

Annual report 2018



Nordic
Innovation

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Nordic Innovations goal is to promote and develop det nordic cooperation, to contribute to making the nordics a pioneer region within sustainable growth, increased entrepreneurs-hip, innovation and competitive companies.

The organisation is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and is a key factor in implementing the nordic cooperation program for business and innovation.

Nordic Innovation supports projects and programs which contributes to fulfilling the goals in the cooperation program. The organisation has offices in Oslo and employs 21 persons from all the Nordic countries. The yearly budget is appx. NOK 90 mill.

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CEO Svein Berg at the soft launch of Nordic Innovation House in Singapore.

On track – full throttle ahead

The Nordic governments decided on the new Co-operation Program for Innovation and Business 2018-2021 late in 2017. The program is ambitious and points out what is to be achieved in the coming four years period. At the same time the program does not formulate concrete action points for Nordic Innovation. That gives us a lot of freedom to identify which actions are the most efficient way to reach the goals, and at the same time more responsibility compared to former programs where the governments had defined and prioritized specific projects.

We knew the headlines in the Nordic Co-operation program for Innovation and Business, but we needed to make it operational. We therefore started in 2018 by investigating what was the national priorities in the different Nordic countries. We met and had discussions with more than 100 organisations and companies from all the Nordic countries.

We collected and assessed the strongholds identified by the national innovation and trade promotion organizations. Based on this, Nordic Innovation have formulated three comprehensive programs which are to be our main priorities for the next four years:

- * Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity
- * Nordic Sustainable Business Transformation
- * Health, Demography and Quality of Life

– 2019 will be a busy and challenging year. With all the meetings, workshops, preparations and build-up of our new programs we have lifted our stakeholders' expectations of what we can and will deliver.

We have opened two more Nordic Innovation Houses – one in Singapore and one in Hong Kong – building on the success of our houses in Silicon Valley and New York. We are bringing Nordic business closer to Asia and Asia closer to us. The prime ministers of the Nordics have an ambition to make our region the most integrated in the world. With the four Nordic Innovation Houses we are also integrating outside our region, bringing Nordic businesses together through cooperation between export organisations, embassies, start-ups and growth companies.

2019 will be a busy and challenging year. With all the meetings, workshops, preparations and build-up of our new programs we have lifted our stakeholders' expectations of what we can and will deliver. In May 2018 the Nordic ministers of business, trade and innovation launched our program Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity. Such a milestone shows that the ministers see Nordic Innovation as a key tool to deliver on their policies. Our challenge is to continue to be relevant and launch new activities for our ministers in June 2019.

I believe we are on the right track to achieving concrete deliverables on the Nordic Co-operation Program for Business and Innovation. 2019 will prove that Nordic Innovation not only can and will deliver, by working together with key stakeholders within business, the startup community, cluster organizations, trade promotion agencies, and decision-makers. Although we are small, we are agile and have a good reputation and by bringing people together and connecting the right stakeholders we will contribute to making the Nordics a more sustainable, competitive and integrated region.

On the following pages you can read more about our achievements in 2018; Nordic Smart Government, where we over a three-year period have contributed NOK 40 mill, Nordic Scalers – where we have completed 3 of 4 batches, Nordic Female Entrepreneurship – putting gender equality on the entrepreneurial agenda, our export efforts within Nordic Sustainable Cities and Nordic Welfare Solutions in India, China and North America, and of course our new programs. I trust you will find that Nordic Innovation is on the right track.

Now it is time for us to deliver. It is full throttle ahead.

Oslo, 19. February 2019
Svein Berg, CEO



Svein Berg

Nordic Sustainable Cities

Increasing the export of Nordic solutions for sustainable, liveable and smart cities



Nordic cooperation is unlocking doors for Nordic companies in North-American, Chinese and Indian cities.

Cities play a crucial role in driving sustainable development. By 2050, 66 percent of the world's population is expected to live in urban areas. This creates a growing global demand for solutions for the urban environment – and some of those solutions might be found in the Nordic region. We can offer high quality urban solutions based on our Nordic strengths such as good governance, public-private partnerships, design tradition, environmental and social consciousness as well as robust technological solutions.

In 2018, Nordic Innovation have carried out several activities to unlock doors to global markets for Nordic companies with solutions to urban development challenges.

"We have built upon the ground work we did last year and now see that the Nordic collaboration we have facilitated have led to contacts with decision-makers in our three focus markets North America, China and India that will be valuable for Nordic companies", explains Rasmus Malmberg. Malmberg has been running Nordic Sustainable Cities together with Hans Fridberg, Håkan Lind and Ivar Josefsson.

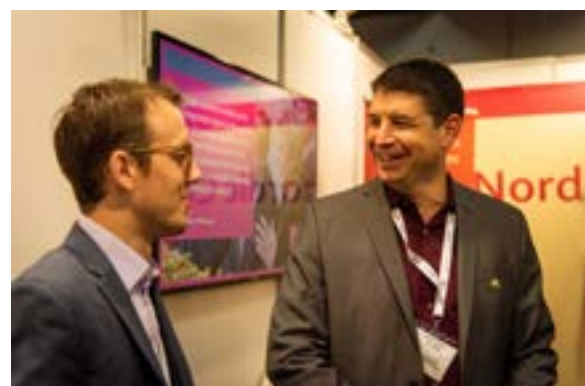
Branding activities

In addition to the work done locally in North America, China and India, Nordic Innovation have carried out two call for proposals for branding activities targeting international stakeholders. A good example of those branding activities is the Sustainable Urban Solutions event that was held

in conjunction with Nordic Clean Energy Week in Copenhagen in May. The event attracted 450 participants from all over the world exploring how the global cleantech community can solve global urban development challenges. Another example is the Nordic pavilion at Smart City World Congress in Barcelona. The pavilion, representing all the Nordic countries except Iceland, attracted 460 participants and 32 exhibitors. 21 presentations by companies and cities, as well as 50 speed meetings between Nordic companies and international decision-makers, were held at the pavilion.

