
CALL FOR PROPOSALS

HÖG 17

- Research projects

The Knowledge Foundation invites Sweden's new universities and university colleges to apply for funding of research projects. The research projects must be co-produced with the business sector and contribute towards renewal by the research groups and advancement at the participating companies.

If you have questions about the call, please contact:

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We require your
application no later than
3 p.m. (15:00)
on 8 June 2017

For Technical support, contact:
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About the Knowledge Foundation

The Knowledge Foundation finances research and competence development at Sweden's new universities and university colleges¹ with the purpose of strengthening Sweden's competitiveness. We provide funding when activities are conducted in collaboration between academic staff and business sector partners. The aim is to build strong and profiled knowledge environments that co-produce research and education with the business sector.

The Knowledge Foundation will therefore also evaluate whether project proposals will contribute to the establishment of such integrated research and education environments.

Programme background

Through the HÖG programme - Research projects, the universities and companies are given the opportunity to jointly answer a well-defined and specified research question. The Knowledge Foundation has been engaged in the formation and development of research groups and research environments since its first call for proposals in 1995.

Purpose and objective of the programme

The programme aims to promote development of new research areas with a potential to either develop new research environments or to renew existing research environments. The purpose is also to contribute to the development and strengthening of the competitiveness of participating companies. The programme is intended to serve as an initial step towards other types of funding programmes at the Knowledge Foundation.

The objective is for researchers and business partners to answer a shared research question, and through this generate results that benefit both the academic and business sectors.

¹ Blekinge Institute of Technology, Swedish Defence University, The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences GIH, Dalarna University, University of Borås, University of Gävle, University of Halmstad, Jönköping University, Kristianstad University, University of Skövde, University West, Karlstad University, Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Linnaeus University, Malmö University, Mid Sweden University, Mälardalen University, Royal Institute of Art, Royal College of Music, Stockholm University of the Arts, Södertörn University and Örebro University.

Who may apply?

Sweden's new universities may apply. The project manager must be a PhD. The project must be carried out in collaboration with business partners (see definition below). Other collaborating partners (e.g. public agencies) may participate in the project, but their input is not counted as co-financing.

How should the funds be used?

Funding from the Knowledge Foundation may be used only to pay for researchers employed at new universities and direct project-related costs, e.g. cost of facilities and material.

The application must present a budget that encompasses the entire project. This includes reporting on funding from the Knowledge Foundation, company resources used in the project, and any contributions from the university. The budget should present the direct costs of the project. In its funding decision, the Knowledge Foundation can reduce the budget. Costs accrued before the approved project period cannot be accepted.

Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document *Guidelines on Approved Expenditures* (see www.kks.se).

The funds applied for should not include overhead. This will be calculated and included in the proposed contract upon approval of the application.

Business sector involvement

Projects must be co-produced with business partners. Co-production means that the academic and business sectors together, and from their respective perspectives, must formulate and address a scientific question/problem. The question presented in the application should be based on a problem that, if solved, will benefit the company – and, from an academic perspective, the solution to the question/problem should contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge. For more information on co-production, see www.kks.se.

At least two companies, independently, must co-finance each project. There needs to be a balance in corporate co-financing to the extent that normally one company should not provide more than 70 % of the total share of corporate co-financing.

By “business sector”, the Knowledge Foundation refers primarily to private companies. The concept, however, may include companies under public ownership that are active in competitive markets and where the company finances its operations in the same manner as private companies. Hence, public subsidies or fees may not constitute a significant part of the company’s revenues. None of the organisations may be solely administrative enterprises. The companies must operate in Sweden to the extent that their input provides value for co-production and they have the potential to integrate the results from co-production into their organisation here.

In companies with fewer than 10 employees and/or less than SEK 1 million in annual turnover (based on the most recent annual report), the conditions for co-production in the project must be very clearly described.

If any economic or personal links exist between the involved companies, between any company and university, or between any company and individual researcher(s), this must be disclosed. The project plan must clearly indicate any personal conflicts of interest, and the individual’s various roles in the company or university must be fully described.

Formal requirements

An application must meet the following requirements before the Knowledge Foundation will consider it for evaluation. If the application does not meet the following requirements, it will be rejected without further evaluation.

- The funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation may not exceed SEK 4 million.
- The project must be in line with the purpose and objective of the call. This means, e.g. that the application must present a well-defined research project.
- If any economic or personal links exists between the involved companies, between any company and university, or between any company and individual researcher(s), this must be disclosed on the application form. For example, ownership of shares, board memberships, employment/consultant work should be specified.
- Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document *Guidelines on Approved Expenditures* (see www.kks.se)
- The earliest starting date for the project: 2018-01-01. The latest starting date for the project: 2018-05-01.
- The project duration should be 1 to 3 years.
- The project manager must hold a doctorate.
- Salaries funded by the Knowledge Foundation must go to employees at Sweden’s new universities.

