NOK 300 000.

Below you will find more information on the objectives and funding framework of the programme, eligibility requirements and selection criteria, and an outline of the administrative process of project selection under the programme.

## **2 OBJECTIVES AND FUNDING FRAMEWORK OF THE CALL**

### **2.1 Objectives**

The **overall aim** of the programme is to improve the quality of higher education. The programme shall lead to establishment and strengthening of partnerships between higher education institutions in Norway and the partner countries, through:

- development and implementation of joint educational activities;
- increased mobility of students between Norway and the partner countries, including mobility in connection with internships / work placements;
- increased integration of higher education and research in the collaboration between Norway and the partner countries;
- increased involvement of non-academic partners (industry, companies, organisations, etc.) in relevant project activities.

### **2.2 Expected project results**

Applicants are requested to describe the expected results of the project as specifically as possible. SIU will monitor project results and the degree to which project activities contribute to achieve the objectives of the programme. Project results that may contribute to achieve the objectives of the programme include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing joint study programmes and joint degrees between partners
- Jointly developed courses embedded in study programmes at the institutions
- Jointly developed educational tools, methodology, curriculum or services etc.
- Joint implementation of educational activities
- Internationalisation at home
- Credit transfer for students participating in educational activities at collaborating institutions
- Formalised knowledge exchange between higher education institutions and non-academic partners
- Increased student mobility between Norway and the partner countries (for less or more than three months) within the framework of the partnership
- Student participation in work placements abroad (internships / vocational practice training), within the framework of the partnership
- Dissemination activities

### 2.3 Project funding and activities

Each application may be awarded up to NOK 300 000. SIU may reduce the amount awarded based on an assessment of the merits of the individual applications.

The project budget included in the application form shall only include funds applied for through this call.

Support may be granted to activities that contribute to achieve the overall aim and objectives of the programme. Applicants should design their projects in the way they consider best suited to achieve the overall aim and objectives of the programme.

Activities may include all levels of higher education (Bachelor, Master and PhD), all fields of education, and involve multiple fields and disciplines.

Projects are encouraged to include plans for increasing student mobility of minimum 3 months' duration both within and beyond the project period.

The project may include funds for salaries and indirect expenses (including administration and overhead), limited to 20 per cent of the total allocation. The funds may be shared between the applicant and the project partners.

**Please note** that investment in scientific equipment and infrastructure is not an eligible cost and may not be included in the application. The same applies to costs related to research activities *not clearly linked to* educational activities.

For more information on eligible project activities, please see the attached "Guidelines for applicants".

## 3 ELIGIBILITY & SELECTION CRITERIA

### 3.1 Eligibility criteria

In order to be eligible, applications must meet the following requirements:

- The **applicant** must be an accredited Norwegian higher education institution
- The application must include at least one **partner** that is an accredited higher education institution in Brazil, China, India, Japan, Russia or South Africa providing accredited education programmes that are relevant to the proposal and at a level equivalent to that offered at the Norwegian applicant institution.
- A **curriculum vitae** (CV) for the project coordinator must be uploaded.

- Applications must be written in English and be submitted fully completed, including attachments, through SIU's online platform for applications and reporting ([Espresso](#)) within the call's final deadline.
- All **project activities** described in the application must be completed within the project period defined under item 1 above.

**Please note** that failure to meet the above requirements will lead to dismissal of the application.

### 3.2 Selection criteria

The eligible applications' relative strength will be assessed on the degree to which they are deemed able to meet the following selection criteria:

- The project's relevance to the overall aim and objectives of the programme.
- The quality of the project design, including:
  - the application's overall clarity and quality
  - correspondence between project goals, proposed activities, budget allocations and expected project results
  - demonstration of cost-effectiveness
  - the sustainability of the project results
  - the project's feasibility
  - potential for increasing student mobility of minimum 3 months' duration
- The quality of the partnership, including:
  - complementarity, experience and expertise of the project team
  - level of formalised commitment
  - potential for long-term collaboration between the partners
  - level and quality of involvement of non-academic partners

SIU presumes that all projects adhere to a high ethical standard in research and higher education. SIU emphasises the importance of gender equality, inclusive practices and anti-corruption measures in all project activities.

