



**BIOECONOMY
IN THE NORTH**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2018 ON BIOECONOMY IN THE NORTH (BIN)

Guidelines for Applicants

A collaboration between the Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany (BMBF), and the Research Council of Norway (RCN).

1. Aim of the initiative

In the last decade Europe has faced a great deal of coordination activities in the field of bioeconomy research. The respective activities cover almost all thematic areas of bioeconomy but differ in size of the consortia, project duration, scope and aim as well as in the instruments under which they were implemented. The majority of the initiatives address the entire EU in order to foster the European cohesion and, thereby, somewhat disregard regional specificities (e.g. type and sources of biomass available).

Therefore, three research funders from Finland¹, Germany² and Norway³ have decided to start a joint initiative for the implementation of bioeconomy in the Northern part of Europe. The partners share the view that their countries share similar challenges and similar assets with regard to climate, climate change, vegetation patterns, industry structure and cultural aspects. Following this consensus, the aim of Bioeconomy in the North (BiN) is to deepen the cooperation of researchers in the field of bioeconomy in the northern part of Europe, to create critical mass, to generate synergies, to increase the quality of R&D by supporting excellent scientific communities.

2. Purpose

The primary scope of the initiative is to support **“Research and innovation leading to new products and supply services from non-food/non-feed biomass resources in Northern Europe”**.

¹ Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry

² Federal Ministry of Education and Research

³ Research Council Norway

3. Topics of the first call

The aim of this initiative is to finance high-quality R&D projects in order to strengthen existing initiatives or establish new international partnerships/collaborations. Projects in the frame of „Bioeconomy in the North“ are expected to significantly contribute to at least one of the three following topics:

1. Forest Biomass Production

Priority topics:

- Improved forest biomass, focusing for example on production via accelerated tree breeding;
- Innovative cultivation, harvest and storage systems allowing a more integrated natural resource management and resource planning.

2. Lignocellulosic Biomass Conversion

Priority topics:

- Improved biomass conversion and valorization, focusing for example on chemicals, fibers and innovative products;
- New and innovative production and value chains.

3. Valorization and Governance Strategies and Policy Instruments for Sustainable Bioeconomy Development

Priority topics:

- Analysis for better matching biomass demand and supply (policy information);
- Analysis and development of existing / new markets and business models;
- Policy analysis and impact assessment in light of responsible research and innovation (RRI).

4. Call characteristics

Modalities

- a. In Finland, the call is open for Finnish applicants who comply with the criteria described in <https://mmm.fi/tutkimus-ja-kehittaminen/lomakkeet-ja-ohjeet>.
- b. In Germany, the call is open for any German applicant who complies with the criteria listed in the German “Bekanntmachung BiN 2018” of BMBF (Link will follow).
- c. In Norway the call is open for applications within the forest based sector as described within the plan of the BIONÆR program in the Research Council of Norway: <https://www.forskningsradet.no/prognett-bionaer/Documents/1253971968565>. Basic chemical research and screening for possible chemical candidates for specific or non-specific uses will not be supported. Only research organizations could be formal applicants to this call. The project idea should be supplementary to existing project

portfolio in BIONÆR, i.e. it should not be a copy, an extension or a continuation of existing projects.

Eligibility

Following the submission of proposals, the funders will address aspects of formal compliance regarding the 1) BiN criteria and 2) the specific national requirements. Proposals that do not fulfill the initiative or the national criteria will not enter the scientific evaluation phase.

Eligibility criteria:

- Consortia must involve at least two partners from two different participating countries members of the initiative;
- The participation of at least one industry partner per consortium (large company or SME) from countries member of the initiative is mandatory;
- Consortia must be balanced: the contribution of one country to the collaborative project must not exceed 70% of the total project costs in order to ensure balanced transnational partnerships;
- The duration of the project should not exceed a period of three years;
- Project partners from non-member countries of the initiative may participate in project at their own expenses. The respective financial commitment must be stated in a letter of intent;
- Proposals must be submitted via the BiN electronic submission system (ESS) exclusively by the project coordinator. Please note that failure to comply the submission rules (date, format and size of file) will cause ineligibility of the project. Proposal submitted via E-mail, fax or paper copy will not be considered for evaluation;
- Industry partners must demonstrate their ability to co-finance the project;

Additional national eligibility criteria are described [here](#).

Applicants are strongly recommended to contact their respective funding agency before submitting a proposal.

Funding

The total budget for funding transnational research projects in the first call of BiN will be approximatively about 5.5 million €. The budget for individual project proposals will not be restricted; however, it must fit the project goals and must not exceed national funding limits for each partner. Funding of the project partners is provided by the participating national programs according to their respective national regulations. Requested funding may cover research and travel expenses (for example, consumables, equipment, travel costs, ...) according to each institution's guidelines.

A consortium agreement among the project partners has to be consented before first instalments can be transferred. For more details please contact your funding agency.

5. Submission of proposals

Proposals must be written in English and must be submitted exclusively via the electronic submission tool (available from September 17th, 2018). The project coordinator will be responsible for the submission of the proposal.

The application process will be single-phased. English written proposals must be submitted by the project coordinator exclusively using the [Electronic Submission System](#) (ESS). Please see also the [national regulations](#) for additional requirements (e.g. hard copies, forms, etc.) that may be required by national / regional programmes.

Upon receipt by the BiN secretariat office, proposals are registered and acknowledged.

6. Assessment criteria, evaluation and selection

The evaluation of eligible proposals is conducted by renowned international experts. Proposals are subject to a thorough quality and viability assessment with respect to the following equally-weighted criteria:

- Relevance and potential impact related to the funding objectives of the call and of the overall policy of MMM, BMBF (as set out in the "National Research Strategy BioEconomy 2030") and RCN;
- Innovation of the research approach, quality and originality of the proposed solution;
- Added value for each country and synergies achieved through the joint cooperative research project;
- Excellence and expertise of the applicants and the partners involved; consortium potential and project management capabilities;
- Prospects of success and applicability of the project results (in scientific and economic terms); economic and social perspectives and sustainability;
- Adequate size and structure of the project, quality and stringency of budget as well as time and work schedule, balance of workload and networking of partners.

Positively evaluated projects will be recommended for funding. The results will be made available and will be communicated to the project coordinators through the BiN secretariat.

7. Confidentiality

BiN ensures complete confidentiality to applicants, i.e. your proposal will only be read by the national evaluators and the commissioned international experts, and will be handled by the BiN secretariat operated by Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH, Germany.

8. Timeline

September 17 th , 2018	Call opening
January 17 th , 2019	Deadline for submission of proposals via ESS

January – February 2019	Eligibility check
March 2019 – June 2019	Evaluation
July 2019	Communication of results to the project coordinator

9. Contacts

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