

Funding opportunity: Grants for joint Nordic events

Nordic Innovation offers funding for activities/events that promote Nordic solutions for sustainable, smart and liveable cities to relevant stakeholders from outside the Nordic region.

Application period: 1 February – 9 April 2018 at 13.00 CET

Funding decision: 20 April 2018

Total budget: up to NOK 1,5 million

It is expected that a new application period will open in the 3rd quarter of 2018

Background

This funding opportunity is part of the Nordic Sustainable Cities project, which serves as a flagship project under the Nordic prime ministers' initiative Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges. The project is managed by Nordic Innovation and will run through 2019.

Nordic Sustainable Cities is an ambitious showcase and export program for Nordic solutions to sustainable urban development challenges. Its aim is to strengthen the Nordic brand, add value to existing trade promotion efforts through Nordic cooperation and to expand the market potential for Nordic businesses.

The project is carried out in close cooperation with national export organisations, clusters and businesses. It includes establishing a joint Nordic export platform, building political partnerships and networks as well as making an ambitious branding effort. As part of the latter, a high-quality, research-based report on Nordic cities and the solutions that make them work was launched in September 2017.

North America, India and China have been selected as focus areas for joint Nordic activities within Nordic Sustainable Cities. Therefore, activities targeting one or several of these markets, or activities with a global reach, will be prioritised.

Objective

The main objective for this funding opportunity is to strengthen the Nordic brand in urban development, build networks between Nordic and international stakeholders and to boost export of Nordic products and services.

Nordic Innovation believes that joint Nordic workshops, seminars, exhibitions, trade fair pavilions or similar can create Nordic added value and improve existing national efforts. Our expectation is that by pooling resources we can become a more interesting partner for key stakeholders internationally.

Thematic scope

The activities funded under this call for proposals shall focus on sustainable urban development and include one or several of the following selected Nordic strongholds:

- Architecture and design
- Integrated planning
- Clean air and water
- Climate adaptation
- Smart city solutions
- Urban mobility – public transportation, walkability and cycling
- Circular economy and waste management
- City governance

What activities can be funded

Nordic Innovation offers funding for joint Nordic workshops, seminars, exhibitions, trade fair pavilions or similar, in a physical or digital format. It is possible to apply for funding for one (1) project/ activity taking place in 2018-19. However, applications that demonstrate ambitions to build a long-term concept for joint Nordic activities will be prioritised. There are two funding categories:

1. Smaller events or activities

Funding for smaller events can be up to NOK 200.000. Smaller events must target specific key stakeholders in a selected market/city and set out clear goals for building lasting relations between Nordic companies and the targeted stakeholders.¹

2. Larger events or activities

Funding for larger events can be up to NOK 500.000. Larger events must target a broader, but clearly identified, set of key stakeholders in a selected market/city and set out clear goals for the outcome in terms of strengthening the Nordic brand, building networks between Nordic and key international stakeholders and/or boosting export of Nordic products and services.¹

General eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding, the following conditions must be met:

- The project must include partners from **at least three Nordic countries** with a reasonable balance between the five Nordic countries and the three autonomous regions (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands).
- Nordic Innovation can only fund projects submitted by organisations (private or public), that are **based and operate in** one or more of **the Nordic countries**.
- No more than 50% of the total budget can be covered by Nordic Innovation. In-kind contribution in the form of working hours counts towards financing.
- The proposed activities must fit within the thematic scope of this funding opportunity.

¹ Relevant stakeholders are, in this context, key decision makers or influencers for smart, sustainable and livable cities in a specific market.

- The project partners that will receive funding in the project must be **eligible for de-minimis state aid** under European Commission Regulation (EC) [No 1407/2013](#) of 18 December 2013.²

Failure to fulfil these basic eligibility criteria will result in automatic rejection of the funding application and the application will not be evaluated further.

Evaluation criteria

Proposed activities will be rated on a scale from 1-5 (5 being the highest and 1 the lowest) based on the extent to which they:

- Contribute to strengthening the Nordic brand within sustainable urban development (25%).
- Strengthen networks between Nordic stakeholders as well as between Nordic and relevant international stakeholders (25%).⁴
- Are expected to boost export of Nordic products and/or services (25%).
- Provide value in relation to cost (cost/benefit) (25%).

Priority will be given to activities that:

- Demonstrates ambitions to build a long-term concept for joint Nordic activities.
- Target North America, China, India or has a global reach.

Application

Applications must be submitted using [the application form](#) by email to r.malmberg@nordicinnovation.org and h.fridberg@nordicinnovation.org. The deadline is 9 April 2018 at 13.00 CET. The application must:

- Clearly indicate which category (small/large) the application falls within
- Include a list of committed Nordic partners behind the activity
- Include a free text project description (maximum 1.500 words) containing:
 - A project description (please be as precise as possible on what concrete activities you are planning and what the funding will be spent on)
 - A description of the target group(s) for the activity
 - Clear and measurable goals for outcome of the activity. Goals should be set in relation to the objective and the evaluation criteria specified in this document
 - A short plan for communication before, during and after the proposed activity
- A filled out [budget sheet](#) showing the anticipated total costs of the activities, including a specification of the requested funding and own financing/contributions in-kind must be submitted.

² Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they are eligible for de-minimis funding (The most common barrier for applicants is that project partners cannot receive more than 200.000 EUR total under this provision over x years if the partner in question conducts economic activity. Public institutions, universities and non-profit organization are exempt.)

³ Please notice that NI is currently awaiting an official clarification regarding the European state aid law. Legal framework for funding might therefore be subject to change.

⁴ Relevant stakeholders are, in this context, key decision makers or influencers for smart, sustainable and livable cities in a specific market.

Evaluation procedure

Nordic Innovation will evaluate the incoming applications that fulfil the basic eligibility criteria, based on the evaluation criteria. Nordic Innovation will fund the highest rated applications within the allocated budget. Nordic Innovation reserves the right to grant a lesser amount than what is stated in the application.

Communication and Reporting

All funded activities must be in line with the general objective of Nordic Sustainable Cities and adhere to the following communication requirements:

- Nordic Innovation's logo must be visible in all communication material related to the activity.
- Social media should be used for communicating the activity, including the following handles @nordicinno and #nordicsolutions.
- All communication material related to the activity must be based on the [Nordic prime ministers' initiative graphic profile and communication guidelines](#) unless something else is agreed upon in the final contract.
- Build upon the story of Nordic sustainable cities found in the communication material developed for the Nordic Sustainable Cities project found on the project website: <http://nordicinnovation.org/sustainablecities>.
- Provide a brief communication plan describing measurable goals, key messages, target groups and planned activities, if the project is funded.
- Nordic Innovation must be updated on the progress and results from the funded activity. A joint milestone plan shall be agreed upon if the project is funded.