



UKRI–RCN Money Follows Cooperation Agreement

Guidance for Applicants

SUMMARY

1. UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is collaborating with the Research Council of Norway (RCN) via a Money Follows Cooperation (MfC) agreement.
2. Both UKRI and RCN are opening a specific set of funding opportunities for the inclusion of partners from both countries. The UKRI Councils participating in this agreement are the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). This agreement will only apply to funding opportunities launched by these Councils.
3. This agreement does not represent a separate research funding opportunity. It represents a straightforward mechanism for the inclusion of Co-investigators employed by a Norwegian Institution (Norway Co-Investigator) in applications submitted by a UK-based Principal Investigator (PI) to eligible UKRI funding opportunities published by each of the participating Councils. This mechanism will enable Norway Co-Investigators to be included in UK-led applications and to receive funding from the participating UKRI Councils.
4. Following the announcement of this agreement, specific funding opportunities from each of the participating UKRI Councils are eligible for the inclusion of Norway Co-Investigator(S). Through this agreement the inclusion of Norway Co-Investigator(s) is permitted in funding opportunities open to the inclusion of Co-Investigators that do not expressly forbid international collaboration and do not provide alternative support for International Co-Investigators.
5. Applications can be submitted at any time to specific funding opportunities with no closing date. Applications to specific funding opportunities with a closing date will only be accepted to opportunities opening after 3 November 2022.
6. Under this agreement, UK-based researchers are also able to take part in RCN funding opportunities as International Co-Investigators. UK-based researchers wishing to take part as International Co-Investigators in applications submitted to RCN should contact RCN for information on terms and conditions.

BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

7. In 2019, RCN and UKRI began discussing the possibility of a cooperation agreement between the two organisations. This led to the development of a Money Follows Cooperation (MfC) agreement to foster collaboration between researchers in both countries, continuing the long history of research collaboration between the UK and Norway.

8. The principle of MfC calls for opening, under set conditions, national funding programmes to collaboration with applicants from other countries, strengthening cross-border cooperation. Both RCN and the participating UKRI Councils have reciprocally opened their agreed national research funding opportunities to collaborative applications involving researchers from the other country as International Co-Investigators.
9. Through this agreement the inclusion of Norway Co-Investigator(s) is permitted eligible in funding opportunities open to the inclusion of Co-Investigators that do not expressly forbid international collaboration and do not provide alternative support for International Co-Investigators.
10. General conditions and budget available will differ depending on the funding opportunity to which an application is being submitted. Applicants should refer to UKRI's Funding Finder for further information on which funding opportunities this agreement is applied to and information on the application process, including further guidance on application submission.
11. Collaborative research applications involving Norway Co-Investigators may be submitted in any disciplinary or interdisciplinary area which falls within the remit and funding parameters of the applicable participating Councils. Further details on the participating Council's remit can be found on [UKRI's website](#).
12. This agreement will apply until the termination of the MfC agreement signed between UKRI and RCN on the 5th October 2024. Successful projects including a Norway Co-Investigator that extend past the end of the MfC agreement will continue to be supported by UKRI.

ELIGIBILITY

13. Applications must be submitted via the participating Council's funding opportunity, by an eligible PI employed by a [UK research organisation eligible to receive funding](#) from the participating Councils (AHRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC and NERC). This, depending on the UKRI Council, may include institutions eligible to receive UKRI funding, which are currently located outside the UK e.g. MRC Unit The Gambia at LSHTM, MRC and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit and other UK research organisations overseas. Further information on Institutions eligible to receive UKRI funding can be found in [UKRI's website](#).
14. The UK PI must meet the participating Council's eligibility criteria for the specific funding opportunity to which an application is being submitted. The application's leadership and majority of the budget is to be awarded to institutions eligible to receive UKRI funding.
15. A Norway Co-Investigator is an individual employed by a research organisation (RO) in Norway who otherwise fits the normal definition of a Co-Investigator on a research project, assisting the grant holder in the management and leadership of the project. The Co-Investigator is usually expected to make a major intellectual contribution to the design and conduct of the project. The International RO must be of comparable status and standing to a UKRI-recognised UK Institution eligible for UKRI funding.

