



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

University Grants Commission, India



Norwegian Directorate  
for Higher Education  
and Skills

# Indo-Norwegian Cooperation Programme in Higher Education and Research – INCP2

## 1. Call for Applications 2024

The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) and the University Grants Commission (UGC) India, announce up to NOK 32 000 000, – ≈ INR 262 080 000, – in joint grants (50/50 from each side) to project partnerships between Norwegian and Indian higher education institutions.

Application deadline: **13 August**, 15:00 (UTC), 18:30 (IST)

### Who can apply?

- Accredited Norwegian higher education institutions or institutions with accredited higher education programmes
- Public funded Indian universities recognised under Sections 2 (f) and 12B of the UGC Act, 1956 which are fit to receive development grants, and Institutions of National Importance (INIs), including IITs, and IIMs.

An application must involve at least two higher education institutions, one based in Norway and one in India.

### Aim

The aim of INCP2 is to establish partnerships for internationalisation and quality enhancement in higher education, through academic collaboration and mobility, in close connection to work life, industry and business in India and Norway.

The cooperation on INCP2 shall complement and expand existing Indian and Norwegian research cooperation.

## **Objectives**

- To strengthen institutional linkages between higher education and research institutions in India and Norway.
- To foster high quality academic and research programmes.
- To provide mutual mobility and training for students, academic and administrative staff.
- To increase mutual knowledge of each other's educational systems and to enable institutions on both sides to prepare for future cooperation.

## **Target groups**

- Higher education institutions in Norway and India.
- Master's and PhD students, and academic and administrative staff in Norway and India.

## **Areas of Cooperation**

Projects must be established within the following areas of cooperation:

- Democracy and a rules-based world order
- Education
- The Ocean
- Arctic/polar research
- Clean Energy
- Climate and environment
- Urban planning and development
- Health, including global and public health, biotechnology, and the medical sciences
- Information technology and security

Cross-disciplinary collaboration across all disciplines is highly encouraged.

## **Cooperation, commitment, and responsibility**

Each project must designate two project coordinators, one from each of the main partner institutions, who must hold positions as postdoctoral scholars or permanent academic staff members at their respective institutions.

The project proposal must be a collaborative submission by both the Indian and Norwegian teams, representing their institutions and duly endorsed by the heads of their respective institutions or their authorised representatives.

If more than one institution from each country participates, it is necessary to identify one institution in India and one in Norway as the primary partner institutions.

Collaboration among participating institutions must be based on principles of equality and characterised by transparency at all stages. Indian project coordinators must be affiliated with an eligible Indian university and reside in India, while Norwegian project coordinators must be affiliated with an eligible Norwegian higher education institution and reside in Norway.

Projects may incorporate research institutes, business and industry in India and Norway as associate partners. Project should aim to strengthen cooperation among participating institutions and include educational activities that extend beyond individual researcher and student collaboration.

## **Activities**

Projects may include activities such as:

- Joint research involving student participation in areas of shared interest.
- Joint publications.
- Short-term (1-4 weeks) and long-term (4-12 weeks) exchange visits and internships for both faculty and students.
- Co-supervision of PhD and master's students.
- Co-design of courses, which may include virtual and/or blended formats.
- Development of joint and dual degree programs in accordance with the laws and regulations of both countries.
- Intensive courses such as summer/winter schools.
- Organising of seminars, workshops, and conferences.
- The development of training programs for academic and administrative staff to enhance capacity and leadership skills
- Exchange of literature, course materials, publications, and collaborate on curriculum development.

## **What can you apply for?**

You can apply for up to NOK 2 800 000 ≈ INR 22 932 000 pr project.

Projects must have a duration of 4 years. Projects must have planned start-up no later than 1 November 2024 and be scheduled to end by 31 December 2027.

Note that the project must have at least one budgeted activity in each year of this four-year period. Due to the late allocation of funding to projects selected for support under this call, you may plan for a limited number of project activities in 2024, such as start-up meetings or other preparatory activities.

