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Regional Innovation project for the public sector 2021

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Financial scheme: Support from Other Funders

Application deadline: 20 October 2021, 13:00 CEST

Relevant thematic areas for this call:

Regional development, Democracy, administration and renewal, Education and competence, Energy, transport and low emissions, Climate and polar research, Health

Target groups: Public sector

Funding scale: NOK 1 000 000-3 000 000

Amount of funding presumed available for this call for proposals: NOK 20 000 000. There are two calls for proposals with deadline October 20.2021. One call is for industry and the other for public sector. The proposals submitted for these two calls will compete for the total funds of 20 million NOKs. The proposals will be evaluated and ranked according to quality based on their scores on the criteria.

Project duration: 6-36 months

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This is a call with a fixed deadline.

 Your application may be submitted several times before the deadline.

It is the last submitted version of the application that will be evaluated.

Viktige datoer

08 Sep 2021: Åpen for søknad

20 Oct 2021: Søknadsfrist

10 Feb 2022: Tidligste tillatte prosjektstart

01 Aug 2022: Seneste tillatte prosjektstart

01 Aug 2025: Seneste tillatte prosjektslutt

Purpose

Regional innovation projects for the public sector are projects led by the public sector with a comprehensive content of research and development.

The projects are based on needs and challenges in the public sector and must form part of the public sector body's development plans.

It is a goal that the projects contribute to sustainable restructuring and innovation, strengthen the link between R&D organisations and public sector bodies and qualify them to participate in research and innovation collaborations under national and EU programmes.

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↓ **Relevant thematic areas**

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- ↓ Democracy, administration and renewal
- ↓ Education and competence
- ↓ Energy, transport and low emissions
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- ↓ Health

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About the call for proposals

The purpose of the call is to contribute to research-based innovation in public sector bodies located in the City of Oslo within the following priority areas:

- Climate, the environment and emission-free solutions
- Education and competence
- Health, care and welfare services
- Research-basis for the development of public services

Thematic areas relevant to the pandemic and reopening of society, cf. the coronavirus situation, will also be given priority.

Public sector bodies are encouraged to include relevant business partners in their project.

Funding can also be used as co-funding for projects that have been awarded support from an EU programme.

The call for proposals is available in Norwegian and English. In the event of a discrepancy between the two versions, the Norwegian version is legally binding.

Who is eligible to apply?

Municipal undertakings and agencies in the City of Oslo

Municipally owned companies in the City of Oslo

State owned undertakings with business address in Oslo

Research organisations, companies and sole proprietorships are not eligible to apply.

Who can participate in the project?

Requirements relating to the Project Owner

- The Project Owner must be an undertaking, agency or company owned by the City of Oslo, or a state-owned undertaking with a business address in Oslo.
- The Project Owner must secure the funding of the addition to the amount awarded by RRF Oslo.
- The Project Owner must have approved the submission of the grant application to RRF Oslo.

Requirements relating to collaboration and roles in the project

- The Project Owner can carry out the project in binding collaboration with other parties, such as

companies, public organisations in Norway or R&D partners. Parts of these partners' project costs will be covered by RRF Oslo's funding of the project.

- If a partner can be deemed an undertaking in accordance with the [state aid rules](#), the undertaking will become a recipient of state aid. Funding awarded to an 'undertaking' constitutes state aid. In general, an 'undertaking' is a company, but in this context, it is defined as any actor that carries out an economic activity consisting of offering products and/or services in a given market. It can also apply to state-owned undertakings or companies. When an undertaking receives support to cover a portion of its project costs as a Project Owner or partner in the project, this support must be awarded in accordance with Article 25 of the General Block Exemption Regulation for state aid (Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014). For more information about state aid, see [the Research Council's website](#).
- Any partnership constellation in the project is expected to form the basis for long-term collaboration, development and dissemination of knowledge and effective mutual utilisation of results.
- All project partners (aside from the Project Owner) must be listed in the section 'Project partners and R&D providers' in the application form. Read more about project partners and R&D suppliers [here](#).
- Project partners must be defined as either 'funding and task-performing' (municipality and/or business partner that contributes in-kind) or 'task-performing' (fully-funded R&D organisation or company with the role of R&D provider in the project).
- Other international actors may participate in the project, but will not receive funding from RRF Oslo.
- Companies participating in the project that are interdependent will be considered as one entity and as a single recipient of funding in accordance with the state aid rules.

