

Call for proposals 2020:

Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity

Changing the way people and goods move

Application deadline:	31 March 2020 at 13.00 CET
Funding decision:	1 June 2020
Total budget:	NOK 16 million

Please note that the call text is subject to change until the end of 2019.

Background

This call for proposals combines two of the initiatives that currently make up Nordic Innovation's [Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity](#) program. The program was launched 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 program.

This is the second call for proposals launched by Nordic Innovation on the two selected topics. The first round of calls was carried out in the spring 2019. [Four projects](#) were selected for funding.

Purpose

The purpose of this call is to foster the establishment of Nordic innovation projects, new Nordic partnerships, value chains and/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, innovative and connected mobile future, where quality of life and liveability is a cross-cutting aspiration.

Funding

Total budget: Nordic Innovation has allocated NOK 16 million to this call for proposals.

Total number of projects to be funded: 2-4 projects with up to NOK 4 million funding each from Nordic Innovation. The funding will be given in the form of a grant.

Project duration: Maximum 36 months.

About the programme and thematic scope of the call

The Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity program is about changing the way people and goods move and speeding up the transition towards a sustainable future through innovative Nordic mobility solutions. At the core of the program lies the shared Nordic values of trust, equality, sustainability, innovation and openness, as well as the Nordic tradition of putting people first and securing accessibility for all.



Moreover, *Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity* is about the movement and connectivity of people, goods and services, assets and data. The term 'mobility' is used instead of 'transport' as we seek a broad and new approach, where moving people and goods from A to B is core, not the mode of transport, how or where it takes place. 'Smart' may refer to e.g. sustainability, security or digitalization. *Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity* is also about business development, innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable growth in this field.

Projects seeking funding should aim to achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

- New Nordic sustainable business models and solutions within mobility and connectivity
- Impact and value creation for Nordic businesses
- Improved global market opportunities for Nordic mobility and connectivity solutions and business models

Through the program and this call for proposals, we are looking for projects that have the potential for creating high impact and substantial Nordic added value, and where joint Nordic mobility and connectivity innovation can provide solutions to global challenges. We seek mobility projects that boost added value and spark innovation by combining and building on Nordic strongholds, existing or new mobility solutions. This includes innovative mobility concepts and solutions that are ready for global markets. Applicants should also note that we seek to fulfil the [Nordic countries' joint vision of the Nordic region as the most sustainable and integrated region in the world within a decade](#).

This call for proposals covers two topics:

- Seamless, integrated and people-centric mobility, or
- Sustainable, secure, energy-efficient and decarbonized mobility

The topics may overlap, but applicants will have to state the main focus of their project in the application.

Topic 1: Seamless, integrated and people-centric mobility

New technology, as well as and changes in behaviour and demand, is transforming urban mobility as we know it today. To adapt to and manage technological changes and future needs, Nordic Innovation is looking for projects that will bring about an improved mobility landscape – optimizing and improving the way people and goods move. The projects should contribute to a seamless and integrated mobility system that considers users (both consumers and businesses), operators (of both physical assets and services), owners, financiers as well as regulators.

Areas of interest may include but are not limited to: Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS), digitalization and logistics, connected transportation systems, last mile solutions, smart infrastructure, sharing services or autonomous and electric vehicles. The projects should lead to the optimization of the mobility system by creating new business opportunities and solutions that will enable fast, smooth, accessible and affordable mobility solutions for both people and goods.



Topic 2: Sustainable, secure, energy-efficient and decarbonized mobility

Nordic Innovation wishes to solicit projects that will help speed up the transition to a cleaner, more resource efficient and secure mobility sector in the Nordic region. As such, the projects shall ensure that the future of mobility will reduce the environmental impact of the transport sector, provide better and safer mobility services as well as boost the competitiveness of the Nordic mobility industry with regards to sustainable mobility/transportation.

Proposed projects can span across all modes of transportation, people or goods transport, including but not limited to: alternative energy sources, decarbonization, efficient and affordable mobility solutions, safe and secure mobility systems. The projects should lead to a Nordic mobility system that is more resource-efficient, climate and environmentally friendly, as well as safe and accessible, for the benefit of all Nordic citizens.

Who can apply

Companies (SMEs and larger companies), public sector organizations (e.g. infrastructure owners, regulators, procurers, innovation ecosystems), cluster organizations, business networks or research institutions may apply. Please note that the involvement of industry and the direct benefit of the project for companies in the Nordic region will be part of the evaluation criteria. We are looking for consortia that show ambition, complementary strengths, competence and experience with international activities.

As we emphasize the significance of active participation of problem and technology owners, consultancies should not take the role as 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.

Consortium partners from countries outside the Nordic region are welcome to participate, but only partners from the Nordic countries can receive funding from Nordic Innovation.

General eligibility criteria

Only projects that meet all the following general eligibility criteria will be eligible for funding:

- The project must include partners from minimum three Nordic countries. The balance between the countries should be reasonable.
- Nordic Innovation requires co-funding of minimum 50%, in the form of direct funding or in-kind contributions (working hours). The total share of any in-kind contributions must be reasonable and well-balanced. The co-funding requirement applies to the project as a whole and not individual partners.
- The project period cannot exceed 36 months.
- Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6 or higher:

TRL 1 – basic principles observed

TRL 2 – technology concept formulated

TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept

TRL 4 – technology validated in lab

TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)

TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment



TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment

TRL 8 – system complete and qualified

TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment

- Only applications submitted through Nordic Innovation's application portal will be accepted.
- All applications must be within the scope of this call.