Funding to the Indian institutions will be provided by UGC, and by HK-dir to the Norwegian institutions.

## What can the funding be used for?

The funding can be used to cover the following types of costs:

- Personnel and administration costs
- Procurement costs for services
- Procurement costs for equipment and services
- Master's and PhD Scholarships
- Travel and accommodation costs
- Other project-related costs

For information about what the different types of costs include and how to budget and calculate them, see Budget guidelines in part 2. of this document.

## How to apply

A joint application from the Norwegian and Indian partner institution must be submitted through the HK-dir application portal [Espresso](#). The application form includes texts that provide guidance on the information requested in the different fields.

## Requirements of the application

The application must meet the following minimum requirements:

- The application must be submitted by the application deadline applicable to this call.
- The application must be submitted through the HK-dir application portal [Espresso](#).
- The application must be written in English.
- The application must be submitted on behalf of an organisation that can be entered as applicant under this call (see section "Who can apply").
- The application must include at least one partner institution in India and Norway.
- The application must include a mandatory spreadsheet (provided in the application form) detailing 50% of the project costs from the Indian institution and 50% from the Norwegian institution.
- The application must include a Letter of Commitment from each project partner, signed by the leadership at the relevant level, demonstrating their interest and dedication to the project.

For the Norwegian Institution the application must include a signed version of [HK-dir's standard declaration of participation](#) from the person in the applicant organisation in Norway, with administrative responsibility for the application. Applications that do not meet these requirements may be rejected or considered

incomplete. Applications with errors will be given a short additional deadline to correct such errors where possible.

The content of attachments/links that are not a requirement will not be included in the assessment of the application.

### **What will be emphasised in the assessment?**

Applications that meet the requirements that apply to the call will be assessed based on the criteria listed below. The criteria will be weighted according to the percentage indicated in brackets behind the individual criteria.

#### **Relevance of the project (30%)**

The proposed project's significance in terms of:

- Promoting long-term sustainable collaboration in higher education and research between India and Norway.
- Facilitating active participation, mutual benefits, and the exchange of ideas between partners from both countries.
- A strong understanding of the needs and capacities of both Indian and Norwegian institutions and their partners.
- A dedicated commitment from partner institutions during and after the project's duration.

#### **Quality of project design and implementation (20 %)**

Under this criterion, the following factors will be considered:

- Feasible and practical strategies to achieve project objectives.
- Clear outlines of expected project outcomes, baseline, activity selection, and how these activities contribute to the project's goals.
- Clear connections between ongoing or planned research collaborations and proposed educational activities, highlighting their combined value.
- Cost-effectiveness and adequate resource allocation on both sides for activity implementation.
- High-quality measures for evaluating and documenting the project's impact, including result evaluation indicators, and possible environmental and climate impact of the project.
- Identification of potential risk factors and mitigation strategies.
- Plans for sustaining and developing the institutional partnership beyond the funding period.

## **Quality of the project group and collaborative structures (20 %)**

Demonstrated by:

- Equity and complementarity of participating institutions/actors and the collective experience and expertise of the project group.
- Task and responsibility division, reflecting commitment and active involvement from all participating institutions/actors.
- Clear and comprehensive plans for interaction between participating institutions/actors and stakeholders.
- A target for a 50-50 gender balance in all aspects of the project.

## **Project impact (30%)**

The project's potential to:

- Enhance the quality of academic and research programs in India and Norway.
- Enable sustainable mobility and training for students, academic, and administrative staff.
- Increase mutual understanding of each other's educational systems.
- Increase collaboration between academia and business
- Deliver substantial benefits to the project's target groups, participating institutions, and external stakeholders.

