



# CALL FOR PROJECT OUTLINES: CLUSTERS AND ECOSYSTEMS AS DRIVERS OF NORDIC SMART MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

**Deadline:** 20 November 2018 at 15.00 CET

**Budget:** NOK 200 000

## Purpose and context

The purpose of this call is to foster the establishment of Nordic innovation projects, new Nordic partnerships, value chains or business models in the field of Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity. Through this initiative, Nordic Innovation sets out to promote sustainable growth, innovation, entrepreneurship and/or global competitiveness of Nordic companies. By promoting Nordic smart mobility and connectivity solutions, Nordic Innovation aims to speed up the transition to a more sustainable and connected mobile future, where quality of life is a cross-cutting aspiration.

## Background

This call for project outlines is one of four concrete initiatives that currently make up Nordic Innovation's strategy on [Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity](#). The programme was launched by the Nordic ministers for business in May 2018 and is one of Nordic Innovation's three thematic priorities for the period 2018-21. A total of NOK 60 million has been allocated to the programme.

## Funding

Nordic Innovation will provide funding of **NOK 200 000** to up to 10 early-stage Nordic projects related to smart mobility and connectivity, with the aim of developing the most promising initiatives to next stage large scale Nordic Innovation projects.

## About Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity

Nordic smart mobility and connectivity is about the movement and/or connectivity of people, places (rural and urban), goods and services, assets, information and data. The term 'mobility' is used instead of 'transport' as we seek a broad approach. 'Smart' may refer to e.g. sustainability, security or digitalisation. Nordic smart mobility and connectivity is also about business development, innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable growth in this field.

We are looking for projects that have the potential for high-impact and Nordic added value, and where joint Nordic mobility and connectivity innovation can provide solutions to global challenges.



Furthermore, projects should aim to increase competitiveness in the Nordic region and achieve the following outcome:

- Strengthen Nordic agility and ability to adapt quickly by being frontrunners in the development of a smarter and more sustainable future of mobility, and/or
- boost Nordic smart mobility and connectivity innovation and competitiveness, and/or
- improve global market opportunities for Nordic smart mobility and connectivity solutions and business models

At a strategic and more general level, the following output will be of interest – however, applicants are welcome to target the opportunities or challenges they deem the most pressing:

- More integrated, seamless and innovative mobility in the Nordic region.
- Nordic cities as frontrunners in implementing the future of mobility.
- Speedier transition to smarter and more sustainable mobility solutions.
- Increased cluster/value chain collaboration on mobility and connectivity.

The applicant may suggest relevant project themes, within the above framework, but the following terms and key words may function as inspiration:

- Mobility services – from transport to mobility to liveability.
- Nordic smart and green mobility/transport.
- Connected, cooperative and automated transport.
- Next generation goods delivery.
- Last mile distribution.
- Seamless and accessible mobility.
- Electrification.
- Decarbonisation.
- Sharing economy.
- Test bed Norden.
- New business models and new value chains.

## Who can apply

This is a call for proposals specifically targeting Nordic clusters, business networks and ecosystems. Nordic Innovation defines clusters in a broad sense; applicants do not necessarily need to call themselves cluster organisations.

We look for mature organisations with international activities and ambitions. The organisation can be regional, national or international.

Applicants must represent a strong business community. It is a clear advantage if the organisation is accepted in and part of a national or international cluster or ecosystem programme. In addition to cluster-, business network and ecosystem organisations, companies that represent an ecosystem can apply, as long as the group has shared secretariat functions.



Projects must benefit companies in the Nordic region. Companies can also be directly involved as part of the consortium, but not as project owner or project leader. This can also be a way to prepare for stage 2 where companies should play a larger role.

As we emphasise the significance of active participation of problem and technology owners, consultancies should not take the role of project owner or project leader. Applicants seeking to build a strong Nordic base/consortium for future EU projects on mobility and connectivity, are also invited to participate in this call. The framework described above still applies.