**Please note** that these criteria correspond to various compulsory fields in the online Espresso application form, and that the application's ability to meet these relative criteria will be assessed on the basis of the description provided. In order to ensure coherence and a logical order in the description of your project, please read the relevant help texts in the online application form as well as the "Guidelines for applicants" carefully. Remaining questions may be directed to SIU.

## **4 COMPOSITION OF THE PARTNERSHIP**

The application may include higher education institutions, public or private enterprises, research institutes, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or other organisations in Norway or abroad as partners. At least one partner must be an accredited higher education institution outside Norway (cf. item 3.1 above).

## **5 ATTACHMENTS**

In addition to a CV for the project coordinator (cf. item 3.1 above), applications should include **Letters of Commitment** from all partners, documenting interest in and commitment to the project by leadership at relevant level. The Letters of Commitment will be assessed as part of the application. Applications without such letters from partners are at a competitive disadvantage, but are still eligible. Other types of attachments will not be taken into consideration.

## **6 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS**

### **6.1 Assessment of applications and response to applicants**

Each application will be assessed by a panel of reviewers from SIU on the basis of its individual merits with regard to the selection criteria set out above (item 3.2), and its relative standing to other competing applications. Applications will be evaluated on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

Grant allocation decisions are made by SIU, based on the selection criteria set out above. As part of the assessment, SIU may also take into consideration the geographic, academic and/or institutional distribution of the projects.

In case the applicant has received a similar grant from SIU in recent years, SIU may also take into consideration past performance, such as quality in the implementation of the previous project(s) and financial management.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the application process, tentatively in December 2018.

### **6.2 Contract and reporting obligations**

The applicant will be required to enter into a contract with SIU. The contract will be subject to SIU's standard terms and conditions, and must be signed by a representative holding the requisite authority to legally bind the applicant. The obligations on part of the applicant include a duty to submit progress reports, project accounts, and a final report upon completion of the project.

Until a binding contract has been entered into, SIU reserves the right to at any time revisit any evaluation and decision on the basis of newly discovered facts which may adversely affect the planned implementation of a project.

## **7 CONTACT INFORMATION**

For further information on the programme or how to apply, please contact SIU by email ([utforsk@siu.no](mailto:utforsk@siu.no)) or by telephone (+47 55 30 38 00).

## Appendix 1 – Guidelines for applicants 2018

### INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines are designed to aid applicants in preparing their applications for 2-year funding under the UTFORSK Partnership Programme.

Applications must be submitted via SIU's online system for applications and reporting, *Espresso*. Espresso may be accessed at [espresso.siu.no](https://espresso.siu.no), where the application forms are available in English. New users will be required to create a personal user account via the "Register" link on the login page. Existing users may use their existing user name and password. If you have forgotten your password, please follow the "New password" link on the login page. Once you are logged in, you will have access to the calls for applications currently available from SIU.

**Please note** that applications submitted in other formats will not be considered by SIU.

You can at any point before submission save your application and continue at a later stage. Remember to submit before the application deadline. If you need to make changes after submission, please refer to the guidelines under the "Submission" section below.

These guidelines follow the same structure as the online application form in Espresso, and are therefore divided into the following sections: "Start", "Applicant and partners", "Project description", "Budget", "Preview", "Confirmation" and "Submission". Detailed information on the budget is presented in the *Budget guidelines* in Appendix 2.

For further information on the programme or how to apply, please contact SIU by email ([utforsk@siu.no](mailto:utforsk@siu.no)) or by telephone (+47 55 30 38 00).

## **START**

### **Project number**

The project number is the identification key for your individual project proposal. The number is automatically generated by the Espresso system.

### **Project title**

The project title will follow your application throughout the lifetime of the project, from start-up until completion. It should therefore be designed to give a short and informative description of the project.

