



**Norwegian Cooperation
Programme in Higher
Education with Russia**

Programme Document 2011–2016

1. General

The Norwegian Cooperation Programme in Higher Education with Russia (hereafter referred to as the Russia Programme) is a programme for cooperation between Norwegian and Russian institutions of higher education.

Through cooperation projects and mobility activities the Russia Programme aims to strengthen Norwegian-Russian knowledge cooperation within the prioritised areas mentioned in the Norwegian government's High North Strategy. The Russia Programme is managed by the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) on the basis of an agreement, RUS-11/0008, with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Russia Programme supports project cooperation between higher education institutions in Russia and Norway. Eligible activities include education projects targeting the development of courses and curricula, training of academic, technical and administrative staff, and scholarships for students. The Russia Programme includes all three levels of higher education (Bachelor, Master and PhD).

2. Goals and objectives

The overall goal of the Russia Programme is to contribute to the development and strengthening of long-lasting cooperation between Norwegian and Russian institutions of higher education.

The objectives of the Russia Programme are to:

- increase cooperation on the development of sustainable study programmes in sectors that are of high priority at the educational institutions in question as well as at national level
- increase expertise by facilitating the sharing of experiences with regard to Norwegian reforms associated with the Bologna process
- enhance the quality of education in educational institutions that are involved in the projects
- increase academic cooperation and relations between Norway and Russia
- increase mutual knowledge of each others' language and culture

3. Eligibility

All accredited Norwegian universities, specialised university institutions and university colleges as well as university colleges with individual study programmes accredited by NOKUT are eligible for participation in the Russia Programme. For Russian institutions, all fully recognised/accredited higher education institutions – private and public – are eligible, provided that they can offer education at a level comparable to what is offered at the eligible institutions in Norway. The programme will support both bilateral and network projects. A network project should involve a minimum of three eligible higher education institutions located in Norway and Russia. Bilateral and network projects may involve informal or formal cooperation with other institutions (such as research institutes, NGOs etc).

Eligible areas of support:

- Humanities
- Social sciences
- Business development
- Petroleum
- Maritime studies
- Climate and energy
- Environmental sciences and sustainable use of resources
- Health

The academic areas also apply for professional studies.

4. Cooperation, commitment and responsibility

The Russia Programme primarily supports projects and activities representing long-term institutional cooperation between one or more institutions in Norway and one or more institutions in Russia. In accordance with the main goals of the Russia Programme, cooperation activities must reflect the needs and priorities of the institutions in both countries. The cooperation should be based on the principle of equality between the partners and must be characterised by transparency at all levels.

The Russia Programme is built on bottom-up initiatives, and individual contacts may well be the starting point of cooperation. At the same time, the challenging goals and objectives of the Russia Programme require institutional commitment for all involved. Preferably, the selected areas of cooperation should reflect key areas in the partner institutions' strategic plans and priorities. In any case the management of the involved institutions must endorse the cooperation.

Russia Programme participants are also encouraged to seek synergy with other available programmes and mechanisms, such as the Quota Scheme or others.

5. Project categories and eligible activities

In order to reach the goals of the Russia Programme, applications in the following categories will be considered for support:

1. **Project cooperation:** Long-term cooperation between one or more institutions of higher education in Russia and one or more institutions of higher education in Norway.
2. **Limited cooperation activities:** Support may be given to the development of relations and cooperation between higher education institutions in Norway and Russia through limited joint activities, such as seminars and study visits. Such activities may, but do not have to, aim for further development into a long-term collaborative project.

Eligible activities for support within the Russia Programme are:

5.1 Development of study programmes/courses

Costs related to the development of new courses, study programmes and degrees are supported by the Russia Programme. The establishment of joint programmes is encouraged. These costs may include expenses related to curriculum development, development of teaching materials and methods, quality assurance mechanisms, meetings, exchange visits and others.

5.2 Intensive courses

Expenses for the development and implementation of new intensive courses are supported by the Russia Programme. Intensive courses may last between one week (five working days) and one month. Courses may take place during term time or in the summer by way of short courses, symposiums, master classes or workshops. Intensive courses must include students and teachers from both the Norwegian and Russian institution(s). The courses must give ECTS points and be recognised as part of the students' degree. The amount of ECTS should be mentioned in the application.

5.3 Training/competence-building of academic staff

Expenses related to the training/competence-building of the academic staff from the cooperating institutions are supported by the Russia Programme. Training should be related to the implementation of the cooperation project. The budget should include travel expenses and costs in relation to daily allowances and accommodation for academic staff participating in training outside their home country or in locations other than the home institution.

5.4 Training/competence-building of technical and administrative staff

Expenses related to training/competence-building of technical and/or administrative staff from the institutions in the cooperation are supported by the Russia Programme. Training should be related to the implementation of the cooperation project. The budget should include travel expenses and costs in relation to daily allowances and accommodation for academic staff participating in training outside their home country or in locations other than the home institution.

