Norwegian Programme for Research Cooperation with India (INDNOR)

Programme to promote research cooperation between India and Norway

Work Programme 2010-2019

1. Introduction

The Norwegian Programme for Research Cooperation with India (INDNOR) has been established to promote collaboration on research and research funding between India and Norway. The Programme is part of the effort to enhance the internationalisation of Norwegian research. Activities in specified thematic priority areas under the programme will be carried out in cooperation with the relevant thematic research programmes of the Research Council of Norway. At start-up, the INDNOR programme encompasses the following thematic priority areas as set out in the Norwegian Government's India strategy: *international political issues, climate, the environment, clean energy and social development.* The cooperation programme will seek to extend its scope over time to include a wider range of thematic areas and scientific fields. Administration of calls and project follow-up will be carried out by the relevant thematic research programmes and scientific activities at the Research Council (hereafter called thematic/scientific research programmes). An Expert Advisory Group will be appointed by the Research Council. Experts will be selected from the research sector, government, trade and industry and other sectors, and the group will include representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other funding ministries. The Expert Advisory Group will play an important role in setting agendas for the development of strategies in relation to research cooperation between India and Norway in a bilateral as well as a multilateral context, and will provide input to the authorities on research cooperation with India.

The INDNOR programme has been established to promote research cooperation with India and provide a cohesive framework for research initiatives targeting India. The programme will enable the Research Council to negotiate joint financing of Indo-Norwegian research cooperation with the Indian authorities. It will facilitate the integration of Indo-Norwegian research cooperation in the Research Council's programmes and activities and enhance research collaboration.,

Importance will be attached to following up the Government's India strategy, White Paper No. 30 (2008-2009) to the Storting, *Climate for Research,* and the Research Council's overall strategy, *In the Vanguard of Research*. The INDNOR programme is targeted toward R&D institutions as well as trade and industry, and depending on the thematic area or scientific field, funding may include activities ranging from basic research to industry-oriented research.

2. Background and challenges

The Research Council seeks to strengthen bilateral research cooperation between India and Norway and is establishing an initiative on research funding cooperation as part of this effort.

Activities may encompass bilateral cooperation with India, Nordic cooperation, as well as research cooperation with India within the framework of the European Research Area (ERA) and the EU Seventh Framework Programme.

An "Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Norway on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology" was signed 14. Nov 2006. Under this Agreement a "Programme of Cooperation" defining areas of research cooperation was signed 14. May 2009. The White Paper No. 30 (2008-2009) to the Storting,, *Climate for Research*, identifies India as one of Norway's prioritised partners for research cooperation. The Norwegian Government's Strategy for Cooperation between India and Norway (2009), *Opportunities in diversity*, emphasises that research cooperation is to be strengthened and support efforts within the other priority areas in the Strategy.

Challenges

Developments in India, the country's changing role in the world and its increasing economic and geopolitical significance create a new set of opportunities and challenges for Norway. India is one of Norway's prioritised partners for cooperation. The Norwegian Government has taken the initiative to prepare a strategy that clarifies the objectives and priorities for Norway's relations with India. India's importance as research and knowledge nation is increasing. Cooperation within areas such as knowledge development, research and higher education are crucial for strengthening Norway's relations with Indian society and for enhancing bilateral cooperation within selected thematic priority areas.

The INDNOR programme is being launched by the Research Council to promote collaboration on research and higher education between India and Norway within selected areas.

Interest in cooperation with Indian research groups and authorities is on the rise among Norwegian researchers and research institutions. The INDNOR programme is designed to serve as a catalyst and facilitator for research cooperation and competence-building at universities, university colleges and research institutes. The programme will fulfil existing needs as well as comprise a more long-term, stable, quality-oriented focus on research collaboration with India. It will provide a basis for increasing the number of research projects, stimulate Norwegian expertise on India and attract both Norwegian and international researchers.