What can you seek funding for?

You will find detailed and important information about [what to enter in the project budget on our website](#).

Project costs pertaining to R&D activities under the project qualify for funding from RRF Oslo. The project's R&D activities must satisfy the definition of either 'industrial research' or 'experimental development' as set out in the [state aid rules](#).

'Industrial research' means the planned research or critical investigation aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for developing new products, processes or services or for bringing about a significant improvement in existing products, processes or services. It comprises the creation of components parts of complex systems, and may include the construction of prototypes in a laboratory environment or in an environment with simulated interfaces to existing systems as well as of pilot lines, when necessary for the industrial research and notably for generic technology validation." A more comprehensive description can be found on this [webpage](#), look under "Important definitions for Article 25"

'Experimental development' means acquiring, combining, shaping and using existing scientific, technological, business and other relevant knowledge and skills with the aim of developing new or improved products, processes or services. This may also include, for example, activities aiming at the conceptual definition, planning and documentation of new products, processes or services..."This is not the complete definition of experimental development. A more comprehensive description can be found on this [webpage](#), look under "Important definitions for Article 25".

We can provide funding for parts of the applicant's costs pertaining to R&D activities under the project. This applies to costs associated with R&D activities carried out by the project partners, and to costs incurred in connection with the purchase of R&D services from R&D providers.

Project costs are the actual costs that are necessary to carry out the project, and can include:

- Direct project costs, which are the costs of resources earmarked specifically for completing the project, such as personnel costs for project employees.
- Indirect project costs, which are related to the use of general resources that the project benefits from. Indirect project costs include the project's share of costs for renting offices, IT/telephone and joint administrative costs related to personnel and finances.

The following types of costs must be specified in the project budget:

- Payroll and indirect expenses, which are costs associated with the company's own R&D activities in the project. See our guidelines for budgeting of [payroll and indirect expenses](#).
- Procurement of R&D services, which are costs associated with hiring R&D providers.
- Equipment, which encompasses operating and depreciation costs for scientific equipment necessary for the execution of the project.
- Other project costs, which comprise costs for other activities that are necessary to carry out R&D activities under the project.

The budgeted project costs must be in accordance with the description given in the [General Block Exemption Regulation Article 25 \(3\)](#).

We do not provide funding for operational business activities including activities associated with the commercial exploitation of the R&D results, such as protection of intellectual property rights, market surveys and marketing, and testing and completion of new products or services. Such costs are therefore not to be included in the project budget.

Scope of funding

Municipal undertakings, agencies and companies **can apply for up to 70 per cent** support of their budgeted project costs.

State owned undertakings can apply for up to 50 per cent support of their budgeted project costs.

The maximum funding limit for any business partners is 50 per cent. Projects must have a duration of between 6 and 36 months.

The project must be of a scope that can form the basis for applying for funding of at least NOK 1 million. RRF Oslo's maximum funding limit for any one project is NOK 3 million.

The level of support (aid intensity) available for project costs will depend on the nature of the project and the type of R&D activities as defined in the [state aid rules](#). This includes the project's research activities, partnership constellations and the size of any business partners. For applications awarded funding, the aid intensity may therefore vary from 25 to 70 per cent.

Enterprise size/type of activity	Industrial research	Experimental development
Small enterprises	70 %	45 %
Medium size enterprises	60 %	35 %
Large enterprises	50 %	25 %

For applications awarded funding, the final grant amount will be determined in conjunction with contract negotiations.

Conditions for funding

If the project application is awarded funding, the Project Owner must revise the project and grant application in accordance with the conditions set out in the funding decision. The revised application must incorporate updated and supplementary information about the project and any partners.

Support to research organisations participating as partners in the project must go to the organisation's non-economic activity, as R&D activity carried out in effective collaboration with others is defined as part of the research organisation's non-economic activity under the EFTA Surveillance Authority's guidelines on state aid for research and development and innovation. RRF Oslo requires a clear separation of accounts for the research organisation's economic and non-economic activities.

