

Regulations approved by the NOVA Board on 11 December 2017, changes approved on 29 Nov. 2019. English language proofing on 15 January 2018.



Regulations for NOVA Courses and Other Projects

Valid from 1 January 2019

Definitions:

Organisations

NOVA UN (NOVA)

- The Nordic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University Network (nova-university.org)
- Current members: Aarhus University: Science and Technology (AU-ST); the University of Helsinki: Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry (HU-AF) and Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (HU-V), the University of Eastern Finland: School of Forest Sciences (UEF-F); the Agricultural University of Iceland (LBHI); the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU); and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU).
- Please note that not all units of Aarhus University, Science and Technology (AU-ST) are part of NOVA.

Units of AU-ST that are part of NOVA:

- Department of Agroecology – Sections: Agricultural Systems and Sustainability; Climate and Water; Crop Health; Entomology and Plant Pathology; Soil Fertility; Soil Physics and Hydropedology
- Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics – Centres/sections: Centre for Quantitative Genetics and Genomics; Molecular Genetics; Crop Genetics and Biotechnology
- Department of Food Science – Science teams: Plant, Food & Sustainability; Plant, Food & Climate; Differentiated & Biofunctional Foods; Food Chemistry & Technology; Food, Metabolomics & Sensory Science
- Department of Animal Science – Research Units: Behaviour and stress biology; Epidemiology and management; Reproductive biology; Animal nutrition and environmental impact; Immunology and microbiology; Integrative physiology; Molecular nutrition and cell biology
- Department of Engineering – Sections: Biological and Chemical Engineering

BOVA UN (BOVA)

- The Baltic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University Network (bova-university.org)

NOVA-BOVA-Nordplus Network

- Local Nordplus network originating from the NOVA and BOVA Networks (www.nmbu.no/en/students/nova/nordplus)

Applicants, course organisers, teachers

Head applicant (= course leader)

- Responsible for the application.
- Must be a member of the academic staff at one of the NOVA member institutions.
- Person in charge of the course.
- Must have a doctoral degree if applying for PhD courses.

Course organiser

- Course leader in collaboration with his/her NOVA member institution.

Main teacher

- Teacher giving a substantial amount of lectures or tutoring on the course, can be from either a NOVA or a non-NOVA institution and must hold a doctoral degree.

Other teacher

- Teacher contributing a small amount of lectures or tutoring.

Teacher(s)

- Includes teacher(s), researcher(s) and speaker(s).

Participant categories

NOVA student

- Student registered at a NOVA member institution. However, a student registered at a part of a NOVA member institution that is not member of NOVA UN, is not considered a NOVA student, but as “other Nordic non-NOVA student”, see below.
- Veterinary students enrolled in residency programmes in the international and national specialisation programmes are treated on a par with veterinary PhD students.

BOVA student

- Student registered at a BOVA member institution.

Other Nordic non-NOVA student

- Student registered at a or at a part of a Nordic institution of higher education that is not member of NOVA UN. This includes students registered at the units of Aarhus University, Science and Technology (AU-ST), as well as at the faculties of the University of Helsinki and the University of Eastern Finland that are not part of NOVA UN.

Other participants

- Participants not falling into the categories NOVA student, other Nordic non-NOVA student and BOVA student.
- Examples of “other participants”: BOVA other, other Baltic PhD student, low-income countries PhD student, other countries PhD student, other non-PhD student and participants from industry/institutes.

Non-NOVA student

- Student or other participant not considered a NOVA student cf. definition above.

1. Instructions for applications for NOVA courses and other projects

1.1. Call for applications

There is one yearly call with three application deadlines for PhD courses (including PhD activities and competence-enhancing courses), combined master's and PhD courses, master's courses exceeding €5,000 and course series on PhD and master's level. Course series are evaluated only once, but funding decisions are made for each course (see below for more details).

Applications for master's courses not exceeding €5,000 and other projects are accepted continuously.

1.2. Priorities

NOVA will always aim to fund high-quality courses in all its fields of specialisation every year. In addition, every year, NOVA's Board can define thematic priorities that will be announced in connection with the call for applications.

