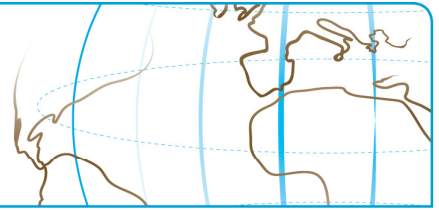


CALL FOR PROPOSALS



Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in
Higher Education – SIU

Nordic Master Programme

Funding for the development of Nordic Master Programmes

Each project may be awarded up to 1 million DKK

The deadline for applications is 15 September 2010

As an important part of The Nordic Council of Minister's focus on strengthening the position of the Nordic region as an attractive region for education, higher education institutions (HEIs) aspiring to develop Nordic Master Programmes are invited to submit applications under this call.

The objective is that HEIs in cooperation will develop joint Nordic Master Programmes of high quality that will be attractive to both Nordic and non-Nordic students.

Only HEIs from the Nordic countries (Denmark - including Greenland and Faeroe Islands -, Finland - including Åland -, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) are eligible for financial support.

Funds have been allocated to finance six programmes (DKK 1 million each) in 2010.

The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) is responsible for the administration of Nordic Master Programmes on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The application should be submitted online and the application form will be available at www.siu.no/nordicmaster.

The application deadline is Wednesday **15 September 2010**.

Please find the call from the Nordic Council of Ministers attached.

More information is available at www.siu.no/nordicmaster.



Call for proposals:

Funding for the development of Nordic Master Programmes

The Nordic Council of Ministers (NMRS) calls for proposals to develop Nordic Master Programmes.

Introduction and background

The Nordic Council of Ministers sees the development of joint Nordic Master Programmes as one of several means to strengthen the Nordic region as a more coherent unit, boost its competitiveness, and attract both Nordic and non-Nordic students to study at Nordic higher education institutions (HEIs). Cooperation between HEIs in several Nordic countries with the objective to develop joint master programmes will make it possible to promote the strengths of each country and provide study programmes of top international quality.

Good conditions for this are already established. Nordic researchers have a long tradition of working together, and the Nordic institutions are used to collaborate on programmes like *Nordplus* and *Nordforsk*.

The foundation for the call for proposals for the development of Nordic Master Programmes is thus as follows:

- Strengthening of subjects where Nordic HEIs work together in specifically defined fields
- Improving the relative competitiveness of the Nordic region in higher education to help make the region a more coherent entity
- Attracting non-Nordic students to Nordic HEIs, as well as retaining the best Nordic students

The selected programmes should develop high-quality and attractive master programmes by building upon the best each country has to offer, and consequently contribute to making the Nordic university systems more competitive.

- The Nordic Council of Ministers believes that developing a brand such as the Nordic Master Programme brings a new instrument giving visibility to individual institutions/actors as well as HEIs in the Nordic countries.



The pilot projects must:

- Through cooperation between different educational institutions and other bodies in several Nordic Countries create highly attractive Master programmes. This will be achieved by building upon the best that each country has to offer.
- Develop programmes of the highest academic quality in order to boost the competitiveness of the Nordic higher education system.

The Nordic Council of Ministers believes that the longstanding tradition of cooperation between Nordic researchers and academic institutions, the relative similarity of the Nordic countries and the high standard of their quality-assurance systems already in place, combine to provide a solid foundation for creating innovative and attractive master programmes. In this call for proposals, projects developing master programmes in small subject areas are encouraged to apply.

1. Objectives for Nordic Master Programmes

The overall objective of the Nordic Master Programme is to retain and build upon national excellence of each individual country through cooperation between the Nordic HEIs, and thereby provide master programmes which each country alone would not be able to offer. In this way the Nordic dimension will be enhanced and the Nordic region strengthened through the increased international visibility of its HEIs.

- To stimulate cooperation between HEIs and other relevant bodies and strengthen the Nordic Region
- To make Nordic HEIs more visible on the international arena and proliferate *good practice*
- To develop new models for Nordic cooperation in education
- To develop new areas of academic study
- To generate specialised knowledge in areas where expertise is needed
- To stimulate and support the development of a number of master programmes jointly offered by HEIs in several Nordic countries.



2. Which projects may receive funding?

The Nordic Council of Ministers seeks high-quality programmes which become better and internationally more attractive through cooperation between Nordic HEIs, and possibly also other bodies such as enterprises.

The programmes should attract both Nordic and non-Nordic students. The programme proposals should outline the conditions to be provided for students, for example, as to how virtual networks and similar arrangements will be integrated.

Innovative elements should be highlighted, and the extent of mobility required and plans for examinations should be clearly specified. The collaborating institutions are encouraged to develop inter-disciplinary study programmes.

The programmes should be based on institutional commitment and on cooperation between well-established and high-profile units.

