



Welcome to the Brain Power Initiative

The Brain Power Initiative is a campaign to generate more brain power in Norway. Today, we are in fifth place among the Nordic countries in terms of our research effort. We believe that Norway not only should take gold as a skiing nation, but also as a pioneer in research and development!

About The Brain Power Initiative

By launching this campaign, NAR wishes not only to focus on what Norway needs to do to keep up with the rest of the world, but also on how we can become a global leader in innovation.

Therefore, we hope that an increasing number of individuals and organizations will join this initiative.

Our vision

We are working to develop a vision that will enable Norway to become a leading provider of knowledge. Our first goal must be to become the leading Nordic country in research and development by the year 2020.

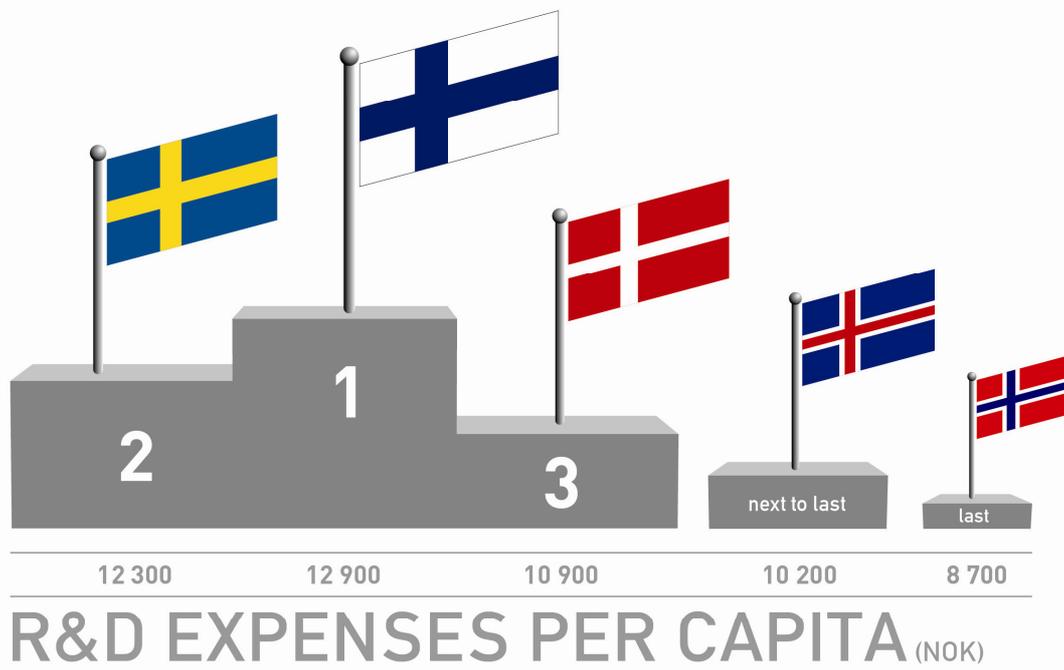
If Norway is to become a leading-edge nation, research must be given top priority as a policy issue. We must establish an understanding of research as the most important investment in our future, both in regard to welfare, commerce and the development of our society.

The Norwegian Brain Power Initiative is above all intended to compel politicians and leading public figures to take responsibility and act. Short-sighted and simplistic solutions will not be able to solve the future challenges we face – only knowledge will lead the way towards the kind of future we envision!

OUR THOUGHTS
BUILD OUR COUNTRY



Brain power is competitive power



Kilde: NIFU Nordisk FoU-statistikk 2010

Norway's present-day prosperity is not the result of chance. It is the product of acquired knowledge, and has allowed us to take advantage of natural as well as human resources in a responsible manner. Nevertheless, we are about to be left behind by many other countries. Norway's research effort pales in comparison with that of our neighbours, both measured as GDP as well as per capita.

Many of the world's countries have similarly large amounts of natural resources as we do, and even larger populations, but not anywhere near the prosperity enjoyed by our country. The difference lies in our ability to use knowledge to transform resources into value and prosperity. Competition between the world's nations is greater than ever today. Countries like China and India, previously able to compete only in low-cost production, now stake a lot on knowledge in order to dominate the global economy.