5.5 Student grants

For Russian students

Scholarships for Russian Bachelor's students, Master's students and PhD candidates may be applied for as part of a regular project proposal, whether the application is for project cooperation (long-term) or limited cooperation activities. The Russia Programme may cover full Bachelor's and Master's degree studies in Norway (long-term projects only) as well as shorter non-degree studies at all three levels (preferably a minimum of three months – maximum two semesters). It is a precondition that the student/candidate is enrolled at a higher education institution in Russia.

Scholarships and fellowships for education in Norway are granted on the basis of the regulations and rates of the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*). For Bachelor's and Master's students the monthly rate is NOK 9,250 per month (2012–2013), and the grant covers a maximum of 10 months per year per student. For PhD candidates the rate is NOK 10,500 per month, and support may be given for a maximum of 12 months (two semesters). Please note that the rates are indexed annually and that an estimate of the increased rates must be reflected in the budget. In addition, each Russian student/candidate may be granted a travel allowance (including visa and travel insurance costs) of up to NOK 8,000.

For Norwegian students

It is also possible to apply for a travel allowance (including visa and travel insurance costs) of up to NOK 8,000 for each Norwegian student undertaking a course of study / study visit at a Russian partner institution as part of the proposed project.

5.6 Publication and dissemination

Costs related to the publication and dissemination of results from projects may be supported by the Russia Programme. Publication activities include publications of books, journal articles etc.

Dissemination activities include the organisation of and participation in workshops, seminars, conferences etc.

5.7 Infrastructure

Limited funds are also available for scientific equipment, office infrastructure and library equipment. The cost of these items may exceed five percent of the total budget only in exceptional cases.

5.8 Travel

Travel costs should be calculated according to the cheapest mode of international air travel. Travel expenses exceeding this limit will not be covered.

For Russian travellers, visits to Norway will be covered according to the standards of Norwegian national regulations. Regulations established by the individual institutions in Norway concerning visiting academic staff should be used.

For Norwegian travellers, stays abroad are calculated according to the Norwegian state travel allowance scale (*Statens Reiseregulativ*). For Russians travelling in Russia or a third country (not Norway), expenses should be calculated in accordance with Russian national regulations or regulations established by the home institution, provided they do not exceed Norwegian allowance limits.

6. Financial guidelines

6.1 Allocation

For the project period 2012-2015:

In the case of long-term project cooperation, the total sum applied for should not exceed NOK 3,500,000 for all years (2011-2015) for bilateral projects involving two institutions, or NOK 4,000,000 for all years (2011-2015) for network projects.

Long-term projects starting in 2012 should be completed by 31.12.2015 at the latest.

For the project period 2013-2016:

In the case of long-term project cooperation, the total sum applied for should not exceed NOK 3,000,000 for all years (2013-2016) for bilateral projects involving two institutions, or NOK 3,500,000 for all years (2013-2016) for network projects.

Long-term projects starting in 2013 should be completed by 30.06.2016 at the latest.

Details regarding funding possibilities will be announced in connection with calls for proposals.

6.2 Project management

A prerequisite for participation in the Russia Programme is that basic salaries of faculty and staff members participating in the cooperation are not covered by the programme. Faculty and staff members participating in activities financially supported by the Russia Programme should be employed and paid by their own institution. This applies to participants at institutions in Norway (iN) as well as at institutions in Russia (IoN).

6.2.1 Compensation – department at the institution in Russia (IoN)

The IoN department may receive compensation for the time spent by the academic IoN project coordinator on management and coordination. Compensation is intended to cover substitute manpower at the IoN coordinator's institution. An assessment of the number of months of work needed to accomplish these functions should be given in the project application. Compensation is allocated according to the relevant rates/regulations at the researcher's home institution. The tentative maximum project management workload for a bilateral and/or network project is estimated at four (4) months per year per project. However, an assessment of the number of months of work needed to accomplish these functions should be given in the project application. Applications for the development of projects / limited project activities may include compensation for a project management workload of maximum one month. Overheads relating to salaries are not covered by the Russia Programme.

6.2.2 Compensation – department at the institution in Norway (liN)

The liN department may also receive compensation for the time spent by the academic project coordinator on managing and coordinating the cooperation project and for time spent by the coordinator on course and seminar work carried out at the institution in the cooperating country etc. Compensation is intended to cover substitute manpower at the liN researcher's institution and may include salary costs and social costs (taxes, insurance etc.), but other overheads relating to salaries are not covered by the Russia Programme.

The tentative maximum project management workload for a bilateral and/or network project is estimated at four (4) months per year per project. However, an assessment of the number of months of work needed to accomplish these functions should be given in the project application. Applications for limited project activities may include compensation for a project management workload of maximum one month.