1.3. Main requirements

There shall be joint Nordic planning of NOVA courses/activities and other projects and a clear added value of organising courses/activities and other projects in the NOVA Network. All activities financed by NOVA must be research based.

NOVA courses/activities should preferably be held in English.

1.4. Funding schemes

1.4.1. PhD courses

NOVA UN supports specialised, international and interdisciplinary PhD courses/activities, veterinary specialisation courses, PhD course series, as well as competence-enhancing courses for PhD students and other scientists. Digital courses are part of the funding scheme. PhD activities include amongst others interdisciplinary courses in generic skills (e.g. analysis and problem solving, project management, written and oral communication, self-management and work habits, interpersonal, intercultural and leadership skills etc.), career prospects, methodology, quality and ethics in research, etc.

1.4.1.1. Competence-enhancing courses

NOVA teachers can initiate courses to enhance the competence at NOVA institutions among PhD students and other scientists.

A competence-enhancing course shall focus on bringing new competence into the NOVA network and should help NOVA UN stay in the academic forefront to solve Nordic challenges in the future. Instead of requiring joint Nordic course planning, the requirement for competence-enhancing courses is that the participants on the courses are PhD

students and other scientists from Nordic institutions. In addition, it is required that the subject of the course is not sufficiently covered within the NOVA network at the time of the application, that the course is focusing on the latest developments within the field, or that it is facilitating methodology transfer from one subject to another. This also includes digitalisation of courses/education.

A competence-enhancing course must be at university level and be offered by scientific staff employed at a university to award ECTS credits.

1.4.1.2. PhD activities

Whether a PhD activity can award ECTS credits will be evaluated case by case.

1.4.2. Master's courses

NOVA UN provides financing of master's courses exceeding €5,000, master's courses not exceeding €5,000, as well as course series on the master's level in specific areas where Nordic cooperation can add particular value. Digital courses are part of the funding scheme.

1.4.3. Combined master's and PhD courses

NOVA UN does not have a special grant scheme or a separate call for combined courses. However, course organisers are welcome to arrange courses to which both master's and PhD students are admitted.

The entry requirements, learning outcomes and examination methods must be treated separately for the two student groups. A combined course is **not** a course where PhD students are accepted to a master's course or vice versa. The master's course must be registered as a regular master's course at the university running it.

The applications must follow the master's course exceeding €5,000 and PhD course application schemes. Applicants must submit one application for the master's course and one application for the PhD course.

For combined PhD and master's courses, there should be flexibility regarding the minimum number of NOVA students, but there must be at least 10 qualified and registered NOVA and BOVA students in total.

1.4.4. Course series

NOVA UN supports series of courses offered yearly or every second year on PhD or master's level (maximum four courses in a series or two identical courses given every second year will be funded). The courses should preferably be offered by different member institutions each year. The courses can either be a series of courses within a related area, courses that form a thematic whole, or identical courses.

The respective applicant for the second to fourth course in the series must submit an application for his/her course for the board meeting in June the year before the course is scheduled to run. The Board will take student evaluations of previous courses in the series into consideration when reviewing applications for the second, third and fourth course in the series.

1.4.5. Other projects not exceeding €5,000

NOVA UN supports other projects in specific areas where Nordic cooperation can add particular value. Other projects include the planning of courses, support to application writing to other funding bodies and other pedagogical projects in order to foster new or existing networks. The initiative must be anchored at the respective institutions.

1.5. Budgetary considerations and regulations

1.5.1. General regulations for all courses

- a. Requirements concerning students and cancellation policy
 - a. Total minimum number: 10 qualified and registered NOVA and BOVA students. If not obtained, the course should be cancelled.

