



Guidelines for involving civil society in work relating to Our Vision 2030

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Our Vision 2030

A **competitive** Nordic Region

Together, we will promote green growth in the Nordic Region based on knowledge, innovation, mobility and digital integration.



**The Nordic
Region will
become the most
sustainable and
integrated region
in the world**

A **green** Nordic Region

Together, we will promote a green transition of our societies and work towards carbon neutrality and a sustainable circular and bio-based economy.

A **socially sustainable** Nordic Region

Together, we will promote an inclusive, equal and interconnected region with shared values and strengthened cultural exchange and welfare.



Photo: Yadid Levy/norden.org • Iris Dager/norden.org

Background

The Ministers for Nordic Co-operation (MR-SAM) have decided that the Nordic Council of Ministers will co-operate with civil society in the Nordic Region to a greater extent in its work relating to the Our Vision 2030 programme and the action plan for 2021-2024. Consequently, *both* a **Nordic network** for involving civil society organisations *and* a procedure for **public consultations** are being established to increase the opportunities for input from civil society, business and industry, and other stakeholders in the Nordic Region in respect of the Nordic Council of Ministers' efforts to implement Our Vision 2030. The two components are described below.

[Our vision](#) is for the Nordic Region to be the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030. As a means to provide guidance for concrete efforts, the Nordic Council of Ministers has adopted an action plan for the period 2021 to 2024. It consists of 12 objectives for a green Nordic Region, a competitive Nordic Region, and a socially sustainable Nordic Region.

The importance of involving civil society to ensure relevance and quality is emphasised in objective 11: *"The Nordic Council of Ministers will give Nordic civil society, and especially children and young people, a louder voice and greater participation in Nordic co-operation, as well as increase their knowledge of the languages and cultures of neighbouring countries."*

Going forwards, the Nordic Council of Ministers will therefore be more open to civil society organisations and other stakeholders giving their input and getting involved in Nordic co-operation. The Nordic Council of Ministers must be an organisation that is open, transparent, and relevant to civil society when it comes to information, resources, processes, and attitudes.

As part of these efforts, the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation have decided to establish a new model for involving civil society in the Nordic Council of Ministers. The model consists of two components:

1. a *Nordic civil society network* for ensuring ongoing co-operation with the Nordic Council of Ministers where this is relevant, and
2. *public consultations* for providing increased opportunities for civil society to comment on and contribute to, in particular, the Nordic Council of Ministers' larger overarching proposals such as governing documents or programme activities.



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Nordic civil society network

The Nordic civil society network will consist of representatives from national and pan-Nordic civil society organisations. The network will be divided into three sub-groups based on the three strategic priority areas of the vision: *a green Nordic Region*, *a competitive Nordic Region*, and *a socially sustainable Nordic Region*.

In recent years, the Nordic Council of Ministers has worked to strengthen co-operation with civil society. The network is not intended to replace existing contacts and networks that the sectors have established with civil society. The aim of the Nordic civil society network is to further strengthen co-operation with civil society in the Nordic Region and make this more goal-oriented and co-ordinated in order to implement Our Vision 2030 and its action plan for 2021-2024. This goal-oriented co-operation will help the Nordic Council of Ministers to ensure that efforts relating to Our Vision 2030 are transparent and relevant, and that Nordic civil society organisations are involved in Nordic co-operation through enhanced collaboration with the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Outline of the task

The Nordic civil society network will serve as a platform for collaboration with the Nordic Council of Ministers and other civil society organisations in the network. The role of the network should be developed based on jointly identified needs and wishes. Collaboration must be rooted in the implementation of Our Vision 2030 and the action plan for 2021-2024.

Collaboration with the Nordic Council of Ministers can take place with all of the individual councils of ministers (sectors) in all stages of the political decision-making process by way of information, consultation, dialogue, and involvement in the Nordic Council of Ministers' work. Each leading sector is responsible for involving the network where this is relevant.¹ This primarily means the following:

1. Depending on the subject area in question, the entire network or parts of it may be involved. The network can also appoint a representative within the network for a specific issue.

- *information* on the Nordic Council of Ministers' work based on what is published on the Nordic Council of Ministers' website or sent directly to the civil society network. The network will thereby be informed of relevant ongoing work and given the opportunity to provide feedback on this if necessary.
- *consultation* on the work of the sectors with the opportunity for civil society to provide views on current policy issues and specific initiatives and measures. The chair of the relevant committee of senior officials and the Secretariat is responsible for regularly consulting with the civil society network in order to identify priority areas for collaboration. This means giving the sectors the opportunity, if necessary, to co-prepare matters with the network or involve the network in concrete activities.
- *dialogue* on future initiatives and proposals from civil society and the Nordic Council of Ministers.
- *involvement* in relevant parts of the Nordic Council of Ministers' activities, such as in projects, as well as participation in relevant meetings and conferences.