## **How is the application processed?**

1. Eligibility check and formal verification of applications by UGC and HK-dir
2. Eligible applications will be assessed by two experts with expertise and knowledge from international collaboration in higher education and research, and the areas of cooperation covered by the call. One expert is nominated by UGC and is representing India, and one expert is nominated by HK-dir and is representing Norway. In these two individual assessments, the applications are given a sub-grade for each assessment criterion that applies to the call, according to this [Grading scale](#). The two individual assessments will then be consolidated, so that each application receives one set of grades. In case of disagreement about the grading of applications, the application will also be considered by a third expert. To qualify for a grant, all the final sub-grades must be higher than 2, and at least three out of four sub-grades must be 4 or higher. The overall grades for the applications are calculated based on the final sub-grades and the weighting indicated for the criteria (weighted average grade). In cases where two or more applications are awarded the same overall grade, the applications will be ranked based on the highest sub-grade for the criteria in the order they are

listed. In the case of applications that are still equal, their ranking will be determined by drawing lots.

3. The ranked/graded list of applications will be presented to the UGC/HK-dir Joint Committee, for final decision on grants.

### **When can you expect an answer to the application?**

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the application process. We estimate that grant decisions will be published by the end of October 2024. The justification for the grading of the applications will be included as an appendix to the grant decision.

### **What conditions will apply to projects that receive a grant?**

The Indian and Norwegian institutions receiving support from INCP2 share the responsibility for executing and overseeing activities and projects. Both the Indian and Norwegian project partners are required to submit annual progress reports and a final report to UGC and HK-dir, respectively.

For the Norwegian institutions [HK-dir's standard terms](#) for project grants will apply to the implementation of projects that receive grants.

### **Guidance and contact**

If you need guidance during the application process, HK-dir and UGC will reply to questions about the call but cannot read through or comment on specific application drafts. You may send an email to:

- HK-dir: [INCP2@hkdir.no](mailto:INCP2@hkdir.no)
- UGC: [archana.ugc@nic.in](mailto:archana.ugc@nic.in) Dr. Archana Thakur, JS (IC)

## 2. Budget Guidelines INCP2, 2024–2027

### 1. General conditions

All partnership and program activities will be funded jointly by UGC and HK-dir through matching grants. The maximum allocation per project is NOK 2 800 000 ≈ INR 22 932 000 pr project, (50/50 percent from Indian and Norwegian sides). UGC will provide funding to the Indian institutions, while HK-dir will fund the Norwegian institutions, acting as bilateral custodians of INCP funding in India and Norway.

INCP funding is designated to cover collaborative costs of joint projects. Proposals must include financial contributions from both Indian and Norwegian sides.

A joint project budget must be presented in the application form in Espresso. The application must also include a mandatory spreadsheet (provided in the application form) detailing 50% of the project costs from the Indian institution and 50% from the Norwegian institution, denominated in NOK and INR respectively<sup>1</sup>.

These separate budgets will serve as the base for contracts and project documents issued by the respective authorities, UGC and HK-dir, to their national institutions, and will also guide subsequent independent financial reporting to UGC and HK-dir.

The institutions in Norway and India, registered as the applicants in Espresso, are responsible for ensuring that all cost estimates, including those from partners, adhere to approved limits, are accurately calculated, and sufficiently justified.

Projects eligible for support will be funded from 1 November 2024 to 31 December 2027. Support may be provided for joint activities fostering long-term relationships and cooperation between eligible higher education institutions in Norway and India.

Due to the late allocation of funding to projects selected for support under this call, you may plan for a limited number of project activities in 2024, such as start-up meetings or other preparatory activities.

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<sup>1</sup> HK-dir and UGC takes no responsibility for loss due to unfavourable exchange rates, during the project period.



## 2. Costs categories

### **Personnel and Administration Costs**

This includes costs in the form of salaries to project participants as far as the plan is for them to have paid release time to contribute directly and concretely to the implementation of the project.

### **Special requirements for the Norwegian institutions**

For Norwegian partners, it is calculated a total of 1,718 working hours a year (full-time equivalent (FTE) hours) in a full-time position. A project participant in a full-time position that will contribute 50% (1/2 FTE) in the first year to the project and 75% (2/3 FTE) in the second year, the annual paid release time will then be  $1,718/2 = 859$  working hours and  $1,718/3 \times 2 = 1,145$  working hours respectively.