3. Requirements for the projects

The collaborating HEIs should set up a *joint consortium* which will develop and run the master programme. Proposals should clearly state which educational institution(s) will be responsible for the application and admission procedures to the programme.

The programmes should be "*joint study programmes*" with graduates receiving one joint or multiple national diplomas, depending on national legislation. Applications should indicate how the consortium relates to national legislation.

The programmes must encompass *120 ECTS*, in other words be two-year courses of study. The minimum course offering from each HEI involved in the consortium must amount to *20 ECTS*. This is to secure concrete and active participation of all members of the consortium. Courses should be taught in *English*; however, exceptions can be made in certain cases.

All the participating HEIs must be able to provide third cycle degrees (doctorates) within the discipline concerned, either at its own institution or via cooperation with other institutions, for students who wish to continue their studies.



The master programme must be recognized in all of the countries that are involved in the consortium, in compliance with all of their current national quality-assurance systems.

The cooperation must be documented by a written agreement between the participating HEIs signed by the rector of the institutions, or equivalent.

4. Minimum number of participating countries and institutions and eligibility criteria

As a rule, a minimum of three HEIs from three different countries should cooperate on one Nordic Master Programme. In special cases, however, exceptions may be granted where specialised competence is required and the rest of the quality requirements are satisfied.

Only HEIs from the Nordic countries (Denmark - including Greenland and Faeroe Islands -, Finland - including Åland -, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) are eligible for financial support. The three autonomous regions each count as one country.

The consortia that receive funding should be the ones that actually implement and start the actual study programmes. It should be noted that funding under this call can only be used for the *development phase* of the Nordic Master Programmes, and it is taken for granted that the institutions which make up the consortium will be responsible for costs incurred in the actual implementation and running of the programmes.

Projects are primarily open to HEIs with a strong research profile, and all of the institutions participating in a consortium must be able to provide third cycle degree (doctorates) within the discipline concerned, either at its own institution or via cooperation with other institutions, for students who wish to continue their studies.

The Nordic Council of Ministers will also take a positive view of strategic partnership with other bodies such as enterprises etc.



5. Assessment criteria and evaluation committees

The quality of the *content* of the master programme will be assessed on the basis of the following elements:

- The objective of the master programme and its potential to contribute to the excellence and competitiveness of Nordic HEIs (weight 3)
- The academic quality and added value – Nordic strength – which the integrated study programme brings about, relative to what already exists in the respective disciplines in the various Nordic countries (weight 3)
- The extent to which the quality of the master programme can be assured (weight 3)
- The extent to which the master programme is linked to research within the given field (weight 3)
- The extent to which the master programme will be able to offer examples of “good practice” which can be disseminated (weight 2)
- The degree of inter-disciplinarity (weight 1)
- The degree of innovation in the proposed programme (weight 2)
- The programme’s potential for recruiting international students (weight 2)

The quality of the cooperation within the consortium will be assessed on the basis of the following elements:

- How integrated/robust are the established mechanisms for cooperation (the degree of institutionalisation, regularity of meetings, clearly defined and active roles for all partners)? (weight 3)
- To what extent is the master programme genuinely integrated and anchored, both nationally and within the particular HEI? To what extent is the consortium capable of implementing the programme? (weight 3)
- How clear and transparent is the structure of the master programme? (weight 2)
- How well developed are the mechanisms for attracting students from countries outside the Nordic region? (weight 2)

Applications will be assessed by a committee made up of experts from the Nordic region as well as from other countries.



6. Budget, processing, timetable and practical issues

Each programme may receive funding of up to **DKK 1 000 000**. This fund is a one-off sum intended to stimulate the development of the respective programmes.

50% of the total project funding is distributed to the coordinating institution at the start of the project period. The remaining 50% will be paid when the programme is launched (i.e. admits students and offers the required courses) and the final report is approved by SIU.

Applications should clearly state how the consortium intends to employ the allocated funds. The application should also contain a tentative timetable with information about, e.g. when the programme will be launched, the number of students to be admitted, etc.

The consortium must submit an interim and a final report.

Applications must be in English and be submitted online to SIU at <http://espresso.siu.no>.

The deadline for applications is **Wednesday 15 September 2010**.

The primary objective of funding the development projects is that Nordic Master Programmes are actually implemented. Students who apply for the programmes must be clearly informed about the conditions for acceptance and what degree they will receive at the end of their course of study.

Timetable:

1 April – 15 Sept 2010	Application period
Sept – Nov 2010	Evaluation of applications
Mid-Dec 2010	Notification of successful applicants
15 June 2011	Interim report describing the progress, any problems, plans for continued work, etc.
15 Oct 2012	Final report on content, organisation, structure, estimated number of students, etc.

For further information, please contact:

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