What future role will Norway play once we are unable to offer either low-cost production or innovation? If we are to maintain our ability to compete, we will have to be able to not only furnish manpower, but also brain power.

Norway needs enough brain power to understand the future, but above all to help create and shape it. We need to concentrate our research efforts in such a way that it will be possible to absorb new knowledge and research results from abroad to strengthen our competitive ability. The political will to invest in research is central to this effort. There is no reason why Norway should conduct less research than Sweden or Denmark.

The world's best country to live in – for how long?



Norway is the world's best country to live in. Not because we have a lot of money, but because we have the knowledge to manage our financial assets, and an understanding of how to positively influence our own society and its progress.

Norway is currently facing numerous challenges that threaten our welfare state. Among other things, the gap between rich and poor is constantly growing, and we are experiencing problems related to integration and diversity. Prudent decisions and concrete action are needed to deal with these changes in our society. If we fail to act, Norway will no longer be the best country to live in.

In order to meet these new social challenges, it is crucial for Norwegian politicians and decision makers to understand that the future is not about new technology alone. The greatest challenge is to bring about constructive public debate, ensuring the smooth functioning of our democratic system and thus a society that is good to live in.

Who will win the future?

Today, political parties and leading experts agree that the name of the future is "knowledge society." Yet, there are no specific goals or plans for how Norway should foster such a knowledge-centred society, or how we are to succeed in competition with other countries.

We believe that Norway as a nation must recognize that it is in competition with the rest of the world, a contest that demands more than mere participation. We believe that Norway should aim to become the leading Nordic country in the field of knowledge! Or do we want our Swedish neighbours to be smarter than us?

If we are to win the future, we may draw a lesson from our national role models who have dared to go all out and proven that even a small country is able to compete. Regardless of whether we think of Amundsen's expedition to the South Pole, the Norwegian football team's victory over Brazil or Magnus Carlsen's rise to become the world's top chess player, they all have one thing in common: they take competition seriously!

In order to develop our own knowledge society and do better than our competitors, we must assemble the brightest minds and facilitate their work in creating new ideas and innovations that will lead our society forward. Norway has a tradition of recognizing those who dare and manage to break boundaries. This is something we ought to remember in our decision to become the leading provider of knowledge in the Nordic countries.

Time to get smart!



*“Norway should allocate more of its oil revenues to growth-enhancing initiatives such as knowledge and research, **and not just invest in the stock market.**”*

Petter Aaslestad, president, Norwegian Association of Researchers (NAR)

In order to meet our future challenges, we must engage the finest minds in research. We need more and better brain power. That is why we have called this campaign “Brain Power Initiative,” hoping that it will help to propel research into the top ranks of political policy.

The Norwegian Brain Power Initiative takes place at many smaller and larger brain power centres throughout Norway – at our universities, colleges, research institutes, large and small research environments in museums, archives, research councils, government ministries, agencies, health institutions, etc.

We can strengthen this initiative by making certain that research represents an attractive and competitive career choice.

NAR has long argued that Norway should allocate more of its oil revenues to growth-enhancing initiatives such as knowledge and research, and not just invest in the stock market – because thoughts are the building blocks of our future. Knowledge is the most important tool for solving tomorrow's challenges.

During 2012 and 2013, NAR will initiate a number of incentives. The website www.hjernekraftverk.no is one of them. Here it will be possible to monitor the status of Norway's commitment to research. We will arrange meetings with representatives of the various political parties, providing them with the necessary knowledge to make the right choices.

NAR ran a national ad campaign for the Brain Power Initiative in September, 2012. In March 2013 we will launch a second ad campaign to create more public awareness about this issue. NAR's local chapters will play a central role by arranging public debates, publishing newspaper articles, etc. Using social media and other means, we hope to involve as many people as possible, also those without a direct connection to NAR. Our objective is to strengthen Norwegian brain power, and our first goal must be to become the leading provider of knowledge among the Nordic countries.