

Partnership Program for North America

Call for applications 2019

Two-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, Canada and the United States of America. The call is part of the Partnership Program for Higher Education Collaboration with North America, and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

Norwegian higher education institutions may apply for funds to develop and strengthen partnerships with Canada and the US. The partnerships should aim to contribute to the quality of the education programs in Norway. The proposal should demonstrate the changes the collaboration will bring about and how these are to be achieved, including plans for dissemination of knowledge and practices developed in the project.

- This call for applications is open to **two-year project cooperation**, with a project period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021.
- Each project may be awarded up to NOK 300 000. The total funds made available in this call are approximately NOK 2 million.
- The final deadline for submitting applications is **25 September 2019, at 12:00 Norwegian time**.

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. Objectives and funding framework of the call

2.1 Objectives

The overall aim of the program is to improve the quality and internationalization of Norwegian higher education. The program shall lead to establishment and strengthening of partnerships between higher education institutions in Norway and the US and Canada, through:

- development and implementation of joint educational activities;
- increased mobility of students within the framework of strategic partnerships, including mobility in connection with internships/work placements;

- increased involvement of non-academic partners (industry, companies, organizations, etc.) in relevant project activities.

2.2 Expected project results

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

OBJECTIVE	EXPECTED PROJECT RESULTS
<i>Increased quality and internationalisation of study programs in Norway through development and implementation of joint educational activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or improved curriculum, tools or methods developed through international cooperation and integrated into Norwegian education programs • International joint courses that are integrated into education programs in Norway • New or improved international semesters and mobility windows in Norwegian education programs • Co-publications between education institutions in Norway and abroad
<i>Increased mobility of students</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or improved exchange agreements between education institutions in Norway and partner countries • Increased number of exchange stays abroad for students from Norway that are recognised at the home institution • Increased number of students from Canada and the US completing courses in Norway
<i>Increased involvement of non-academic partners in relevant project activities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of Norwegian students undertaking internships or work placements in Canada and the US • Increased number of US or Canadian students undertaking internships or work placements in Norway • Increased number of students conducting academic thesis work with a non-academic partner in a partner country • Increased number of non-academic partners contributing as guest lecturers, supervisors or visiting staff as part of the partnership

2.3 Project funding and activities

Each project may be awarded up to NOK 300 000. Diku 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 objectives of the program. Applicants should design their projects in the way they consider best suited to achieve the objectives of the program. Activities may include all levels of higher education (Bachelor, Master and PhD), all fields of education, and involve multiple fields and disciplines.

The project may include funds for salaries and indirect expenses (including administration and overhead), limited to a maximum of **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 “Budget guidelines”.

3. 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, the US or Canada as partners. At least one partner must be an accredited higher education institution in the US or Canada (cf. item 4.1 below).

4. Eligibility & selection criteria

4.1 Eligibility criteria

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

- Applications must be written in English and be submitted fully completed, including attachments, through Diku’s application platform ([Espresso](#)) within the call’s final deadline.
- 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 Canada 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.
- A **curriculum vitae** (CV) for the project coordinators in Norway and the partner country must be uploaded.

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

4.2 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 program.
- 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
- 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
- Impact and dissemination
 - expected impact on the participants and participating institutions
 - sustainability of project results
 - quality of the plan for dissemination of project results

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. 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 carefully. Remaining questions may be directed to Diku.

5. Attachments

In addition to a CV for the project coordinator (cf. item 4.1 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 Diku based on its individual merits with regard to the selection criteria set out above (item 4.2), and its relative standing to other competing applications. Applications will be evaluated on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest).

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

If the applicant has received a similar grant from Diku in recent years, Diku 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 November 2019.

6.2 Contract and reporting obligations

The applicant will be required to enter into a contract with Diku. The contract will be subject to Diku'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, Diku 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

Questions regarding the program or how to apply can be directed to:

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Senior Adviser

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Appendix

Budget guidelines

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 Diku'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 *Specification of budget items* field in the application.

Student mobility

The tables below describe eligible costs that may be included in project applications with regard to incoming/outgoing student mobility.

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

MOBILITY UP TO 4 WEEKS	ELIGIBLE COSTS
To/from Norway	<p>Bachelor/Master/Ph.D students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project applications may include accommodation and living costs for students related to the planned project activities (e.g. work placements/teaching practice, field work, intensive courses, workshops, supervision, research activities, etc.). • Costs related to participation in conferences not clearly linked to the planned project activities may not be included.

MOBILITY OVER 4 WEEKS	ELIGIBLE COSTS
To Norway	<p>Bachelor/Master students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project applications may include scholarships to students and are meant to cover accommodation and living costs in Norway. The scholarships may not exceed the applicable rate set by the Norwegian State Educational

	<p>Loan Fund (<i>Lånekassen</i>). In 2018/19, the monthly rate is NOK 10 825.</p> <p>PhD students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project applications may include accommodation and living costs associated with the Ph.D. students stay in Norway up to the applicable monthly rate set by the Norwegian Research Council («Overseas Research Grants») for individuals. In 2019 the rate is NOK 18 000. Additional grants for dependents are not given.
From Norway	<p>Bachelor/Master students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project applications may include scholarships to students from Norway to cover costs which are not covered by student funding available from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (<i>Lånekassen</i>). The scholarships may not exceed NOK 6 000 per student per month. These rates also apply to international mobility for work placements. <p>Ph.D. students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 («Overseas Research Grants») for individuals.

The rates for student accommodation and living costs are based on rates and net amounts paid out to students from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (*Lånekassen*) for Bachelor and Master students and the Norwegian Research Council for Ph.D. students.

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

Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (*Lånekassen*) or other external funding sources.

Travel costs for staff

Projects may include 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.

Costs related to participation in conferences not clearly linked to the planned project activities may not be included.

Infrastructure and scientific equipment

Investments in infrastructure and scientific equipment 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 items "Salary, remunerations of consultants and honorariums" and/or "Indirect costs", not as part of the individual activities.