Three focus markets

Last year, Nordic Innovation invited the five Nordic trade promotion agencies to develop and implement projects to help Nordic companies access



Russ Stark, Chief Resilience Officer in the City of St. John, speaking with Mats Shore from Business Sweden at Nordic Edge. St. John is one of the cities involved in the North American export project. Photo: Magnus Buer



A Chinese delegation visiting a district heating facility in Copenhagen in September. Photo: Magnus Buer

selected cities in North America, China and India. In 2018, these projects are up and running and have all made significant progress in opening doors to these markets for Nordic companies. The project in North America has come the furthest in recruiting Nordic companies, like Rockwool, to their export platform, while systemic challenges has proved it somewhat more difficult to connect with the right people in China and India. Nevertheless, Nordic companies like ABB, Tomra, Danfoss, Iceland GeoSurvey and Vaisala have all participated in workshops in India – and the Chinese and Indian projects have all made good progress in 2018.

Related to the export effort in China, the Nordic Council of Ministers invited a Chinese delegation to look at sustainable urban solutions in



Nordic Innovation's Hans Fridberg opening the Nordic pavilion at Smart Cities Expo World Congress 2018 in Barcelona with ambassadors from four Nordic countries. Photo: Rasmus Malmberg



Nordic Innovation's Rasmus Malmberg talking to participant at the Sustainable Urban Solutions event in Copenhagen in May. Photo: Magnus Buer

Copenhagen and participate in the Nordic Edge conference in Stavanger. The delegation was facilitated by Nordic Innovation and resulted in our Managing Director Svein Berg being invited to speak at a Chinese conference on sustainable urban development in Beijing in January 2019.

In 2018, we have also initiated a network of urban living labs in 14 Nordic major cities called the Nordic Urban Living Lab network, a Nordic collaboration with the C40 network called Nordic Solutions for C40, as well as a close collaboration with the Danish Business Authority's master classes targeting cities in our three focus markets North America, China and India.

Read more about Nordic Sustainable Cities at www.nordicinnovation.org/sustainablecities

Branding and exporting Nordic welfare solutions to the global market

Supported by the five Nordic prime ministers, Nordic Innovation spent considerable efforts in 2018 to help Nordic companies and healthcare providers showcase and export their health and welfare solutions.

Our welfare systems and high level of innovation has made people from all over the world look to the Nordic countries how we address social challenges, how we care for our elderly and build our hospitals and care homes. The world needs new and holistic welfare solutions and Nordic companies and healthcare providers are ready to deliver them.

In 2018, most of our time have been spent developing new branding material and getting export efforts in both Canada and Germany up and running.

"We have continued our work with bringing some of the most important national branding and export organisations to work together to create and deliver Nordic projects and value chains – which has never been done on this level before. That is something that we are proud of", says Nordic Innovation's Mona Truelsen who is spear-heading the Nordic Welfare Solutions project together with Arvid Løken.

Branding Nordic solutions and strongholds

Trade promotion agencies, embassies, clusters and ecosystems working with export have expressed a need for branding material to support their activities. In 2018, Nordic Innovation has initiated and finished several types of branding material

publicly available for everyone to use. The material is based on the findings in the Nordic Strongholds and Core Qualities of the Nordic Health Tech Ecosystem analysis that we published last year. A storytelling document on Smart Digital Health and a video on how the Nordic healthcare system puts the patient first are already finished and made available. Additionally, we have started working on three different whitepapers – on Smart Digital Health, Sustainable Healthcare and Ambient Assisted Living. The whitepapers will be finished in 2019.



Recruiting participants in Denmark to the export project in Toronto. Photo: Arvid Løken



Mona Truelsen speaking to the Nordic Export Task Force, a group of experts from the Nordic health and welfare sector that helps develop, promote and execute Nordic Welfare Solutions. Photo: Arvid Løken

Setting up efficient export platforms

The other area of focus in 2018 has been to establish export efforts helping Nordic companies to foreign markets. A project by the Nordic trade promotion agencies in Toronto, Canada, has seen the five Nordic trade promotion agencies work together to successfully recruit a number of hospitals, care homes and local experts to help Nordic companies with their go-to-market strategy and select 18 Nordic companies to an export program in Toronto that will launch in 2019.

In addition, five Nordic health and welfare tech cluster organisations have partnered with a German cluster organisation to help Nordic companies with digital health and care solutions enter the German market. They will take Nordic companies through a 13-month structured program consisting of study trips, workshops, seminars and product feedback. The program ends with the companies exhibiting at a Nordic pavilion in a leading German conference. The program will launch in 2019.

Read more about Nordic Welfare Solutions at www.nordicinnovation.org/welfaresolutions



The Nordic prime ministers.
Photo: Victor Svedberg / Swedish Government Offices

Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges

In 2017, the five Nordic prime ministers launched the Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges initiative to share knowledge and experiences from the Nordic region with the rest of the world. Nordic solutions in various areas, such as sustainable urban development, health and welfare, and gender equality, can be effective tools in our common work to reach the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals before the year 2030.

The prime ministers' initiative is coordinated by the Nordic Council of Ministers and consists of six flagship projects. Nordic Innovation is running two of them – Nordic Sustainable Cities and Nordic Welfare Solutions.



Circular solutions for Nordic businesses

With the Sustainable Development Goals there is a stronger focus on sustainability than ever, and it has become very visible just how urgent the need for businesses to transition into circular economy is. Across the Nordics and Europe, the legislation is going in one direction: sustainable, innovative and circular solutions are here to stay.

