CALL FOR PROPOSALS

NU 18 – Online Education for International Positioning

The Knowledge Foundation invites Sweden's university colleges and new universities to apply for funding for the development and implementation of online education. The objective for the programme Online Education for International Positioning is to support the development of online courses that contribute to the international profiling and positioning of the university's strong research and education environments.

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 23 January 2019

Knowledge Foundation ><

Contents

Knowledge Foundation ><

About the Knowledge Foundation

The Knowledge Foundation finances research and competence development at Sweden's university colleges and new universities[1] 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.

Background of the programme

Society changes, and new technologies and new business models are changing the playing field for many industries and sectors of society. This applies equally to the education sector. Universities currently face increased competition, where profiling of research and higher education comprises a competitive edge for universities to assert themselves in the face of global competition.

As part of this trend, various educational offerings based on technology-enhanced learning have emerged. The range of MOOCs (massive open online courses) has increased dramatically in later years. In the wake of MOOCs there is also a rapid development of smaller, focused courses and modules for clearly defined target groups and with admission based on defined entry requirements, for example SPOCs (small private online courses). An online education offering allows universities to position their internationally strong research and education environments, with the aim of establishing themselves against international competitors.

Students today are an increasingly heterogeneous group, which also presents challenges for the design of educational offerings. New forms of teaching – particularly online – can make education available to a larger group of students. For instance, online education presents the possibility of reaching the working population. By using flexible, modular courses, studies can be combined and tailored to fit current work duties.

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[1] Blekinge Institute of Technology, Swedish Defence University, The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, 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.

Knowledge Foundation ><

Through this programme, the Knowledge Foundation would like to provide Sweden's university colleges and new universities with the possibility to further strengthen their profile and to position themselves internationally within their strong research and education areas. The Knowledge Foundation perceives this as a key component for the objective of building integrated environments comprising a strong link between advanced competence development and leading research activities.

Purpose and objective of the programme

The programme aims to contribute to the international positioning of the university's strong research and education areas by supporting the development of online education at second and third-cycle levels.

The objective of the programme is to support the development and implementation of online courses that are internationally viable; with a focus that reflects business sector needs, and which contribute to pedagogical development.

Programme design

In this call, universities are invited to apply for funds for the development and implementation of online education based on the university's strategy/ambition regarding online education for international positioning.

The initiative is to result in the development of targeted, online courses. These targeted courses are characterised by having a clearly defined target group with admission based on defined entry requirements. The courses can also be offered as hybrid courses, i.e. courses that are offered both as modules in the regular course offerings and as open online courses (MOOCs).

The programme aims to support a long-term process where the university gradually develops and implements online education. Therefore, the application need not comprise all areas identified in the university´s strategy/ambition regarding online education for international positioning. The application may comprise either one or more subprojects. A subproject refers to a course or courses within one strong research and education area. The subprojects may vary in terms of scope and design. A subproject may comprise the development and implementation of a maximum of 15 credits per application. This application need not comprise all planned/possible courses within an area, and instead this can be divided over several applications. The call opens annually, which provides the opportunity to

Knowledge Foundation >‹

apply for additional subsets of the university's strategy/ambition in future calls.

The project duration should be 3-4 years.

Funding includes means for development and implementation of courses. Requirements to be fulfilled for this funding is that the initiative concerns:

- second and third cycle courses;
- with a focus that corresponds to needs in the business sector; and
- which leads to pedagogical development.

The project may comprise both development of new courses as well as further development of pre-existing courses. The courses should be part of the university's regular course offering and should be evaluated for quality and approved by the university's decision-making body.

It is possible that the implementation of developed courses is run partially online a first time, i.e. that the course has both campus-based modules and online modules. Funds for course implementation can be obtained for running the course twice, where the second round is to be fully online.

The possibility of collaboration between universities exists, even universities not included in the Knowledge Foundation's target group. In the latter case, a university may contribute towards the development and implementation and be included in funding from the Knowledge Foundation provided that the main activities are conducted at the applicant university and that the application clearly shows that the collaboration benefits the research and education environment at the applicant university.

Who may apply?

The programme is open for Sweden's university colleges and new universities.

A university that plans to apply for funding is advised to contact the programme manager well before the application deadline to discuss the conditions for an application.

Knowledge Foundation ><

How should the funds be used?

The funds should be used for the development and implementation of online education for second and third cycle courses, which are in line with the university's strategy/ambition regarding online education for international positioning. The project plan must specify the types of development work that will be done.

Below is indicated the delimitations for the funding from the Knowledge Foundation. The participating companies/organisations are responsible for their own contributions to the development process.

The Knowledge Foundation funds the following:

- The development of online courses – the Knowledge Foundation
- The implementation of online courses – the Knowledge Foundation stands for 50 % of the costs of running courses twice
- Costs for project leader/project management – the Knowledge Foundation
- Costs for knowledge distribution and feedback of experiences at the university – divided between the Knowledge Foundation and the university
- Costs for hiring external experts – a limited part from the Knowledge Foundation
- Costs for the use of equipment – divided between the Knowledge Foundation and the university
- Costs for communication and recruitment – divided between the Knowledge Foundation and the university

The Knowledge Foundation *does not* fund:

- costs for infrastructure, such as e.g. platform costs or equivalent
- the development of validation systems, recruitment and other support functions for online education

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.

