



**U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**  
**2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE**  
**ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314**

**NSF 24-070**

## Dear Colleague Letter: Nordic-U.S. Research Collaboration on Sustainable Development of the Arctic

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March 19, 2024

Dear Colleague:

The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) and [NordForsk](#), the science funding body of the Nordic Council of Ministers, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Research Cooperation. The MOU provides an overarching framework to encourage collaboration among U.S., Nordic, and Canadian research communities and sets out the principles by which jointly supported activities might be developed.

NordForsk and NSF are pleased to announce support for interdisciplinary research to bring forward new knowledge on how to ensure sustainable development of the Arctic. This funding opportunity is designed to support interdisciplinary research projects of the highest international quality and potential for societal impact with clear added value from multilateral collaboration. Only interdisciplinary research will be funded that integrates skills from multiple disciplines to contribute new and groundbreaking knowledge for the sustainable development of the Arctic.

When relevant, this opportunity also aims to encourage the engagement of Indigenous perspectives. Indigenous perspectives should be an integrated part of the proposed research, described in the application, and will be evaluated as part of the proposal assessment. Depending on the research and research results, Indigenous perspectives can be integrated into the projects in different ways. This will be up to the researchers to decide, but the expectations, guidance and how this part will be evaluated are described in the call text.

Applicants are encouraged to consider three keywords when developing research ideas into proposals: Security, Natural Resources and/or Societal Changes. Climate change has driven rapid transformations in the Arctic, including significant temperature rise and declining sea ice, which have profound ecological, societal, and geopolitical impacts. International research collaboration, especially that which includes local Indigenous perspectives, can open opportunities for the combination of expertise and experience from diverse research

communities that have not collaborated on Arctic research before. Increased and strengthened collaboration between like-minded countries and communities in the Arctic is valuable and will allow researchers to take advantage of infrastructure and human resources across disciplinary and national boundaries. To participate in this multinational collaboration, U.S. researchers would collaborate with Nordic and Canadian researchers and jointly develop a project within the scope of the NordForsk Call. This document provides the specific guidelines for the preparation, submission, review, and award of joint NSF-NordForsk proposals.

NSF staff will review pre-proposals involving researchers from U.S. institutions and determine whether a full proposal should be invited by NordForsk. NSF will then review any invited full proposals that include researchers from U.S. institutions and determine whether NordForsk should consider them for funding. NSF expects to fund researchers from U.S. institutions on successful proposals submitted under this NordForsk-led opportunity.

Under the NSF-NordForsk opportunity, projects must be at the intersection of participating NSF units and NordForsk:

## **NSF**

A list of specific participating NSF programs can be found on the NSF Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE) website at <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/IntlCollaborations/index.jsp>.

## **NordForsk**

- Research Council of Norway (Norway)
- Research Council of Finland (Finland)
- Swedish Research Council (Sweden)
- Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development, Formas (Sweden)
- Independent Research Fund Denmark (Denmark)
- Research Council Faroe Islands (Faroe Islands)
- Greenland Research Council (Greenland)
- Icelandic Center for Research, Rannis (Iceland)
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada)

Proposers should review the NordForsk Call for Proposals

<https://www.nordforsk.org/calls/sustainable-development-arctic-call-pre-proposals> for further information on the areas of research, requirements, and objectives for this collaboration. Also, see "[Annex 1: National Funding Rules](#)" for requirements specific to NSF. Proposers must contact NSF cognizant Program Director(s) to ensure the proposal aligns with the goals and requirements of the program prior to submission of the pre-proposal. To reach the cognizant program director in the target directorate, please contact:

- BIO – [debquestions@nsf.gov](mailto:debquestions@nsf.gov)
- GEO – [nsfgeo-nordforsk@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfgeo-nordforsk@nsf.gov)
- SBE – [nsfsbe-nordforsk@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfsbe-nordforsk@nsf.gov)
- EDU – [nsfedu-nordforsk@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfedu-nordforsk@nsf.gov)

PIs proposing work that requires logistics field support in the Arctic Regions should contact Arctic Research Support and Logistics ([https://www.nsf.gov/geo/opp/arctic/res\\_log\\_sup.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/geo/opp/arctic/res_log_sup.jsp)) when preparing the pre-proposal.

