

## **NORFACE Governance programme - Frequently Asked Questions Outline Proposal stage**

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Please note that this document will be updated regularly. If your question is not answered here, please contact the NORFACE Coordination Office at [governance@nwo.nl](mailto:governance@nwo.nl). For questions about national/regional eligibility, please contact the national contact persons listed in the Call of Proposals. No rights can be derived from this document.

### **What is NORFACE?**

NORFACE (New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Co-operation in Europe) is a collaborative partnership of national research funding agencies from European countries in the realm of social and behavioural sciences. The network develops common research funding instruments, and acts as a forum for discussion and knowledge exchange. Since its launch in 2004, NORFACE has expanded to twenty partners. For its joint transnational research programmes, it regularly seeks collaboration with partners outside of the network as well.

### **Which national/regional funding agencies participate in this Call for Proposals?**

The NORFACE Governance programme is supported by the following funding agencies:

- L'Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR, France)
- Austrian Science Fund (FWF)
- Belgian Science Policy (BELSPO; Belgium, federal)
- Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS)
- Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)
- Estonian Research Council (ETAg)
- Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique (F.R.S.-FNRS; Belgium, Wallonia and Brussels Federation)
- Independent Research Fund Denmark (IRFD)
- Fonds National de la Recherche Luxembourg (FNR)
- The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO)
- Research Council of Lithuania (RCL)
- Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek-Vlaanderen (FWO; Belgium, Flanders)
- Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS)
- State Research Agency (AEI; Spain)
- Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)
- The Academy of Finland (AKA)
- UK Research and Innovation - Economic and Social Research Council (UKRI - ESRC)
- The Irish Research Council (IRC)
- The National Science Centre (NCN, Poland)
- The Research Council of Norway (RCN)
- The Swedish Research Council (VR)

### **There are three funding agencies from Belgium, whose eligibility requirements do I need to take into account as an applicant from Belgium?**

There are three funding agencies from Belgium that participate in this Governance Call. Each funding agency is affiliated with different educational institutions. Please check with your institution which of these funding agencies they are affiliated with, and which eligibility requirements are thus applicable to you.

### **Can a partner from a country/region that is not represented by a funding agency in this call participate in a consortium?**

Researchers from countries or regions not participating in this NORFACE Call and stakeholders not performing research are invited to participate in the projects as Co-operation Partners. Co-operation Partners cannot apply for funding directly from the Governance programme, although some funding



agencies allow for costs to be applied for through other partners in a project team depending on national or regional regulations. Please check funding possibilities in the national/regional annexes of the various funding agencies. The applicants invited to submit a Full Proposal will be asked to demonstrate the (re)sources from which the participation of the Co-operation Partners will be funded. Contributions by external partners can be either in cash or in kind.

**How many national partners should participate in a project? Will projects with a high number of partners be given preference?**

At least three national research teams, based in three different countries eligible for funding from the NORFACE Governance partners should take part. The eligibility of national teams is subject to national/regional eligibility rules.

The composition of a project team should be determined by the research question and project design. There is no optimum number, and applicants should not add partners for the sake of it. All partners should have a significant role in the research. The added value resulting from transnational cooperation must be addressed in the proposal and will be assessed.

**What are the guidelines for a balanced consortium?**

Each project team should strive to include researchers early in their careers, including post-doctoral and PhD students, as participants in the project. NORFACE strives to promote gender equality, please refer to the [NORFACE Statement on Gender Equality](#) on the NORFACE website. Furthermore, NORFACE strongly encourages geographically balanced consortia.

**What is the role of the Main Applicant?**

The Main Applicant should be a researcher responsible for carrying out and managing the project. The Main Applicant will be the main contact point for NORFACE on behalf of all the applicants for scientific, knowledge exchange and communication matters. The responsibilities of a Main Applicant for the administrative and financial management of a funded project may differ per country or funding agency.

In addition, the Main Applicant is responsible for leading the project activities at their own institution. The Main Applicant must be based at an institution eligible to the funding of a funding agency participating in this Call. As a Main Applicant carries the responsibilities of the full project lead as well as the responsibilities at his/her institution (i.e. as a single Co-Applicant would), there can be a Main Applicant *or* a Co-Applicant at one institution and not both. The role of Main Applicant is not limited to researchers at any specific career stage, though national or regional eligibility rules may apply.

