

The Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Education and Research



Programme Document 2012-2015

The Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Education and Research 2012-2015 is established on the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and the Nordic Council of Ministers, signed on September 29, 2011.

This document presents the objectives, design and priorities of the programme, as well as information required for potential applicants.

Further information is available from the application forms and call for proposals.

1. Objective

The general objective of the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Education and Research is to promote multifaceted contacts in the fields of education and research, in the interests of sustainable social and economic development in Russia and the Nordic countries.

By funding Nordic-Russian cooperation projects in higher education and research between educational institutions and research organizations, the programme aims to initiate long-term partnerships that will improve the direct links between the involved institutions and organizations.

Targeting the above goals, the cooperation efforts in higher education and research are directed towards multilateral cooperation in the training of highly qualified experts, exchange of undergraduate and postgraduate students and university faculty, as well as joint research projects and promotion of innovation.

Mutual benefit between the Nordic and Russian cooperation partners is an important goal for the programme.

2. Programme design

The Programme for Nordic-Russian Cooperation in Education and Research is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) coordinates the Nordic activities of the programme on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers. SIU administers education activities, while NordForsk administers research activities.

The Russian activities of the programme are coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

Please note that this Programme Document 2012-2015, concerns higher education activities, only. For information and guidelines regarding research cooperation, please consult NordForsk.

The programme is designed to stimulate cooperation between institutions. Cooperation projects should include at least one higher education institution in at least two different Nordic countries and at least one higher education institution in Russia. In any application the leadership of the participating institutions must agree to the activities that are funded through the programme, and the institution must be committed to provide the required contribution in kind or cash for successful implementation of the project. If a project proposal is granted support from the programme, the involved institutions are required to sign a cooperation agreement that affirms their mutual commitment to the project. Cooperation projects should be coordinated by one higher education institution in the Nordic countries and one higher education institution in Russia.

Funding for Russian participants will be realized as own contributions (in kind or cash) of the participating institutions, obtained from the participating institution's funds for international cooperation or other own funding. Funding for Nordic participants will take place on the basis of a contract between the Nordic coordinating institution and SIU. The collaborating institutions have mutual responsibility for planning, follow-up and reporting on progress in the projects. SIU will require financial reports from the coordinating institution in the Nordic countries.

The Nordic Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation have established a joint Nordic-Russian Working Group that will have the responsibility for the planning of the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Higher Education and Research, and the authority to select the activities that are to be funded within the framework of the programme. Project applications will be reviewed according to predefined criteria and will be presented for the Working Group for decision.

3. Priorities and applicable activities

Thematic and other priorities for the programme are elaborated on the basis of a dialogue between the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

3.1 Priority areas in the field of higher education

In the field of higher education, the joint project activities should be related to some of the following thematic priority areas:

- Shared Nordic-Russian challenges regarding environment and climate and common or shared resources, such as for example the Baltic Sea or the Arctic region

- Social inclusion and exclusion – including special needs education, social integration of minority and migrant children, youth employment, and transition from education to labor market.
- Area studies – including the languages, literature and culture of Russia and the Nordic countries.
- Higher education aimed at strengthening long-term cooperation in the field of industries and innovation.
- Reform of higher education structures with regard to the aims of the Bologna Process, such as developing the degree programme structure, increasing compatibility of degree structures between the Nordic countries and Russia, institutional management, funding of higher education, quality assurance, and the system of international collaboration.

3.2 *Applicable higher education activities*

- Development of joint courses, study programmes and degrees between partner institutions in Russia and the Nordic countries. This may include curriculum development and development of distant learning/virtual courses.
- Mobility of students, academic and administrative/technical staff between partner institutions in Russia and the Nordic countries
- Networking – including funding for organizing workshops, seminars and/or study visits.
- Joint Nordic-Russian teaching and supervision, including guest lecturing.
- Preparatory activities aimed at developing long-term cooperation between the collaborating institutions in the Nordic countries and Russia. In particular, the programme welcomes joint Nordic-Russian project initiatives aimed at participation in European education programmes.