6.2.3 Project administration costs

Applicants should seek to limit administrative costs. Projects with general administrative costs of more than seven percent of the total budget will receive support only in exceptional cases. The project administration costs should be distributed between the main IoN and liN partners and may, based on the workload of each institution, also be distributed to network partners. This could be done on an equal basis or by agreement between the partner institutions.

Project administration costs are intended to contribute to administrative expenses at department, faculty or institutional level associated with the additional time and resources invested in the administration of training activities, accounting and reporting etc. that are directly connected to the cooperation project.

6.3 Costs not covered by the Russia Programme

Apart from the general administrative costs of seven percent of the total project budget, no additional overhead can be deducted from the project allocation from the Russia Programme. Basic salaries for faculty and staff members who participate in a cooperation project are not covered by the programme.

The programme will not support the following activities:

- marketing of goods and services
- private business
- operating costs beyond initial measures
- establishment of business in Norway

- cost of general management of operations in Norway
- development and testing of new technology

7. Applications and procedures

Interested institutions should submit joint applications to SIU, signed by the Vice-Chancellor/Rector (at the two main partner institutions, liN and loN) and based on proposals jointly prepared by the collaborating institutions. All proposals must include objectives, activities, work plans, budget requirements and reflections on the sustainability and risk factors of the project/cooperation. The application should be completed and submitted online in SIU's administrative system for applications and reporting, Espresso. The application form and guidelines will be available at the time of the call for proposals. Deadlines will be announced in the call.

Calls for limited cooperation activities will be announced annually throughout the programme period.

8. Requirements, priorities and selection procedures

Applications must fulfil the following criteria:

- All applying institutions in Russia and Norway must be accredited by their respective national authorities
- The project should support institutional and national priorities and strategies
- The project should be approved at management level at all involved institutions
- Long-term cooperation projects should present strategies for *sustainability*. The applications should include reflections on the termination of the project and plans for how one can benefit from the results achieved and how activities in the project can be continued after the supported project period is over
- The project should include a gender perspective in the project's structure and ensure gender equality in the activities and recruitment. This can, for instance, be done through recruitment policy, thematic priorities, by including gender perspectives in the curriculum, teaching methods and materials, and/or by organising seminars/workshops aimed at increasing gender awareness at institutional level
- The projects should contribute to competence-building within the following areas: petroleum, climate and energy, environmental sciences and sustainable use of resources, business development, health, humanities, social sciences, maritime studies

It should attach importance to the assessments in the selection process if:

- the project is relevant to and/or supports reforms in relation to the Bologna process in Russia
- the project can document synergy effects in relation to other programmes and mechanisms
- the project develops Norwegian-Russian joint study programmes or degrees
- the project can document that the environment is safeguarded (in projects where the environment might be influenced by project activities)

9.1. External evaluations and the Programme Board

The selection process will be as follows:

- All project proposals for the Russia Programme should be submitted in the online registration system Espresso
- External evaluators will assess the quality, feasibility and relevance of applications for project cooperation
- The Norwegian embassy in Moscow and the Consulates General in St. Petersburg and Murmansk are given the opportunity to comment on the applications for project cooperation.
- The Programme Board will make the final selection of projects that are granted support.

Regarding applications for project cooperation, external evaluations represent an important basis for the Programme Board's decisions. The evaluator should as far as possible represent the combination of a relevant academic background, geographical knowledge and insight into relevant forms of international cooperation. The evaluators will be recruited by SIU.

The Programme Board will make the final funding decision on the basis of programme priorities, application quality, the available assessments, comments from the Embassy and the Consulates General and of institutional priorities. In addition, the Programme Board will take into consideration the overall composition of the Russia Programme project portfolio.

10. Indicators of success

The success of the Russia Programme as a whole rests on the success of the individual projects. As the Russia Programme is open to a variety of activities and cooperation profiles, specific success criteria must be seen in connection with the project portfolio.

On a general level success criteria will be:

- The establishment and continuation of relevant and sustainable study programmes with sound student recruitment in Russia and of new joint study programmes and/or joint degrees
- Continuity in the use of teaching materials or methods developed in projects, also after the project period is over
- Increased quality in the areas of education involved in the projects
- Increased knowledge of the Bologna process and its reforms at the institutions in Russia
- Increased capacity for and expertise in participation in international cooperation at the involved institutions
- Increased mutual knowledge about each others' language and culture
- Increased interest in cooperation with Russia at higher education institutions in Norway
- Increase in the number of long-term cooperation activities with Russia at higher education institutions in Norway
- Increased level of mobility between Russian and Norwegian higher education institutions
- Increased gender awareness in programme activities

11. Reporting procedures

All institutions taking part in the Russia Programme are jointly responsible for the implementation and monitoring of activities and projects. Annual progress reports should be submitted to SIU using the online reporting facility Espresso. SIU is responsible for reporting to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.