

Call for networks with activities in 2020

[Nordic Forest Research \(SNS\)](#) and the [Forest Bioeconomy Network](#) (former EFINORD) hereby announce a joint research network call. Both SNS and the Forest Bioeconomy Network share a common goal of supporting research in forest issues related to bioeconomy.

Overall scope of the call and features of funded networks

Participants in submitted networks should represent *at least six* countries consisting of three research institutions in the Nordic* region AND three research institutions in additional countries of relevance for the activities of the network. Successful applicants may receive funds from SNS and the Forest Bioeconomy Network of approximately 100 000-200 000 SEK for activities over the course of one year, covering *at most* 50% of the total budget for the network.

Network outputs should be useful for the Nordic community and should include knowledge exchange across national borders through e.g. arranging workshops, seminars, scientific meetings or open conferences. Networks could also produce peer-reviewed scientific papers, design policy recommendations based on research findings, write large-scale research funding applications, and create or maintain databases or websites.

Focus areas of the call

Successful proposals should relate to either of the following focal areas:

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Meeting the demands of sustainable forest management in a growing bioeconomy
- Maintenance and increased utilisation of ecosystem services

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

We *particularly encourage* networks dealing with issues related to climate change mitigation and adaptation to apply for funding. With experiences from the extreme weather in 2018, we need to prepare for similar situations in the future. Therefore, SNS and the Forest Bioeconomy Network wish to encourage strategic networks that explore novel ways to either lower the risk, or tackle the impacts of extreme weather events such as flooding, landslides and wildfires. A key aim encouraged in this call is to find ways that allows the Nordic countries to create platforms for adapting, handling and mitigating future unprecedented events in a biobased society.

* Nordic is defined as Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the autonomous areas of the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland Islands.

Meeting the demands of sustainable forest management in a growing bioeconomy

The baseline for bioeconomy is access to sustainable and efficient production of biomass. This thematic area covers efficient management of forests to ensure optimal use of forest resources from economic, ecological, and social perspectives. Efficient management may concern afforestation, production and trade-offs between different uses and users of forests. For example, the role of digitalisation is discussed as a means to enhance efficiency. The demand for bio-based products is equally important, as the market is a strong driver of bioeconomy. Furthermore, the development of a circular bioeconomy depends on a diversified and cross-sectoral development of forest-based goods and services, e.g., development of new forest-based goods and building with wood.

Maintenance and increased utilisation of ecosystem services:

Forests offer a multitude of ecosystem services. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, ecosystem services can be understood as the “benefits people obtain from ecosystems”. Accordingly, forest ecosystem services are those benefits people obtain from forest ecosystems. These include forest products such as timber, food, alternative energy materials, as well as services such as climate mitigation, water quality, biodiversity, and cultural benefits with spiritual, recreational, health or wellbeing dimensions. In combination with sustainable and efficient production, the thematic area covers the non-timber benefits of the forest use.

Note that networks do not need to cover several of the focus areas. It can be an advantage to limit the network to focus on narrower, specific topics within the prioritised themes of this call. For details regarding the focal areas, please download the [SNS Strategy plan](#) for 2018-2021.

Please download the [application form](#) and submit your application to sns@slu.se by 24.00 CET, 1st of June, 2019, at the latest.

Scope of the call

The aim of the network call is to:

- Strengthen forest research in the Nordic region.
- Bridge gaps between research and practice.
- Promote collaboration across sectors within a sustainable bioeconomy.
- Link national research projects which otherwise would be carried out on a national level, but where considerable positive outcomes can be reached through a wider regional scope.

Call conditions

Activities and participation

- Network grants are for activities over the course of one year (2020).
- Aspects of the prioritized focus areas must be addressed.
- Researchers or communication officers at research institutions are eligible to apply.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to be involved but cannot be main applicants.
- Networks should include participants from *at least six* different countries consisting of three research institutions in the Nordic* region AND three research institutions in three additional countries of relevance for the activities of the network.
- Each gender must be represented by a minimum of 40% of the participants in the network.
- PhD students and young researchers should be included in the network.