- Of the funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation, PhD-level researchers in the project should be allocated more time than non-PhD personnel.
- The project must include participation from business sector partners, and the project plan and budget must describe the involvement of all partners.
- The business sector partners' contribution to the project must correspond to at least the same amount requested from the Knowledge Foundation.
- At least two companies that are independent of each other must be co-producers in the project
- The companies must fall within the Knowledge Foundation's definition of "business group".
- The vice-chancellor, the project owner (department head/equivalent), and the applicant must sign the application.

Evaluation

The secretariat of the Knowledge Foundation reviews the applications to determine if the application complies with the formal requirements.

Applications that meet the formal requirements will be subject to peer review by international scientific experts.

At its meeting the external evaluation panel, using the findings from peer review, jointly develop a final, overall assessment, priority, and recommendation for a decision. Funding decisions are made by the CEO of the Knowledge Foundation, based on the recommendation from the external evaluation panel.

No additions or modifications to the application will be approved after submission of the application.

Evaluation criteria

Scientific/artistic quality:

- How does the application relate to the state-of-the-art? How well does the scientific question/problem address this?
- How clear and realistic are the scientific objectives?
- How clear and relevant are the scientific methods?
- How high is the level of scientific expertise in the project group?

Benefits to the business partners:

- How relevant is the scientific question/problem in relation to the needs of participating companies?

Expected results and effects:

- To what degree will the project generate scientific results of good quality (e.g. scientific publications)?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to development and renewal of the research group and research area?
- Are plans/ideas for a continuation beyond the time-frame of the project presented?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to the development of participating companies?
- When deemed relevant; How will the project contribute to the development of an integrated research and education environment?
- Considering the expected results, is the investment appropriate?

Implementation:

- How well planned and organised is the work of the project, particularly as regards relevant work distribution among the partners?
- How well does the budget reflect funding needs outlined in the project plan?

The project is evaluated as a whole based on all of the criteria presented. Please note that high scientific quality is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for awarding research funds. Company participation must be an integrated part of the project.

Application

Applications are submitted via the Foundation's website, www.kks.se.

The application should state who will be project manager. The project manager is responsible for the implementation of the project. The application should also state who within the university is project owner. The project owner, who should have staff and budget responsibility at a senior level, has the overall responsibility for ensuring proper conditions for implementing and monitoring the project. The project owner may be a department head or another appropriate person, in accordance with the institution's internal organization and delegation.

Signatures from the project manager, the project owner and the vice chancellor are required. The project manager's signature means that she or he is prepared to take responsibility for the described implementation according to stated project plan. The project owner and the vice chancellor assure through their signatures that the university approves the project and will be

involved according to the project description. Applications should be written in English to enable international peer review.

To facilitate peer recruitment, the applicant is requested to suggest two international (non-Swedish) experts qualified to evaluate the final application.

The application shall be structured, and contain headings, according to the following:

- a) The project host academic environment (not exceeding 3 pages):
Describe the academic environment, your development needs, strategies and aspirations regarding collaborative research and education. Include your main results of the past few years, personnel composition, financing and external, non-academic collaboration partners.
- b) The project's expected contribution to the research and education environment (not exceeding 1 page): Describe the strategic value of the proposed venture by demonstrating how the project will support the development of the academic environment in line with your aspirations for collaborative research and education.
- c) Project plan (max 12 pages):
 - Describe and motivate the scientific research question that will be addressed and the scientific methods that will be employed (including how the research question relates to the state-of-the-art).
 - Describe the expected results and effects of the project and how these relate to the needs of the research group and the companies.
 - Describe how the project will be implemented, e.g. the contributions of the respective partners and how they complement each other's expertise. The work of the fellows covered by the budget, including those from the company, must be described. Implementation may be described by, e.g. presenting the timetable and possible objectives of the project and work components that specify the activities performed by different participants.
 - Describe the rationale for costs presented in the budget (salaries, equipment, materials etc.) and how the costs have been calculated. This also includes co-financing from the companies.
- d) Qualifications, CVs (max 2 pages/person) for relevant project staff.

- CV with relevant information about those participating in the project, including experts from companies (CVs exceeding 2 pages will not be considered in the evaluation).

3. Project budget (appendix form, only the Foundation's appendix form can be accepted).

4. Signatures (appendix form)

Timetable and decisions

- The Knowledge Foundation must receive your application no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) on 2017-06-08.
- International experts will review the scientific quality of applications during September and October.
- The external evaluation panel will submit its final recommendation to the CEO of the Knowledge Foundation in November.
- Applicants will be informed about the decision by the end of November 2017.
- The project may commence after the decision is made, earliest 2018-01-01, and latest at 2018-05-01.