Funding awarded to an 'undertaking' constitutes state aid. In this context, an 'undertaking' is defined as any actor that carries out an economic activity consisting of offering products or services in a given market. This will apply to any business partners in the project, but can also apply to municipal or state-owned undertakings. Companies serving as partners may have parts of their project costs covered in accordance with the General Block Exemption Regulation Article 25 (Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014).

The state aid rules set clear limits for the percentage of funding that undertakings are allowed to receive, depending on their size and the type of activities they undertake. The project is to be implemented by means of effective collaboration between all partners as defined in the state aid rules:

'Collaboration between at least two independent parties to exchange knowledge or technology, or to achieve a common objective based on the division of labour where the parties jointly define the scope of the collaborative project, contribute to its implementation and share its risks, as well as its results. One or several parties may bear the full costs of the project and thus relieve other parties of its financial risks. Contract research and provision of research services are not considered forms of collaboration.'

If the application is granted and it includes partners, the Project Owner must sign an agreement with all the partners.

Projects awarded funding under this call may be required to submit accounting reports annually documenting incurred project costs and how they have been financed.

Reports and disbursement of funding

We will disburse 50 per cent of the funding on the basis of an invoice at project start-up and then a further 50 per cent on approval of project accounts for the first project year. Funding for the second project year is disbursed in the same way. It is possible to agree on a different plan for disbursement.

The final disbursement is conditional on approval of the project's final report and project accounts. Only actual expenses entered in the Project Owner's accounts will be covered.

Scientific articles and research data

The Project Owner is responsible for selecting which archiving solution(s) to use for storing research data generated during the project. The Project Owner must specify the planned solution(s) in connection with the revised grant proposal.

Available tools

Applicants can use tools developed by the [Research Council](#) and/or [KS](#) when preparing the application

You can also ask for advice from one of the [competence brokers](#) in Oslo. The competence brokers can assist in finding a relevant research partner, and give you tips and advice for your proposal.

Relevant thematic areas for this call

Regional thematic areas for this call for proposals are the topics prioritised in [RRF Oslo's policy document for 2020–2023](#):

- Climate, the environment and emission-free solutions
- Education and competence
- Health, care and welfare services
- Research-basis for the development of public services

Thematic areas relevant to the pandemic, cf. the coronavirus situation reopening of society, will also be given priority.

Regional development

THE ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY · HEALTH AND WELFARE · EDUCATION

Democracy, administration and renewal

DEMOCRACY, POWER AND GOVERNANCE · SOCIETAL SECURITY · PUBLIC SECTOR RENEWAL AND INNOVATION
MACROECONOMIC CHALLENGES · URBAN DEVELOPMENT
DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIETAL SECURITY · INNOVATION IN THE MUNICIPAL SECTOR
ECONOMIC HANDLING OF THE CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC · FIELD OF PLANNING RESEARCH

Education and competence

EDUCATION · TEACHING AND LEARNING · MANAGEMENT, ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE IN EDUCATION
EDUCATION AND COMPETENCE FOR PARTICIPATION IN WORKING LIFE AND SOCIETY
RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Energy, transport and low emissions

TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY · LOW AND ZERO EMISSIONS

Climate and polar research

CLIMATE · GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES · GLOBAL CLIMATE CHALLENGES

Health

GLOBAL HEALTH · HEALTH, CARE AND WELFARE SERVICES · USE OF HEALTH DATA · EHEALTH
EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

Practical information

Requirements for this funding scheme

Applications must be created and submitted via My RCN Web. This call has an open-ended deadline. A unique grant application may only be submitted once (whereas calls with a fixed deadline may be submitted and resubmitted multiple times up to the submission deadline).

- The application and all attachments must be written in Norwegian or English. The templates for attachments can be found at the end of the call for proposals.
- All attachments must be uploaded in PDF format.

Mandatory attachments

- Project description of up to 10 pages in length using the designated template. Use the standard template published with this call.
- Partner information about the Project Owner applicant and each partner using the designated template. This applies to public and private sector partners and R&D institutions. Use the standard template published with this call.
- CVs for the project manager and other key project participants (e.g. individuals responsible for the project's work packages) using the designated template.