16. Applicants should ensure they have read the specific participating Council's guidance to applicants and funding opportunity guidance. For further information on participating UKRI Council's guidance to applicants, please see below:
- ESRC - [Guidance for applicants](#)
 - NERC - [Guidance for applicants](#)
 - AHRC - [Guidance for applicants](#)
 - MRC - [Guidance for applicants](#)
 - EPSRC - [Guidance for applicants](#)

COSTS

17. Applicants seeking to partner with Norway Co-Investigators in their application should consult the funding opportunity specific eligibility requirements, as certain participating Councils and funding opportunities operate under different rules and are subject to different eligible costs. Applicants should refer to the 'Contact' section for participating Councils contact details.
18. UKRI covers the following costs of Norway Co-Investigators involved in applications led by UK PIs, according to its applicable regulations:
- **Directly Incurred Costs** (e.g. travel and subsistence costs, conference attendance) – This component will be assessed in the context of the application as a whole and the justification of resources. Travel and Subsistence costs for Norway Co-Investigators are required to be reasonable and fully justified in accordance with the applicable participating Council guidelines. Applicants may apply for funds to cover other directly incurred costs (e.g. consumables, consultancy fees, survey costs and equipment costing less than £10,000), provided they are fully justified. For some participating Councils, 'Other Directly Incurred Costs' will include further possible costs and have specific requirements, if these costs are to be incurred by the Norway Co-Investigator. Applicants should refer to the respective funding opportunity guidance and Council guidance to applicants for further information.
 - **Research Assistants (RA) based in Norway** (e.g. salary costs for research assistants employed at a Norwegian institution or seconded from a UK institution) – Applicants may apply for funds to cover the cost of a RA based in Norway to support research activities in Norway. Where the RA is recruited and employed by a Norwegian institution to support the Norway Co-Investigator, these direct costs will be paid at 100%. In cases where an RA is employed by a UK institution but seconded to Norway, costs will be paid at 80%. Applicants should check the applicable participating Council guidance to applicants for further information on eligibility.
 - **Salary costs** – UKRI covers salary costs for Norway Co-Investigators, provided that these costs are justified and it is demonstrated that the funding of investigator salaries within Research Grants is the standard practice of the Norway Co-Investigator's

institution. Alternative arrangements to secure researcher time, such as teaching replacement costs, will be considered where these are required by the Norway Co-Investigator's Institution. UK institutions preparing applications for submission are strongly advised to liaise closely with the Norway Co-Investigators named on the application to ascertain any requirement for salary costs. Salary costs requested for the Norway Co-Investigator must be justified within the Justification of Resources section.

19. UK applicants budgeting for the use of large infrastructure or facilities, should, where possible, use UK large infrastructure or facilities when applying to UKRI funding.
20. The following costs of Norway Co-Investigators **are not eligible**:
 - **Estates and other indirect costs** – Since institutions outside the UK do not use the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology, it is not possible for UKRI to check and monitor the calculation of estates, overheads and indirect costs in Norwegian institutions. For these reasons UKRI Councils will not consider any estates, overheads or indirect costs pertaining to Norway Co-Investigators.
 - **Equipment** - Any individual item, or components combined to make an item, with a value greater than £10,000).
21. For the Money Follows Cooperation (MFC) principle to be applied, the contribution and added value of the international participants to the research must be clearly explained and justified in the application.
22. Justified costs for Norway Co-Investigators will be funded at 100%, however, the total costs claimed for the Norway Co-Investigator contribution to a project must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the project, calculated at 100% full economic cost (fEC). Applicants who include Norway Co-Investigators must fully justify the associated costs within the 'Justification of Resources' section of the application.
23. Under this agreement, more than one Norway Co-Investigator may be involved in an application to an eligible funding opportunity, however, the combined funding incurred by the Norway Co-Investigators must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the project, calculated at 100% fEC. Depending on the participating Council and funding opportunity, other International Co-Investigators may be also eligible for inclusion in an application. Where this is the case, the combined total costs requested for the International Co-Investigators (including those incurred by the Norway Co-Investigators) must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the project, calculated at 100% fEC.
24. All costs must be specifically justified, and applicants must explain why such costs are required to achieve the aims of the research project, with an appropriate explanation of which costs in the application relate to the Norway Co-Investigators. Each budget line requested for Norway Co-Investigators should be itemised, as noted in **Annex 1**.
25. UKRI will pay the award directly to the lead UK organisation under its standard terms and conditions. The UK organisation where the UK PI is based will then be responsible for disbursing the funds to the Norway Co-Investigators.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND ASSESSMENT

