

GUIDE TO MAKING A GOOD APPLICATION - CONSULTATIVE RESEARCH COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH



The Consultative Research Committee for Development Research (FFU):

- Members are appointed by the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation
- Assesses and Phase 1 and Phase 2 applications and suggests the prioritized projects for funding by MFA (after the approval by Innovation Fund Denmark)
- Participates in the quality assurance of the projects based on progress and final reports
- Adhere with the policy on conflict of interest as in the Danish Research Councils.

Three criteria for assessment: SCIENTIFIC QUALITY, RELEVANCE, and EFFECT

1) The scientific quality of the proposal is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- The research experience and qualifications of the project coordinator and the team;
- The originality and innovative nature of the project, in terms of generating new knowledge;
- For Phase 2 furthermore the feasibility of the proposed research including management structure, managerial competence and experience of the project coordinator, and research design.

2) The relevance of the proposal is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- The focus with respect to the themes;
- The project responds to national development priorities relevant for Danish development assistance (window 1) /relevant for Danish strategic sector cooperation in the country or is otherwise relevant for strengthening commercial or political cooperation with Denmark (window 2);
- Opportunities for private sector cooperation.

3) The effect of the research is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- The potential direct effects on the SDG's;
- The effects of the project in terms of the partnerships with public and private sector which could take the research to the next step;
- The contribution of the project to strengthened research capacity.

Recommendations:

- Do select a subject within the themes described in the Calls.
- Do identify a research question which is not only intellectually challenging but also relevant and under-researched.
- Do formulate research questions and hypotheses that describe the innovative nature of the proposed research, how controversies in the literature may be addressed and how 'conventional wisdom' may be revised.
- Do explain carefully how the project contributes to new knowledge by positioning it in relation to existing research (not enough to provide a list of literature read).
- Do include components of research capacity development.

- Make sure that the main responsible researcher/researchers can allocate sufficient time (not necessarily a good idea to select a director or dean as main researcher).
- Do ensure a good balance between input from each of the project partners.
- Do follow up on recommendations from the evaluation of the phase 1 application, when writing the Phase 2 application.
- Be focused, realistic and feasible. It is not an advantage to cover very broad research questions or extensive empirical material. It is not an advantage to apply for multi-country comparative studies unless the rationale is clearly explained.
- Do present management structure and outreach clearly.
- Make sure that the research is analytical rather than descriptive.
- Consider that interdisciplinarity is an asset and make sure that you have the right competences in the team.
- Do try to move from 'grey' to internationally refereed publications.

Warnings:

- Do not apply for data collection projects without thorough explanation of how data will be used.
- Do not apply for "development projects", as the grants are for research.
- Do not apply for consultancy type of activities.
- Do not apply for Ph.D. projects without sufficient involvement of senior researchers (allocate enough time for the key applicant).
- Do not apply for funding for your entire institute (number of key researchers should be limited to approx. 5-6 from each participating institution).
- Do not address only a small part of the call text.