Old business models with a take-make-waste paradigm are becoming less and less viable, and the Nordic Innovation program Nordic Sustainable Business Transformation (NSBT) was established in 2018 to support Nordic businesses in the transition with Senior Innovation Advisers Elisabeth Smith and Marthe Haugland in the lead.

One of the initiatives of 2018 was Circular Economy Within the Manufacturing Industry, where the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, Accenture and Technology Industry Finland ran a pilot project with the aim of building capacity on circular economy for 30 Finnish businesses. Based on the pilot, Sitra created a playbook.

"The playbook is a hands-on tool that manufacturing companies can use to explore the circular economy for their company and get an understanding of what it would mean to their business model. Our analysis shows that an even larger impact can be achieved if we apply the circular concept to the eco-system at Nordic level within the manufacturing industry", explains Marthe Haugland. Nordic Innovation would like to further test this novel approach in 2019.

Another step for Nordic Innovation in exploring opportunities within circular economy, was to support the Nordic Industrial Symbiosis Network, with partners from four Nordic countries and led by the Eyde Cluster (NO). Nordic Industrial Symbiosis Network initiated a process bringing together industry and the financial sector to identify

barriers to a circular economy in the Nordics and try to map the road ahead. The Nordics as pilot area for cross-border industrial symbiosis could give direction for a functioning circular economy internationally.

2018 was a year of many new measures, and that made autumn and winter very busy seasons for Nordic Innovation. In October the NSBT team travelled to Yokohama, to take part in the third World Circular Economy Forum, (WCEF2018). The forum was held by the Japanese Ministry of Environment and Sitra. Nordic Innovation participated to bring 50 Nordic circular economy heads together to strengthen the Nordic networks and the Nordic cooperation.

"It is a paradox that one has to travel to the other side of the world to meet Nordic circular actors. I think this illustrates why we need more cooperation on circular economy," Marthe Haugland said at the time.



Senior Innovation adviser Marthe Haugland at a Nordic get-together at World Circular Economy Forum in Japan. Photo: Dyveke Elset.



Nordic Innovation COO Niina Aagaard at the LOOP launch at Slush - Photo Magnus Buer

After the success of the 2018 forum, Nordic Innovation will be a key partner in the WCEF2019 in Helsinki, Finland.

As 2018 was coming to an end, there was just time for another important project in the Nordic Sustainable Business Transformation program. Nordic Innovation launched LOOP – Ventures for the Circular Economy, in cooperation with Avanto Ventures and Sitra. The launch took place in Helsinki, Finland during the startup event Slush. Nordic Innovation wished to be part of LOOP because the project aims to combine circular economy and business growth agendas into one, by building an ecosystem that both generates new business and supports the global goals of circular economy.

"The launch event during Slush was a great success both in terms of interesting pitches and keynotes and successful meetings during the matchmaking" explains Senior Innovation Adviser Anna-Maija

Sunnanmark, who joined the NSBT team during 2018.

Avanto Ventures is facilitating the process of matching CE startups and corporations wishing to transition into circular economy, to create six-month ventures. The first Nordic venture-results will be presented at the World Circular Economy Forum 2019.

"2018 has been an exciting year for circular economy in the Nordics and with Nordic Sustainable Business Transformation, I am confident that we can help kickstart the Nordic transition", finishes Senior Innovation Adviser Elís Benediktsson, who joined the team in January 2019.

Read more about Nordic Sustainable Business Transformation here:
www.nordicinnovation.org/projects/2319/nordic-sustainable-business-transformation

– Our analysis shows that an even larger impact can be achieved if we apply the circular concept to the eco-system at Nordic level within the manufacturing industry. Marthe Haugland.

Speeding up the transition to a more sustainable and connected Nordic mobile future

In 2018, Nordic Innovation have launched two calls for project outlines, partnered up with one of Europe's largest shipping conferences and developed a game to start debates around mobility in Nordic cities in 2050.

Imagine how your average day will look like 30 years from now. Do you still spend an hour in traffic on your way to work in another city – or feel your bones freeze as you are standing on the platform waiting for a bus or a train that is delayed for the third time this week? Do you stop by the supermarket on your way home, only to find out that some of the stuff you were planning to buy are out of stock because they got lost somewhere during transport?

Or maybe innovative solutions and technology has totally changed your life, giving you more time to do the stuff you love doing. It is hard to predict the future – but we believe that our Nordic societies can be organised better.

In 2018, we started the **Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity** program to contribute to making a more sustainable, connected, integrated and seamless transport system in and between Nordic cities. The program is based on the Nordic Co-operation Program for Business and Innovation Policy 2018-2021 created by the five Nordic Ministers for Business.

"If we increase the pace of developing innovative solutions for mobility and connectivity, we can transform our societies – not only making them more sustainable in terms of reducing carbon footprints, but also increase the quality of life for all Nordic citizens and create opportunities for Nordic companies", says Nordic Innovation's Nina Egeli, who is running the program together with Arvid

Løken, Mikael von Dorrien, Håkan Lind and Ivar Josefsson.

The team started the year by travelling around the Nordics visiting a large number of stakeholders to gather information, anchor, and shape the program. Based on that input and the co-operation program, Nordic Innovation launched several activities in 2018 to speed up the transition to a more sustainable and connected mobile future in the Nordic region – and create new opportunities for Nordic companies.

Developing innovation projects

After hosting several workshops in the Nordics, at ITS World Congress and a Nordic cluster meet-up, Nordic Innovation launched two calls for project outlines to establish new Nordic partnerships, value chains or business models related smart mobility and connectivity during the fall.