26. Before submitting an application, applicants looking to collaborate with an eligible Norway Co-Investigator(s) should review the specific funding opportunity guidance to which an application is being submitted.

Applicants submitting an application to a MRC funding opportunity should contact the relevant MRC Programme Manager to discuss their intention to include a Norway Co-Investigator. Further information on who to contact can be found on MRC's dedicated website under [Areas of Investment and Support](#), by selecting the relevant research area, or alternatively please refer to the MRC Funding Opportunity to which an application is being submitted.

27. Applications can be submitted at any time to specific funding opportunities with no closing date. Applications to funding opportunities with a closing date will only be accepted to opportunities opening after 3 November 2022.
28. UKRI will accept applications via the [Joint Electronic System \(Je-S\)](#). There are some differences in the Je-S format between participating UKRI Councils. Applicants should ensure that they follow the relevant guidelines and requirements for the individual Council covering the remit of their research. Norway Co-Investigators looking to take part in collaborative proposals, must be registered within Je-S.

UKRI is currently working towards developing a new Funding System to replace Je-S. Although a launch date has not been announced, some future funding opportunities will use this upcoming system. This guidance will be updated accordingly in due time.

29. When submitting applications related with this agreement, applicants should begin the application title with 'UKRI-Norway:' in the Je-S proforma. Guidance on how to complete the Je-S application process with a Norway Co-Investigator can be found in **Annex 1**.
30. UKRI funds research on a competitive basis employing independent expert peer review. This system is regarded as an international benchmark of excellence in research funding, and this provides a guarantee of the quality of UK research. The criteria of assessment will depend on the individual UKRI Council and funding opportunity the application is submitted to. Applications will be evaluated according to normal UKRI procedures, plus any specific criteria set out in the funding opportunity to which an application is being submitted.

Note regarding COVID-19

UKRI acknowledges that it is a challenge for applicants to determine the future impacts of COVID-19 while the pandemic continues to evolve. Applications should be based on the information available at the point of submission and known impacts to the application should be accounted for. Where known impacts have occurred, these should be highlighted in the application. There is no need to include contingency plans for the potential impacts of COVID-19. Applicants must follow travel advice set out by their institutions and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. UKRI will not cover the cost of time spent in quarantine due to travel.

DATA SHARING NOTICE

31. UKRI is committed to protecting personal information and will ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to protect the information supplied by the applicant. Further information is available in UKRI's [Privacy Notice and the Data Protection Policy](#).
32. UKRI carries out the processing of personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The information provided by applicants will be used by UKRI for the purpose of carrying out reviewing and assessment for making a funding decision.
33. For administrative purposes, the results of the evaluation and methodologies used to evaluate applications will be shared between UKRI and RCN, if requested, except for confidential information. Where appropriate, UKRI will seek to involve international academics in the peer review process.

CONTACT

34. General enquiries regarding the submission of applications under the UKRI-RCN Agreement, should be submitted to the respective participating Council to which an application is being submitted to:
 - AHRC: International@ahrc.ukri.org
 - ESRC: International@esrc.ukri.org
 - MRC: International@mrc.ukri.org
 - EPSRC: International@epsrc.ukri.org
 - NERC: International@nerc.ukri.org
35. Enquiries concerning the Je-S application, should be addressed to the Je-S helpdesk at JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org or via +44 (0) 1793 444164.