

## Norwegian Roadmap for Research Infrastructure 2023

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#### Appendix 1: Principles for prioritisation and allocation under the National Financing Initiative for Research Infrastructure

Funding for infrastructure is allocated under open calls under the National Financing Initiative for Research Infrastructure. The calls for proposals will be followed by an evaluation and prioritisation process in which both scientific quality and strategic relevance are emphasised through two respective sets of criteria. If strategic considerations so warrant, more targeted calls for proposals will also be considered.

High scientific quality is decisive for whether the research infrastructure is considered worthy of funding. The application review process comprises a scientific evaluation carried out by external referees and a strategic evaluation carried out by the Research Council administration. The evaluation work carried out by the international referees assesses whether the research infrastructure will be able to contribute to research of high scientific quality. This assessment serves as an advisory basis for the Research Council's further processing of grant applications, where the Research Council administration carries out an assessment of the national importance and strategic relevance of the research infrastructure.

Points considered by the experts are:

- The research importance of the infrastructure in terms of quality and impact of the research that needs the infrastructure
- The extent to which the infrastructure contributes to promoting the internationalisation of Norwegian research
- The industry-related relevance of the infrastructure for existing industry or start-ups, contribution to the international competitive position of Norwegian industries
- The societal relevance and potential of the infrastructure to contribute to knowledge and expertise of societal importance
- The extent to which the infrastructure project is technically, competently, resource-wise and financially feasible
- The extent to which the plans for establishment and operation are well adapted to the tasks in the project
- Interaction between new infrastructure and any existing infrastructure
- The quality of the project plan and the quality of project management

In the Research Council's assessment of grant applications, the strategic guidelines set out in the call text are important. The first stage of the strategic processing of grant applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- National importance of infrastructure
- The extent to which the infrastructure will utilise national research expertise and promote national networking
- Whether the infrastructure contributes to an appropriate national division of labour between relevant academic communities
- The extent to which the plans for establishment and operation are well adapted to the tasks in the project
- The extent to which responsibility for administrative management, establishment and operation of the infrastructure is safeguarded
- How the infrastructure is anchored institutionally and its importance in supporting strategic priorities and national strategies
- Whether good plans for making the infrastructure available to relevant users outside the host institutions exist
- Whether the infrastructure supports national business priorities (where relevant)
- Whether the infrastructure contributes to long-term competence building in research areas that are expected to be of importance to Norway
- Whether the infrastructure has strategic anchoring in the host institutions and there are plans for financing operations after the project period exists
- Whether the infrastructure is of societal relevance to Norway

The assessment criteria used by the referees and the Research Council administration respectively are summarised in more detail on [the website of the call](#).

In the second part of the strategic assessment, the final selection of the projects recommended for funding is made. This overall assessment across disciplines and portfolios. The following points are emphasized:

- Each project addresses the priorities and overall objectives of the Government's Long-term plan for research and higher education 2023-2032 - the national importance of the research infrastructure within strategic priority areas
- Ranking and assessment from the administration panels
- Provisions in the call
- Coupling between investments in research infrastructures and research funded through the Research Council's other policy instruments. Investments must be proportionate to the scope of research and the need for research infrastructure in these areas.
- The degree of urgency to establish/continue research infrastructures
- Breadth of the portfolio: all the national priority areas should be supported over time with research infrastructures if high-quality applications are available
- International obligations, including management of host roles where Norwegian institutions have important roles in international infrastructure cooperation
- Whether there is a sufficient financial framework available to finance the project
- How well-prepared the establishment or upgrade is to achieve rapid initiation of the project

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