In the selection of projects, cooperation that contributes to the following aims will be given priority:

- Development of joint courses, study programmes and degrees, primarily on the MA- and PhD-level.
- Distance learning/virtual college and university courses
- Quality assurance of higher education
- Balanced mobility of students and academic/administrative/technical staff between the Nordic countries and Russia
- Knowledge exchange between university and society and/or industry.

4. Funding and application guidelines

The funding of higher education activities will be provided through the existing mechanisms which the Russian Federation and the Nordic Council of Ministers employ to support international cooperation in education and research. The Nordic-Russian cooperation is an equal partnership in which each partner finances their own expenses. This means that the expenses in cooperation projects should be split between the Nordic countries and Russia.

Nordic participants in higher education projects should apply for funding to SIU. Funding for Russian participants will be realized as own contributions (in kind or cash) of the participating institutions.

4.1 *Allocation and types of support*

The total sum applied for on the Nordic side should not exceed EUR 50 000 for the entire project period (2016). In order to be eligible for funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers, projects must provide own funding (in kind or cash). A maximum of 70 % of the total Nordic project costs can be granted by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Russian institutions participating in projects should provide funding (in kind or cash) according to their activity level in the project. Further details regarding funding possibilities may be announced in connection with calls for proposals.

Higher education grants may be given for:

- Travel expenses for faculty and staff, including board and lodging according to standard rates, visa expenses.
- Student travel grants, including visa and travel insurance expenses, as well as costs for preparatory language courses and tests.
- Purchase of equipment, books, and periodicals (up to 5 percent of total budget).
- The rental of premises.
- Compensation to department/section of coordinating institution (up to 1 month per year).
- On a limited scale, expenses in connection with hiring of external lecturers.
- Administration costs (up to 10 percent of sub-total)

Higher education grants may not cover:

- Basic salaries and overheads relating to salaries
- Funding for participation from other countries than the Nordic countries and Russia

4.2 *Financial guidelines*

Travel expenses for faculty and staff

Travel costs should be calculated according to the cheapest mode of international air travel. Travel expenses exceeding this limit will not be covered. Expenses should be calculated in accordance with national regulations in the Nordic countries or regulations established by the home institution, provided they do not exceed national allowance limits.

Student grants

Nordic institutions may apply for travel grants on behalf of Nordic students undertaking a course of study / study visit at a Russian partner institution as part of the proposed project. Travel grants for students, including visa and travel insurance expenses, as well as costs for preparatory language courses and language tests (TOEFL or similar), are granted according to a fixed rate of up to EUR 1000 per student.

Purchase of equipment, books, and periodicals

Costs related to the purchase of necessary equipment, books, and periodicals may be supported by the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme. The costs should be limited to maximum 5 percent of the total budget.

Rental of premises

Rental of premises in connection with organization of workshops and seminars may be supported by the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme. To receive support, the workshop/seminar should be organized in one of the Nordic countries.

Compensation to department/section of coordinating institution

The department/section at the Nordic institution coordinating the project may receive compensation for the time spent by the academic project coordinator on management and coordination of the

Nordic-Russian project. Compensation is intended to cover substitute manpower at the project coordinator's institution. The maximum project management workload for a Nordic-Russian project is estimated to one (1) month per year per project. If the workload is larger than one month per year, this should be covered by the institution's own contribution to the project. Overheads relating to salaries are not covered by the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Education and Research.

Hiring of external lecturers

Costs for hiring of external lecturers in connection with project activities can be supported to a limited extent, i.e. short-time guest lectures in the thematic area of the project cooperation. The external lecturers must be from one of the Nordic countries or from Russia.

Project administration costs

Applicants should seek to limit administrative costs. Projects with general administrative costs of more than ten percent of the sub-total budget will not receive support. Project administration costs are intended to contribute to administrative expenses at department, faculty or institutional level associated with the additional time and resources invested in the administration of the project, including accounting and reporting that are directly connected to the cooperation project.

Costs not covered by the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme

Apart from the general administrative costs of ten percent of the sub-total budget, no additional overhead can be deducted from the project allocation. Basic salaries for faculty and staff members who participate in a project are not covered by the programme.