### **Project editor access**

Project editor access is access to edit the contents of your application. As a default, the editor access rests with the project coordinator. The project coordinator may grant editor access to up to four other registered Espresso users.

### **Project read access**

Project read access is access to view the contents of your application (including attachments), but not to edit its contents. The project coordinator may grant read access to an unrestricted number of other registered Espresso users.

## **APPLICANT AND PARTNERS**

### **A.1 | Applicant**

#### **Institution**

In this field, provide the name of the applicant institution. The applicant must be an accredited Norwegian higher education institution. Eligible partner institutions in Norway are retrieved via the search function. Please contact SIU if you do not find your institution via the search function.

#### **Department**

Please select the unit (department level or above) where the project will be administratively located. If you do not find the unit in the list, you can register it by pressing "Add new unit". To update the contact information for the unit, press "Update unit". If multiple departments/units will be involved in the project implementation, please choose the department most involved with the implementation of the project.

### **Head of department**

In this field, you are asked to provide the name of the head of the department/unit where the project will be administratively located.

### **Project coordinator**

This field asks for the name and relevant information of the project coordinator at the applicant institution. Please note that a *curriculum vitae* (CV) is mandatory for the project coordinator, and must be uploaded as an attachment in section A.5 of the application form. The CV should not be longer than 4 pages.

## **A.2 | Partners**

Please list the partner(s) in the project by clicking “Add new partner”. At least one partner must be an accredited higher education institution in one of the UTFORSK partner countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and Japan). Other partners may be other higher education institutions, public or private enterprises, research institutes, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or other organisations in Norway or the UTFORSK partner countries.

If the relevant partner is not found via the search function, you may add the partner by pressing the “Add Institution” button. Please make sure that the partner’s name is correctly spelled if you add a new partner. A contact person must be provided for each partner in the project.

## **A.3 | Participants in the project**

In this section, applicants should provide a list of all academic and administrative staff and other participants who will actively contribute to the project in addition to the project coordinator and contact person(s) for the partner(s) in the project. The project coordinator and contact person(s) already registered in sections A.1 and A.2 do need not to be included here.

The persons listed under A.3 will, together with the project coordinator and contact person(s) for the partner(s) in the project, constitute the project team. In the project description, you will be asked to explain the complementarity, experience, expertise and gender ratio of the project team.

The size and composition of the project team will vary from project to project depending on the size and the nature of the project. The team should be composed in a way that enables you to reach the goals of your project.

#### **A.4 | Fields of education and training**

Please list the fields of education and training to which the project is related. This information will be used by SIU for statistical purposes. The list is based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED F2013).

#### **A.5 | Attachments**

The following attachments **must** be uploaded before submitting the application:

- *A curriculum vitae (CV)* for the project coordinator. Applications without CV for the project coordinator will not be processed. The CV should not be longer than 4 pages.
- *Letters of Commitment* from partners, documenting interest in and commitment to the partnership by leadership at the relevant level. The letters of commitment will be assessed as part of the application. Applications without such letters from partners are at a competitive disadvantage, but are still eligible.

**Other types of attachments will not be taken into consideration.**

All attachments must be uploaded in an appropriate format (e.g. pdf., doc., docx. or jpg.).

##### *What is a letter of commitment?*

A letter of commitment is a formal document where a partner commits itself to participate in and contribute to the project. It should contain information that is as specific as possible with regard to what resources (funds, work hours, equipment, premises, etc.) the partner will contribute to the project. It should be signed by a person authorised to enter into such commitments on behalf of the institution or organisation. This may be a Head of Department, a Dean of the Faculty, a leader of an organisation, a Director (one of a group of senior managers who run a company), or another person authorised to enter into such commitments.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **B.1 | Project summary**

Please provide a short summary of your project in this section. The summary should mention:

- the goals and expected results of the project
- the main activities in the project
- the institutions and partners involved in the project

The summary will be published in [SIU's project database](#) and will be publicly available on SIU's website if the project is supported. It may also be used by SIU in reports and publications related to the programme.