PIs proposing research that requires access to research vessels are encouraged to check general information at [https://www.nsf.gov/news/news\\_summ.jsp?cntn\\_id=191729&org=OCE](https://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=191729&org=OCE).

PIs that propose research that leverages NSF Directorate of Biological Sciences investments, such as National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) infrastructure, data, or research coordination are encouraged to check general information at <https://new.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/national-ecological-observatory-network>.

## **PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION**

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All proposals must fall within the mission and funding parameters of NSF and NordForsk. Proposals that do not fall within the missions of both funding organizations will not be considered.

Proposers at U.S institutions must collaborate with co-host institutions in three or more Nordic countries to submit a pre-proposal following the instructions at <https://www.nordforsk.org/calls/sustainable-development-arctic-call-pre-proposals>. Pre-proposals will be used to determine eligibility.

NordForsk, as the lead for this opportunity, will communicate pre-proposal eligibility and award decisions to the lead PIs. Further instructions will be provided to the U.S. PI on document submission procedures to receive NSF funding for the U.S. portion of the awarded collaborative proposal.

## **DEADLINES**

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Refer to the NordForsk call for applicable deadlines.

## **GUIDELINES**

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Please see the NordForsk call <https://www.nordforsk.org/calls/sustainable-development-arctic-call-pre-proposals> for a more detailed description of the review process.

## **PRE-PROPOSALS**

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Pre-proposals are required. Project teams should follow instructions at <https://www.nordforsk.org/calls/sustainable-development-arctic-call-pre-proposals> when preparing and submitting a pre-proposal.

## **FULL PROPOSALS**

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As the Lead Agency, NordForsk will invite proposers to submit a full proposal and provide further instructions on submission procedures.

## **FUNDING DECISIONS**

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Funding decisions are subject to availability of funds.

NordForsk will notify the Nordic and U.S. PIs that the full proposal is being recommended for funding. The U.S. PI will then be directed to submit additional documentation to NSF so the award can be processed on the U.S. side.

NSF and NordForsk will coordinate the U.S. and NordForsk award timing as much as possible. Because of potential differences in funding cycles, it is possible that some projects will have delayed start dates to allow time for funds to become available and/or all pre-award requirements to be met. Wherever possible, NSF and NordForsk will endeavor to hold to standard turnaround times for each participating agency, but in exceptional circumstances outcomes could be delayed.

The number of U.S.-NordForsk projects selected for funding and the total amount to be allocated will depend on the number and quality of the submitted projects and the available funding from each funding agency.

## **POST-AWARD CONSIDERATIONS**

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Awardees will be expected to comply with the award conditions and reporting requirements of the agencies from which they receive funding.

Awardees are expected to acknowledge both NSF and NordForsk in any reports or publications resulting from the award.

NSF and NordForsk will discuss requests for changes in awards (for example, changes in objectives or scope) before a joint decision is made.

NSF will consider requests for no-cost extensions for U.S. PIs using standard procedures.

In accordance with NSF and NordForsk standard procedures, awards will be publicly

announced.

Questions about this DCL may be directed to [NSF-NordForsk@nsf.gov](mailto:NSF-NordForsk@nsf.gov). Additionally, OISE helps to coordinate the overall engagement between NSF and NordForsk. The current OISE program manager for the Nordic research councils is listed at <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oise/country-list.jsp>.

## **DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

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NSF and NordForsk will share relevant information and data—whether in connection with the proposal and award process, or thereafter during the post award process. Data are expected to be shared between NSF and NordForsk to enable the secure and efficient processing of full proposals for this NSF-NordForsk opportunity. Data shared include proposal attachments, anonymized peer reviews, and anonymized panel comments. NSF and NordForsk are committed to maintaining data confidentiality, protection, and privacy and intend to fully abide by their own applicable laws and policies concerning the sharing of data in our collaborative activities.

Sincerely,

Kendra Sharp  
Office Head, Office of International Science and Engineering

Susan Marqusee  
Assistant Director for Biological Sciences

Alexandra R. Isern  
Assistant Director for Geosciences

Sylvia M. Butterfield  
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