Globalisation in the social, economic, environmental, political and cultural areas places high demands on all levels of society. Growing globalisation and internationalisation have created international arenas where countries cooperate, but also compete to establish research collaboration with the very best researchers and research nations. Knowledge production and transfer is internationalised and increasingly competitive. At the same time, the world is facing major challenges related to climate change, energy supply, technological development, water resources, disease and welfare services. The international research system must – and is expected to – join forces and assist in how to meet these challenges.

There is growing awareness of the need for appropriate distribution of tasks between national research activities and the international and bilateral joint research initiatives prioritised by Norway. Many European countries are currently investing heavily in research cooperation with India. In this competitive field, Norwegian researchers are not obvious potential collaboration partners for Indian institutions. To establish successful research collaboration at

the programme level, Norway must demonstrate the quality of its research groups and its willingness to make significant long-term investments. The INDNOR programme will facilitate such collaboration.

3. Objectives of the programme

The objectives of the INDNOR programme are:

1. To strengthen bilateral research cooperation with India;
2. To establish binding cooperation on research funding with the Indian governmental research funding bodies in collaboration with relevant thematic research programmes and scientific activities at the Research Council;
3. To continue to foster relations with India through cooperation with EU and Nordic countries as well as multilateral organisations in which India and Norway are partners;
4. To implement capacity-building, dissemination and promote the establishment of new research cooperation between India and Norway;
5. To lay the foundation for cooperation with India in all thematic areas and scientific fields, and encompassing basic research, applied research and innovation. Efforts will be made to ensure the involvement of trade and industry, universities and university colleges, and independent research institutes in both countries.

4. Programme structure and organisation

The INDNOR programme has been launched to meet the challenges described above, and is intended to promote research cooperation between India and Norway and facilitate the establishment of long-term cooperation schemes on research funding between the two countries. Unlike other programmes at the Research Council, the INDNOR programme does not have its own programme board and its funds will primarily be administered by other thematic/scientific research programmes at the Research Council within the framework designated by the Research Board of the Division for Strategic Priorities. The Executive Director will appoint an Expert Advisory Group consisting of experts on India from the research, trade and industry and public sectors, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other funding ministries. The Expert Advisory Group will review and comment on the annual report and budget distribution for the coming year as a group, and the members may also be consulted individually (please refer to Section 8.) The Research Council will maintain a close dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the implementation of the programme.

5. Thematic priority areas, partners and forms of cooperation

At start-up, the INDNOR programme will encompass the following thematic priority areas as set out in the Norwegian Government's India strategy: *international political issues, climate, the environment, clean energy and social development.*

The programme will be flexible when it comes to incorporating new thematic and scientific initiatives. An effort will be made to expand the scope of the programme over time to encompass prevailing thematic priorities in the Programme of Cooperation under the Agreement on research cooperation in the fields of science and technology between India and Norway. This may be achieved by inviting additional ministries to participate as co-funders.

Relevant criteria for recommendations of new thematic research priority areas include

- areas of common strengths

- areas where Norway or India has leading research groups or special expertise
- areas where interest is expressed by Indian and Norwegian authorities or research funding bodies
- areas where India is facing challenges, e.g. related to global challenges, societal issues or with regard to its research and innovation system.

Forms of cooperation
Cooperation on research funding generally involves the issuing of joint calls and joint provision of funding. Forms of cooperation may range from coordinated calls to joint programmes. Funding modes may vary from exclusively national administration of funds provided to Norwegian players (fair return, distributive pot) to transfer of national funds to a joint budget to be centrally administered by the country or organisation that is authorised to do so on behalf of the participating countries and financing organisations (no fair return, real common pot).

6. Strategic instruments

Norway is an active partner in the EU Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, and Norwegian research groups have established a number of collaborative efforts with the other Nordic countries. The Research Council is participating in the Asia NORIA-net, whose aim is to establish binding research funding cooperation between the Nordic countries and countries in Asia, particularly China and India. Within such networks, the INDNOR programme, in collaboration with relevant thematic research programmes and scientific activities at the Research Council, will serve as a participant and funder of Norwegian participation in joint calls for proposals targeting India.