*Character limit: 2 000*

### **B.2 | Information on the partnership**

#### **History of cooperation**

Please give a brief description of the history of cooperation between the participating institutions in this field.

If relevant, please include information on ongoing or previous research collaboration between the participating institutions.

*Character limit: 2 000*

#### **Previous and parallel funding**

Is the proposed project related to any projects currently or previously funded by SIU or other funding agencies? If yes, please briefly describe the project(s) and include project identification numbers.

#### **Current applications**

Have the participating institutions applied for funding for any of the activities listed in this application through other programmes administered by SIU or other funding agencies? If yes, please list the relevant programmes.

#### **Composition of the project team**

Please describe briefly the complementarity, experience, expertise and gender ratio of the project team.

The team should be composed in a way that enables you to reach the goals of your project. The size and composition of the project team will vary from project to project depending on the size and the nature of the project.

*Character limit: 2 000*

### **B.3 | Description of the project**

#### **Goals and expected results**

The goals of your project, as well as what results are expected during the project and on its completion, should be explained in this field. You should also explain how the results of the project will be sustained after the project period.

*Character limit: 3 000*

#### **Current situation**

Please describe the current situation, which the project is designed to change or improve. If relevant, you may include baseline data here.

*Character limit: 2 000*

#### **Work plan and timeline**

The work plan and timeline should outline all of the activities that you need to carry out in order to reach the goals of your project. The work plan and timeline should have each activity listed (by order of start date) and outline how the tasks and responsibilities will be distributed among the partners.

*Character limit: 3 000*

#### **Risk assessment**

Please give a brief assessment of potential risks and difficulties that may impede a successful implementation of the project. For each risk you identify you should also outline what measures you plan to avoid or mitigate the effects of the risk.

Examples of potential risks are difficulties related to recruitment of students and staff, time constraints, language and cultural barriers, corruption or mismanagement of funds, etc.

*Character limit: 2 000*

## **B.4 | Standard indicators**

### **Student mobility**

Please provide information about planned mobility of students during the project period. Press "Add mobility" to register the expected number of mobilities.

Long-term and short-term mobility to and from Norway should be registered separately. Please register mobility of 3 months' duration or longer as "Long-term (3 months or more)".

If your project is awarded funding, the data you provide here will be used by SIU to monitor the progress of your project and to generate aggregated data on a programme level.

### **Joint development of courses and degree programmes**

Please provide information about new courses or degree programmes to be developed through the project. Press "Add course" to register a course or programme.

Summer schools should also be included. Existing courses or degree programmes that will be revised as a result of the collaboration should also be registered.

If your project is awarded funding, the data you provide here will be used by SIU to monitor the progress of your project and to generate aggregated data on a programme level.

## **BUDGET**

Detailed information on the budget is presented in the *Budget guidelines* in Appendix 2.

### **Specification of budget items**

The budget shall only include the funds you apply for from SIU for your project. Please specify each of the budget items. Be as specific as possible, detailing how you plan to spend the funds you apply for and how you have estimated the costs.

The aggregate cost of salaries, remuneration of consultants, honorariums and indirect costs cannot exceed 20 per cent of the amount you apply for. The funds may be shared between the applicant and the partners, based on agreement between the institutions. Please specify how these costs have been calculated and how many months of work will be carried out by whom on the basis of the budgeted costs.

*Character limit: 3 000*

## **PREVIEW**

Press the buttons to get a print preview of the application or download a PDF version of it.

## **CONFIRMATION**

Prior to submission of the application, the applicant is required to confirm the following:

- That a CV for the project coordinator has been uploaded.
- If letters of commitment from partners have been uploaded (not obligatory, but will be assessed as part of the application).
- That the information provided in the application is in all respects correct and that the application is approved at the appropriate administrative and academic levels at the applicant institution.

## **SUBMISSION**

When you have completed your application and are ready to submit, press the “Submit application” button.

If any of the required fields in previous sections have not been filled in, you will have to go back to the relevant section and complete these fields before you can submit your application.

