

Call for Nominations – TFS Starting Grant 2020 Prequalification

This program is open to all departments and faculties/units at UiT - The Arctic University of Norway, aiming to recruit young national or international candidates with outstanding academic merit and research potential.

Each faculty at UiT can nominate no more than 3 (three) candidates.

Purpose: The foundation's goal is to attract highly talented young scholars from all disciplines to UiT and to give them a particularly good framework and conditions to help them realize their potential to achieve international excellence. In this way, the program aims to contribute to recruit, retain and develop UiT based, national or international excellent research leaders in various fields of research at UiT.

The TFS Starting Grant Program aims to:

- Give excellent young researchers the chance to develop into successful research leaders by providing long-term funding
- Aid UiT in attracting and retaining excellent young scholars in research in line with UiT's strategies and priorities and where the university foresees recruitment needs within the next four years

TFS now calls for nominations for 4-year grants beginning in 2021.

Project proposals from all disciplines, as well as cross-disciplinary project, are welcome, given that they correspond to the research strategies and recruitment needs of the respective departments and faculties at UiT, where the research will take place.

TFS encourages the university to nominate candidates currently based outside of Norway.

The program aims to prepare the PIs for further career development, for example to obtain competitive research funding such as ERC Starting Grant, ERC Consolidator grant or equivalent national and international research funding.

Eligibility: Nominations may be put forward only by faculties/units at the UiT. To be eligible for a TFS Starting Grant, the candidate cannot be employed in a permanent faculty position as an associate professor or professor at UiT at the application deadline. Candidates with permanent position at other institutions in Norway or abroad can be nominated.

Normally, candidates must be 40 years or younger¹ on the application date. However, the age limit may be exceeded in the following circumstances or a combination thereof:

- Parental leave: the age limit may be exceeded by the actual amount of leave taken for each child born.
- Long-term illness² or clinical training or national service: the age limit may be exceeded by the documented amount of leave taken.

Further information: Please consult Appendices 1 to 3 for further details about the program and how to apply.

Application deadline

Prequalification applications must be submitted by **17th February 2020**. (Further info in Appendix 2.)

¹ Before the candidate's 41st birthday

² Over ninety days for the candidate or a close family member (child, spouse, parent or sibling)

Appendix 1 - About the recruitment program

A program for UiT departments and faculties

Acknowledgement of the recruitment purpose of TFS grants is an important prerequisite for TFS funding. Nominations should thus be grounded in a need – identified by the nominating faculty/unit – for recruitment in the applicable subject area within 3-4 years of the anticipated start of the project. Any TFS funding should be seen as a contribution towards the university's priorities and identified recruitment needs.

The nominating faculty/unit must commit to the following should their candidate succeed in the competition:

- To co-fund the project as budgeted in the application (further info in Appendix 3).
- To employ the successful candidate in a relevant temporary position from the project start date.
- To employ other temporary project staff funded by the grant from the foundation
- To organize and conduct an external evaluation of the project and a competence assessment of the project leader before the end of the project period
- To announce a permanent position within the candidate's field of research before the end of the project period.

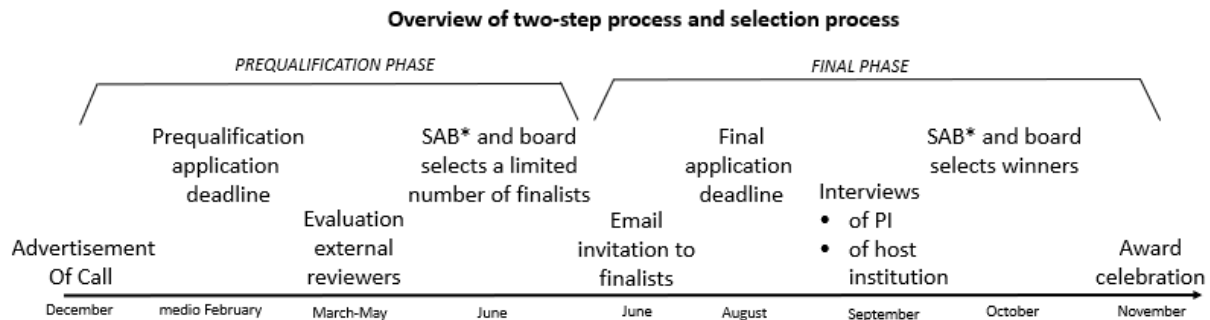
A program for talented young scholars

The program aims to recruit young, talented, ambitious researchers who desire to build and lead a research team. Candidates must not be employed in a permanent faculty position (associate or full professor) at UiT at the application deadline. For detailed information, please see Appendix 2.

Only candidates nominated by a faculty/unit at UiT may apply for funding under the TFS Starting Grant program. Proposals should be prepared by the nominee in close cooperation with the unit/faculty and should be submitted by the application deadline as stated in the call for nominations.

Appendix 2- How to apply and evaluation criteria

Two-step submission and selection process



Step 1: Prequalification

In Step-I, the qualification (teaching and leadership competence, scientific and scholarly work and competence) of the candidate and the quality and impact of the suggested research project, will be evaluated by external reviewers.