When the number of FTE hours that each participant shall contribute during the relevant project years has been calculated, they are then multiplied by the internally calculated average hourly rate that applies to the individual participant's job category.

The average hourly rates you operate with should include all non-wage labour costs factored into the relevant job category (expenses for holiday pay, insurance, etc.) and the organisation's usual mark-up for indirect costs (rent, general operating, and administrative costs etc.). Average hourly rates cannot exceed NOK 840 (maximum hourly rate).

When calculating the costs of releasing participants from organisations other than the applicant organisation, the calculation shall, as far as possible, be done in the same way. The person named as applicant is responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient documentation that the hourly rates applied are correct.

In the budget comments, you must state the number of FTE hours and average hourly rate of all participants, distributed per project year. If the figures stated in the budget/budget comments do not match, we will use the budget figures and the number of hours in our assessment. In case of doubt related to the calculation, we generally recommend consulting the person with financial responsibility for the project. Other compensation/salary costs for project participants cannot be included in the budget.

### **Special requirements for the Indian institutions**

Administrative costs are intended as a contribution to added administrative expenditures at department or institutional level resulting from the cooperation project. The Indian main partner institution may include an administrative overhead of the sub-total of maximum 7% of budget. (sub-total before the project administration is added).

### **Procurement Costs for Services**

Covers external services necessary for the project, such as services from a consultancy agency, a publisher or a translation company. There are no restrictions with regard to the services that can be procured for projects, other than that the services must be clearly necessary to carry out the project and achieve its planned results. Clear justification is required to demonstrate the necessity of the services. Only actual costs should be included in the budget. This means that if the institution/organisation carrying out the procurement is exempt from [input VAT](#), then deductions must be made for this tax when the cost is calculated (price excluding VAT). Please note that transport services (e.g., air or rail travel) should not be budgeted as procurement of services, but as 'Travel and accommodation costs', cf. below.

The applicant institutions must ensure adherence to legal rules and transparency in procurement. If any of the project participants or any of their related parties (cohabitant/spouse/children) have financial interests (directorships, shareholdings, etc.) in any of the external suppliers that are to provide services for the project, these must be explained separately in comments to the budget.

### **Procurement Costs for Equipment**

Involves the acquisition of physical items or software necessary for the project. The necessity of equipment must be explained, and only actual costs are eligible. You must choose the most affordable available version of the equipment needed. Depreciation costs should be calculated, and adherence to legal rules is essential. Please note that specification of how budgeted depreciation costs are calculated shall be provided in the comments to the budget. Only the part of the depreciation cost that can be attributed to the period from procurement to the end of the project period shall be included in the budget.

### **Scholarship costs for students**

In projects where student exchanges, (master's and/or PhD students) are planned between India and Norway, reasonable costs associated with such exchanges may be covered.

For groups of Indian students who are going on exchange stays to Norway that last longer than 4 weeks ( $\geq 28$  calendar days), costs related to the students' subsistence may be budgeted using the following rates:

- **Master's students:** A grant equal to the applicable [basic student loan from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund](#)
- **PhD students:** A grant equal to the applicable [rate for a single research stay abroad under the Research Council of Norway](#)

For exchange stays taking place after 31 December in the project start-up year, an additional 3% may be added to the applicable grant rate.

In addition to the scholarship rates, incoming students from India should also be entitled to funding to cover reasonable additional expenses associated with the exchange stay (e.g. travel, visa, and insurance expenses). Such costs shall be calculated and budgeted according to the budget category 'Travel and accommodation expenses', cf. further guidance below.

For groups of Norwegian students going to India, all costs associated with the exchange shall be calculated and budgeted according to the budget category 'Travel and accommodation expenses', cf. below. The same may apply to Indian students coming to Norway when the exchange stay is scheduled to last less than 4 weeks ( $< 28$  calendar days).

In the case of a partial virtual exchange, costs related to the period during which the students are on a physical exchange stay are covered in accordance with the corresponding rules as stated above.

