CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Graduate Professional Development
Program 19 – step 1 (autumn)

Through the Graduate Professional Development programme, the Knowledge Foundation invites Sweden’s university colleges and new universities to apply for funding to develop second-cycle courses targeted at the business sector. The programme aims to provide a skills upgrade for professionals and companies for knowledge-intensive business development and innovation.

The objective is to support the development and delivering of second-cycle courses where the expertise in strong research environments matches the strategic needs for expertise in companies.

In Step 1, the need for expertise will be analysed and matched with the research and education environments at universities, and educational activities will be initiated.

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 2 December 2019

Knowledge Foundation
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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

Flexible training for professionals and companies is an essential part in the development of complete academic environments.

In order for companies to establish and maintain a leading position, it is crucial that employees have adequate education and the opportunity to continually develop their expertise. The business sector has a demand for knowledge available within the research and education environments of universities. Through second-cycle courses in cooperation with business partners, the research areas of universities can be linked with business development areas of companies. This will strengthen the relationship between research, education, development and innovation.

Flexible courses and training for professionals may be expected of research and education environments onwards in order to be an attractive academic partner for companies in relevant industries. Through the program such courses can be developed, which also supports the development towards an integrated research and education environment.

Since the research institutes² have experience in working with companies as well as universities, they are also expected to contribute to development within this program form and can therefore participate.

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.

² RISE, Swerea, FOI, IVL, and VTI.
The aim of this programme is that universities, on their own or in collaboration with other universities and research institutes, will become the obvious suppliers of expertise to enhance the competitiveness of the business sector.

**Purpose and objective of the programme**

The programme aims to provide a skills upgrade for professionals\(^3\) and companies for knowledge-intensive business development and innovation. The program also aims to strengthen the conditions for research and education environments to position themselves as leading academic partners to companies in relevant industries.

The objective is to support the development and delivering of second-cycle courses where the expertise in strong research environments matches the strategic needs for expertise in companies. This should also result in a method for developing second-cycle courses in co-production with business partners.

**Programme design**

This is a two-step initiative. Step 1 includes analysing the needs for expertise and compiling a curriculum of 45-90 higher education credits. The educational programmes must have the flexibility to meet the needs of working professionals. This step also comprises co-production with companies to develop and deliver courses/course modules of 10-15 higher education credits. Here it is necessary to describe the work process and initiatives for course development through co-production. In addition, the university's educational support services should be involved in the project so that any developmental needs in these functions with regard to the development and implementation of courses for professionals can be identified and addressed in the application to Step 2, ie the main application. Project time is 1.5-2 years for Step 1, which is announced in spring and autumn.

For higher education institutions and environments that have not previously been supported by the KK Foundation within this program, or conducted similar activities, our recommendation is that the project period for Step 1 should be 2 years. In cases where such experiences exist, a project period of 1.5 years may be sufficient. Graduate Professional Development Program Step 1 is announced in spring and autumn. The project time for projects announced in the spring is 1.5 years, while the project time for the autumn

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\(^3\) Professionals with an academic qualification or equivalent real competence.
calls is two years. (Graduate Professional Development Program Step 2 is announced only in the fall).

The results of Step 1, in terms of course curriculum, flexible design, and methods for developing courses through co-production, comprise the foundation for the work in Step 2. The complete course curriculum must be developed and implemented in Step 2. Moreover, the methods for developing and implementing courses must be compiled and documented. Step 2 includes two phases: phase A – Ongoing development and implementation; and phase B – Consolidation of the activities. The length of Step 2 is 3-4 years.

To initiate a project, companies in the target group must be engaged from the start. Building a sustainable programme requires broad collaboration amongst companies within a given business area. Trade organisations can provide valuable contributions towards programme development and knowledge about general developmental issues in a business area.

Collaboration between the academic and business actors should guarantee that the content addresses the advanced level and is driven by needs, and that the educational format has the flexibility to adapt to the situation of companies and their employees – including companies working internationally.