The nominee must prepare a prequalification application in English containing the following:

- Cover page in line with the TFS template (up to three (3) A4-pages)
- Description of the candidate up to one (1) A4-page (motivation, ability and experience for scholarly and academic work, teaching and research leadership)
- Project description of up to seven (7) A4-pages (including references) describing the research project (including a gantt-chart) and the research environment (in line with Project description template) in which the project will be undertaken.
- Budget in line with the TFS template
- CV of up to three (3) A4-pages listing the candidate's most important and relevant publications
- Commitment letter from the faculty/unit in accordance with the TFS template must accompany the application.
- Eventual commitment letter from cooperating partners if they are to contribute with resources to the project (funding, personnel, equipment,,,,)

Evaluation criteria prequalification

Funding decisions will be based upon international peer review, with attention given to the following aspects:

A. Evaluation of the research proposal

- I. Quality and relevance of research
- II. The research environment
- III. Work plan

B. Evaluation of the nominated candidate

- I. Teaching and leading competence
- II. Scientific, scholarly work and competence
- III. International experience/network

Importance will be attached to the originality and innovativeness of the project, as well as to whether or not it entails international cooperation. Extensive international experience will be evaluated positive. The main criterion for selection will be a high level of academic quality by international standards. In addition to the quality of the candidate and his or her work, the candidate's ability and ambition to build and lead a research team, and to cooperate with leading international research groups, will be given particular emphasis.

Step 2: Final proposal and interview

After the prequalification round, based upon peer review of the applications, a limited number of candidates will be invited to submit Step 2 applications and final budgets. At least one month will be given for finalist candidates to prepare the final proposal.

In Step-2, the focus will be:

- (1) on the implementation of the project in general and at UiT, and
- (2) how the candidate will build a strong and visible research team well integrated at the institution, also in a longer perspective in a potential future faculty position at UiT.

Applicant are requested to name three-3 references that may be contacted by the Scientific Advisory Board during the Step-2 application process. The names and contact details (title, name, workplace, email address and telephone number) of references should be included in an additional page at the end of the application Step-2 document.

The finalist's host departments will be interviewed by the Advisory Board regarding their plans for the recruitment of candidates with outstanding academic merit and research potential

Finalist's candidates will also be interviewed by the Advisory Board.

Final applications will not be subjected to external referee evaluation.

About the selection process

Successful candidates are expected to pursue additional competitive funding opportunities (e.g EU funding) during the project period. The nominated candidate's experience of, or potential for, research management, including national and international research collaboration, is an important evaluation criterion.

In line with the strategy of the respective unit/faculty, the proposed research team can also aim to be a node in an already established research environment or group, with the candidate as the leader of the node. In addition, the host unit's plans for recruitment of candidates with outstanding academic merit and research potential will be of importance to the foundation's final decision.

Submitting the applications

Please send step 1 application including enclosures and budget as one (1) PDF file to [post\[at\]tfstiftelse.no](mailto:post[at]tfstiftelse.no) within 17th February 2020 (prequalification). In addition, budget shall also be submitted as a separate excel file.

Selection of finalists and invitation to submit Step-2 applications will be announced May/June 2020.
Deadline for the step-2 application will normally be Medio August.

Receipt of submitted applications will be confirmed by email.

Candidates who don't get awarded will receive feedback from the evaluators. Please note that names of appointed experts will not be communicated to applicants.

Contact information:

Unn Sørum: phone +47 916 33 850, [unn\[at\]fstiftelse.no](mailto:unn[at]fstiftelse.no)

Oddveig Åsheim: phone +47 41 66 31 64, [oddveig\[at\]fstiftelse.no](mailto:oddveig[at]fstiftelse.no)

Appendix 3: Funding and project grant agreement

Each grant will be given as financial support for a research project.

For TFS Starting Grant there is maximum 12 MNOK for the 4 year funding from TFS. The overall budget of each project should allow for the establishment of a small research team under the leadership of the project leader and should facilitate the career development of the project leader.

TFS is a strategic partner for UiT. TFS prerequisite that any TFS contribution is matched by own funding from the UiT/ host faculty/ unit at a level of minimum 33 % in the equation (see equation in excel form "Example – for illustration").

(UiT's own funding (minus) indirect costs for UiT-funded positions)	should be greater or equal to 0.33
(total project costs (minus) indirect costs for UiT-funded positions (minus) other external funding (NFR in the example illustration))	

In this calculation the Foundation has chosen to disregard indirect costs for positions financed by UiT.

Such own funding may include salaries, consumables, equipment, overhead related to positions, Total Direct and Indirect costs/ "leiestedskostnader"; e.g the use of lab/equipment.

As a receiver of TFS-funding UiT is obliged to apply for "gaveforsterkning" (Governmental funding) and contribution for "gaveforsterkning" corresponding to 25% of TFS-grant should be included in the budget.

"Gaveforsterkning" is governmental funding administered by the Norwegian Research Council. It is a political decision that may change over time. More information about "Gaveforsterkning" can be found at www.forskningsradet.no.

Funding from the Foundation and "gaveforsterkning" may be put towards

- The salary of the project leader and technical personnel
- PhD and postdoctoral fellowships
- The purchase of research equipment
- Other research expenses directly related to the project

Funding from the foundation and "gaveforsterkning" may not be put towards

- Overhead related to positions funded by UiT, TFS, or other
- Other expenses not directly related to the project

Numbers in the summary area (yellow) will be automatically updated from lines below.

Please specify eventual source of other funding.

Please add specifications regarding salaries and man months (green area) for each planned position in the project as shown in the example illustration.

Please ensure that the budget contains all the necessary information regarding direct costs and overhead to be covered by the co-funding from the unit/faculty, and that the nominees and the host unit/faculty fully agree on the terms of the budget, including the number and types of positions, before the final application is submitted.

In the event a grant application is successful, a project grant agreement will be signed between the foundation and UiT, in which their respective responsibilities will be detailed in full.