

Call for annual networks with activities in 2024

Nordic Forest Research (SNS) and the Forest Bioeconomy Network (ForBioeconomy) hereby announce a joint research network call. The aim of the call is to promote collaboration and strengthen forest research related to bioeconomy in the Nordic region by networking activities. Deadline for submitting an application is August 31, 2023 at 24:00 CEST.

Focus areas of the call

I. Youth's perspective on mitigating climate change in Nordic forests

Climate change has increased the risk of forest damage in the Nordic region, caused by, among other, drought, fire, floods, pests, and pathogens. We want to influence the Nordic forest sector by funding networks that explore youth's perspectives and inspire knowledge building among Nordic youth regarding the role of forests and forestry to mitigate climate change and climate change related damages.

II. A gender equal Nordic forest sector

Forestry is historically a male dominated sector. We want to promote gender equality and highlight the importance of equal rights and opportunities by funding networks that directly address gender equality issues with the aim of creating a modern and diverse Nordic forest sector. See the links for SNS reports on the topic – [here](#) and [here](#)

III. We also invite networks that relate to the general focus areas of the [SNS strategy](#)

- Forest resources as a base for value creation and rural development
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Safeguarding of forest biodiversity

Please note that well qualified applications related to focus area I and II specific for this call will have highest priority in the evaluation and selection process.

Network funding and requirements

Applicants in funded networks should represent at least five different countries, consisting of at least three research institutions from different countries in the Nordic region*. Applicants of relevance for the activities of the network from outside of the Nordic region can also be included. The main applicant must though be a researcher or a communication officer at a Nordic research institution.

Successful applicants may receive funds of maximum 200 000 SEK for activities over the course of one year (2024), covering at most 50% of the total budget for the network.

Network outcome

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 –IRL, digital, or hybrid. Networks could also produce peer-reviewed scientific papers, communicate research results, design policy recommendations based on research findings, write large-scale research funding applications, and create or maintain databases or websites.

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

Scope and conditions 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.

Activities and participation

- Network grants are for activities over the course of one year (2024).
- Aspects of the prioritized focus areas must be addressed. (Please note that well qualified applications related to focus area I and II specific for this call will have highest priority in the evaluation and selection process.)
- Researchers or communication officers at research institutions are eligible to apply.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to be involved but cannot be main applicants.
- The main applicant must be a researcher or a communication officer at a Nordic research institution.
- Submissions with women as main applicant are particularly encouraged.
- Applicants in funded networks should represent at least five different countries consisting of at least three research institutions from different countries in the Nordic region. Applicants of relevance for the activities of the network from outside of the Nordic region can also be included.
- Each gender must be represented by a minimum of 40% of the applicants and the participants in the network.
- PhD students and early career researchers should be included in the network.

Economic framework

- The amount applied for from SNS and Forest Bioeconomy Network can be maximum 200 000 SEK.
- The funding should primarily be spent on networking costs, e.g. costs for arranging scientific meetings, workshops and conferences (online or physical), but could also cover costs for designing policy recommendations based on research findings, writing large-scale research funding applications, creating or maintaining databases or websites (excluding hardware) and communication activities.
- Labor costs are not eligible for financing. This includes salary and overhead costs, and the costs of board meetings or other administrative meetings.
- Networks are expected to co-finance at least 50% of the total budget.
- Co-financing can either consist of cash or be in the form of in-kind such as working hours (salary) or access to infrastructure or other resources.
- Cost-efficiency: We encourage applicants to ensure that the cost-per-person is reasonable. In addition to physical meetings, we encourage use of web-based meetings to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Communication activities and reporting

- The network is 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's various channels.
- The network is expected to report their activities and expenditures, including a popular science piece by the 1st of March, 2025. 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](#), to sns@slu.se
- Points to include in the proposal:
 - o Aims of the network and area in focus.
 - o Planned activities and outcomes.
 - o How the network will be beneficial for the Nordic region.
 - o Involved applicants including research institutions and stakeholders, if applicable.
 - o A plan for integrating PhD students and young researchers into the network.
 - o A plan to address gender equality.
 - o Budget.

Schedule

- The call is announced in April 2023
- Deadline for submitting proposals is 24:00 CEST, August 31th, 2023.
- The outcome of the call will be communicated to the main applicant in November 2023.
- Successful networks can start on January 1st, 2024.
- The payment will be processed in March-April 2024.
- The network is expected to submit a final report and a popular science piece no later than March 1st, 2025. The reporting template is available for download on the [SNS website](#).

Contact

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

Evaluation and selection process

The applications will be assessed by 3–5 members of the SNS board and 3–5 evaluators nominated by the Forest Bioeconomy Network working group. Evaluation criteria are described below. The secretariat of SNS compiles results of evaluations and prepares a joint proposal. Based on the proposal, a decision on the selection is made at a 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. Is the network addressing specific topics/problems in accordance with (one or several of) the focus areas of the call
2. Is the network related to one of the two specific focus areas of this call (focus area I or II)?
3. Does the network have clear aims?
4. Are the planned activities reasonable and clearly described?

Relevance of the network

5. Is the network relevant in a Nordic setting?
6. Will the network activity increase synergy in the Nordic region?

Network participants

7. Is the network represented by at least five countries?
8. Does the network involve researchers from at least three different Nordic countries?
9. Does the network reach the requirement of minimum 40% representation of each gender?
10. Does the network have an adequate plan to address gender equality?
11. Does the network include PhD students?
12. Does the network have an adequate plan to include and integrate PhD students and young researchers?

Expected outcome

13. Are the expected outcomes clearly described?
14. Is the overall connection between aims and means viable?

Economic framework

15. Is the maximum amount applied for 200 000 SEK?
16. Is co-financing at least 50% of the total budget?
17. Is the budget reasonable considering the planned activities, means and expected outcomes?

About Nordic Forest Research (SNS) and The Forest Bioeconomy Network

[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 the development of a sustainable society. The following focus areas are especially important for the activities of SNS: - Forest resources as a base for value creation and rural development - Climate change adaptation and mitigation - Safeguarding of forest biodiversity. The SNS strategy plan for 2022-2025 can be found [here](#).

[The Forest Bioeconomy Network](#) (ForBioeconomy) 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,
- securing sustainable provision of forest ecosystem services, and
- demand and supply of forest-based products.