### **Travel and Accommodation Costs**

This budget category covers travel and accommodation costs for necessary trips to be undertaken by project participants in connection with the project, as well as reasonable costs for exchange students not covered via the scholarship rates mentioned above. For project participants, it is possible to apply for coverage of expenses for both domestic and international travel, regardless of their job category.

### ***Special requirements for the Norwegian institutions***

Please note that for Norwegian project participants, travel and accommodation costs must be budgeted in accordance with the rates in [the State Personnel Handbook](#) (see chapter 9.2 for domestic travel, and chapter 9.3 for international travel). For guidance on these rules, we refer to the [Employer portal](#) and [Lovdata](#).

### **Special requirements for the Indian institutions**

For the Indian personnel/students the air travel shall be governed by OM no. 19024/3/2021-E.IV of Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India dated 16.06.2022.

We encourage you to have a clear focus on creating a sensible travel plan for project participants. Digital alternatives should generally be considered and used where appropriate, so that unnecessary travel costs and environmental impacts are avoided. We also encourage other more environmentally friendly transport options (e.g., trains) to be used where possible. Travel that is not sufficiently justified may not be approved when the application is assessed.

### **Other Project-Related Costs**

Miscellaneous costs that do not fit into other categories but are deemed necessary for project implementation. Detailed justifications are required for these costs.

Costs under this budget category may include, for example, the cost of renting premises, the cost of necessary domestic transport, the cost of disseminating the project results, exchange of literature/ course materials/ publications/ curriculum development, etc.

## **3. The budgeting process in Espresso**

To facilitate the budgeting process prior to entering the amounts for the joint project budget in Espresso, a mandatory spreadsheet must be uploaded in the application format. Budget costs for each activity/budget category per year must be entered in the spreadsheet and a breakdown of which parties will contribute to the different activities/category, the Indian or the Norwegian, the value of the contributions must be provided.

A joint INCP project budget 2024-2027, denominated in INR and NOK, will then be generated in the spreadsheet based on the figures you enter in the breakdown between the Indian and Norwegian partner. This budget should be equal to the joint project budget you must enter in the application format in Espresso. Please note that for application purpose, all amounts should be registered in the application form in Espresso (Joint project budget) in Norwegian kroner (NOK).

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## Appendix 1

### **The Indo-Norwegian Cooperation Programme in Higher Education and Research (INCP2) Programme Document 2024–2027**

#### **Background**

The Indo-Norwegian Cooperation Programme in Higher Education and Research” (INCP2) is based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Norway for cooperation in higher education, initially signed on February 14, 2014, and renewed on October 22, 2022. In addition, it is based on the renewed Agreement on Academic Cooperation between the University Grants Commission India (UGC) and the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir), signed in June 2023.

The INCP2 is the second call for applications from the programme. The first was issued in 2014, when 13 projects were funded bilaterally for the period spanning from 2014 to 2018.

The INCP2 is jointly funded through matching grants provided by the Indian Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The program is jointly managed by the UGC in India and HK-dir in Norway.

The programme shall continue to build capacity for future cooperation on both sides, with the aim to stimulate future cooperation within regular Norwegian and European internationalisation initiatives, such as UTFORSK, INTPART and Erasmus + and Indian and other international funding options.

The educational projects funded through INCP2 shall have a long-term aim, linking them to research, or to strategies for institutionally based long-term cooperation.

In addition to facilitating cooperation, the projects shall constitute a common ground for capacity building and for the transfer of good practice in India and Norway. The projects shall constitute an important way of initiating bilateral cooperation in higher education, by contributing towards overcoming obstacles that stand in the way of educational cooperation.

## **Aim**

The aim of INCP2 is to establish partnerships for internationalisation and quality enhancement in higher education, through academic collaboration and mobility, in close connections to work life, industry and business in India and Norway. The cooperation on INCP2 shall complement and expand existing Indian and Norwegian research cooperation.