The Nordic Smart Connectivity and Mobility team on a study trip to Gothenburg. Some team members have since been swapped. Photo: Dorde Tomic/OASC



The Nordic Smart Connectivity and Mobility team on a study trip to Gothenburg. Some team members have since been swapped. Photo: Magnus Buer

The first call was directed towards companies, public sector organisations and research organisations to develop Nordic projects focussing on quality of life. The second was directed towards clusters, business networks and ecosystems.

We received 45 applications before the calls closed just before the end of the year. The aim is to develop the most promising initiatives so they can move forward to the next stage; large scale Nordic Innovation projects in 2019.

Can a game affect what mobility will look like in Nordic cities in 30 years?

Urbanisation is one of the key future megatrends in the Nordic region, just like in the rest of the world. By 2050, 66 percent of the world's population is expected to live in urban areas and is something we need to plan for also in the Nordics.

Mobility systems play an important part in ensuring that our growing urban areas will be liveable, smart and sustainable, and we need to start thinking about how to develop them sooner rather than later. Based on research, in-depth interviews with mobility experts, and testing, Finnish service design company Hellon have together with Nordic Innovation developed the Nordic Urban Mobility 2050 Futures Game.

"The game approach was selected to encourage and facilitate stakeholders to have a dialogue. We believe that participating in the scenario creation process has much bigger impact on participants instead of just hearing or reading about the future",

says Zeynep Falay von Flittner, Lead Service Designer and Design Director at Hellon.

The game will be used as a conversation starter for municipalities, companies and citizens to help plan and prepare for future of mobility, and to encourage participants to create new Nordic project proposals that can be funded by Nordic Innovation. The game will be finalised in spring of 2019.

When sea meets land

The maritime industries have long and strong tradition in the Nordic countries and will play an important part in transforming mobility in the Nordic region. By tying it together with land-based transport industries, we hope to see new interesting partnerships arise. The market itself expresses both the potential and need for innovation in this intersection, and we hope to see solutions, value chains or business models in this fields in the coming years.

In 2019, Nordic Innovation will launch a funding instrument centered around what we call "Sea Meets Land" to support innovation and collaboration between land-based and ocean industries. In 2018, we therefore partnered up with Nor-Shipping, the largest meeting place for ocean-based industries in the Nordic region, to assist in facilitating this funding instrument next year.

Read more about the Nordic Smart Mobility and Connectivity program at www.nordicinnovation.org/mobility



Svein Berg, CEO Nordic Innovation and Kathrine Myhre, CEO Norway Health Tech. Photo: Magnus Buer.

Nordic Proof - an alliance for Nordic test facilities

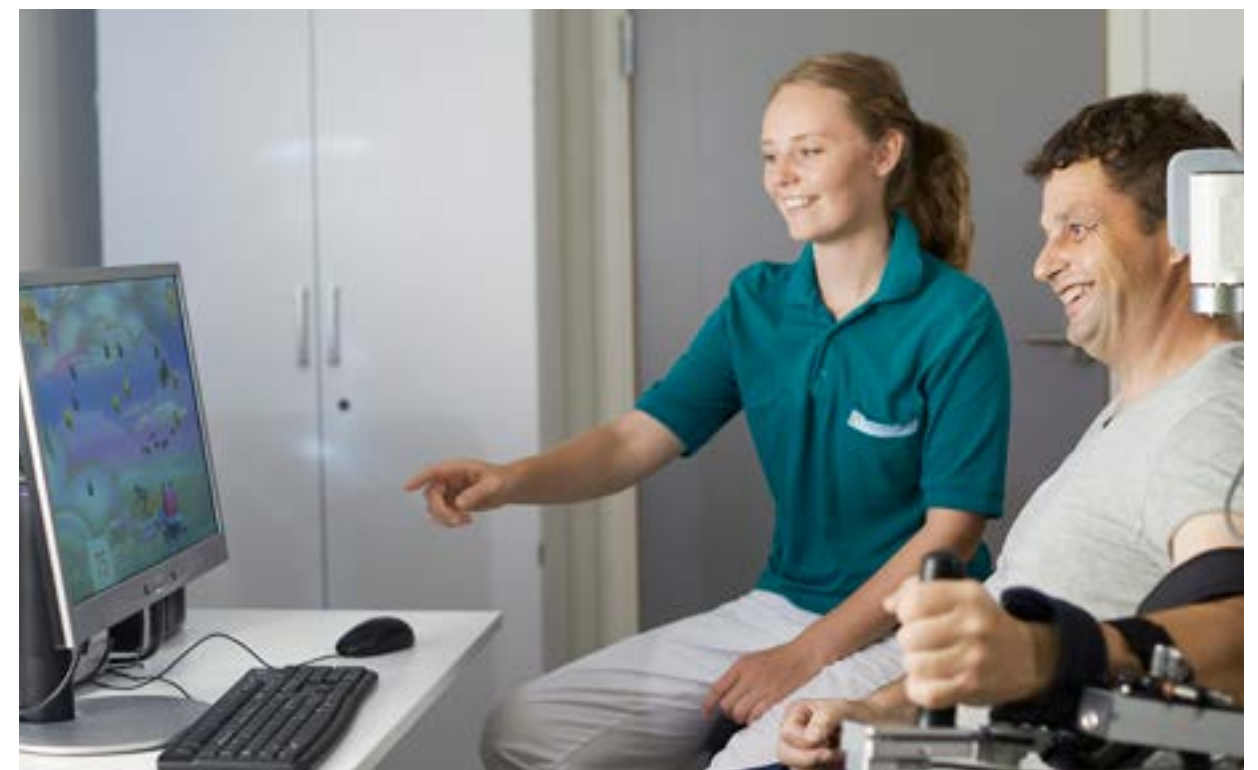
In the health sector, there are high demands for new products and solutions are put into use. It is therefore essential that everything is tested thoroughly, both before the solution is launched or possibly rejected. Nordic Proof has created a Nordic alliance for such testing facilities.

