

# UTFORSK Partnership Program

## Call for applications 2020

### Four-year project funding

#### 1 Invitation

Diku is pleased to issue this call for applications for funding of joint projects between higher education institutions in Norway and Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Russia, South-Africa, and the United States of America. The projects may engage in bilateral or multilateral cooperation involving partners in one or several of the eligible countries.

The total funds made available in this call are up to NOK 100 million funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

This call for applications is open to project cooperation for four (4) years. Applicants may define the project period from dd.mm. 2021 to dd.mm. 2025.

- Each project may be awarded up to NOK 3 million.
- *The final deadline for submitting applications will be announced when the Call for applications is published.*

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

---

#### 2 Background

The UTFORSK Partnership Program 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. This call is also extended to collaboration with Canada and the USA.

The "Long-term plan for research and higher education" (2019-2028) clearly states that international cooperation is a prerequisite to secure quality in Norwegian higher education. The significance of international cooperation, as a measure for benchmarking quality, is also emphasized in the white paper on "Quality Culture" (16, 2016-2017) stating that internationalisation should be an integrated part of education. Research based education (content) and research-based pedagogy (teaching

methods) represent two other mainstays in the Norwegian educational policy as well as collaboration with the world of work and good student mobility - all priorities of the Panorama-strategy.

Furthermore, international cooperation is a prerequisite for achieving Agenda 2030, adopted by all UN nations in 2015, on sustainable development. In bringing on board Agenda 2030, this partnership program is committed to the understanding that the *Sustainable Development Goals* are integrated and indivisible by balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social, and environmental. The countries included in this call are all significant stakeholders to achieve these goals.

### 3 Objectives

The overall aim of the programme is to improve the quality of higher education and improve students' learning outcomes through international cooperation with the following main objectives:

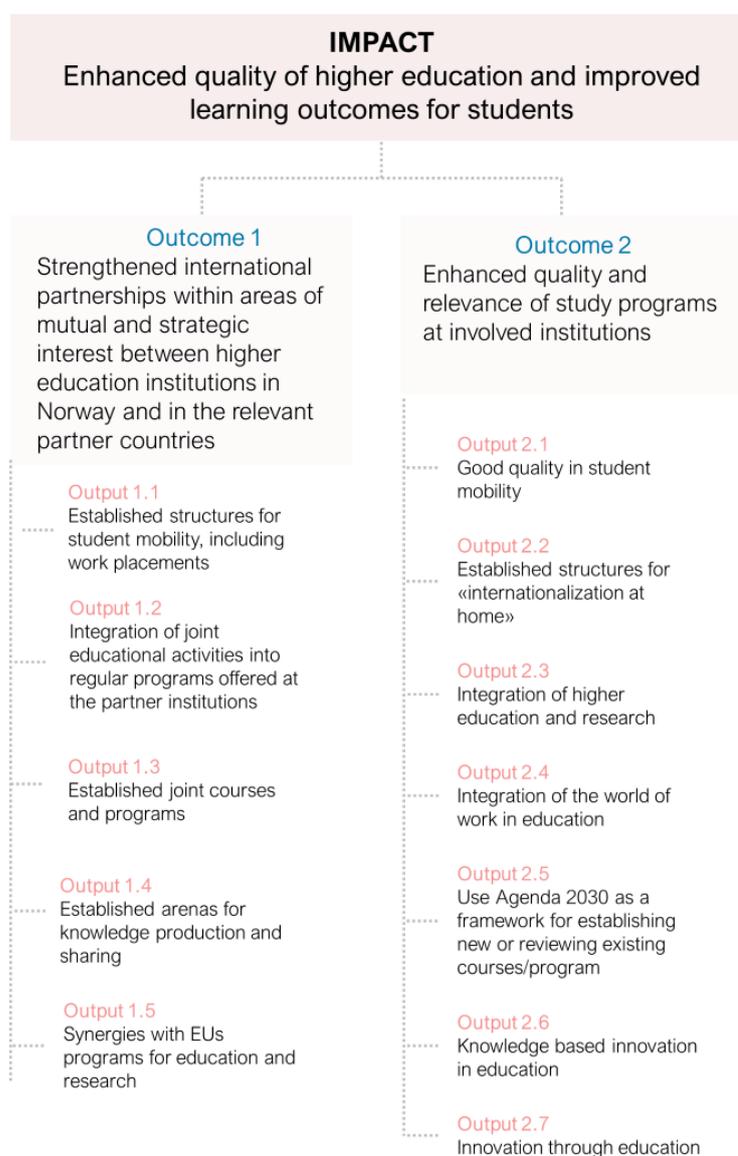
- strengthening international partnerships within areas of mutual and strategic interest between higher education institutions in Norway and the relevant countries.
- enhancing the quality and relevance of study programs at involved institutions.