- b. The course organiser is responsible for selecting a cancellation policy that aims to reduce the risk of financial loss.
 - c. Courses that receive a considerable amount of external funding through NOVA (e.g. from SNS) can receive funding from NOVA even though the number of NOVA students is too low.
 - d. The course must have qualified and registered students from at least two NOVA institutions or at least one NOVA institution and one BOVA institution.
 - e. For combined PhD and master's courses, there should be flexibility regarding the minimum number of NOVA students, but there must be at least 10 qualified and registered NOVA and BOVA students in total.
- b. Course length
- a. On-site PhD course: maximum five working days (plus a distance learning part, if appropriate).
 - b. On-site master's course: minimum five days and preferably not more than two weeks (plus a distance learning part, if appropriate).
 - c. Digital course: can include an on-site module in addition to the digital module, but it is not required.
- c. Workload per ECTS credit and course recognition
- a. All courses must fulfil the requirements at the NOVA member institution offering the course concerning the number of hours of workload per ECTS credit in line with the ECTS User's Guide where one ECTS credit corresponds to 25-30 hours of workload. For NOVA courses applied for and approved before 1 January 2018, the approved number of hours of workload per ECTS credit applies.
 - b. All NOVA member institutions should commit to recognising automatically all credits of a NOVA course for participating students if the course does not overlap with other courses and is fully relevant for the student's curriculum.
- d. Cooperation with BOVA UN
- a. It is encouraged to cooperate with BOVA teachers on NOVA courses and to organise NOVA courses at BOVA institutions. Organising courses at BOVA institutions can be a way to reduce costs.¹ According to the cooperation agreement between NOVA and BOVA, in such cases, the BOVA host shall participate in the course arrangements.
 - b. The local BOVA coordinator of each BOVA institution can assist with further information, and contact information for possible teachers with whom to cooperate.
- e. Other activities in connection with courses
- a. To enhance the utilisation of NOVA UN as a vehicle for increased research activity and cooperation, at both the Nordic and the global level, it is encouraged to organise researcher meetings, workshops or seminars in connection with courses. Course organisers can invite international experts to teach courses, and facilitate NOVA courses in cooperation with other international groups.

1.5.2. Special regulations for PhD courses – applications submitted to NOVA before 1 January 2018

- a. Students include PhD/Licentiate students plus qualified master's students. Master's students may be included in NOVA funding if they have documented knowledge to be active participants in the course.
- b. Maximum 25 NOVA/BOVA PhD/Licentiate and qualified master's students can be covered by NOVA.
 - a. If the number of such students from the host institution exceeds 50% of the total number of such students: The number of students from the host institution that can be covered is a maximum 50% of the total number of NOVA/BOVA PhD/Licentiate and qualified master's students.
 - i. More are welcome, but will not be covered by the NOVA grant.
 - ii. Expenses affected: student meals and materials.

Formula to calculate the number of NOVA and BOVA students that can be covered in these cases:

$$C = (H+O)/2+O$$

¹ It can be possible to get free access to laboratories.

Legend:

C=no. of NOVA/BOVA PhD/Lic. or qualified master's students covered by NOVA

H=no. of NOVA PhD/Lic. or qualified master's students from the host institution

O=no. of other NOVA/BOVA PhD/Lic. or qualified master's students

- c. Expenses that can be covered:
 - a. Accommodation for NOVA and non-NOVA teachers
 - b. Travel for NOVA and non-NOVA teachers in the Nordic-Baltic region
 - i. If teachers are residing outside the Nordic-Baltic region, reasonable travel expenses from/to outside this region are covered.
 - c. Remuneration for maximum two non-NOVA teachers (total maximum €5,000 for maximum two teachers)
 - d. Meals for teachers and NOVA/BOVA students on course days (maximum €30/day/person), (cf. §1.5.2.b.)
 - e. Expenses relating to course content (materials (cf. §§1.5.2.b. and 1.5.2.d.), transport, rent, other; including for instance laboratories, field excursions etc.)
 - f. Administration
 - i. In the final disbursement, the allotted amount for administration will be 10% of the actual costs, but can never exceed 10% of the total grant. It is not a fixed amount.
 - ii. In addition, the NOVA Board will provide a grant of €2,500 to cover administration, regardless of actual costs. This applies for NOVA PhD course applications submitted after 1 January 2015.
- d. Expenses that **cannot** be covered:
 - a. Salary for teachers employed at a NOVA member institution
 - b. Travel and accommodation for students (and other course participants)
 - c. Meals and materials for non-NOVA and non-BOVA students
 - i. This includes the participant categories: “other Nordic non-NOVA student” and “other” (i.e. BOVA other, other Baltic PhD student, low-income countries PhD student, other countries PhD student, other non-PhD student and participants from industry/institutes).
 - d. Publishing costs
 - e. Central overheads
- e. There is no course fee on NOVA PhD courses for NOVA and BOVA students. There is neither any course fee for non-NOVA and non-BOVA students, except that teachers/researchers and participants from the industry (i.e. participant categories: other non-PhD student and participants from the industry) can be charged a course fee. The course organiser must charge all participants that are non-NOVA and non-BOVA students for meals.