For several years, Nordic Innovation has funded projects within Nordic welfare solutions. The latest is Nordic Proof, which offers test facilities for Nordic companies developing health and welfare solutions. Nordic Proof is a network of 7 Nordic university hospitals providing companies an arena to test new products or solutions.

Nordic Proof were launched in the fall of 2017 and is operated by Norway Health Tech. "Norway Health Tech have worked with test facility in Norway for several years, but we saw the need for a Nordic arena for companies to

test their products to the standards and requirements set by national health authorities", says Kathrine Myhre, CEO at Norway Health Tech.

"The Nordic region have global recognition for their well-developed health systems and commitment to build evidence. Our ambition with Nordic Proof is to offer Nordic companies test facilities, which can contribute to acceleration and scaling. We also believe that Nordic Proof can make the Nordic region an attractive region for the international health industry", explains Myhre.



Sunnaas sykehus is one of the partners in Nordic Proof. Photo: Bård Gudim.

During 2018, Nordic Proof has signed a contract with 8 companies for testing in at least one of the test facilities. Additionally, many companies make direct contact with the facilities. Nordic Proof have received good feedback for making it easier for the companies to get in touch with the right professional department in the hospitals, and several companies have taken advantage of the opportunity to test in several hospitals.

"The companies that test at several hospitals also experience useful insights, and benefits to succeed in the various Nordic countries. We also believe that companies that tests and develop their solutions in close cooperation with users get a product that is better suited to the market and will have a greater chance of success", says Myhre

Arvid Løken, Senior Innovation Adviser at Nordic Innovation, believes Nordic Proof is a unique opportunity for Nordic entrepreneurs. We want to give Nordic companies the opportunities to connect to the right capital, expertise and users throughout the region.

– We hope that Nordic Proof will be an attractive service for Nordic companies targeting the health sector, but also in the long term be able to attract foreign companies that see the potential for developing and testing new solutions in the Nordic region.

Arvid Løken

After a year of development and testing of the services, Nordic Proof will, in 2019, work actively to make the service better known both in the Nordic countries and at selected international meeting places. Nordic Proof has two annual partner meetings and these collections are used to exchange experiences and increase competence in areas where there is a common desire to develop.

Read more about Nordic Proof here:
www.nordicproof.org

Facing the challenges in the Nordic healthcare systems

On a global level, demographic challenges have a major impact on health care systems. In the Nordic region, facing those challenges jointly is the best way to maintain a good health service for our citizens.

In 2018 Nordic Innovation launched the program **Health, Demography and Quality of Life**, with the objective to face the challenges of a growing proportion of elderly people and an increased prevalence of lifestyle and chronic diseases.

To do so, we have developed four initiatives and an ambitious vision:

– In 2030 the Nordics will be the most sustainable and integrated health region in the world, providing the best possible personalized health care for all its citizens.

"In the Nordic region we have all the required tools to become the most sustainable and integrated health region in the world. This first year we have worked thoroughly in anchoring the vision and completed scenario planning within personalized health, data driven health and data sharing", explains Mona Truelsen, Senior Innovation Adviser at Nordic Innovation.

One of the initiatives, **Bridging Nordic Data Initiative**, is focusing on solutions on how to bridge Nordic health data and personal data for utilization in the Nordic health ecosystems.

"Together with national innovation institutions, e-health services and cluster organizations, we have found ways of sharing of health data", says Rasmus Malmberg, Senior Innovation Adviser at Nordic Innovation.

The other initiative we have worked on during the year is **Value Chain Collaboration**. The initiative will boost exports of Nordic solutions, strengthen Nordic export networks and create value chain



Workshop in Reykjavik discussing opportunities for companies within Nordic health collaboration.
Photo: Anne Ipsen

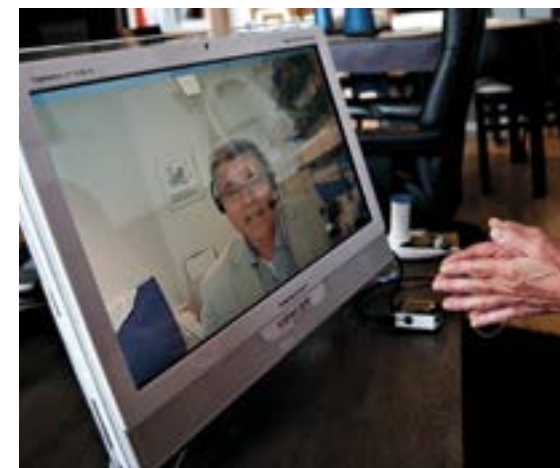


Quality of life is an important part of integrating the Nordic countries health systems. Photo: Yadid Levy Norden.org

collaborations at markets with high potential for Nordic solutions.

"We carried out a workshop in Reykjavik, called Grow Your Business Nordic, where we gave Icelandic health companies opportunity to learn about Nordic export opportunities, networking and Nordic cooperation", says Malmberg.

Mona Truelsen is optimistic about the continuation of the program. *"So far two of the initiatives are running and we hope this have laid a good foundation for the years come, both for the program and in the strive to reach our vision",* says Truelsen



Development of new health technology will be crucial to become an integrated Nordic health region.
Photo: norden.org

The four initiatives will run along the program through 2021. **Prevention and Healthy Patient**, is an initiative which will focus on value-based health care, prepare for the development of solutions using personal health data and increase the involvement of the patient in the treatment to ensure quality of life. The fourth initiative is **Healthy Cities**, which aims to improve health and quality of life for Nordic citizens by creating a healthy supportive environment based on innovative solutions.