A well-integrated research and education activity is a prerequisite.

**Design of the Graduate Professional Development Program**

**Step 1** Open call for proposals:
- spring – project length 1.5 year
- autumn – project length 2 years
  - Studying, planning, developing, and implementing pilot courses/course modules totalling 10-15 higher education credits.

**Step 2** Targeted call for proposals - autumn; project length 3-4 years
- Phase A – continued development and implementation of courses, including development of methodology, totalling 45-90 higher education credits.
- Phase B – consolidation of activities.
Step 1

Who may apply?

The applicant organisation must be a university in the Knowledge Foundations target group. Furthermore, the current research and education environment is well-qualified in research and education - including advanced level - as well as in research collaboration with industry. One requirement is that the environment should have a recently completed project, or one in progress, within one of the larger programs of the KK Foundation, ie Research Profiles, Synergy or Industrial Graduate Schools. The project/ projects must have been in progress for at least two years at the time of application and the research area should be closely related to the current field of competence.

Several universities and research institutes may collaborate if this increases quality, business sector relevance, or in some other way makes a positive contribution. The application should be supported by at least five companies.

How should the funds be used?

The Knowledge Foundation’s funds will be used for investigating and planning courses and flexible forms of education. This also includes clarifying development needs regarding the university's support functions for flexible courses and trainings for professionals and companies. In addition, courses/course modules will be developed and implemented corresponding to a total of 10-15 higher education credits.

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

The application should not include the added amount for overhead costs. This will be calculated and included in the proposed contract if the Knowledge Foundation approves the application for funds.

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4 Research and educational environments that have received several project support in referenced programs, or through other experiences can be judged to have the necessary conditions, may also be able even if specified conditions are not met.

5 For synergy projects, they must have submitted a progress report (half-time report).
Maximum funding from the Knowledge Foundation, excl. overhead costs, is;

- The university has not previously been granted support from the Graduate Professional Development Program – 3 million SEK
- The university has previously been granted support from the Graduate Professional Development Programs but not the current research and education environment – 2.5 million SEK
- Current research and education environment has previously been granted support from the Graduate Professional Development Program – 2.0 million SEK

University involvement

In order for a new education activity for professionals to be sustainable, demands are made on the university’s education-related support functions. The university requires to support the development of forms for recruiting vocational participants, validate participants' real skills and enable lead times for development and quality assurance of new courses to be reasonable based on business needs.

The university will therefore report and motivate its views on and aspirations for flexible education for professionals. The ambitions will be presented both overall for the entire university and for the current research and education environment. Furthermore, it will be reported how the university intends to support the current environment in the implementation of Stage 1 based on the university's ambitions.

Business sector involvement

The development work requires engagement of companies in the target group and possibly trade associations/equivalent that is extensive enough to ensure relevance for the business target group. Therefore at least five companies should participate in the development of each course. The participating companies/trade associations must cover their own contributions in the development work.

For the Knowledge Foundation’s concept of the business sector, see www.kks.se
Expected results

Expected results from Step 1 are:

- A detailed description of the addressed field of expertise based on an inventory and analysis of the target group companies and their development and competence needs.
- A clear description of how well the field of competence and needs overlap with the scientific strength and planned development of the research and education environment.
- Learnings and identified development needs - for the current environment and overall for the university - based on developed and implemented courses/course modules.
- A method for develop and implement development second-cycle courses in cooperation with industry (first version).
- A well-founded plan for achieving the required flexibility in the courses.
- A planned course curriculum covering 45-90 higher education credits.
- A larger number of participating companies prior to the application to Step 2.

The results from Step 1 are required for the application to Step 2. To this application – the main application – must be attached a report for the work in Step 1 (needs assessment, courses development, etc.).