The changes regarding course fee are optional for courses running in 2019. Please see the previous regulations here: <https://www.nmbu.no/download/file/fid/30290>
- f. Accommodation for all students and meals for non-NOVA and non-BOVA students are handled/charged separately by the course organiser and should not be included in any accounting to NOVA.
- g. Cancelled PhD courses can receive funding for actual costs (e.g. expenses for hotel reservation that are not refunded etc.) prior to the cancellation of the course. Salary for administration of the course or for planning of the course and of course content will not be covered. The maximum amount that can be covered is €2,500.

1.5.3. Special regulations for PhD courses (including PhD activities and competence-enhancing courses) – applications submitted to NOVA after 1 January 2018

- a. Students include PhD/Licentiate students plus qualified master's students. Master's students may be included in NOVA funding if they have documented knowledge to be active participants in the course.

- b. As a two-year pilot, courses that are approved during the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019 and meet the criteria regarding number of students cf. §1.5.1.a., will receive a total lump sum of €10,000, which is a flat rate, plus €1,000 to cover administration. All administration must be covered within that amount. In addition, courses in fields prioritised by the NOVA Board in the Open Call, will receive an incentive grant of €2,000. If there are teachers employed at Nordic higher education institutions teaching the course from at least four different Nordic countries, the course will receive an incentive grant of €2,000. The amount is to be spent freely on the project with the exception of administration. If there are available resources remaining from the NOVA grant, it is encouraged to use them towards networking in connection with the course. The pilot will be evaluated, based on the students' evaluation of the course quality, financial concerns and NOVA's course budget, but other factors may be taken into consideration.
- c. There is no course fee on NOVA PhD courses for NOVA and BOVA students. There is neither any course fee for non-NOVA and non-BOVA students, except that teachers/researchers and participants from the industry (i.e. participant categories: other non-PhD student and participants from the industry) can be charged a course fee.
The changes regarding course fee are optional for courses running in 2019. Please see the old regulations here: <https://www.nmbu.no/download/file/fid/30290>
- d. Cancelled PhD courses can receive funding of actual costs (e.g. expenses for hotel reservation that are not refunded etc.) prior to the cancellation of the course. Salary for administration of the course or for planning of the course and course content will not be covered. The maximum amount that can be covered is €2,500.

1.5.3.1. Special regulations for competence-enhancing courses

- a. The special regulations for PhD courses in § 1.5.3. apply with the exception that master's students are not covered by the funding for competence-enhancing courses.
- b. Scientists from NOVA and BOVA member institutions who are not PhD students are not regarded as NOVA or BOVA students. In accordance with § 1.5.3.c., such participants (i.e. participant categories: other non-PhD student, as well as participants from the industry) can be charged a course fee.
The changes regarding course fee are optional for courses running in 2019. Please see the previous regulations here: <https://www.nmbu.no/download/file/fid/30290>

1.5.4. Special regulations for master's courses – applications submitted to NOVA before 1 January 2018

- a. For the financing of NOVA master's courses, NOVA UN utilises Nordplus funding when possible.
- b. The following types of expenses can be covered in accordance with the NOVA and Nordplus rules: NOVA can cover expenses for external teachers, funding for expenses relating to course content (e.g. venue, materials and transport including for instance laboratories and field excursions etc.) and administration. Depending on the location and the country of the NOVA teacher's home institution, NOVA or Nordplus can cover travel and accommodation for NOVA teachers. Nordplus funding can cover travel and accommodation costs for incoming students. Detailed information on how expenses can be covered is available below. Nordplus funding must be applied for separately to the local Nordplus coordinators.
- c. Maximum 25 NOVA/BOVA master's students can be covered by NOVA.
 - a. If the number of such students from the host institution exceeds 50% of the total number of such students: The number of students from the host institution that can be covered is maximum 50% of the total number of NOVA/BOVA master's students.
 - i. More are welcome, but will not be covered by the NOVA grant.
 - ii. Expenses affected: materials.