Read more about Health, Demography and Quality of life here:
<http://nordicinnovation.org/projects/2319/health-demography-and-quality-of-life/>

Scaling the Nordics

Scale-ups are important for productivity, economic growth and employment. However, only 0,19% of all Nordic companies are scale-ups (scale-ups as share of total stock of enterprises within the non-financial business economy, start year of the growth period 2013-2016), according to a new report made by the Nordic statistical institutes for Nordic Innovation. The Nordic Innovation founded program Nordic Scalers is trying to change that by offering Nordic scale-ups tools to grow and a greater network in the Nordic region.

Nordic Scalers was initiated in 2017, but it was in 2018 that the program really got to shine with a lot of interest from both inside and outside the Nordics. The program is run by a consortium consisting of five Nordic partners: Epicenter Stockholm (SE), Rainmaking (DK), Startup Norway (NO), Icelandic Startups (IS) and MARIA01(FI).

During a 10 weeks intensive program the selected scale-ups receive hands-on and customized support which includes meetings with experienced entrepreneurs, access to new networks, tools for growth and peer groups. This enables the companies to grow even faster in a sustainable way. In 2018 Batch 2 and 3 each ran for 10 weeks, one batch in spring and one in autumn.



"The Nordic Scalers Program far exceeded our expectations and we uncovered and overcame several obstacles that stood in the way of our growth. We gained a researched and well-backed growth plan including an updated business model, target group and value proposition. We are of course grateful and would definitely recommend the program to other scale-ups." Alexander Åström, CMO Gigstr, participated in Batch 3 of Nordic Scalers.

Alongside Batch 2, the Nordic Scale-up Summit was held at Epicenter Stockholm on 14 March 2018. The summit was held as a cooperation between SEB and Nordic Scalers. The aim of the summit was Nordic community building and awareness raising, and had prominent speakers such as Per Bolund, Minister of Financial Markets, Government of Sweden and Jimmy Wales, Founder of Wikipedia. Nordic Scalers will hold another Nordic Scale-up Summit in Helsinki in June 2019.

"The company feedback from the Nordic Scalers programme has been excellent. From Batch 3 participants, for example, 75% gave the highest score for the Nordic Scalers program. This means that experimentation we have exercised to develop the programme has been worth it. We seem to have found a model that meets the needs of the scale-ups." Anna-Maija Sunnanmark, Senior Innovation Adviser.



Nordic Scalers at workshop in Stockholm fall 2018. Photo: Magnus Buer

In addition to the Nordic Scalers program, Nordic Innovation's goal is also to raise awareness about the importance of scale-ups and to share learnings among key stakeholders, both public and private. In the summer of 2018, Nordic Innovation and Swedish Breakit joined forces and held the event: 'From start-up to scale-up: How do we create more high-growth companies?' at Almedalsveckan, 4 July in Sweden. The panellists invited to take part in the debate included Niklas Adalberth (founder of Norrskén Foundation co-founder of Klarna), Saeid Esmaeilzadeh and Ashkan Pouya, founders of Serendipity Group.

"The most difficult thing about scaling a company is keeping talent and internal communication," said Adalberth at the event. The balance between focusing on growth and revenue versus the internal communication is one of the challenges the Nordic Scalers program try to solve with the participating scale-ups.

The cooperation with Breakit and the attention and overall success of the event, has resulted in a continuation of the cooperation between Nordic Innovation and Breakit. *"With awareness raising events like Almedalen or Nordic Scale-Up Summit we want to share our learnings from the Nordic Scalers program and to build a Nordic scale-up community. By cooperating with scale-up programs outside the Nordics we want to contri-*

bute to branding the Nordics globally as a scale-up hub. So far, the Nordics has been known for its thriving start-up scene but now it is time to raise the bar and support our scale-up companies who will contribute most to job- and wealth creation." Anna-Maija Sunnanmark, Senior Innovation Adviser. In the summer of 2019 another scale-up event will take place in Almedalen.

"We are pleased to have received very positive feedback from the scale-up companies that have completed the program in 2018. However, we see that there is a need for more information about scaling-up. Through a deeper understanding of what triggers success and failure respectively, clear policy recommendations can be developed, and we are in a better position to design the most suitable support programs for these companies –at national and/or Nordic level. This is why we have initiated a qualitative study to accompany the statistical study conducted. We experience great interest also from countries outside the Nordic region regarding our future findings." Nina Egeli, Senior Innovation Adviser.

The program is set to run for two years, with the final batch of scale-ups participating from April to June 2019.

Read more about Nordic Scalers here:
www.nordicinnovation.org/nordicscalers

Nordic Smart Government – creating value of real-time data

The Nordic prime ministers have a stated ambition to make the Nordic region the most integrated region in the world. One of the goals is to simplify the lives of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and to create new business opportunities and growth based on economic data, and thereby support a more competitive region.



The Nordic countries are highly digitized. Despite this, there is limited automation and re-use of data across the systems. This means that companies, when they report to the public or when invoicing, often spend time on manual processes, where data in a system is re-entered in another system. The program Nordic Smart Government, partly funded by Nordic Innovation, hopes to ease the burden for the small businesses in our region.

Kjersti Lunde is the program manager for Nordic Smart Government. She works for the Danish Business Authority, which is one of the partners in the program.

"There are around 2 million smaller and medium-sized enterprises in the Nordic region, all of them reporting to the authorities. We are highly digitalized, but there has been limited coordination in the digital development, so the systems are not able to easily share data. Businesses report basically the same data in different systems, which is time consuming. We are looking to create an ecosystem of digital solutions, both public and private, which are using compatible standards and formats for efficient and smart collecting and sharing of data, says Lunde. This will provide new opportunities for innovative data-based products and services. We have examined how Nordic SMEs processes their data and we want to secure an infrastructure that makes the data available in real time. The

data can provide better decision-making both for investors and creditors, but also for government authorities. In addition, the administrative burdens for the businesses will, of course, be reduced", says Lunde. A business case made by EY in 2018, estimates the effects of sharing financial information in real time in B2B in the range of 250 to 270 billion NOK.

