

Norec grant for work-exchange cooperation 2026

Call for proposals Phase 2: Project Implementation

This call for proposals is for partnerships applying to start a work-exchange project in August/September 2026.

Eligible applicants are partnerships with an existing or recent collaboration agreement with Norec, or partnerships that have completed Phase 1: Concept Development with Norec in 2025/beginning of 2026.

1. Deadline and grant funds

- **Deadline:** 1 February 2026 at 23:59 PM Central European Time (CET)
- **Total funds available:** 20 million NOK
- **Application processing:** Applicants will receive a final decision within 3 months
- **Expected work-exchange start date:** August/September 2026

2. Purpose of the grant

Norec supports global partnerships for sustainable development by funding mutual work exchanges.

The purpose of the grant is to:

- Build mutual trust and strong global partnership to enable institutional development and drive innovative solutions for sustainable development
- Give young professionals the chance to gain international experience and skills in sustainable development.

It is based on [Norec's vision](#) and [theory of change](#) and reflects Norec's two main principles:

- **Reciprocity:** Everyone has valuable knowledge to share. All partners in a work-exchange learn from each other and benefit from each other's expertise.
- **Youth participation:** Young people make up a large part of the world's population but often lack opportunities to influence decisions. Norec supports work exchanges for young people aged 18-35, to gain experience and contribute to their communities.

Norec aims to **support a broad portfolio of work-exchange projects**, considering thematic variations across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), competencies, geographic locations, participant profiles, and partnership types.

Thematic priorities in 2026: climate, climate adaptation, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The grant scheme is competitive; all complete applications are assessed based on the criteria outlined in this call for proposals and in comparison with other applications. Meeting all formal and practical criteria does not guarantee funding under this grant scheme. Incomplete applications will be dismissed.

Norec supports Norway's development policy objectives aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our development policy is designed to promote economic growth, democracy, human rights, good governance, and measures to help people escape poverty permanently.

3. Who can apply?

Formal funding requirements

1. Partnerships that have completed Phase 1: Concept development/feasibility study funded by Norec, or partnerships that have an existing or recent collaboration agreement (completed less than two years ago) with Norec.
2. Partnerships (consisting of two or more organisations from different countries) between the following types of organisations can jointly apply for Norec grants:
 - Civil society organisations
 - Public institutions
 - Private sector companies
 - Multilateral and global organisations

All organisations in the partnership must be legally registered entities within one of the specified categories. The application must include accurate and complete information about the type of organisation.

3. Capacity requirements: all organisations must have the administrative and financial capacity needed to carry out the work-exchange project. More specifically all partners must:
 - Have a board of Directors or Trustees (not applicable to all public sector institutions).
 - Have a physical office and be able to provide the participants with a relevant workspace to foster learning and exchange of knowledge among colleagues.
 - Have a digital accounting software. Excel as accounting system is not accepted.
 - Be able to receive funding from abroad.
 - Have consolidated annual audited financial statements. The audited period must not be older than 18 months. If you are exempt from being audited, you need to provide a justification and submit an unaudited financial statement. The auditor must be authorised.
 - Have minimum three full-time salaried employees working within programme, management and administration. Exceptions can be made if any of the partners only

have two full-time salaried employees and adequately explains how they cover the third full-time position.

4. **Geographic location:** The organisations are based in Norway or in one or more of the countries on [Norec's' partner list](#)
 - a. In exceptional circumstances, where Norec sees that the project aligns closely with Norec's goals and has transformative potential, partnerships may include countries not on this list. However, projects must always be implemented in a country eligible for Norwegian development assistance ([ODA countries](#)).

When assessing applications, Norec will consider whether the partnership is likely to obtain the necessary permits or visas to the country participants will travel to, and the security situation where they will be located.
5. **Misconduct:** None of the organisations can have an ongoing case of investigation or allegation of wrongdoing with Norec.
6. **Outstanding claims from Norec:** The organisations cannot have any outstanding reimbursement claims from Norec not reimbursed within the given deadline.
7. **Duration of work-exchange and age of participants:** Exchanges must last from 6-18 months. Exceptions may apply and must be discussed with Norec. The young professionals or volunteers must be aged 18 — 35.
8. **Legal compliance and responsible business practices:** Coordinating partner must confirm in the application template that all organisations in the partnership comply with relevant national provisions of labour, health, safety and environmental legislation, as well as adhere to responsible business practices, if private companies.
9. **Ethical principles:** Coordinating partner must confirm that all partners in the partnership meet Norec's minimum [ethical principles](#) and have policies for preventing sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) and anti-corruption.
10. **Project idea:** the project must:
 - a. align with Norec's intended purpose of the grant and addresses a specific need (see section 2. purpose of the grant) and,
 - b. comply with the [OECD/DAC criteria for Official Development Assistance \(ODA\)](#)

Commitment to inclusion

Norec follows the principle of "Leave no one behind" and aims to support the inclusion of organisations 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.