5. Application guidelines

- The Nordic project budget must present the total cost of the project for Nordic participants and the amount of own funding. Own funding can be institutional contribution or external funding from other sources. In kind contributions can be accepted to some extent, if project activities require extensive use of substitutes at the institution (more than 1 month per year). Detailed information about own funding must be given in the application form.
- The Russian participating institution(s) financial contribution to the project should be stated in the Letter of commitment. The Russian financial contribution can be own institutional contribution or external funding from other sources. In kind contribution can be accepted to the extent that it will contribute to the successful implementation of the project.
- Any project application must clearly state the academic input that each of the partner institutions contribute to the Nordic-Russian cooperation project.
- The project application must contain information on the applicants' plans for making the Nordic-Russian cooperation sustainable after the project financing from the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme has stopped.
- All projects should be completed by 31.12.2016 at the latest.

6. Application procedure

- Interested Nordic and Russian institutions should submit joint applications through SIU's online administrative system for application and reporting, [Espresso](#). The application form will be available at the time of the call for proposals. Deadlines will be announced in the call. Applications cannot be submitted after the closing date.
- All project proposals should be jointly prepared by the collaborating institutions. All proposals must include goals and objectives, activities, work plans, a detailed budget and reflections on the sustainability and risk factors of the project/cooperation.
- Nordic institutions apply for funding for Nordic participants. The application to SIU is submitted by the Nordic institution that the network have chosen to be the coordinating institution of the project. The leadership of the Nordic coordinating institution should confirm the institution's commitment to the project.
- Partial funding from the Russian institution (in kind or cash) should be accounted for and confirmed in project proposals by the signature of the Russian institution's Rector.
- In addition to the application form, the main partner institutions and network partners in Russia and the Nordic countries should submit a Letter of commitment. Letters of commitment can be uploaded in the online application form in [Espresso](#).
- Letters of commitment must contain the following information:
 - The institution's areas of specialty and expected contribution to collaboration within this area
 - For Russian institutions: Confirmation about available institutional funding and a detailed budget for their part of the project.
 - The Letter of Commitment must be signed by the participating institution's Rector.

7. Processing of applications

When an application has been received by SIU the procedure is as follows:

- SIU and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation assess the applications. In the evaluation of applications, SIU may consult other Nordic programme administrators, and will make use of external peer review when required within the thematic priority areas.
- SIU and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation each provide the joint Nordic-Russian Working Group with a separate list of project applications that are prioritized for support.
- The Joint Nordic-Russian Working Group makes the final decision on which project proposals that are granted support.
- SIU inform all applicants on the result of the application.

8. Terms and conditions

Activities must take place between the approval of the application and the end of December 2016. All successful candidates will receive a Letter of Approval.

SIU will sign a Contract with the main Nordic partner institution for funding of Nordic participation in joint Nordic-Russian higher education projects. When granted support the Nordic and Russian institutions

cooperating on a project will be required to sign a collaboration agreement, confirming their mutual obligations in the project.

Payment of grants to Nordic institutions is made after a Contract has been signed by SIU. An initial payment of 80 percent of the funds is then made, whilst 20 percent is paid on approval of the final report. Funds are allocated and paid in Euro (EUR).

When a project has been granted support from the Nordic-Russian Working Group, funding from the Russian partner institution(s) (in kind or cash) should be activated. The projects should report to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation that the institutional funding has been transferred to the project.

9. Follow-up on projects

9.1 Reporting

All higher education institutions taking part in the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Education and Research are jointly responsible for the implementation and monitoring of activities and projects. The Nordic and Russian partner institutions have common ownership to the results of the cooperation project.

In higher education projects, progress and financial reports on the use of Nordic funds should be submitted to SIU using the online reporting facility [Espresso](#). Russian participants in higher education projects should report according to the standards used at their own institution.

SIU will report on higher education activities in the Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Education and Research to the Nordic Council of Ministers.

9.2 Receipts

The coordinating institutions in Russia and the Nordic countries must keep all receipts in the event of an external audit, and keep accounts according to the laws in their own country.