Partners in Smart Government are all five Business Registries authorities in the Nordic countries, together with several tax authorities and statistical authorities. Together, they have established a program organization with almost 50 participants.



Girl testing an AR solution at Slush 2018. Photo: Magnus Buer



People immersing themselves in VR at Slush. Photo: Magnus Buer

Who's a part of Nordic Smart Government

NO	SE	FI	IS	DK
Brønnøysunds-registrene	Bolagsverket	Patent and Registration Office (PRH)	Directorate of Internal Revenue	Erhvervsstyrelsen
Skatteetaten	Skatteverket	Vero (Finnish Tax Agency)	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs og Ministry of Industries and Innovation	Danmarks Statistik
Statistisk Sentralbyrå	Statistisk Centralbyrån	Finnish State Treasury	Statistics Iceland	Skattestyrelsen (informally)

-The purpose of the collaboration is to share financial data across the region, and thus support an effective market. By working together, we explore solutions jointly, and have discovered new ways to share approaches and experiences. Now, we have a much wider picture of how we can solve the challenges and are a lot further than we had expected, concludes a satisfied Lunde.

Nordic Innovation's contribution to the program has ensured working hours for project managers and program management, for consultants, analyzes, workshops with SMEs and communication and travel.

By May 2020 Nordic Smart Government will deliver a roadmap to the Nordic business ministers. The roadmap will contain proposals for regulatory changes and requirements for digital systems, data quality and security. The proposal will also contain a democratic data policy which secures a fair and consent-based data sharing.

Read more about Nordic Smart Government here:
nordicsmartgovernment.org

Higher interest in Nordic Innovation's activities

The digital communication effort in 2018 has had a positive effect on Nordic Innovation's newsletter and social media.

Nordic Innovation have the past year focussed on our newsletter and social media as main communication channels. Due to the implementation of GDPR Nordic Innovation has cleaned up the newsletter subscriber list. The result was a 15% increase in the opening rate, which means that the readers are more relevant and have a higher interest in Nordic Innovation's activities than earlier.

Improved activity on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn has led to higher reach and increased numbers of followers on all three platforms. The followers have increased with +8,5% on Twitter, +26% on Facebook and +30% on LinkedIn. The most popular stories with high reach typically involved Nordic ministers, "open calls" within the programs and statistics comparing the Nordics with other countries and regions.

New web solution

In the beginning of 2018 Nordic Innovation and NordForsk initiated the process of developing a joint web solution. After a longer public procurement process the two organisations signed a three year contract with Frontkom in December 2018. Frontkom was one out of three suppliers matching our budget, needs and requirements the best. With a joint web solution Nordic Innovation and NordForsk will achieve more costs efficiency and strengthen the collaboration on internal resources. The joint web solution will make the two organisations less vulnerable to illness, employment retention and lack of resources. Nordic Innovation's new website is expected to be launched in spring/summer 2019.

Program management

Nordic Innovation's activities aim to create Nordic added value with concrete results and visible effects for the Nordic countries. Concurrent with



Intern workshop at Sentralen. Photo: Magnus Buer

the new Nordic Co-operation Programme for Business and Innovation 2018-2021, Nordic Innovation has worked on developing new internal work procedures for monitoring and results management, which will be implemented when implementing new programs and projects.

This implies:

- A framework for consistent, informed and responsible decision making in the programs
- Clarification of the criteria for selecting Nordic Innovation projects
- Ensuring that information is available in time for external reporting and evaluations
- Ensuring learning and sharing of information, and knowledge transfer

In the development of the programs there has been focus on making clear program objectives and a Theory of Change to support the development of indicators that will help measure the progress and effects of the programs. Several interactive working sessions, with the participation of all the staff of Nordic Innovation as well as separately in the program teams, has taken place in this process.

"We work with innovation and there is a need for a more dynamic approach to results management. If we only look for goals and structures, we will overlook important features of the programs. Instead of thinking only in terms of systems and structures, there is a need to become more involved with the fluent, dynamic and complexity of change

and innovation" says Trine Moa, Senior Administration Adviser at Nordic Innovation.. As part of the work, a workshop was held in Oslo with the aim to assess the quality of the program objectives (Theory of Change) and to support the development of indicators that will help measure the progress and effects of the programs. The workshop was facilitated by the external moderator Alasdair Reid.

"The workshop provided a 'collective thinking space' and the method of mixing staff from program teams with communication, management, advisers and administrative staff proved fruitful in challenging the intervention logics and indicators" says Moa.

Cooperation with NordForsk and Nordic Energy Research

The joint administration between Nordic Innovation, NordForsk and Nordic Energy Research will continue and has shown positive results. The cooperation has led to reduced costs, risks and vulnerability. It has made the administration able to provide better services than before, which is the result of increased centralization of tasks previously performed by each organization.

In December 2018 the building owner offered the three organisations to move premises in the same building at a reduced cost. The three organisations accepted the offer and are relocating 1 April 2019. The relocation will place the three organisations at the same floor and enable an even closer cooperation between the three organisations.



In SoMe you can follow Nordic Innovation on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn - @nordicinnno.

Why Female Entrepreneurship?

Statistics tell us that about one third of all entrepreneurs are women. This is true for Europe, but also surprisingly for the Nordic region. You would think in a region who has fostered great female leaders in all areas of society, the situation would be different. So why is it like that?

Studies done in the field show that when establishing and running a business, women face challenges such as access to finance, access to information, training, access to networks for business purposes and of course the issue of reconciling business and family concerns.