**What is the role of the Co-Applicants?**

A Co-Applicant is responsible for leading the project activities at their own institution. They will be responsible for the administrative and financial management in case a project is funded and this may differ per country or funding agency. The role of Co-Applicant is not limited to researchers at any specific career stage, though national or regional eligibility rules may apply. Each Co-Applicant should be based at an institution eligible for funding by a participating funding agency.

There may be more than one Co-Applicant from one country, but there can only be one Co-Applicant per university or research institution. Please note, at one institution there can be a Main Applicant *or* a Co-Applicant and not both, as the role of a Main Applicant includes the responsibilities of a single Co-Applicant would (see previous question). Other project team members at the university or research institution should be listed under the heading 'Team Members' in the Outline and Full Proposal application template.

**What do the additional roles of Team Members and Co-operation Partners entail?**

Researchers who are involved in a national/regional team and who do not have the role of Main or Co-Applicant can be involved in an application as a Team Member. Please note, Team Members can only join

a team when a Main or Co-Applicant from their country, university or research institution is already involved in the application. PhD students or Postdocs participating in an application should also be identified as Team Members and mentioned in the application. The role of a Team Member is not limited to researchers at any specific career stage, though national or regional eligibility rules may apply.

Researchers from countries not participating in this NORFACE Call and stakeholders not performing research are invited to participate in the projects as Co-operation Partners. Co-operation Partners cannot apply for funding directly from the NORFACE Governance programme.

**Can our application include more than one Co-Applicant per NORFACE partner country?**

Yes, if a project team sees it as appropriate, there may be more than one Co-Applicant from one country, but only one Co-Applicant per university or research institution is allowed. Other project team members at their university or research institution should be listed as 'Team Members'. Also, please note that your application still has to include research teams based in at least three participating *countries* to be eligible in this Call.

**Can we list more than one Co-Applicant per university/research institution?**

Please name only one Co-Applicant per university/research institution. The Co-applicant will be responsible for managing the NORFACE funds in his/her institution. Other members of the research team at that university or research institution can be identified in the application under the heading 'Team members' in the application template, but cannot be included as Co-Applicants.

**Is the Main or Co-Applicant status limited to researchers at any specific career stage after completing their PhD?**

The roles of Main Applicant and Co-applicant are not limited to researchers at any specific career stage, though national or regional eligibility rules may apply.

**How do I describe the transnational added value of the collaboration?**

It is important that all proposals make the added value of their proposed project clear, not only how the research is academically excellent, but also how it is essential that this is delivered by transnational collaboration and how the management and communication structures enable collaboration across partners from the beginning; i.e. the research is truly integrated from conception and not just bringing together individual projects at the end.

**What happens to a consortium if one of the partners is considered not eligible?**

The NORFACE Coordination Office will verify the eligibility of the proposals according to the transnational eligibility criteria, while the participating funding agencies will each verify the suitability for national/regional funding according to their respective eligibility criteria. Both transnational and funding agencies' eligibility criteria must be met. If one of the research partners in a consortium is not eligible, then the whole consortium is not eligible and the proposal will not be evaluated.

**Are proposals in this Call similar to Horizon 2020 applications?**

No, these are different programmes. The NORFACE Governance programme is designed by the NORFACE funding agencies. The theme does correspond with one of the Horizon 2020 thematic priorities and part of the funding is provided by the European Commission.

**The Call for Proposals states "Each research partner may request funding for personnel costs, consumables, travel costs, equipment and subcontracting in accordance with these national or regional rules." Does this mean that permanent academic staff can recover their salary costs in accordance with national/regional guidelines?**

This depends on national eligibility requirements, please refer to the annex to the Call for Proposals. If you have further questions, contact the relevant national or regional agency.

**Can a researcher be involved in more than one project?**

One person can be involved in a maximum of two applications in the current Call. A person can be involved as a Main Applicant in only one of these applications.

**What is the budget for the Call?**

The budget available is set at a minimum of € 17.6 million, including funding from the European Commission.

**What is the available funding per project?**

Project teams with three research partners from three different countries participating in this NORFACE Call may request a maximum of € 1,200,000 in total across these partners. Project teams with four or more research partners from at least four different countries participating in this NORFACE Call may request a maximum of € 1,500,000 in total across these partners. For the maximum funding that can be requested per partner, please refer to the national or regional eligibility requirements.

**What are eligible costs?**

All costs must be eligible according to the national or regional eligibility rules in the Call for Proposals, which may be specified per budget item. Each research partner may request funding for personnel costs, consumables, travel costs, equipment and subcontracting in accordance with these national or regional rules. In case of doubt, applicants should consult their respective national/regional agencies for advice.