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 applying organisation must be a university in the Knowledge Foundations target group and authorised to award degrees at the 2-year master’s level or higher in the proposed area of expertise.
- The project owner should have overall responsibility (as stated below) and could be the deputy vice-chancellor for education or the dean of basic education (or corresponding).
• The project must be aligned with the purpose and objectives of the call.
• The planned course offering should encompass 45 to 90 higher education credits.
• Reporting of current research and education environment with at least one recently completed project or ongoing within the Knowledge Foundation's major program, ie Research Profiles, Synergy or Industrial Graduate Schools Profile, Synergy or Corporate Research School. The project must last for at least 2 years. Synergy projects must have submitted a partial report (half-time report).
• Reporting of the university's ambition with flexible training for professionals, partly related to the current research and education environment, and partly regarding related education issues (as above) to create the conditions for a sustainable business.
• 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 in the application form. Specify, e.g. ownership of shares, governing board positions, and employment/consultancy.
• Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the Guidelines on Approved Expenditures (see www.kks.se).
• Maximum funding from the Knowledge Foundation is 2, 2.5 or 3 million SEK (as stated above).
• The earliest starting date for the project: 2020-02-01. The latest starting date for the project: 2019-04-01.
• The application shall include parts and appendices according to the call instructions.

Evaluation

Evaluation criteria

The secretariat of the Knowledge Foundation reviews the applications. Besides the formal requirements the assessment is based partly on the overall aspirations of the university and the conditions for developing an advanced level education activity that can be sustainable, partly on the corresponding ambitions and conditions for the current research and education environment. Furthermore, the business sector's benefit from the competence initiative will be taken into account.
No additions or modifications to the application will be accepted after it has been submitted.

Funding decisions are made by the General Manager of the Knowledge Foundation.

Application

Applications are submitted via the Knowledge Foundation’s website, www.kks.se by the project manager. This is important as the applicant’s account is connected to the project and reporting.

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 the 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 the deputy vice-chancellor for education 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 must be written in Swedish or English.

The appendices are as follows:

1 Project host environment (not exceeding 2 pages)

Describe the Project host environment, including both research and education, clearly outlining its current situation, its aspirations and the way forward. Prioritize the reporting of projects, results, etc. based on relevance to the current project.

The description should include the following headings (each heading entails both education and research)

- The host environment’s overarching profile and focus (max 800 characters).
• Main results of the past few years such as scientific production, collaboration with industry and the number of students at the undergraduate level, advanced level and research level in relevant education programs.
• 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.

2 The Project’s contribution to the research and education environment (not exceeding 2 page)

Describe the value of the proposed enterprise by demonstrating how the Project will support the development of the host environment, in relation to your aspirations within collaborative education and research. Specify in particular:

• How addressed field of competence is part of the environmental research and education at the undergraduate level, advanced level and research level
• How the planned investment is important for the environment's development in research, education, collaboration and positioning
• How any academic cooperation partners (institutions of higher education and research institutes) complement the current environment

3. The benefit of the project for business (max 1 page)

Describe how the project supports business development. Specify in particular:

• Which areas of business in Sweden have developmental needs in the field of competence and what opportunities / problems that the proposed competence development can meet. Also indicate significant development trends for identified business sectors.
• Which companies, and any industry organizations that participate in the project from start.
4. The university's ambition with flexible education for professionals (max 1 page)

The university will report and motivate its views on and aspirations for flexible training for professionals. The ambitions will be presented both overall for the entire university and for the current research and education environment. Furthermore, it will be reported how the university intends to support the current research and education environment in the implementation of Stage 1 based on the university's ambitions.

5. Statement of intent from the participating universities, research institute, companies, trade associations/equivalent (max 1 page per organization)

6. Signatures from applicant university (appendix form).
Vice-chancellor, project owners and project managers.

Timetable and decision

- The Knowledge Foundation must receive your application no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) on 2 December 2019.
- During December 2019, all applications will be reviewed.
- The Knowledge Foundation’s General Manager will render a decision on financing in December 2019.
- The earliest starting date for the project: 2020-02-01. The latest starting date for the project: 2019-04-01.