Collaboration between civil society organisations takes place by way of activities within the network through the sharing of knowledge and co-operation across the Nordic countries. These efforts must link to the implementation of Our Vision 2030 and be designed, managed, and implemented by the Nordic civil society network and led by the project manager for the network.

The Nordic civil society network for Our Vision 2030 is co-ordinated by a project manager for the network. This project manager is a representative of a national or Nordic civil society organisation selected for the role by way of a tender process in the autumn of 2020. The role of the project manager is to co-ordinate the efforts of the Nordic civil society network and to manage the project budget allocated by the Nordic Council of Ministers for this work. The Nordic Council of Ministers is allocating a total budget of DKK 2 million for the period 2021 to 2024 for the Nordic civil society network.

Application and selection process

Representation in the Nordic civil society network for Our Vision 2030 is developed by way of an open application process aimed at civil society organisations in the Nordic countries, as well as a selection process conducted by the Nordic Council of Ministers based on specific criteria.

The application process will take place during the first quarter of 2021. Applications to the Nordic civil society network are made by way of a digital form in which the civil society organisations provide: 1) information about the civil society organisation; 2) information about the organisation's chosen representative for the Nordic network; and 3) the organisation's motivation for participating in the Nordic civil society network.

The selection process will take place during the second quarter of 2021. The Nordic Council of Ministers will elect a total of 40 representatives for the Nordic civil society network for Our Vision 2030. The Nordic Council of Ministers will assess the applications based on the following criteria, which have been determined by the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation:

- The applicant must be a civil society organisation² operating in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, or Åland, or be a Nordic association of civil society organisations.
- In its work, the applicant must have a connection with one or more of the three strategic priority areas of Our Vision 2030: a green Nordic Region, a competitive Nordic Region, and a socially sustainable Nordic Region.
- The applicant must demonstrate an interest in, commitment to, and motivation for being involved in goal-oriented co-operation with the Nordic Council of Ministers in relation to work with Our Vision 2030 as part of the Nordic civil society network.

In its selection, the Nordic Council of Ministers will seek an even distribution between the Nordic countries and the three strategic priorities of Our Vision 2030. In addition, diversity, gender equality (a gender balance of 40-60%), and age (at least 10% of representatives should be young people) will be taken into account in respect of representation. Youth representatives participating in the network must represent some type of youth organisation (for, by, and with young people). The Nordic Council of Ministers will look favourably on youth organisations nominating someone aged no older than 28, with the exception of representatives from disability organisations for young people where the people in these organisations are subject to different circumstances and are often older.

2. Organised civil society includes voluntary organisations, non-profit organisations, associations, foundations, charities, civic organisations, interest organisations, business organisations, labour organisations, faith communities, social enterprises or cooperatives, and other interest-based groups.



Photo: Yadid Levy/norden.org • Tam Vibberstoft/norden.org

Public consultations

Public consultations will give civil society, business and industry, and other stakeholders in the Nordic Region the opportunity to provide input on the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

A digital portal for public consultations is being created at norden.org, where draft proposals and reports, among other things, on the ongoing efforts relating to Our Vision 2030 are published along with an accompanying questionnaire that provides an opportunity to leave comments and give views. The portal will be launched in the spring of 2021.

The Nordic Council of Ministers publishes public consultations on, for example, Nordic co-operation programmes and major programme and project activities. The consultations can be used in all stages of the political decision-making process. The sectors are responsible for conducting public consultations.

The target group for the public consultations includes but is not limited to the Nordic Region's civil society organisations, citizens, businesses and industries, academia, and public authorities. In other words, this involvement has a broader target group than that of the Nordic civil society network for Our Vision 2030. This work is also connected to the Nordic civil society network for Our Vision 2030 insofar as it will ensure that the network is always informed when a new public consultation is published on norden.org.

About this publication

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Nordic co-operation

Nordic co-operation is one of the world's most extensive forms of regional collaboration, involving Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

Nordic co-operation has firm traditions in politics, economics, and culture and plays an important role in European and international forums. The Nordic community strives for a strong Nordic Region in a strong Europe.

Nordic co-operation promotes regional interests and values in a global world. The values shared by the Nordic countries help make the region one of the most innovative and competitive in the world.

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