

Call for proposals for Exchange Cooperation, 2025

1. About the grant

Norec supports global partnerships for sustainable development by funding collaborative work exchanges. This grant programme gives young professionals a chance to gain international work experience and skills in sustainable development.

- Norec aims for a wide variety of exchange projects, considering diversity in themes, competencies, locations, participants, and partnerships.
- In 2025, projects related to climate, climate adaptation, and food security will be prioritised.

Norwegian development policy is built on the Sustainable Development Goals, climate goals, and human rights. Norec supports these goals.

The grant programme is competitive. All completed applications are evaluated based on the guidelines in this call for proposals and in comparison with other applications.

Meeting all formal and practical criteria does not guarantee funding under this programme.

Deadlines and grant funds

- **Collaboration agreement (only for partners that have completed a feasibility study)**
 - **Deadline:** 15 January, 2025
 - **Total funds available:** NOK 40 million*
 - **Application processing finalised:** 15 April, 2025
 - **Expected exchange start date:** August 2025

Final decisions depend on Norec's annual allocation from the Norwegian fiscal budget.

*These are the total funds available for the current call for applications.

2. Intended purpose of the grant

This grant aims to build mutual trust and strong global partnerships for sustainable development. It focuses on enabling institutional development and innovative solutions driven by young professionals as holders of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Specifically, Norec aims to support:

- Building knowledge, skills, and attitudes that promote sustainable development
- Improving organisational readiness to manage diversity and create inclusive workplaces
- Strengthening strategic and institutional learning, innovation and development across the partnerships and within the organisations

- Creating or supporting global networks, communities of practice, and partnerships
- Supporting mutual learning, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 17
- Increasing ownership, knowledge, and awareness of projects among staff across partner organisations
- Encouraging innovative solutions and improving the quality of services provided by grant recipients
- Promoting positive impact on local communities

3. Who is eligible to apply?

Partnerships between the following types of organisations can apply for Norec grants:

- Civil society organisations
- Public institutions
- Private sector companies
- Multilateral and global organisations.

Applicants must be legally registered entities within one of these categories.

The application must include accurate and complete information about the organisation type.

Eligibility requirements

- **Location:** Applicants must be based in Norway or in a country listed on [Norec's partner list](#).
 - In exceptional circumstances, where Norec sees that the project aligns closely with Norec's goals and has transformative potential, partnerships may include countries beyond this list. However, projects must always be implemented in a country eligible for Norwegian development assistance ([ODA countries](#)).
- **Partnership approach:** Applicants must apply as a partnership and work together to develop the project.
- **Capacity requirement:** Applicants must have the administrative and financial capacity needed to carry out the exchange project.
- **Expertise and planning:** Applicants must demonstrate a good understanding of the areas for which expertise will be exchanged and provide a realistic framework for the project results.
- **Ethical standards:** The applicant must confirm that their organisation's ethical guidelines meets Norec's minimum [ethical standards](#), including a policy for preventing sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH).

Commitment to inclusion

Norec follows the principle of “Leave no one behind”. Beyond the main eligibility and priority criteria, Norec aims to support the inclusion of participants who may not typically engage in global partnerships for sustainable development.

Two types of organisations are especially encouraged to apply:

- Organisations that are not traditional aid recipients but wish to expand their international engagement and collaboration.
- Organisations that are made up of, or work with, marginalised or vulnerable groups.

4. How is the project appraised?

Norec begins by checking if the application meets the formal criteria:

Formal criteria:

- The project complies with the [OECD/DAC criteria for Official Development Assistance \(ODA\)](#)
- The project aligns with Norec’s grant scheme objectives and addresses a specific need
- The applicant meets the eligibility requirements
- A complete application is submitted by the deadline.

Assessment criteria

If the formal criteria are met, Norec then evaluates the project based on:

- **Clear Goals:** The project has well-defined, realistic, and measurable goals, with baselines and indicators for tracking results.
- **Partnership strength:** The application shows each partner’s unique strengths, a strong and mutual partnership, joint ownership of the goals and result framework, and collaboration in the project description.
- **Support for Exchange Participants:** There is a clear plan for mentoring and supporting participants before, during, and after the exchange.
- **Integration with Organisational Strategies:** The project aligns with the workplans and strategies of the organisations involved.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** The budget demonstrates efficient use of funds.
- **Risk Management:** The applicant has identified, analysed, and reduced key risks, including any that could negatively affect the four cross-cutting issues. The applicant must also confirm that practical arrangements are in place, such as visas, work permits, training, guidelines, housing, and insurance.

Additional Considerations

Norec also considers:

- Alignment with the Norwegian Government’s strategies and relevance to partner countries.

- The overall mix of projects in Norec’s portfolio.
- The project’s potential to strengthen mutual international partnerships.
- The extent to which the project promotes the exchange of new, innovative knowledge, skills, and attitudes between partners.
- The project’s potential to inspire new approaches and broader impacts across organisations.
- The added value of Norec’s support (additionality).
- Where relevant, attention to cross-cutting issues, such as environmental sustainability or gender equality.
- Due diligence of the project and its partners, including reference checks if needed.

For returning applicants, Norec will review:

- Past performance on prior grants, including project results and results-based management
- Risk and financial management
- Support to exchange participants
- Collaboration with partners

The findings from the Feasibility study will also influence the evaluation.

Based on this appraisal, Norec decides whether to grant funding. If needed, specific follow-up measures to address any identified weaknesses may be included in the grant agreement.

Eligible project activities for funding

Feasibility study

Norec’s grant for the feasibility study mainly covers costs for bringing partners together at one of the partner organisations and holding meetings with Norec to plan the project.

Collaboration agreement

The Norec grant primarily supports costs for the mutual work exchange of young professionals or volunteers aged 18 — 35. Exchanges must last at least 6 months. Exceptions may apply.

5. The application process

First time applicants

To apply for a Collaboration Agreement (CA), applicants must first complete a Feasibility Study. All reports from the Feasibility Study must be submitted to and approved by Norec before a CA can be awarded.

If this is your first time applying for a Norec grant, more information about the application process and deadlines for autumn 2025 will be provided on this website.

Collaboration agreement duration

- **New applicants:** Can apply for a collaboration agreement lasting up to 2 years.
- **Returning applicants:** Can apply for a short-term agreement (1 to 3 years), or a long-term agreement (3 to 5 years).

Application processing and guidance

Applicants will work with a programme adviser who will guide and support the partnership throughout the process.

1. Final applications will be evaluated based on the criteria above. Norec may involve internal and external advisers in the assessment.
2. Applications will be processed in line with the [Norwegian Freedom of Information Act](#).

For detailed information about the application requirements and guidelines, [click here](#).