The EU Seventh Framework Programme provides Norwegian research groups with various opportunities for cooperation with partners from India. It is within the mandate of the INDNOR programme to develop cooperation with India based on established EU consortia and to initiate European and Nordic cooperation based on established relationships with Indian research groups. Specific International Cooperation Actions (SICA) may be launched within a number of themes under the EU framework programme, and open for Norwegian participation in EU projects with Indian and European partners.

Dissemination and communication activities
The INDNOR programme will implement overall measures to disseminate information about Research Council activities relating to India and promote learning across research fields and programmes. The programme will play an important role in disseminating information about the various types of activities and the results of research cooperation with India. Collaboration with other programmes and activities at the Research Council is essential. It is also particularly important to maintain and develop a good dialogue with users. Establishing suitable arenas for dissemination, communication and learning will be another key task.

Recruitment
Recruitment of qualified researchers in global competition is a challenge and especially important to the INDNOR programme to support capacity-building in Norway and India. Few Norwegian researchers have adequate cultural understanding of India. The Research Council’s recruitment and mobility programmes will be vital partners in recruitment activities.

Coordination with other Research Council activities

The INDNOR programme has been launched to establish long-term funding cooperation with India and to follow up objectives set out in the Government's India strategy. In addition to enhancing synergy with other relevant activities at the Research Council and establishing formal cooperation on calls for proposals and follow-up of research projects, the programme will, where appropriate, play a key role in initiating joint activities, such as workshops, seminars or scientific conferences. The programme coordinator of the INDNOR programme and representatives of relevant programmes and activities involved in cooperation with India will comprise an internal team within the Research Council administration that will assist in developing policy, drawing up dissemination strategies, and network-building in close dialogue with the INDNOR programme's Expert Advisory Group and the India Forum that will be established in connection with the Government's India strategy.

7. Budget

The programme period of the India research programme is 2010-2019. At start-up, the programme has a budget of NOK 20 million per year for five years. The programme will be evaluated to determine whether it should be extended for another five years. Efforts will be made to increase the budget significantly through allocations from additional ministries in order to widen the scope of the programme.

As described in Section 4: Programme structure and organisation, the Division for Strategic Priorities will distribute the budget each year, preferably in connection with the annual budget resolution.

8. Guidelines for use of the INDNOR programme's funds

I. Based on input from the Expert Advisory Group, the Research Board of the Division for Strategic Priorities will distribute programme funding to relevant thematic/scientific research programmes and will set aside funds to be allocated by the Research Council administration to encouragement, network-building and dissemination measures. The Research Board will also distribute funds to relevant allocating bodies for funding of research to thematic priority areas and scientific fields that lie outside the Research Council's programmes and activities.

II. The designation of calls for proposals, assessment of grant applications and allocation of funding will be carried out by the individual thematic/scientific programmes on the basis of their own work programmes, the work programme of the INDNOR programme, relevant guidelines from the Research Board and input from the Expert Advisory Group. The Research Council administration will take on this responsibility in cases where there is no relevant thematic/scientific programme. The programme administration is to be consulted with regard to the text of calls for proposals and issuance dates to ensure coordination with partners from India and other partners.

III. The individual thematic/scientific research programmes – or the Research Council administration when no such relevant thematic/scientific programme exists – will be responsible for drawing up contracts and project follow-up. Contracts or allocation letters must specify that a project is part of the INDNOR programme. Expenses for grant application processing may be reimbursed from the INDNOR programme's budget within the parameters set for the individual thematic/scientific programme.

IV. Calls for proposals must set out specific objectives for strengthening cooperation between Norway and India within the scope of the scientific field and must define

funding criteria that differ from the criteria in ordinary calls for thematic and scientific proposals.

V. Calls for proposals should heavily promote bilateral cooperation between Norwegian and Indian institutions, incorporate a recruitment component and gender perspectives, as well as emphasise the added value of including participants from both countries in research projects.

VI. The INDNOR programme will deliver consolidated reports. This means that all participating thematic/scientific research programmes that administer funding on behalf of the INDNOR programme will be required to prepare special reports on the projects associated with the programme in their portfolios. The INDNOR programme's annual report will be submitted through the Expert Advisory Group.