As a main rule, all projects funded by Nordic Innovation require partners from minimum three Nordic countries. However, in relation to this call for project outlines (stage 1, as described below), we will in exceptional cases accept applications where only partners from two countries have been confirmed at the time of applying. It will, however, be an advantage to have partners from at least three Nordic countries in place from the outset. In the former case, the application must contain a convincing strategy on how a full Nordic consortium will be formed. For applications where only two partners are involved initially, a share of the budget should be reserved for partners that enter the project.

Cooperation partners from countries outside the Nordic region are not excluded, but only project partners from the Nordic countries will be funded.

## General eligibility criteria

Project partners must be eligible for de minimis state aid under Regulation 1407/2013 or 360/2012 (de minimis Regulations) of 18 December 2013. Other, more flexible and open support schemes may apply for stage 2.

## Evaluation criteria

All applications/project outlines will be evaluated based on the following three main criteria:

### A. Impact

- We will prioritise projects that have the potential to create high impact for Nordic companies, in particular SMEs (but also larger companies), in terms of sustainable growth, more innovation or entrepreneurship or access to new/global markets.
- Applicants must clarify how the projects will address joint societal challenges or relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals (e.g. 9 and 11).
- Applicants should also note that we seek the fulfilment of the joint Nordic vision of the Nordic region as the most integrated region in the world.

Furthermore, we will be looking for:

- Business potential for Nordic companies (both SMEs and larger companies).
- Potential for a positive impact for Nordic citizens.



- Nordic added value (why will it be advantageous to carry out the project at Nordic level as opposed to e.g. at national or local level).
- Potential for visibility / communication.

## B. Relevance

The application/project idea must show relevance for:

- Nordic Innovation's mission: To contribute to sustainable growth, increased entrepreneurship, innovation and competitiveness in the Nordic region.
- The [Nordic Co-operation Programme for Business and Innovation Policy 2018-2021](#).
- The topic mobility and connectivity as described in this call.
- Ongoing initiatives nationally and internationally (the project should be "well-connected", and build on best practice).
- Cross-sectoral innovation within the topic of mobility and connectivity.
- Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6-9.

## C. Competence and activity plan

- The consortium should consist of partners playing a leading role in national ecosystems.
- The consortium must demonstrate necessary and relevant implementation capacity and competence. In stage 1 (call for project outlines) it is sufficient to briefly describe the role, competence and responsibility and of potential partners.
- Project partners should preferably have experience with international cooperation projects.
- All partners must add competence and play a key role in developing the project.
- An activity plan must be included, briefly describing which type of activities will be conducted and how the NOK 200 000 will be spent.

## Eligible costs and activities

Travel costs, meeting costs and man hours are eligible costs. Feasibility/market studies, consortium building or partner search, concept or project development are relevant activities. Reporting will be simple and based on the activity plan.

## Two-stage process

**Stage 1:** This is a call for project outlines. Nordic Innovation welcomes applications for funding of a fixed amount of NOK 200.000. No co-funding is required at this stage. The application should be maximum 3 pages, including the activity plan. Exceeding pages will not be considered. The intention of the call is to give potential project partners the opportunity to form a viable consortium and develop a robust idea with considerable impact.

Funding decision will be made by the end of December 2018. Implementation period: Maximum 3 months, starting January 2019 at the earliest.



**Stage 2:** Nordic Innovation will invite applicants to apply for considerably larger projects in stage 2 (with required co-funding) after the project-outline phase has ended. In stage 2, a major part of the total proposed budget shall be allocated to benefit SMEs directly. It is not a pre-requisite to have participated in the call for project outlines to be able to compete for funding in the next round. A formal consortium consisting of minimum three Nordic partners must be in place when competing for larger funds in stage 2.



## Matchmaking and further information

Nordic Innovation will host a [workshop at BLOXHUB in Copenhagen on 1 November 2018](#), which will be a matchmaking opportunity for applicants to this call.

## Evaluation

In stage 1, applications will be evaluated by a committee consisting of senior innovation officials from Nordic Innovation. An external evaluation panel will be set up for stage 2. Project inputs from stage 1 may be used to form the basis of stage 2 opportunities.

## Application

[The application form can be found here \(available from ultimo October\)](#). Please note that a list of successful applications, including project titles, will be published on our website.