

Norwegen: Langfristige Förderung für "high-potential" Forschungsgruppen

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http://www.forskningsradet.no/prognett-fripro/Home_page/1226994096426

<http://erc.europa.eu/advanced-grants>

Das norwegische Programm für unabhängige Forschungsprojekte "FRIPRO" ist um eine Förderlinie für vielversprechende Forschungsgruppen erweitert worden. Diese können sich noch bis zum 27. Mai für eine längerfristige und umfangreichere Förderung bewerben, die die Finanzierung eines Projektes über vier bis fünf Jahre mit 15 bis 25 Millionen Norwegischen Kronen (rd. 1,7 bis 2,8 Millionen Euro) umfasst. Der norwegische Forschungsrat unterstützt damit exzellente Forschungsgruppen, eine führende Position in der internationalen Wissenschaft zu erlangen.

The FRIPRO scheme to invest in high-potential research groups

The new application category under the FRIPRO scheme for independent projects "FRIPRO Toppforsk" is designed to give highly promising research groups the opportunity to apply for more ample, more long-term funding. This is part of the effort to help them to become international leaders.

"We want to give excellent researchers and research groups a set of financial framework conditions that will provide them with greater latitude over a longer period of time than is the case in our ordinary research project grants. In this way Norway can develop a greater number of internationally prominent groups that can carve out a strong position on the research front and expand cooperation with the best international researchers," says Director General of the Research Council of Norway, Arvid Hallén.

Building world-leading groups

FRIPRO Toppforsk applications may be submitted by all Norwegian institutions seeking funding under the FRIPRO scheme: universities, university colleges, research institutes and regional health authorities. Projects awarded Toppforsk funding will receive between NOK 15 to 25 million over four to five years. The purpose is to provide long-term funding to outstanding research groups.

The new application category will help to improve career paths for highly skilled researchers and enable dynamic research groups to reach the top of their field. Assessment of grant proposals will attach importance to whether the project and the project group have this potential. Project managers are expected to have experience in research management, candidate supervision and international research cooperation.

Same criteria as the ERC

The Research Council expects recipients of Toppforsk funding to apply for grants from the European Research Council (ERC) in the course of the project period.

"An important secondary objective of Toppforsk funding is to enable Norwegian research groups to win more grants from the ERC," explains Executive Director of the Division for Science at the Research Council, Anders Hanneborg. "We are seeking to design our funding schemes to make it easier for researchers to apply for funding from both the FRIPRO scheme and the ERC without having to make major changes to their grant application. Thus, the Toppforsk application category shares many features with the ERC's funding schemes."

Applications for FRIPRO Toppforsk funding will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project
- Scientific approach
- Principal investigator ' intellectual capacity and creativity
- The research group
- Overall assessment

The first three criteria are identical to those for the ERC Advanced Grants. The last two are designed especially for the FRIPRO Toppforsk application category.

"Advanced Grants target individuals. As the purpose of Toppforsk funding is to build world-leading research groups in Norway, special focus will be placed on assessing the project group as a whole. In the overall assessment, we will be looking at whether the project and the project group genuinely have the potential to evolve into a research group of top international calibre," says Mr Hanneborg.

The project description for a FRIPRO Toppforsk application may be maximum 15 pages. This is five pages more than the limit set for the project description for FRIPRO Researcher Projects, but is the same as that allowed for scientific proposals for ERC grants.

A planned funding announcement for the FRIPRO Toppforsk application category, complete with guidelines, requirements and assessment criteria, will be published on the Research Council website at the end of March. This will be an integral part of the overall annual call for proposals under the FRIPRO scheme, which will also encompass FRIPRO mobility grants, Young Research Talents projects, Researcher Projects and Support for Events. The application submission deadline for the FRIPRO call is 27 May.

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