## **Objectives**

- To strengthen institutional linkages between higher education and research institutions in India and Norway.
- To foster high quality academic and research programmes.
- To provide mutual mobility and training for students, academic and administrative staff.
- To increase mutual knowledge of each other's educational systems and to enable institutions on both sides to prepare for future cooperation.

## **Target groups**

- Higher education institutions in Norway and India.
- Master's and PhD students, and staff in Norway and India.

## **Areas of Cooperation**

Academic collaboration must be established in areas of mutual interest such as:

- Democracy and a rules-based world order
- Education
- The Ocean
- Arctic/polar research
- Clean Energy
- Climate and environment
- Urban planning and development
- Health, including global and public health, biotechnology, and the medical sciences
- Information technology and security

Cross-disciplinary collaboration across all disciplines is highly encouraged.

## **Theory of Change**

While the number of partnerships between Norwegian and Indian higher education institutions has increased in recent years, there is currently limited formal collaboration between Indian and Norwegian higher education institutions. If funding from Norway and India is allocated through INCP2, and there is strong interest from both countries and competitive applications, the program will

continue to serve as an incentive for Indian and Norwegian higher education institutions to initiate collaborations.

Such collaborations will involve organising training sessions, including intensive courses such as summer/winter schools with contributions from both Indian and Norwegian educators. It will also include activities like curriculum development, the exchange of course materials, both longer and shorter visits for students, faculty, and staff, arrangements of joint conferences and seminars, as well as the training of administrative staff and teachers.

These collaborative activities are expected to result in regular exchanges of academic staff and students at the master's and PhD levels, an increased mutual understanding of each other's educational systems, and the preparation of institutions on both sides for future and long-term cooperation. Furthermore, these efforts will contribute to internationalisation and the development of high-quality postgraduate and research programs in close connections to work life, industry and business in India and Norway.

Consequently, this will lead to strengthened institutional connections between higher education and research institutions in India and Norway, ultimately resulting in a more balanced, deepened, and expanded cooperation between high-quality higher education institutions in both countries at the master's and PhD levels.

In summary, the underlying assumption is that by providing funding and creating opportunities for collaboration, it will encourage Indian and Norwegian higher education institutions to work together, leading to increased cooperation, improved understanding, and the growth of high-quality academic programs at the master's and PhD levels, eventually strengthening the institutional linkages between the two countries.

## **INCP Result Framework**

### **Inputs**

The input is the availability of funding from Norway and India for joint projects through INCP2, the presence of competitive applications, a strong interest in participating, and an appropriate project budgets to support cooperation.

### **Activities**

The INCP2 encourages more cooperation between Indian and Norwegian higher education institutions through several joint activities. These activities may include:

- conduct joint research with student participation in areas of mutual interests
- short-term (1-4 weeks) as well as long-term (4-12 weeks) exchange visits of

faculty and students

- joint supervision of PhD and master students
- jointly develop courses, which may include virtual and/or blended courses and student mobility
- development of joint and dual degree programmes as per laws and regulations of both the countries
- intensive courses such as summer/winter schools
- seminars/ workshops/ conferences
- organised training programmes for academic and administrative staff for capacity building and leadership development
- exchange of literature/ course materials/ publications/ curriculum development etc.

### **Outputs**

As a result of the joint activities, INCP2 expects outputs such as increased exchanges of academic staff and students at the master's and PhD levels, improved mutual understanding of each other's education systems, and preparation for future cooperation between the institutions in India and Norway.

#### **Indicators Output:**

- New project collaborations:  
This indicator will measure the number of jointly funded projects 2024-2027
- Increased Academic Exchanges:  
This indicator will measure the number of academic staff and students participating in exchanges between Indian and Norwegian institutions at the master's and PhD levels.
- Improved Mutual Understanding:  
This indicator will involve conducting surveys or assessments to determine the level of mutual understanding and awareness of each other's education systems among participants before and after the project activities.
- Preparation for Future Cooperation:  
This indicator will track the number of joint proposals, agreements, or initiatives for future collaboration that are generated during the project activities.