Economic framework

- Networks are expected to co-finance at least 50% of the total budget, with SNS and the Forest Bioeconomy Network funding covering at most 50%.
- The amount applied for from SNS and Forest Bioeconomy Network should be approximately 100 000–200 000 SEK.
- The funding should primarily be spent on networking costs, e.g. costs for arranging scientific meetings, workshops and conferences including accommodation, travel and conference fees but could also cover costs for designing policy recommendations based on research findings, write large-scale research funding applications, creating or maintaining databases or websites (excluding hardware) and communication activities.
- Labour costs are *not eligible* for financing. This includes salary and overhead costs, and the costs of board meetings or other administrative meetings.
- Cost-efficiency: We encourage applicants to ensure that the cost-per-person is reasonable. In addition to physical meetings, we encourage use of video conferences and web-based meetings to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Communication activities and reporting

- Network participants are expected to keep SNS and the Forest Bioeconomy Network informed about their ongoing activities by inviting the SNS secretariat and the Forest Bioeconomy Network to related events.
- Outputs of the network are expected to include publication of findings to SNS for dissemination in SNS' various channels.
- Network participants are expected to report their activities, including expenditures, by the 1st of March, 2021. The reporting template is available on the [SNS website](#).

Proposal submission

- Proposals must be submitted by using the [application form](#) available for download on the [SNS website](#).
- Points to include in the proposal:
 - Aims of the network and strategic area in focus.
 - Planned activities and outcomes.
How the network will be beneficial for the Nordic region.
 - Involved participants including research organisations and stakeholders, if applicable.
 - A plan for integrating PhD students and young researchers into the network.
 - A plan to address gender equity.
 - Budget.

Schedule

- The call is announced 1st of March, 2019 on the SNS and the Forest Bioeconomy Network websites and by mailing lists.
- The deadline for submitting proposals is 24:00 CET, 1st of June, 2019.
- The outcome of the call will be communicated to the main applicants in December 2019.
- Successful networks can start on the 1st of January, 2020.
- The signed condition of contract shall be returned to SNS latest by the 31st of January, 2020.
- The payment will be processed in March-April.
- Project participants are expected to submit a final report no later than the 1st of March, 2021. The reporting template is available for download on the [SNS website](#).

Evaluation and selection process

The applications are assessed by 3–5 members of the SNS board and 3–5 evaluators nominated by the Forest Bioeconomy Network working group. The evaluation criteria are described below. The secretariat of SNS compiles the results of the evaluations and prepares a joint proposal. Based on the proposal a decision on the selection is made at an SNS Board meeting, with an authorized representative of the Forest Bioeconomy Network participating in the decision-making process.

Evaluation criteria

Quality of the proposal

1. Does the activity involve at least three Nordic countries AND three other relevant countries? (Y/N)
2. Grade the aims of the network (1-10)
3. Grade the project in accordance with (one or several of) the prioritized strategic areas of the call: "Climate change mitigation and adaptation", "Meeting the demands of sustainable forest management in a growing bioeconomy" or "Maintenance and increased utilisation of ecosystem services" (1-10)
4. Are the planned activities reasonable and clearly described? (1-10)

Relevance of the network

5. Grade the expected publishable outcomes (1-10)
6. Grade the other practical outputs (1-10)
7. Grade the overall connection between the aims and means (1-10)
8. Grade the relevance of the network for the Nordic region (1-10)

Participation and inclusion

9. Does the network reach the requirement of 40-60% gender balance? (Y/N)
10. Does the network have an adequate plan to address gender equity? (Y/N)
11. Does the network include PhD students and young researchers? (Y/N)
12. Does the network have an adequate plan to include and integrate PhD students and young researchers? (Y/N)

Budget

13. Is the co-financing at least 50% of the total budget? (Y/N)
14. Is the budget reasonable considering the planned activities, means and expected outcomes? (1-10)

About the organizers

[Nordic Forest Research \(SNS\)](#) is a co-operative body under the Nordic Council of Ministers that strives to enhance benefits for the Nordic region and contribute to development of a sustainable society. The following focal areas are especially important for the activities of SNS:

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Meeting the demands of sustainable forest management in a growing bioeconomy.
- Maintenance and increased utilisation of ecosystem services.

The SNS strategy for 2018-2021 can be [found here](#).

[The Forest Bioeconomy Network](#) (former EFINORD) is a research network affiliated to EFI (European Forest Institute). It promotes and facilitates research collaboration, develops and connects knowledge as well as encouraging policy interaction. The Forest Bioeconomy Network focuses on economics, governance and policy as well as issues related to sustainable production and utilization of forests. The thematic areas are:

- Sustainable and efficient production and use of biomass, and
- Securing sustainable provision of forest ecosystem services.



Forest
Bioeconomy
Network
Formerly EFINORD

Contact

For questions regarding your application, please email SNS (sns@slu.se) or the Forest Bioeconomy Network (camilla.widmark@efi.se).