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Implementation of a Learning Arena for the Research Council's Technology Convergence Portfolio

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Financial scheme: Coordination and Support Activity

Application deadline: 15 November 2023, 13:00 CET

Relevant thematic areas for this call:

Enabling technologies

Target groups: Research organisations

Funding scale: NOK 1 000 000-2 000 000

Amount of funding presumed available for this call for proposals:

NOK 2 000 000

Project duration: 48-48 months

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Important dates

04 Oct 2023: Open for applications

15 Nov 2023: Application deadline

01 Jan 2024: Earliest permitted project start

01 Mar 2024: Latest permitted project start

29 Feb 2028: Latest permitted project completion date

Purpose

The ongoing focus on technology convergence will be strengthened by establishing a learning arena. Responsible development and use of enabling technologies in meeting societal and sustainability challenges place new demands on knowledge, skills, leadership and organisation in research and innovation. To support this work, an arena will be established for mutual learning, exchange of experiences and competence development related to the focus on technological convergence.

↓ **About the call**

- ↓ Who is eligible to apply?
- ↓ Who can participate in the project?
- ↓ What can you seek funding for?
- ↓ Reporting and disbursement of funding

↓ **Relevant thematic areas**

- ↓ Enabling technologies

↓ **Practical information**

- ↓ Requirements for this funding scheme
- ↓ Assessment criteria
- ↓ Administrative procedures

About the call for proposals

Background

Over the past two years, the Research Council has allocated funding to approximately 25 Researcher Projects, Collaborative and Knowledge-building Projects and Innovation Projects for the Industrial Sector within the topic of technology convergence. The aim of this portfolio is to achieve radical new technology development through ground-breaking research and collaboration across the enabling technologies. Biotechnology, ICT and nanotechnology are typical examples of such enabling technologies. The projects in the portfolio aim to arrive at solutions that can be applied, but they often have a high risk of not being fully successful with their radical objectives ("high risk – high gain").

As part of this initiative, funding has been set aside for networking and a learning arena that will work across and add value to the projects. Participation in networks and learning arenas is mandatory for the projects in the technology convergence portfolio.

Goals and target groups for the learning arena

With the learning arena, we will, among other things, gain insight into

- challenges related to working with transdisciplinary approaches, open research and socially responsible research and innovation;
- particular challenges related to research on technology convergence for radical technology development;
- challenges arising from linking research and radical innovation.

The target groups for the learning arena's activities include

- all projects that have received funding under our calls for proposals within technology convergence. Both younger (PhD and post-doctoral fellows) and

more experienced researchers in the projects are included in the target group.

Consortium participants and partners are also included. The number of projects in the portfolio will be approximately 30;

- the research community that works with technology convergence, and who are applicants and potential applicants for the initiative;
- the Research Council of Norway.

The learning arena is a way to contribute to responsible research and innovation. The participants will gain new knowledge, competence and skills. This is an arena for cooperation and co-creation between researchers and the Research Council, and activities that will be included in the learning arena will be developed in cooperation between the actors involved. The Research Council has conducted an initial survey of the relevant projects to gain insight into the needs and experiences of ongoing and start-up projects. Many of the comments were about transdisciplinarity, about the need to develop a common language and about translation between tribal and professional languages.

Responsible research and innovation in the projects and in the Research Council

The projects in the portfolio have been asked to establish processes to take account of the need for accountability in both technology development and innovation. Where relevant, challenges related to health, safety and the environment and aspects related to ethical, societal and political dimensions of technology development must be included.

The learning arena must include continuing work on responsible research and innovation across projects. This includes assessing what kind of future the project will contribute to, mapping possible effects of the project, intended as well as unintended, and discussing and responding to values, needs, concerns and expectations in society and culture. Responsible research and innovation is about reflecting on one's own perceptions and underlying assumptions in the face of societal challenges. It is also about shared learning by involving different stakeholders in the research and innovation process, including other academic communities, different user groups, business and industry and public actors.

Examples for inspiration and information about responsible research and innovation work via and with the Research Council

The national collaboration platform Centre for Digital Life Norway (DLN) deals with biotechnological research and innovation. On their website you will find [useful advice on planning and implementing responsible research and innovation \(RRI\) in research projects](#) (opens in new window).

[Responsible Research and Innovation in Norway \(AFINO\)](#) (opens in new window) is a network and learning centre for responsible innovation and corporate social responsibility in Norway. The goal is to develop expertise and new methods to ensure that innovation is responsible, sustainable and fair.

The European partnership M-ERA.NET has developed [guidelines for RRI](#) (opens in new window). These can be used as inspiration when incorporating RRI into a project.

Document in which the call is based: [Portfolio plan for Enabling Technologies](#).

Contact persons for this call are

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The call is available in both Norwegian and English. The Norwegian call text is legally binding.

Who is eligible to apply?

Only approved Norwegian research organisations may apply. [See the list of approved research organisations.](#)

Who can participate in the project?

Requirements relating to the Project Owner

The Project Owner must be a research organisation.

The research organisation listed as the Project Owner in the application form must have approved submission of the grant application.

If the application involves collaboration between several organisations, the Project Owner submits the application on behalf of all partners.

Requirements relating to the project manager and the project group

The project manager must have an approved doctorate or achieved associate professor qualifications before the application submission deadline. Under this call, current or previous employment in a position as *forsker 1* (research professor), *forsker 2* (senior researcher) or *seniorforsker* (senior researcher) in the institute sector is considered equivalent qualifications.