Formula to calculate the number of NOVA and BOVA students that can be covered in these cases:

$$C = (H+O)/2+O$$

Legend:

C=no. of NOVA/BOVA master's students covered by NOVA

H=no. of NOVA master's students from the host institution

O=no. of other NOVA/BOVA master's students

- d. Expenses that can be covered by NOVA:
 - a. Accommodation for non-NOVA teachers
 - b. Travel for non-NOVA teachers in the Nordic-Baltic region
 - i. If non-NOVA teachers are residing outside the Nordic-Baltic region, reasonable travel expenses from/to outside this region are covered.
 - c. For off-campus courses: support for travel and accommodation for NOVA teachers teaching a NOVA master's course held in their institution's home country
 - i. The same criteria as for Nordplus grants apply: The stay must be related to specific and integrated teaching activities, tutorial activities, or development of study materials. Research activities are not supported. The stay should include at least 8 hours of teaching/working. As of 1 Jan. 2018, the teacher mobility grant is €355 per week or €70 per day. The grant for travel expenses is €100.¹
 - d. Remuneration for a maximum two non-NOVA teachers (total maximum €5,000 for maximum two teachers)
 - e. Meals for non-NOVA teachers
 - f. Expenses relating to course content (materials (cf. §§1.5.4.c.), transport, rent, other; e.g. laboratories, field excursions etc.)
 - g. Administration: In the final disbursement, the allotted amount will be 10% of the actual costs, but can never exceed 10% of the total grant. It is not a fixed amount.
- e. Expenses that can be covered by Nordplus (support must be applied for separately):
 - a. Support for travel and accommodation for NOVA teachers teaching a NOVA master's course held in another country than their institution's home country
 - b. Support for travel and accommodation for incoming students
- f. Expenses that **cannot** be covered by NOVA or Nordplus:
 - a. Salary and per diem for teachers employed at a NOVA member institution
 - b. Publishing costs
 - c. Central overheads

1.5.4.1. Exceptions

- a. For off-campus courses: costs for student accommodation can partly be covered by NOVA. Incoming students can receive a Nordplus grant for accommodation, whereas students from the host institution giving the course cannot not receive such a Nordplus grant.
- b. Under certain circumstances, if the course budget allows, a minor part of the NOVA grant can be used towards student accommodation. The NOVA Secretariat must be contacted concerning this.

1.5.5. Special regulations for master's courses – applications submitted to NOVA after 1 January 2018

- g. For the financing of NOVA master's courses, the course leader is advised to check whether Nordplus support is available through the NOVA-BOVA-Nordplus Network either for the course or for teacher and student travel and mobility.
- h. As a two-year pilot, courses that are approved during the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019 and meet the criteria regarding number of students cf. §1.5.1.a., will receive a total lump sum from NOVA.

Master's courses that are submitted and approved in the NOVA Open Call, will receive a total lump sum of €10,000, which is a flat rate, plus €1,000 to cover administration. All administration must be covered within that amount. In addition, courses in fields prioritised by the NOVA Board in the Open Call, will receive

¹ These amounts will be updated according to the rates covered by Nordplus in the NOVA-BOVA Nordplus Network.

an incentive grant of €2,000. If there are teachers employed at Nordic higher education institutions teaching the course from at least four different Nordic countries, the course will receive an incentive grant of €2,000.

Other master's courses for which funding is applied outside the Open Call will receive a total lump sum of €4,500, which is a flat rate, plus €500 to cover administration. All administration must be covered within that amount.

