# Public Summary

The *Nordic Literacy Hub* (NLH) is the short title of the university and university college collaborative project that focuses on literacy and disciplinarity in 21st-century Nordic schools.

Our understanding of education, knowledge and literacy is under pressure from many sides and is therefore in a phase in which changes will necessarily take place. The NLH represents a way of coordinating research capable of understanding the current situation in Nordic schools and also of producing and discussing models of the schools of tomorrow.

Fifty years ago, literacy in school would simply refer to reading and writing in one specific subject, the L1or the ‘mother tongue’ subject, such as Danish, Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish. Literacy also referred to something that could be acquired, once and for all, as a simple code. Nowadays, this conception is changing. Literacy has come to include sign systems, textual meaning, cultural perspectives and identity. Literacy education is a matter of access to these aspects of literacy and a life-long development of the ability to participate in complex modern society. Incorporating this understanding of literacy into school practices, however, is a major challenge. The NLH will make a substantial contribution to meeting this challenge.

Modern schooling calls for spaces in which students may be part of the *productive* aspect of disciplinary knowledge. Students need to acquire basic literacy skills and *cross-disciplinary* strategies for reading and writing. At a certain point, they also need more specialised *subject-specific* literacy tools so that they can continue their development into the deeper complexities of the disciplines. Adding to the complexity involved but also providing new resources is the use of ICT and the multicultural classroom, which has replaced the mono-cultural classroom of Nordic countries 50 years ago.

In Nordic countries there is a rapidly growing interest in literacy research. So far, however, research communities in Nordic countries have not brought together their efforts to research literacy and disciplinarity in Nordic schools. The Nordic added value NLH seeks is the sharing, coordinating and comparing of existing research, including methodologies and data in Nordic contexts, school contexts and languages, and preparing innovative comparative Nordic literacy research, including school interventions, in collaboration with excellent international literacy researchers in the US, New Zealand, and elsewhere.