Of particular relevance to the objectives of the program are the following priorities:

- Mutual student exchange as a part of institutional cooperation
- Constructive interaction between higher education and research cooperation
- Productive connections to working life, trade, and industry
- Constructive interaction between bilateral and multilateral cooperation, with special emphasis on the EU programs.
- Agenda 2030 as an overarching principle when developing study programs.

Applicants should design their projects in the way they consider best suited to achieve the objectives of the program and based on a needs-assessment at the relevant partner institutions and relevant stakeholders. Planned activities should be proposed by partners based on jointly identified challenges and opportunities. Activities may include all levels of higher education (Bachelor, Master and PhD), and all fields of education. Furthermore, Diku encourages project cooperation across disciplines and sectors.

Applicants are requested to describe the expected results and effects of the project as specifically as possible. Project results that may contribute to achieve the objective of the programme are outlined below. Diku will monitor project results and the degree to which project activities contribute to achieve the objectives of the program.



Please see the [UTFORSK Program Document](#) for more information on the program objectives and identified indicators.

## 4 Own contribution

Applicant institutions and/or project partners must make available resources equivalent to a minimum of 20 per cent of the project budget.

These contributions may be in cash or in kind.

---

## 5 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, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Russia, South-Africa, and the United States of America as partners. At least one partner must be an accredited higher education institution in the partner countries.

---

## 6 Eligibility & selection criteria

### Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, applications must meet the following requirements:

- The **applicant** must be an accredited Norwegian higher education institution or an institution with accredited higher education programs.
- The application must include at least one **partner** that is an accredited higher education institution in Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Russia, South-Africa or the US, providing accredited education programs that are relevant to the proposal and at a level equivalent to that offered at the Norwegian applicant institution.
- The institutions are expected to contribute own financing (in cash or in kind) amounting to a minimum of 20 per cent of the funds applied for.
- All project activities described in the application must be completed within the project period.
- The following attachments must be included:
  - Letters of Commitment from all project partners, including the applicant institution, documenting interest in and commitment to the project by leadership at relevant level.
  - A **curriculum vitae** (CV) for the project coordinators in Norway and the partner country.

- Applications must be written in English and be submitted fully completed, including attachments, through Diku's application platform ([Espresso](#))
- The application must be submitted within the call's final deadline.

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

### **Selection criteria**

The applications that meet the above requirements 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, including:
  - The quality of the need's assessments.
  - The clarity and realism of planned project results for participating institutions/stakeholders and relevant target groups.
  - Whether/to what degree the project is innovative and/or complementary to other initiatives/activities already initiated by the participating institutions/stakeholders.
- The quality of the project design, including:
  - The application's overall clarity, completeness, and quality.
  - Correspondence between project goals, proposed activities, and expected project results.
  - Level of ambition in project goals and expected results.
  - Cost-effectiveness and reasonable resource allocation in the project.
  - The project's feasibility.
  - The likelihood that project results may be sustained beyond the project period.
- The quality of the partnership, including:
  - The complementarity of the participating institutions/stakeholders' profile.
  - The composition of the project team, and their expertise and experience in producing the expected results.
  - The extent of distribution of tasks and responsibilities and active contribution from all participating institutions/stakeholders.
  - The level of formalized commitment from the participating institutions and the potential for long-term collaboration between the partners.
- The impact and dissemination of project results, including:
  - Expected impact for the participants, participating institutions, and other target groups.

- The quality of the plan for dissemination of project results within and outside the project.

Diku presumes that all projects adhere to a high ethical standard in research and higher education. Diku 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. To ensure coherence and a logical order in the description of your project, please read the relevant help texts in the online application form carefully. Remaining questions may be directed to Diku.

---