De Minimis Aid obligations

It is a requirement that all grants from Nordic Innovation comply with the aid rules of the European Union and the Agreement on the European Economic Area (The EEA Agreement). However, organisations under The Nordic Council of Ministers were given new guidelines for State Aid as of 2019, and these applies a.o. for Nordic Innovation.

The support you are being offered is being granted in compliance with Commission Regulation (EC) No 1407/2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid, published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 352 from 24.12.2013.

Grants from Nordic Innovation comes from the five Nordic governments and a Nordic undertaking is allowed to receive up to € 200,000 of de minimis aid from each of the Nordic Countries. Consequently, a Nordic company can receive up to 1,000,000 EUR over a rolling period of three fiscal years from Nordic Innovation under the de minimis regulation, given that the company has received no grants as De Minimis Aid prior to this grant.

Eligible costs

Working hours, travel costs, meeting costs, communication, external services.

Nordic Innovation's approved hourly

rate: <http://nordicinnovation.org/Documents/Attachments/Nordic%20Innovation's%20approved%20hourly%20rate.pdf>

Ineligible costs

- Basic research
- Investments in individual companies
- Independent freelance activities
- Writing applications
- Costs for procurement of equipment
- Overtime costs
- Salary increases
- Indirect taxes and duties, including VAT
- "Return on capital employed", including dividends and other distributions of profits
- Provisions for possible future losses and charges
- Costs related to any interests
- Provisions for doubtful debts
- Unnecessary or ill-considered expenses
- Marketing, sales and distribution costs for production and services



- Leasing costs (or part thereof) where the leasing arrangement has the effect of unnecessarily increasing the charge made to the project (e.g. where the cost without interest of the leased equipment is higher than if purchased).

Evaluation criteria

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

A. Impact (30%)

- Business level: Nordic Innovation seeks projects with the potential to create high impact for Nordic companies, in terms of business opportunities and sustainable growth, more innovation, entrepreneurship or access to new markets.
- Nordic level: Applicants should describe the Nordic added value of the project (why will it be advantageous to carry out the project at Nordic level as opposed to e.g. at national or local level).
- Societal level: Applicants must clarify how the projects will address joint societal challenges or relevant Sustainable Development Goals (e.g. 9 and 11) and the joint [vision for Nordic cooperation](#). The projects should also have a potential for positive impact for Nordic citizens – and beyond.
- Exit strategy: All applications must demonstrate how they intend to ensure the sustainability of the project results and impact creation after the project period has ended.
- Visibility: Nordic Innovation will prioritise high impact projects with a high potential for visibility. Please describe how the project and its results will be disseminated and how visibility will be ensured.

B. Quality and relevance (25%)

The project must show quality and relevance in regard to:

- Nordic Innovation's mission: To contribute to sustainable growth, increased entrepreneurship, innovation and competitiveness for Nordic companies.
- The topic *mobility and connectivity* as described in this call.
- Cross-sectoral innovation within the topic of mobility and connectivity.
- Describe the concrete innovative result and the innovative aspects of the project (new concept, process, business model, product or service) – of relevance to the call text.
- Describe how the project addresses real market needs.

C. Competence and implementation (25%)

- The consortium must demonstrate necessary and relevant implementation capacity and competence. The role, competence and responsibility of all project partners must be described, including the key role they play in implementing the project and/or the results of the project. Short CVs (1/2 page) may be attached.
- The Nordic added value and synergies created through the consortium as a whole must be described.



- Project partners should preferably have experience with international cooperation projects.
- The project plan and management should be realistic, well-structured and clearly defined.
- The involvement of Nordic businesses and industries must be described.

D. Budget and value for money (20%)

- The total budget and cost structure must be reasonable, realistic and in line with the ambitions of the project.
- A high degree of own investment in the project will be assessed positively as it demonstrates commitment to the project.
- Is the project financially viable and does it provide good value for money?
- A budget template will be available on Nordic Innovation's website. This must be attached to the applications.

Application process and other requirements

All applications must be submitted via the application portal on Nordic Innovation's website. The portal will be opened in January 2020.

All questions regarding this call for proposals will be answered through a "Frequently Asked Questions"-document on Nordic Innovation's website. The document will be updated on a regular basis. Questions regarding this call may be submitted to: n.egeli@nordicinnovation.org and i.josefsson@nordicinnovation.org.

Please note that the short summary of the project (re application form) may be published.

Proposals can be written in English or a Scandinavian language. A summary must be provided in English.

Evaluation procedure

All applications will be evaluated by 1) A Nordic Innovation team and 2) An external Nordic evaluation panel with representatives from both the private and public sector. The final funding decision lies with Nordic Innovation. All proposals will be evaluated according to the evaluation criteria described in this call text.

Communication and reporting

Funded projects must provide a communication plan to be approved by Nordic Innovation before project start up. In addition, they must always acknowledge the support of Nordic Innovation in external communication (media, presentations, websites etc.).

When using social media Nordic Innovation must be tagged and relevant hashtag used (#NordicMobility)

LinkedIn: @Nordic Innovation

Facebook: @nordicinnovation.org

Twitter: @nordicinn



Communication material should as a main rule be based on the [Nordic Council of Ministers' design manual](#) unless something else is agreed upon in the final contract.

A reporting template will be provided. Reporting will take place in accordance with the requirements of Nordic Innovation's Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Furthermore, Nordic Innovation will establish regular contact with the successful projects to ensure visibility and support.