



**Nordic Summer University**

**Research, Networking, Folkbildning**

**Call for project proposals 2022-2024**

**Deadline 15 February 2021**

The Nordic Summer University (NSU) calls for project proposals for three-year study circles (2022-2024). We seek proposals for new scholarly networks addressing critical issues in culture, science and society. Founded in 1950, NSU is an independent, non-profit scholarly institution that provides platforms for networks and collaborations across disciplines in the Nordic and Baltic regions. The activities of NSU are based on three concepts:

**Research:** NSU provides frameworks for critical scholarship with relevance for culture, science and society, where scholars and practitioners explore ideas and develop knowledge on equal footing.

**Networking:** NSU brings together university scholars, students, artists and other professionals from different disciplines, countries, generations and institutions in activities that transcend institutional hierarchies.

**Folkbildning:** NSU combines two traditions: the continental ideals of learning and cultivation of the self and the Nordic heritage of *folkbildning* and self-organization, with its investments in open access education and collaboration through participation and active citizenship. All aspects of NSU are democratically organized by the participants, including the decision on the NSU study program.

### **What is a study circle?**

Activities in the NSU are based on thematic study circles, which are forums for participants to present, discuss, and develop their scholarship. The work done in a study circle aims to do new and innovative research in the Nordic and Baltic context and provides a surplus for the Nordic and/or Baltic region. NSU currently consists of nine such study circles, each of which runs for three years. Two people function as coordinators, who are responsible for organizing the activities. Each circle meets twice per year, once in the winter (February-March) in a so called winter symposium in the Nordic-Baltic region including its periphery, and once in the summer during the annual weeklong NSU summer session, which is typically held the last week of July. The winter symposia are organized by the circles themselves in collaboration with a local partner (another network, a university department, a cultural institution, or similar). The summer session is organized by NSU, where all circles meet in the same location. The circles conduct parallel symposia during the day and partake in joint activities in the evening. For more information about current study circles, visit <http://nordic.university/study-circles/>

### **What can NSU offer?**

NSU offers a platform for collaboration, extended networks of people, their in-kind contributions in voluntary work and personal talent, over 70 years of inherited practice and tradition around democratic, grassroots organisation and connections to various institutions and organisations across the Nordic- Baltic regions. NSU is well-known in the Nordic countries and beyond, and as such offers a good network to attract researchers, scholars, students, artists and professionals to participate in your study circle. NSU is currently not able to guarantee funding for the circle activities. However, we are in the process of finding and securing new, long-term partnerships that might come into action during the year 2021. In case funding is not secured, the General Assembly - consisting of members of the NSU community - will decide on the future direction of NSU during the Summer Session 2021. NSU aims to provide financial support for coordinators and participants to attend winter and summer symposia. Other support includes online hosting of events, in case symposia need to be online due to the pandemic situation. The NSU Board also provides

support regarding funding applications, financial management and logistics. The Summer Session is hosted and organised by volunteers within NSU, which means study circle coordinators can focus on the content of their summer session program.

### **Application requirements**

NSU gives priority to interdisciplinary applications with an original approach and content, with interested participants from a minimum of three Nordic-Baltic countries, and a detailed plan of the activities of the circle. NSU strives to support topics that are not already established in universities and projects that cross the borders between disciplines and/or academia and society. Early career scholars are encouraged to apply.

The proposals for new study circles must include:

1. Aims and goals of the project, including an outline of:
  - A. The scholarly context, central questions, and the methodological points of departure for the prospective study circle.
  - B. Considerations regarding impact and outcomes in the Nordic-Baltic context. Depending on the aims of the circle outcomes may vary, but possible outcomes include publications (both academic and directed at the general public), collaborations, and exhibitions.
  - C. Strategies to meet the objectives and values of the Nordic Summer University described in §1 in the [statutes](#).
2. Structural overview of the activities of the circle, including a detailed plan for the six symposia within the three year cycle – two per year, winter and summer – specifying themes for all six symposia, together with suggested locations (possibly online) and possible collaborating partners for each winter symposium.
3. List of people and institutions supporting the proposal, including:
  - A. The names and contact information of the two people who will function as the coordinators of the prospective circle.
  - B. A short list of prospective participants, including their names, present positions, nationalities and/or places of residence. At least three Nordic and Baltic countries should be represented.
  - C. A list of prospective partner institutions, networks, NGOs and other initiatives in the Nordic-Baltic region, preferably indicating their willingness to collaborate.
4. A brief list (maximum one page) of selected bibliographic references, to function as a frame of reference for the study circle.

The length of the application covering the aims and the structure of the circle (1 and 2 above) must not exceed 2000 words. Examples of previous study circle applications as well as the Board's criteria for assessing new applications can be found [here](#).

### **Procedure**

Deadline to submit proposals is 15 February 2021. All received proposals will be subjected to peer review by experts in the field who also have knowledge about NSU. The peer reviews and the Board's suggestions of reformulations will be sent to the applicants by 15 April 2021. Revised proposals should be submitted by 15 May 2021. (See details below.)

**The final decision on the accepted circles is done in and by the General Assembly, during the summer session.** Proposals for new study circles must thus be presented, in person or via conference call, at the first General Assembly meeting during the NSU Summer session, which takes place 16 - 23 July 2021 in Oslo, Norway. (Or online.) The General Assembly will be provided with the following materials upon which to base their decision:

- the revised proposals
- a separate letter indicating the response and changes made to the proposal based on the review feedback.
- a suggested study program for NSU, including a description of priorities, by the NSU Board who takes into consideration the peer review and changes made.

The new study circles will be decided on by a vote of the NSU General Assembly.

### **Contact information**

The proposal, as well as questions, should be sent to board [at] nsuweb.org. Visit our webpage <http://nordic.university>.