The amount is to be spent freely on the project with the exception of administration. If there are available resources from the NOVA grant, it is encouraged to use it towards networking in connection with the course. The pilot will be evaluated, based on the students' evaluation of the course quality, financial concerns and NOVA's course budget, but other factors may be taken into consideration.

1.5.6. Special regulations for other projects not exceeding €5,000

- a. Expenses that can be covered:
 - a. Accommodation for teachers/consultants etc.
 - b. Travel for teachers/consultants etc. in the Nordic-Baltic region
 - i. If non-NOVA teachers/consultants are residing outside the Nordic-Baltic region, reasonable travel expenses from/to outside this region are covered.
 - c. Remuneration for maximum two non-NOVA teachers/consultants (total maximum €5,000 for maximum two people)
 - d. Meals
 - e. Miscellaneous (e.g. meeting room rent, video conference etc.)
 - f. Administration: In the final disbursement, the allotted amount will be 10% of the actual costs, but can never exceed 10% of the total grant. It is not a fixed amount.
- b. Expenses that **cannot** be covered:
 - a. Salary for staff employed at a NOVA member institution
 - b. Publishing costs
 - c. Central overheads

1.6. Non-NOVA students

- a. Students and others not registered at a NOVA member institution are welcome to take a course if space is available. Admission is handled by the course leader in accordance with local regulations. On NOVA PhD courses, there is no course fee for non-NOVA and non-BOVA students, except that teachers/researchers and participants from the industry (i.e. participant categories: other non-PhD student and participants from the industry) can be charged a course fee, cf. §1.5.2.e. (course applications submitted before 1 Jan. 2018) or §1.5.3.c. (course applications submitted after 1 Jan. 2018).
- b. The NOVA members at Aarhus University, Science and Technology, are responsible for actively informing their students about their status as regards to NOVA.
- c. For PhD course applications submitted to NOVA before 1 January 2018, regulations on accommodation, meals and material costs for non-NOVA and non-BOVA students are detailed in §§1.5.2.d.b. and c., 1.5.2.e., and 1.5.2.f.
- d. For course applications submitted to NOVA after 1 January 2018, there are no special regulations on accommodation, meals and material costs for non-NOVA and non-BOVA students.

The changes regarding course fee in §1.6. are optional for courses running in 2019. Please see the previous regulations here: <https://www.nmbu.no/download/file/fid/30290>

2. Processing of applications and course evaluation criteria

These regulations apply to applications submitted to NOVA after 1 January 2018.

For applications for PhD courses (including PhD activities and competence-enhancing courses), master's courses exceeding €5,000, combined PhD and master's courses, and course series, the evaluation will be conducted as described in the three steps below. The NOVA Board will assess and approve these applications.

For applications for master's courses not exceeding €5,000, the evaluation will be conducted as described in the three steps below. The NOVA Chair will assess and approve these applications.

For applications for other projects not exceeding €5,000, the home institution is not responsible for approving the application. The evaluation of these applications will be conducted in two steps (i.e. steps 2 and 3 below). The NOVA Chair will assess and approve these applications.

Description of the steps in the evaluation:

1. **Official approval by the home institution.** Institutions should be given clear information about what their role is in relation to approving applications for submission. An official signatory at the home institution is responsible for carefully examining and approving the following aspects of the course:
 - a. Course content and level are confirmed as suitable for PhD students (or master's students, in the case of master's courses; or PhD students and other scientists, in the case of competence-enhancing courses)
 - b. The course leader is qualified to organise a course and is guaranteed the necessary administrative support by the home institution
 - c. Teachers have good academic and pedagogical competence for the course level in question
 - d. The course programme is well-planned, and different educational methods and elements are balanced and in line with the learning objectives of the course
 - e. The topic is relevant for the home institution and NOVA students
 - f. The number of ECTS credited is in line with the planned workload
 - g. The grant funding is in line with the course content and will be used in accordance with national regulations
 - h. The course advances the Nordic dimension
 - i. The added value from facilitating the course within NOVA UN is clearly explained in the application

Additional information for applications for course series: The institution of the head applicant has the main responsibility for evaluating the application including the course description, learning outcomes and Nordic dimension. Each institution must evaluate the information on its course in the series and fill in the local approval form.