Therefore Nordic Innovation and Innovation Norway joined forces in New York City around the International Women's Day to highlight the Nordic model that promotes, supports and motivates gender equality in innovation and entrepreneurship, and showcase the strengths of Nordic solutions and technology.

Five Nordic entrepreneurs impressed with their pitches for more than 150 prominent guests, including US investors, media and the Norwegian Crown Princess.

The beautiful room at WeWork Bryant Park was packed with more than 150 guests that all came to celebrate Nordic women entrepreneurship in New York March 7th. The event was organised by Nordic Innovation and Innovation Norway.

"When it comes to entrepreneurship in the Nordics, women generally have greater difficulties than men to grow their companies, to get support, to get investors on board. We strive for more equality because it makes sense both for economic growth and sustainability, and we have a responsibility to work for equal opportunities. These entrepreneurs are great examples of women driving innovation

and business", said Niina Aagaard, COO at Nordic Innovation.

After short welcoming speeches by Aagaard and Nordic Innovation House in New York chairperson Hege V. Barnes, five specially selected Nordic women entrepreneurs impressed the audience with their pitches.

Nordic women driving innovation

The entrepreneurs were selected by national trade and business organisations to participate in the event and in a competency building program in the days leading up to the events. They all have in common that they head highly promising technology companies working towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

"Being here in New York the past three days has been an incredible experience. I have been able to take something from every seminar that we have had, and I will be able to implement that into my business just in the next week", said Sandra Mjöll Jónsdóttir-Buch, CEO of Icelandic biotech company Platome.

The Nordic entrepreneurs pitching were:

- Camilla Lindelid Strand (AbleOn Medical)
- Emmi Jouslehto (Arilyn)
- Evelina Vågesjö (Ilya Pharma)
- Hannah Michaud (The Apple Girl)
- Sandra Mjöll Jónsdóttir-Buch (Platome Biotechnology)

– We strive for more equality because it makes sense both for economic growth and sustainability, and we have a responsibility to work for equal opportunities.

Niina Aagaard, COO of Nordic Innovation



Nordic Female Entrepreneurs on stage March 2019 New York City. Photo: Magnus Buer



The Honourable Mrs Carrie Lam, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong SAR at the official inauguration of Nordic Innovation House Hong Kong 28. November 2018.

Nordic Innovation Houses – going global

As we have entered 2019, the Nordic countries have established a total of four Nordic Innovation Houses in North America and Asia. In 2018, the houses in Hong Kong and Singapore were launched, making a nice addition to the houses in Silicon Valley and New York City.

Svein Berg, Managing Director of Nordic Innovation, emphasizes that Nordic Innovation's financial contribution is 50% of the project's total budget.

"The ambition is that each of the Nordic Innovation Houses shall be economically self-sustained after the project period. The total grant is for three years", says Berg.

Why Singapore and Hong Kong?

Singapore's geographical position makes the city a gateway for Nordic businesses to all Southeast Asia. Interest from Nordic companies is great, for example, in health and ICT, these are also areas that are in demand in the market. Singapore is ranked No. 2 (out of 190) in the "Ease of doing business" index.

Hong Kong ranks as number 5 (out of 190) on the "Ease of doing business" index. Hong Kong is "next door" with the Chinese mainland market. The city is also very close to Shenzhen, which builds on market attractiveness. Investors in Hong Kong are very interested in Nordic companies in life science, clean tech and edtech.

"The incubators are meant to be a service for new and established Nordic companies with the high potential for international growth and success. They need to see the Asian markets as a good target market for their products and services and as a place to find important partners, they need to be ready to go global, tackle international markets and competition", says Berg.

A strong Nordic initiative

The concept is based on close cooperation with the different trade and national innovation organizations in the Nordics. A strong consortium consisting of government agencies working with innovation and business from four Nordic countries have developed the project.

In Singapore Business Sweden is coordinating the project in partnership with Innovation Norway, the Finnish and Swedish embassies in Singapore, and the Icelandic Embassy in Japan. In Hong Kong Business Sweden is also in the lead together with partners Innovation Norway, the Swedish Consulate, the Finnish Consulate, the Norwegian, Finnish and Swedish Chambers of Commerce in Hong Kong, and the Icelandic Embassy in Beijing.

"Asia has quickly become a disruptive innovation leader, transforming the global business landscape. The Nordic platforms will enable companies to tap into Asia's flourishing innovation and startup ecosystems, while combining the capabilities of cutting-edge partnerships and by doing so grow their global sales. Nordic cooperation allows the forming of complementary offerings and increase our strategic advantage", says Tobias Glitterstam, Vice President, Asia Pacific, Business Sweden.

– Asia has quickly become a disruptive innovation leader, transforming the global business landscape.

Tobias Glitterstam, Business Sweden



Nordic Innovation Houses breakfast meeting at Slush in December 2018. Senior Innovation Adviser from Nordic Innovation Mikael von Dorrien addressing the crowd. Photo: Magnus Buer

Board members

Sweden
Jenni Nordborg (Chair 2018)
Director and Head of Health Division at VINNOVA

Norway
Hans Martin Vikdal
Director and Head of Finance, Scorecards and Funds at Innovation Norway

Denmark
Andreas Hauptmann
Chief Counsellor at the Danish Business Authority

Iceland
Berglind Hallgrímsdóttir (Chair 2019)
Managing Director at Innovation Center Iceland

Finland
Jukka Häyrynen
Executive Director, Startups, Business Finland

Representative from
Nordic Council of Ministers:
Kristian Henriksen (observer)
Senior Adviser/Business,
Energy & Regional Development

Representative from
Nordic Innovation:
Trine Moa (observer)

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Senior Innovation Adviser Rasmus Malmborg discussing at an internal seminar with NordForsk and Nordic Energy Research.
Photo: Magnus Buer

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