

About Nordic Bridge

Nordic Bridge (N-B) is an Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) project that started on 1 April 2025 and will end on 31st March 2025. The project is developing a digital collaboration platform that connects students, researchers, and academia with stakeholders from the public, private, and community sectors, across the Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) region. The platform is built around a challenge-driven approach, where real societal challenges form the basis for collaborative bachelor's and master's thesis projects and other joint collaborative initiatives and activities.

From Kick-off to Collaboration

Nordic Bridge project officially kicked off in April 2025 at Sligo, Ireland, hosted by Atlantic Technological University and the AIM Centre. From the very beginning, collaboration was identified as the core value of Nordic Bridge, collaboration across disciplines, institutions, countries, and sectors. This shared starting point set the tone for the project's first year and established a strong foundation of trust, openness, and joint ownership among partners.

Education in a Time of Disruptive Technologies

Partners shared a common understanding that in a period of rapid technological disruption, including artificial intelligence and digital transformation, education must place stronger emphasis on critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and ethical judgement. These competencies were identified as core values that Nordic Bridge will actively support through challenge-driven joint bachelor's and master's thesis projects, where students, researchers, and external stakeholders work together on complex, real-world problems.

Key Achievements in 2025

During its first year, Nordic Bridge progressed from concept to structured implementation. A clear governance and partnership model was established, defining the roles of main partners, associated partners, and the Steering Group. Partners jointly agreed on an open-source approach (with potential hybrid elements) for the portal to ensure transparency, flexibility, and long-term sustainability. Additional expertise was added across partner institutions, such as experts from AI, thesis coordinators, and others, strengthening capacity in digital design, collaboration frameworks, and stakeholder engagement.

Initial portal design concepts, user journeys, and collaboration workflows were discussed with partners and stakeholders. It was also agreed that associated partners will be more actively involved in 2026, and they will be the pilot or first users of the portal for testing and giving us feedback. In particular, they will contribute by sharing real problems and challenges that will be translated into user stories for both the project and the portal design. This approach reinforces Nordic Bridge as a co-creation platform rather than a one-way service.

Looking Ahead – Year 2026

All partners reaffirmed their strong commitment to developing the Nordic Bridge portal. Most of the foundational work has now been laid, and further foundations will be established during Period 2, which runs until 31 March 2026. The focus of 2026 will be:

- i. to develop the first prototype of the portal in 2026.
- ii. to work on identifying common study programs across the partner universities to facilitate joint bachelor's and master's thesis projects focused on real societal problems and challenges.
- iii. on deeper involvement of associated partners for piloting challenge-driven collaboration
- iv. on continued alignment with institutional strategies to ensure long-term sustainability.

New Year Greetings from Nordic Bridge Partners 😊