We expect the project manager and the project group to have experience with and expertise in what we request in terms of activities and perspectives, and have the scientific basis needed to establish networks and learning arenas related to responsible research and innovation, technology convergence and inter- and transdisciplinarity. We expect that the project group has experience in leading and conducting workshops and similar learning formats, both in physical and digital formats. We encourage collaboration with existing national learning arenas, but they are not required to participate in the project.

The project manager's and the entire project group's interdisciplinary expertise and suitability to carry out the project will be assessed by the Research Council.

The project manager must be employed by the Project Owner or one of the partners.

Approved Norwegian research organisations and corresponding international organisations may participate as partners in the project and receive funding.

What can you seek funding for?

You can apply for funding to cover actual costs necessary to carry out the project. The Project Owner is to obtain information about costs from the project partners. These costs are to be entered in the cost plan under the relevant cost category.

The grant application requires you to break down the project budget into the following cost categories:

- **Payroll and indirect expenses:** costs incurred by the Project Owner (company) and partners to carry out the learning arena
- **Other operating expenses**, which are costs for other activities that are necessary to carry out the project's activities. Any purchases from subcontractors must be entered here. All costs entered as "other operating expenses" must be specified in the application.

Travel costs for project participants from the technology convergence portfolio are not to be included in the project.

The categories **Procurement of R&D services** and **Equipment** should not be used.

Doctoral and post-doctoral research fellowships may not be included in the project.

You will find detailed and important information about what the budget should contain on the website.

Scope of funding

We can provide funding for a project of up to NOK 2 million under this call. There are no requirements for own funding, but for the university and university college sector, the Research Council requires some own financing of researcher time.

You can apply for funding for 100 per cent of budgeted project costs, limited to the maximum amount sought.

Conditions for funding

The project must start between 1 January 2024 and 1 March 2024, and you must apply for funding from the Research Council for four years. The latest permitted project completion date is 29.02.2028.

In addition, you must be aware of the following if you receive funding from us:

- From 2022, all grant recipients that are research organisations or public sector bodies (Project Owners and partners) must have a [Gender Equality Plan \(GEP\)](#) available on their website. The requirement does not apply to private businesses, special interest organisations or the voluntary sector.
- The Research Council's requirements relating to allocations can be found in our General terms and conditions for R&D projects on the information page [What the contract involves](#).
- The Research Council requires full and immediate open access for scientific articles; see [Plan S - open access to publications](#).

Reporting and disbursement of funding

We will disburse the funding annually based on submitted invoices with specifications of costs. You will only be reimbursed for actual expenses entered in the institution's accounts. All reporting shall be done electronically.

Relevant thematic areas for this call

Enabling technologies

TECHNOLOGICAL CONVERGENCE

Practical information

Requirements for this funding scheme

You can amend and submit the application several times up to the application deadline. We recommend that you submit your application as soon as you have completed the application form and uploaded the mandatory attachments. When the application deadline expires, it is the version of the application that was submitted most recently that we will process.

- The grant application and all attachments must be submitted in Norwegian or English.
- All attachments must be in PDF format.

Mandatory attachments

- Project description of maximum 5 pages. Use the standard template that you can download at the bottom of the page.
- An action plan of maximum 2 pages providing concrete details about how the learning arena will fulfil the objective specified is to be uploaded as an attachment under “Other items” in the online grant application form.
- CV for the project manager of maximum 4 pages. Use the standard template that you can download at the bottom of the page.
- CVs of key participants in the project. Use the same template as for the CV for the project manager.

Applications that do not satisfy the above requirements will be rejected.

All attachments to the application must be submitted with the application. We will not accept attachments submitted after the application deadline unless we have requested additional documentation.

We will not consider documents and websites linked to in the application, or attachments other than those specified above. Be careful to upload the correct attachment type, as there are no technical restrictions on what kind of templates it is possible to upload in the application form.

Assessment criteria

We assess the applications in light of the purpose of the call for proposals and according to the following criteria:

Excellence

Originality/Novelty

- The extent to which the concept is sound, credible and novel.

Solidity

- The extent to which the project objectives are clear and relevant.
- The quality of the proposed deliverables from the project.

Impact

Potential

- The extent to which the expected effects are specified.
- The extent to which expected impacts on the system and societal levels are specified.

Knowledge sharing and exploitation

- The quality of the proposed communication and dissemination activities.
- The extent to which it is credible that the proposed outputs will contribute to the specified effects and impact.

Implementation

Project Manager and project group

- The extent to which the Project Manager and project group are qualified and have the necessary expertise and are positioned to implement the project.
- The extent to which management structures and procedures are appropriate.

Plans and management

- The extent to which the work plan is clear and understandable, and the time table realistic
- The extent to which objectives and measures are coherent.
- The extent to which the project has the support of the leadership of the Project Owner and any partners, and the allocation of roles in the project is clear.
- The extent to which the budget is realistic and appropriate, and resources are allocated so that each of the partners can fulfil their role.
- The extent to which potential risks have been discussed.

Relevance to the call for proposals

The extent to which the project satisfies the guidelines and stipulations set out in the call for proposals.

Administrative procedures

Grant applications will be processed administratively and assessed on the basis of the assessment criteria and relevance to the call.

We expect to publish which applications will be awarded funding in mid-December 2023.

Download templates





Mal prosjektbeskrivelse - nettverksstøtte læringsarena
TEKNOKONVERGENS.docx




Template Project description - Network activities learningarena
TEKNOKONVERGENS.docx



Template for CV researchers.docx



★ MANDATORY ATTACHMENT

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