If you need to make changes to the application after submission, you may do so up to the final deadline. Please request that SIU reopens the application by sending an email to [utforsk@siu.no](mailto:utforsk@siu.no). Please allow sufficient time for SIU to respond to this request. SIU cannot guarantee that requests made on the day of the submission deadline will be responded to with sufficient time to make the changes and resubmit. If an application is not resubmitted before the deadline, it is considered not received by SIU and will not be processed.

## **Appendix 2 – Budget guidelines**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Project budgets will be assessed on basis of their cost-effectiveness and reasonableness. The official Norwegian travel regulations (*Statens reiseregulativ*) will be used as a starting point in SIU's assessment of the reasonableness of budgeted travel and accommodation costs. Where available, moderately priced alternatives for travel and accommodation must be chosen.

Please explain the budgeted amounts as necessary in the field *Specification of budget items* in the application form. The budget shall only include the funds you apply for from SIU for your project. Please specify each of the budget items. Be as specific as possible, detailing how you plan to spend the funds you apply for and how you have estimated the costs.

### **STUDENT MOBILITY**

The tables below describe eligible costs that may be included in project applications with regard to incoming/outgoing student mobility related to each of the eligible levels of education (Bachelor/Master/PhD).

The rates for student accommodation and living costs are based on rates and net amounts paid out to students from the State Educational Loan Fund (Bachelor/Master) and the Norwegian Research Council (PhD). The rates cover the individual student's costs, and additional funding for dependents/family members may not be included in the budget. As the relevant rates are adjusted annually according to the retail price inflation, the rates may be adjusted accordingly for coming years.

Travel, visa and insurance costs incurred in connection with student mobility may be supported if not covered by funding attainable from the State Education Loan Fund or other external funding sources.

**Please ensure that the project budget distinguishes between mobility up to 4 weeks and mobility exceeding 4 weeks.**

### Student mobility up to 4 weeks

	Bachelor, Master and PhD
To/from Norway	Project applications may include accommodation and living costs for students related to the planned project activities (e.g. intensive courses, field work, workshops, supervision, research activities, excursions, work placements, etc).

### Student mobility exceeding 4 weeks

	Bachelor/Master	PhD
To Norway	<p>Project applications may include scholarships to students from the partner countries.</p> <p>The scholarships are meant to cover accommodation and living costs in Norway. The scholarships may not exceed the applicable rate set by the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (<i>Lånekassen</i>). In 2017/18, the monthly rate is NOK 10 634.</p>	<p>Project applications may include accommodation and living costs associated with the PhD students stay in Norway up to the applicable monthly rate set by the Norwegian Research Council (<a href="#">Overseas Research Grants</a>) for individuals. In 2018 the rate is NOK 17 000. Additional grants for dependents are not given.</p>
From Norway	<p>Project applications may include scholarships to cover costs which are not covered by student funding attainable from the State Educational Loan Fund. Such extra costs are limited to <b>NOK 6 000 per student per month</b>. These rates also apply to international mobility for work placements.</p>	<p>Project applications may include specified cost items which are not covered by other external funding, up to the applicable monthly rate set by the Norwegian Research Council (<a href="#">Overseas Research Grants</a>) for individuals. In 2018 the rate is NOK 17 000. Additional grants for dependents are not given.</p>

### Travel costs for staff

Projects may include reasonable travel costs and expenses for academic and administrative staff related to the project activities. Please note the general guidelines set out above regarding reasonableness and cost levels.

### Infrastructure and scientific equipment

Please note that investments in scientific equipment and infrastructure may not be included in the application. The same applies to costs related to research activities *not clearly linked* to educational activities at Master's and PhD level. However, lab fees and consumables related to students' research may be included to a reasonable extent.

### **Project related salary costs**

The aggregate cost of salaries, remuneration of consultants, honorariums and indirect costs involved in a project may not exceed **20 per cent** of the total project budget. The amount may be shared among the project partners, based on agreement between the partners. Please specify how these costs have been calculated and how many months of work will be carried out by whom on basis of the costs budgeted.

All such costs must be included under the budget item "Salary and indirect costs", not as part of the individual activities.