2. **Technical approval by the NOVA central coordinator.** The central coordinator will ensure that the practical eligibility criteria are met: that the course plan is in accordance with the guidelines, that all the necessary documents are submitted and that the course application has been officially approved by the home institution before submission. If the application has deficiencies, the central coordinator will usually not ask the applicant to complete or improve the application, as such applications will be rejected automatically. The central coordinator will check for course evaluations from previous courses organised by the applicant/course group and forward them to the Board/Chair for consideration during the evaluation process.
3. **Final evaluation and approval by the NOVA Board/the NOVA Chair.** Final evaluation and approval are based on the set priorities, including an evaluation of the Nordic dimension of the application. The Board does not discuss the details of applications.

For courses that reach the NOVA Board/the NOVA Chair through the application process described above, the most important evaluation criterion is how well the course promotes the Nordic dimension as defined in

the NOVA Strategy. This should be shown qualitatively, not quantitatively. Criteria that will be taken into account therefore include the items listed below, and applicants must clearly address these:

1. Does the topic fit with **NOVA's Strategy** and is it in accordance with the **priorities**, if any, set by the Board.
2. Does the course/project provide postgraduate students with high-quality education in fields where the **critical mass in one country alone would be too small**, or fields with a **specific Nordic dimension**, defined by, e.g., geographical, climatic or cultural commonalities?
3. What is the **added value** of the course/project? Does it, for example, promote the exchange of best practices in teaching and discipline know-how between teachers? Does it facilitate other forms of cooperation between teachers and students, for example on research?

When evaluating applications, each board member will read each application and make brief comments on the criteria mentioned above.

3. Instructions for grant holders

3.1. Special instructions for PhD courses (including PhD activities and competence-enhancing courses) and master's courses

3.1.1. Grant

3.1.1.1. PhD and master's courses – applications submitted to NOVA before 1 January 2018

- a. The maximum grant at the application stage is based on the costs in the budget.
- b. The disbursed amount will be based on real costs.
- c. The final maximum grant can never exceed the maximum grant guaranteed in the decision.
- d. The expenses should follow the budget presented in the application unless otherwise stated in the decision letter. For the budget items with restricted funding (i.e. meals, remuneration etc.), this limit can never be exceeded. For other budget items, minor deviations are acceptable. For major deviations, the NOVA Secretariat must be contacted.

3.1.1.2. PhD courses (including PhD activities and competence-enhancing courses) and master's courses – applications submitted to NOVA after 1 January 2018

- a. Providing that the course meet the criteria regarding number of students cf. §1.5.1.a., the course will receive the grant from NOVA.
- b. The disbursed amount will be the amount approved by the NOVA Board.

3.1.2. Administration

- a. The head applicant and the head of the hosting department/faculty must sign an administration acknowledgement form concerning the economy and the administration of the course/project.
- b. The head applicant is responsible for administering the course/project.
- c. Admission
 - a. Student admission to the course shall be handled in accordance with local procedures.
 - b. The course leader (i.e. head applicant) is responsible for providing the NOVA Secretariat with the application opening and closing dates, information on admission and on how the students shall apply for the course as soon as possible after course approval and by the deadline set by the NOVA Secretariat.
 - c. Guidelines: the admission process should open at least 3 months before course start and the confirmation should start at least 2 months before course start so that students have time for practical organisation and to apply for travel grants.
- d. Course information/promotion