All requirements set out in the call must be met. Applications that do not meet the formal requirements, or requirements relating to the Project Owner, collaboration and roles in the project, will not be considered.

We will not assess documents and websites linked to in the application, or other attachments than those specified above. There is no technical validation of the content of uploaded attachments, so please ensure that you upload the correct file for the selected type of attachment.

Optional attachments

Proposals for up to three referees who are considered qualified to assess the application

Other conditions

When a project is recommended for funding, more information about the project and any project partners will be required.

Funding decisions can in some cases also entail project-specific conditions. We therefore reserve the right to enter into dialogue with the applicants concerning implementation plans and budgets.

Excellence

To what extent does the project represent an ambitious innovation that is supported by relevant R&D activities of high quality?

- To what extent does the innovation represent something new?
- To what extent will the innovation help to resolve a challenge and/or meet a recognised need?
- To what extent does the project have the potential to generate new knowledge that can lead to innovation?
- To what extent are the R&D activities essential for the success of the innovation?
- To what extent does the project build on relevant and updated knowledge?
- To what extent does the project employ relevant and recognised R&D methods?

Impact

To what extent does the project pave the way for value creation in the public sector entities as well as lay a foundation for benefits to other segments of the public sector?

Value creation and realisation of benefits

- To what extent are the potential impacts of the project clearly formulated and credible?
- To what extent will the project form the basis for value creation for the applicant and public sector partners?
- To what extent is the plan for realisation of benefits relevant and adequate, including risk assessments, plans, methods, resource needs, partners, support and roles?
- To what extent can the project lead to other positive societal outcomes, such as:
 - facilitating utilisation of results by other segments of the public sector, the business sector or other stakeholders;
 - leading to an innovation that can address UN Sustainable Development Goals or solve other important societal challenges?

Dissemination, sharing and exploitation

- To what extent are dissemination and communication activities clearly formulated and directed towards

relevant target groups?

- To what extent is the potential for sharing and exploitation clearly formulated and plausible?
- To what extent does the project have plans for exploitation in other parts of the public sector?

Implementation

To what extent does the work plan provide a good basis for implementing the R&D activities and realising the potential for value creation?

Quality of the project's organisation and management

- To what extent is the project work plan satisfactory, including whether the resources for the various work packages are adequate and reflect the individual work package's objectives, timetable and deliverables?
- To what extent are the partners well suited for carrying out the R&D activities, and is the distribution of the budget, roles and responsibilities clearly-defined and relevant?
- To what extent have management, leadership and support been adequately addressed?

Quality of the project manager and project group

- To what extent does the project manager have the appropriate expertise and experience to lead an R&D project targeted towards innovation and value creation in the public sector?
- To what extent does the project group have the competence and expertise necessary to ensure efficient implementation of the project?

Overall assessment of the referee/panel

This criterion indicates the overall view of the referee/panel, based on the specific criteria which they have been asked to assess.

Relevance to the call for proposals

To what extent does the project meet the requirements and guidelines set out in the call for proposals?

- To what extent does the application meet the topic's guidelines and priorities?
- To what extent does the application meet other requirements and characteristics set out in the call?

Administrative procedures

The application and all mandatory attachments will be made available in a digital portal for referees who will perform an assessment of the criteria 'Excellence', 'Impact' and 'Implementation'. Each application will normally be assessed by a referee panel comprising three experts. The referee panel will submit a consensus-based assessment for each of the three criteria.

If the mark awarded by the referee panel for all of the criteria is 4 or higher on a scale where 7 is the highest mark, the application will be assessed by RRF Oslo's case officers also on the basis of the criterion regional 'Relevance to the call for proposals'. The assessment and marks for all four criteria will be consolidated into a single, overall mark that indicates the merit of the application.

Based on the referee panel's assessment and the regional 'relevance to the call for proposals' criteria, RRF Oslo's administration will then present a recommendation to RRF Oslo's fund board for the final funding decision. The board will emphasise achieving a balanced portfolio of projects and the priorities in RRF's policy document for 2020–2023.

Expected funding decision

RRF Oslo's board will make a decision on the funding of applications in week 5, 2022.

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* MANDATORY ATTACHMENT

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