**Can I contact the members of the panel of experts to discuss my proposal?**

No, applicants should not contact any of the members of the panel of experts to discuss their application at any stage of the selection and ranking processes or afterwards. The composition of the Evaluation Panel will be available on the website after the evaluation of the Full Proposals is finished. The membership of the panel is made public solely for the purpose of transparency. All questions concerning the assessment procedure and the programme in general should be directed to the NORFACE Coordination Office via [governance@nwo.nl](mailto:governance@nwo.nl).

**The project description in the Outline Proposal stage should include no more than 2500 words. Does this include a literature list?**

The relevant references for the project description fall outside of the maximum of 2500 words that can be used for the research plan itself.

**Which relevant publications should be cited in the CVs?**

Only provide short CVs of the Main Applicant and the Co-Applicants, and of individuals representing Co-operation Partners if applicable. CVs of Team Members are not allowed. Each CV may cite a maximum of five relevant publications, and should be no longer than one page in the Outline Proposal stage. In the Full Proposal stage, each CV may cite a maximum of 10 relevant publications, and should be no longer than two pages. Only include manuscripts which have been accepted for publication or which have already been published as part of the recognised literature. Therefore, publications that are currently being written, under review, etc. should not be included.

**If there are ethical issues present, is approval required before submitting a proposal?**

No, unless stated otherwise in national/regional eligibility requirements, where specific ethical approvals may be required under national/regional arrangements, these do not need to be obtained before submitting a proposal. However, they must be obtained before work starts on the project.

**Should Outline Proposals be submitted to each individual agency?**

The ISAAC system, hosted at the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) is the submission and review portal for the NORFACE Governance programme. It can be accessed at <http://www.isaac.nwo.nl>. This is the only way to submit a Governance proposal; applications sent via other channels will not be eligible and will not be evaluated. However, please do check the

national/regional eligibility requirements whether additional submission to national/regional funding agencies is mandatory or not.

**Can I change my application after I have submitted it?**

Only completed applications submitted in the ISAAC system before the deadline will be considered. Once submitted, the application cannot be changed or added to by the applicants.

**In what language(s) should the proposal be submitted?**

All applications must be in English.

**Will we receive confirmation that a proposal has been received?**

Yes, the Main Applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of submitting the application from the ISAAC system via e-mail.

**When can projects start?**

Projects can last up to 36 months. The earliest starting date for successful projects is 1 June 2020, and must have started by 1 September 2020. All national research teams within a given project will be expected to start their projects at the same time. Proposals for projects lasting more than 36 months will be declared ineligible.

**Can I submit a Full Proposal if I have not submitted an Outline Proposal?**

No, if you did not submit an Outline Proposal you cannot submit a Full Proposal. Full Proposals can only be submitted by project teams who have been invited to do so.

**Can I submit a Full Proposal if my Outline Proposal was not successful and I was not invited to submit a Full Proposal?**

No, only those applicants that were selected in the Outline Proposal phase can submit a Full Proposal.

**Do the partners in a Full Proposal need to be the same as in the Outline Proposal?**

Project teams that have submitted an Outline Proposal invited to the Full Proposal stage are not allowed to make changes to the core of the proposal and therefore to the project team. However, in case of force majeure, changes in the consortium are allowed in case that (a) a Main or Co-applicant changed her/his national affiliation and after consultation with the NORFACE Coordination Office, (b) a Main or Co-applicant is on sick or maternity leave and after consultation with the NORFACE Coordination Office, or (c) following an explicit recommendation by the Evaluation Panel and in line with (national/regional) eligibility requirements.

Applicants are advised to consult the NORFACE Coordination Office and representatives of their national/regional funding agencies in case of doubts relating to this matter. Adding Co-operation Partners to the Full Proposal is allowed. The eligibility of all participants in a project team will again be checked in the Full Proposal phase by the NORFACE Coordination Office and the national/regional funding agencies.

**I am a researcher seeking to apply for funding from the UK. What should I take into consideration regarding the current negotiations related to the UK's exit from the European Union?**

The participation of the UK in the NORFACE Governance Call is not affected by the current negotiations related to the UK's exit from the European Union. Irrespective of the outcome of that process, UKRI-ESRC will remain a full member of the NORFACE network and UK researchers will remain eligible to participate in and receive funding from the NORFACE Governance Call. Please refer to the [UKRI-ESRC website](#) for more detailed information or contact Jonathan Carter at UKRI-ESRC via [norfacegovernance@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:norfacegovernance@esrc.ukri.org).