- a. The NOVA Secretariat is responsible for announcing the course on the NOVA website, including creating a course web page. The NOVA Secretariat will promote the course, e.g. on the NOVA Facebook page, in the NOVA newsletter and to the local NOVA and BOVA coordinators. They will in turn promote the course at their respective home institutions.
- b. The NOVA course teachers are responsible for marketing the course actively at their respective institutions. In addition, the teachers should use their academic networks to promote the course.
- c. The NOVA course web page consists of information from the application (course description and learning outcomes), course dates, application information, course fees, other costs for attending the course as accommodation and meals, in accordance with NOVA's regulations. Additional information (e.g. course schedule, practical information, local course information web page etc.) can be published.
- d. The course leader must send updates for the NOVA course web page to the NOVA Secretariat.
- e. Course evaluation
 - a. It is mandatory for all students attending a NOVA course to fill in NOVA's online course evaluation.
 - b. The course leader should schedule ca. 10 minutes on the last day of the on-site course or the last day of the digital course for the students to fill in the course evaluation. The students will receive an email with the link to the evaluation.
 - c. The course leader must send the student email addresses to the NOVA Secretariat by the set deadline.
 - d. The result of the course evaluation will be sent to the course leader and the official signatory. The course leader must comment on the student evaluation in the final report to NOVA. The course evaluation will be taken into consideration in the evaluation of later applications to NOVA from the course leader/course group members. On course series, NOVA funding for the 2nd-4th courses in the series depends among other factors on the student evaluations of previous courses in the series.
- f. Facebook promotion
 - a. During the course, the course leader should submit 3-4 pictures from the course as well as a short text explaining the pictured activities to the NOVA Secretariat. This will be published on the NOVA Facebook page.
- g. Registration of student results
 - a. The course leader is responsible for assuring that the student results are registered according to the organising NOVA member institution's requirements.
- h. Issuing of NOVA diploma and transcript/course certificate
 - a. The students should receive a NOVA diploma and a transcript of records or course certificate from the NOVA institution organising the course. The local NOVA coordinator is responsible for issuing the NOVA diploma.
- i. Reporting to home institution
 - a. Reporting to the home institution of the course should be done according to the practice at the NOVA member institution.
- j. Reporting to NOVA
 - a. The final report is submitted on NOVA's online reporting system. All questions must be answered and NOVA's financial report template must be used, including the student matrix.
 - b. The following information will be requested: financial report, self-evaluation (including comment on student evaluation), number of participating students (total and per institution/student category), number of students who passed, number of ECTS produced (total and per institution/student category), possible external funding, bank and account information, updated course description/course schedule if there have been significant changes.
 - c. The final report shall be submitted within the deadline stated in the administration acknowledgement, 3 months after the end of the on-site course/end of the digital course. NOVA

adheres to a very strict policy for reporting deadlines. Only in very exceptional cases can grants be paid if the reporting is late.

- d. The local NOVA coordinator of the institution offering the course must be able to confirm the student data and the bank and account information.

3.1.3. Disbursement

- a. The grant will be disbursed after the end of the course and after the final report has been submitted to and has been accepted by NOVA.
- b. An advance disbursement of up to 60% of the maximum grant can be requested when the list of enrolled students is finalised, but it is not guaranteed.

3.2. Special instructions for other projects

3.2.1. Grant

- a. The maximum grant at the application stage is based on the costs in the budget.
- b. The disbursed amount will be based on real costs.
- c. The final maximum grant can never exceed the maximum grant guaranteed in the decision.
- d. The expenses should follow the budget presented in the application unless otherwise stated in the decision letter. For the budget items for which there is restricted funding (i.e. remuneration etc.), this limit can never be exceeded. For other budget items, minor deviations are acceptable. For major deviations, the NOVA Secretariat must be contacted.

3.2.2. Administration

- a. Reporting to home institution
 - a. Reporting to the home institution of the project should be done according to the practice at the NOVA member institution.
- b. Reporting to NOVA
 - a. The final report to NOVA is submitted in NOVA's online reporting system. It is required to answer all questions and to use NOVA's financial report template.
 - b. The following information will be requested: financial report, self-evaluation, possible external funding, bank and account information, updated project plan if there have been significant changes.
 - c. The final report shall be submitted within the deadline stated in the administration acknowledgement, 3 months after the end of the project. NOVA adheres to a very strict policy for reporting deadlines. Only in very exceptional cases can grants be paid if the reporting is late.
 - d. The local NOVA coordinator of the institution responsible for the project must be able to confirm the bank and account information.

3.2.3. Disbursement

- a. The grant will be disbursed after the end of the project and after the final report has been submitted to and has been accepted by NOVA.
- b. An advance disbursement of up to 60% of the maximum grant can be requested, but is not guaranteed.