

Norwegen: Regierung erhöht Forschungsbudget um NOK 2,1 Milliarden

28.10.2014

http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Newsarticle/Impacts_of_the_national_budget_for_applicants/1254001297454/p1177315753918

Die Regierung in Norwegen beabsichtigt für 2015 eine Steigerung ihres Forschungsbudgets um NOK 2,1 Milliarden (rd. EUR 251 Millionen). Der Norwegische Forschungsrat soll im kommenden Jahr rund NOK 460 Millionen (rd. EUR 55 Millionen) mehr erhalten. Der größte Teil der Mittel wird in das europäische Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Innovation "Horizont 2020" fließen.

Impacts of the national budget for applicants

The Norwegian Government has proposed an overall increase of NOK 2.1 billion in its budget for research. The Research Council of Norway will receive roughly NOK 460million more next year. The following outlines the impacts of selected items in the proposed 2015 national budget for those seeking funding from the Research Council.

The largest allocations in the 2015 budget proposal will go to the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, industry-oriented research and open competitive research arenas, as well as support schemes to make it easier to seek EU project funding.

Promoting greater participation in Horizon 2020

In the years to come researchers in Norway will need to orient themselves more towards EU programmes when applying for research funding.

The Norwegian contribution to the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, will increase by NOK 700 million. At the same time, the Government will bolster funding for Research Council stimulation schemes designed to help Norwegian researchers to compete successfully for Horizon 2020 funding.

- The budget for the STIM-EU scheme will be boosted by NOK 85 million to NOK 140 million. This will enable Norwegian research institutes to take part in EU projects in spite of the new rules for reimbursement of costs under Horizon 2020, which have increased the costs of participation for the institutes.
- The budget for positioning activities and other types of support to increase participation in EU projects will be increased by NOK 20 million.
- The Research Council will receive NOK 10 million to establish more National Contact Points (NCP) to work to expand Norwegian participation under the framework programme.

These increases will help to strengthen Research Council instruments designed to make it easier to seek EU funding. They also entail a responsibility for the Council to create a foundation that will enhance the success of the proposals submitted by researchers in Norway. The increase in funding for the STIM-EU scheme signals to the research institutes that they need to be proactive with regard to Horizon 2020 and take advantage of the opportunities the scheme provides.

Research infrastructure

NOK 100 million has been set aside for investment in laboratories, databases and other research equipment. According to the new, long-term plan for research, these investments are to be increased by a total of NOK 400 million by 2018. Thus, annual investment in research infrastructure will reach some NOK 800 million.

In practice, the proposed increase for 2015 means that the Research Council will be able to award funding to three to four more projects than in the 2014 budget, depending on the size of the projects. Eighty-seven applications for funding to establish research infrastructure were received by the submission deadline of 15 October 2014.

In the longer term, this escalation in funding will bring Norway a good step forward in the effort to diminish the annual lag in investment in equipment of roughly NOK 1 billion that the Norwegian research community has experienced for many years. It also lays a sound foundation for fostering high-calibre research and attracting top researchers to Norway.

Thematic initiatives

There has been negligible or no increase in the proposed 2015 national budget in important thematic research areas such as climate, health and resource-based industries.

This means that roughly the same amount of funding will be allocated in 2015 to projects under the Research Council programmes for climate research, environmental research, health research and developing resource-based industries as in previous years.

"It's a shame because these are areas we have pointed to as particularly important and which need more funding. At the same time, we are pleased that these same thematic areas are designated as priority research areas in the long-term plan for research. Moreover, we know that all of these areas will receive a boost through the increase in funding for research infrastructure, independent projects and the broad-based instruments for industry-oriented research," says Director General of the Research Council, Arvid Hallén.

FRIPRO funding scheme for independent projects

The budget for the FRIPRO funding scheme for independent projects will be increased by NOK 60 million.

This means that funding can be awarded to eight to ten more projects each year. The total 2015 budget for the FRIPRO scheme will be NOK 875 million. However, with over 1 000 applicants each year, the scheme will remain highly competitive.

SkatteFUNN Tax Incentive Scheme

The ceiling for tax deductions on R&D activity for companies under the SkatteFUNN Tax Incentive Scheme will be doubled in 2015. The maximum hourly rate will remain the same as now.

This means that the largest companies with the highest level of R&D activity will receive tax deductions on more of their activity. The new maximum limit will have a marked impact for them. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that do not have such a high level of R&D activity will not receive noticeably larger tax deductions as a result of the increased ceiling. For SMEs, the hourly rate has the greatest significance for the size of the deductions obtained.

The expansion of the SkatteFUNN Scheme will cost the state an estimated NOK 120 million in increased tax relief for companies. According to the Research Council, an even better effect would be achieved if the tax relief was applied through an increase in the maximum hourly rate. That would give even more actors ' industry heavyweights and SMEs alike ' the best incentive to step up their R&D activity, and we would get more research in the business sector for the same price.

Programme for User-driven Research-based Innovation (BIA)

The Programme for User-driven Research-based Innovation (BIA) will receive a budget increase of NOK 70 million, for an overall budget of NOK 544 million in 2015.

This means that more companies can seek funding for innovation projects and the Research Council will be able to award grants to 60 more projects under the BIA programme. This increase will also trigger private investment in research and innovation activity of nearly NOK 100 million.

Together, the growth in public and private investment will strengthen research activity, raise competence in the sector and enhance competitiveness in companies. It will also increase cooperation between the business community and the best research groups and promote a more knowledge-intensive Norwegian trade and industry.

The BIA programme was established to complement the Research Council's existing funding instruments. The programme allocates funding to the best industry-oriented projects, independent of branch of industry, that cannot be realised under the Research Council's thematic and sector-oriented programmes.

The FORNY2020 programme and enabling technologies

The Government will allocate NOK 20 million to the industry-oriented programme Commercialising R&D Results (FORNY2020) next year. This means that the Research Council can fund up to five more FORNY2020 projects in 2015 than in 2014. An increase of NOK 30 million for activities relating to enabling technologies will be primarily used to finance new ICT projects under the large-scale ICT research programme currently being established at the Council.

Public Sector Ph.D. scheme

The Public Sector Ph.D. scheme is continued in the proposed budget with funding for 25 projects in 2014. The budget proposal does not include any funding for new projects from 2015.

Transport research

The Research Council recommended an allocation of NOK 25 million to the new programme for transport research (TRANSPORT 2025), but this was not included in the Government's budget proposal. Funding in this area has been reduced in the national budget for the second consecutive year. The TRANSPORT 2025 programme's first funding announcement has an application deadline of 26 November 2014 and a budget framework of NOK 35 million.

Quelle: The Research Council of Norway

Redaktion: 28.10.2014

Länder / Organisationen: Norwegen

Themen: Strategie und Rahmenbedingungen

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