### **Outcomes**

The above outputs are expected to lead to outcomes such as stronger institutional connections between higher education and research institutions in India and



Norway. It is also expected that these activities will contribute to the development of high-quality postgraduate and research programs in both countries.

**Indicators Outcome:**

- **Stronger Institutional Connections:**  
This indicator will measure the number of formal partnerships or agreements established between Indian and Norwegian higher education and research institutions.
- **High-Quality Postgraduate and Research Programs:**  
This indicator will assess the quality and ranking of postgraduate and research programs in terms of international recognition and academic excellence. It may include metrics such as the number of publications, citations, or research collaborations.

**Impact**

Ultimately, the desired impact of INCP2 is a more balanced, deepened, and expanded cooperation between high-quality higher education institutions in India and Norway, particularly at the master's and PhD levels.

**Indicators Impact:**

- **Balanced Cooperation:**  
This indicator will measure the balance of cooperation, possibly through assessing the equitable distribution of academic exchanges, collaborative projects, and resources between Indian and Norwegian institutions.
- **Deepened Cooperation:**  
This indicator will assess the depth of collaboration, evaluating the degree of integration and synergy between institutions. It might include criteria like joint research projects, shared resources, and co-authored publications.
- **Expanded Cooperation:**  
This indicator will measure the extent of growth in the number of Indian and Norwegian higher education institutions involved in collaborative efforts and the scope of activities. It may include an increase in the types of joint programs, projects, or initiatives.

The defined output, outcome, and impact indicators mentioned above will be central in evaluating the progress and impact of INCP2. They will help ensure that the program effectively promotes collaboration between Indian and Norwegian higher education institutions. Each project that receives funding through INCP2 must outline the expected project outcomes, establish a baseline, explain the selection of activities, and describe how these activities are expected to contribute

to the achievement of the project's objectives. However, given the emphasis on initiating new partnerships, collaboration, and relationships, flexibility is important, and too rigid predefined goals and targets should be avoided.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Crosscutting issues**

#### ***Human rights***

SDG and in particular goal 4 Education, is underpinning INCP2, and the Government of Norway and India clearly emphasises the principle of inclusive growth and has formulated policies and affirmative actions on national level to prevent inequality in access to higher education based on differences in caste, religion, gender and regional background.

All projects selected for funding must therefore pay attention to key human rights principles during development and implementation of a project: non-discrimination (the right not to be discriminated against based on ethnicity, religion, sex, disability, etc.); participation (the right to freedom of expression and access to information, freedom of assembly and association, the right to participate in decision-making processes that affect people's lives etc.); and accountability (equality before the law, mechanisms to hold duty bearers accountable etc.).

#### ***Women's rights and gender equality***

All projects selected for funding are expected to secure impartial selection of participants, students, and staff, based on merit and academic qualifications at all levels of the projects, also considering the question of gender balance. Projects may use project funding for affirmative actions to reduce the gender gap in project participation, including staff and students.

#### ***Anti-corruption***

With regard to anti-corruption and project management, in the Standard Declaration of Participation, the institution in Norway will state that the Norwegian institutions shall ensure that the implementation of the INCP project must comply with all applicable statutes, laws and regulations, as well as recognised norms for good project governance, and that adequate steps must be taken to prevent/mitigate risk of irregularities, corruption and/or other unethical practices.

The institution in Norway grants that the funds from the INCP2 from the Norwegian, side will be used exclusively for the purposes of implementing the

project, and that the project management will establish suitable procedures for managing the project's financial aspects (budgeting, accounting, reporting, etc.).

### ***Climate/Environment***

Applicants to INCP will be asked to assess the possible environmental and climate impact of their proposed project and in subsequent annual reporting, if selected for funding. The projects are expected to demonstrate environmental awareness through extensive use of information technology in all forms of communication between the partners and in teaching/supervision activities.

Activities should be organised back-to-back to reduce the number of air travels needed to conduct the activities. The programme will allow for short-time mobility, but long-term mobility will be encouraged.

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