University involvement

It is essential for the applicant university to be committed. Hence, the university needs to contribute its own resources to the development activities. This must be presented in the project plan and its budget.

Business sector involvement

The development work requires engagement of companies from the target group and trade associations/equivalent that is extensive enough to ensure relevance for the business target group. The business community should participate in the development of courses (with expertise as well as experience of practical problems or otherwise) which shall be stated in the project plan. The participating companies/trade associations must cover their own contributions in the development work.

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 project must be in line with the purpose and objective of the call.
- The applicant university must be authorised to award postgraduate degrees at a minimum of master's level, and doctoral level for third-cycle courses, within those research and education areas covered by the application.
- The project is to pertain to a clearly delimited part of the university's activities, in which the strength of the research and education environment should be demonstrated.
- A subproject may comprise the development and implementation of a maximum of 15 credits per application.
- Applications must include letters of support from one or more of the participating companies (for each subproject), which describes their individual reasons for participating and their planned input.
- 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 latest starting date for the project is 1 October 2019.

Knowledge Foundation >‹

- The project duration should be 3-4 years.
- The application is to be signed by the vice-chancellor, the project owner and the project leader.

Evaluation

The sectretariat of the Knowledge Foundation reviews the applications to determine if they comply with the formal requirements. Thereafter an external panel makes an evaluation of the application based on the criteria below. Based on the recommendations of the evaluation panel, it is the decisison of the board of the Knowledge Foundation to approve financial support.

Evaluation criteria

Scientific/artistic quality
- How well anchored and motivated is the university's strategy/ambition regarding online education for international positioning?
- How well is the project motivated in relation to the university's research and education strategy?
- To what extent does the project support profiled research at the university?
- What is the scientific/artistic level of the research and education environments in the areas that the project addresses?

Benefits for the business sector
- To what extent does the proposed project relate to the needs for development of knowledge in the business sector?
- To what extent will collaboration with the business sector impact on course development and course content?

Expected results and effects
- How is the initiative expected to contribute to the international positioning and profiling of the university's strong research and education environments?
In relation to the building of integrated environments:
- How, and to what extent, is the project expected to contribute towards advancement of the research environment?
- How, and to what extent, is the project expected to contribute towards advancement of the education environment?
- How, and to what extent, is the project expected to promote closer collaboration between the research and education environments and the business sector?

Implementation
- Is the project plan adequate in relation to set goals?

- Is the project plan realistic in relation to available resources?
- Is the university's commitment clear?
- Is the business sector involvement adequate and sufficient?

Application

Applications are submitted via the Knowledge 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 may be submitted in Swedish or English.

The appendices are as follows:

1. **Project plan**, max. 10 pages, describing:

- the university's strategy/ambition regarding online education for international positioning
- how this strategy/ambition relates to the research and education strategy of the university
- how the project is expected to contribute to international profiling and positioning of the university's internationally strong research and education environments
- how the project is expected to contribute to pedagogical development at the university and how the knowledge and experiences generated in the project will be apprehended
- additional goals with the project
- timetable and plan of activities
- project organisation and project management
- the allocation of costs between the different parts of the project

2. Describe per subproject (the application may comprise one or more subprojects, max. 5 pages per subproject):

- **the project host environment** (1 page) - describe the project host environment, including both research and education, clearly outlining its current situation, its aspirations and the way forward. The description should include the following:
    - The host environment's overarching profile and focus
    - Main results of the past few years
    - Personnel composition (number within each employment category)
    - Funding (Internal, external and from industry)
    - Collaboration partners (academic and non-academic)
    - Aspirations and strategy
      Development needs and challenges
- **the project's contribution to the research and education environment** (0.5-1 page) - describe how the projected is expected to contribute to the development of the research and education environment
- how the subproject relates to the university's strategy/ambition regarding online education for international positioning the international position of the research and education environments in question
- the positioning of the planned online courses, nationally and internationally
- the research and education area's relevance for the business sector
- the companies' contributions in the project
- those activities that motivate applied funding. Based on the project plan, it should be possible to evaluate the costs of the activities.
- project plan for each subproject (subproject leader, timetable and plan of activities, goals, implementation, resources etc.)

3. Letters of support from participating companies. If the application comprises more than one subproject, supporting letters for each subproject should be appended.

Special forms must be used for the two following appendices. The forms can be downloaded from where you apply, at www.kks.se.

4. Project budget

5. Signatures of host university The vice-chancellor, project owner, project manager must sign the application.

Knowledge Foundation ><

Timetable and decisions

- A university that plans to apply for funding is advised to contact the programme manager well before the application deadline to discuss the conditions for an application.
- Applications must be submitted to the Knowledge Foundation no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) 2019-01-23.
- Notification of decisions no later than April 2019.
- Projects granted funding can start after agreements have been signed, no later than 2019-10-01.

Knowledge Foundation ><