New partnerships or existing partnerships wanting to include a new partner

If you are a new partnership or if you want to include a new organisation in your existing partnership, you must apply by the next Phase 1 Concept Development deadline in September 2026. A separate call for proposals will be published for this deadline. You can read more about the phase 1 process [here](#).

A project can receive funding for up to 10 years in total

When applying for a new project after reaching this limit, the partnership must either be in a new partnership/new partner composition or present new expected results/areas of expertise compared to previous projects.

4. How is the project appraised?

Norec reviews whether the organisations and the application meet the formal funding requirements (see section three above). Applications that meet these requirements are then assessed against the criteria outlined below.

Applications that do not meet the formal funding requirements, are incomplete, not submitted within the deadline or not signed by a person with signatory rights will be dismissed.

Norec may also ask for additional information and documentation and conduct reference checks if needed.

Assessment criteria

Norec evaluates the application based on:

- 1. Administrative and financial capacity:** the organisations have the necessary administrative and financial capacity and routines to implement a work-exchange project, including ability to cover unforeseen expenses in the Norec project.
- 2. Partnership strength and reciprocity:** The application shows each organisation's unique strengths, and how each organisation in the application can benefit from the project. Organisations are expected to have collaborated on the project description and planned results.
- 3. Clear learning goals and results:** The project has well-defined, realistic, and measurable goals, with baselines and indicators for tracking results. The results must be clearly connected to the described needs in the project description and to the planned activities implemented by the young professionals on exchange. The learning goals must reflect mutual learning and organisational-level competence development. A clear target group must be identified.
- 4. Innovation and learning:** The project should facilitate the exchange of new and innovative knowledge, skills, and mindsets between the organisations. It should also demonstrate potential to inspire new approaches and drive institutional change within the organisations.

5. **Additionality and integration with Organisational Strategies:** The project aligns with the strategies, vision and goals of the organisations involved. The project demonstrates how Norec's support provides added value or are complimentary to the organisations' existing programmes and projects.
6. **Sustainability of results:** the project has a clear strategy for how goals will be anchored with each organisation and how results will be sustained after the project ends.
7. **Support for work-exchange participants:** The organisations have a clear plan for mentoring and supporting participants before, during, and after the exchange. They also describe how participants will be integrated into each organisation and the activities they will carry out.
8. **Risk Management:** The partnership has identified, analysed, and reduced key risks, including any that could negatively affect the four [cross-cutting issues in Norwegian development policy](#); human rights, women's rights and equality, climate change and the environment, and corruption and financial mismanagement.
9. **Cost-effectiveness:** The budget demonstrates efficient use of funds, with justified cost estimates on each budget line.
10. **Norec's priorities:** Alignment with Norec's current grant priorities and the composition of its portfolio. Thematic priorities in 2026: climate, climate adaptation, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Where relevant across all the above-mentioned points, attention to [cross-cutting issues in Norwegian development policy](#); human rights, women's rights and equality, climate change and the environment, and corruption and financial mismanagement.

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 Collaboration Agreement.

Returning Applicants

For applicants who have received funding from Norec before, Norec will review:

- Past performance on prior grants, including administrative management, project results and results-based management
- Risk and financial management
- Support to exchange participants
- Collaboration and communication within the partnership
- Ability to build on previously achieved results, innovate and develop the project

5. What can you apply for

- **First time phase 2 applicants:** If you have completed Phase 1 and this is the first time you are applying for a work-exchange project (phase 2), you can apply for a two-year project, consisting of maximum two rounds of exchange.

- **Returning applicants** can apply for a short-term project (1-3 years) or a long-term project (3-5 years).

Norec primarily provides funding to cover the direct costs of sending young professionals or volunteers aged 18-35 on international exchange.

This includes:

- Salary for the exchange participants
- Costs related to travel, insurance, taxes and housing.
- Necessary equipment for the exchange participants to do their job
- A small administrative grant for the partner organisations

All cost estimates must be filled in using Norec's budget template and budget instructions, in line with the [Norec Guidelines](#).

Exchanges must last at least 6 months. Exceptions may apply.

6. How to apply

<mailto:norec@norec.no> Mandatory application templates and list over requirement application documents: [click here](#).

For detailed information about how to fill in the application: [click here](#).

Apply by submitting a complete application by email to your programme adviser in Norec or to norec@norec.no within 1 February 2026 at 23:59 PM Central European Time (CET).

Applications will be processed in line with the [Norwegian Freedom of Information Act](#).

Edited: 01.12.2025