CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Graduate Professional Development Programme 20 – Step 1 spring

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

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

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, please contact:

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We require your application no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) on May 28, 2020

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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 academia and business partners. The aim is to build strong and profiled knowledge environments that co-produce research and education with the business sector. The Knowledge Foundation does not identify specific research areas, and calls are open for all scientific and artistic research fields.

Background of the programme

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

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 link between research, education, development and innovation to the mutual benefit of universities and companies.

Flexible courses and training for professionals may onwards be expected necessary for research and education environments in order to be an attractive academic partner for the business sector. Through the current programme such courses can be developed.

Since the research institutes[2] have experience in working with companies as well as universities, they may also be able to contribute

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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.

[2] RISE, Swerim, FOI, IVL, and VTI.

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to development within this programme form and can therefore participate.

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 programme 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. The experience from this development should be utilised in the form of an initial method description for course development in co-production. 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, i.e. the main application. Project time is 1.5-2 years for Step 1, which is announced in spring and autumn.

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[3] Professionals with an academic qualification or equivalent real competence.

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The results of Step 1, in terms of curriculum, flexible design, and methods for developing courses through co-production, comprise the foundation for the work in Step 2. The complete 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,

- phase B – Consolidation of the activities.

The project 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. Industry associations may also provide valuable contributions towards programme development and knowledge about general developmental issues within a business area.

Collaboration between the academic and business actors should ensure that the content is both driven by needs and maintains an accurate level, and that the educational format is given the flexibility that meets the conditions for companies and their employees – including companies working internationally.

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

Design of the Graduate Professional Development Programme

Step 1   Open call for proposals - spring and autumn; project length 1.5-2 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.

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Step 1

Who may apply?

Sweden's university colleges and new universities authorised to award degrees at the 2-year master's level or higher in the proposed area of expertise may apply.

Furthermore, the current research and education environment should be well-qualified in research and education - including at 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 programmes of the Knowledge Foundation, i.e. Research Profiles, Synergy or Industrial Graduate Schools[4]. 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[5].

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 overhead costs (OH). Such costs

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[4] Research and educational environments that for a longer period of time have been granted project funds within these programmes, or through other experiences can be judged to meet necessary conditions, may also be able to apply even if specified conditions are not met.

[5] For synergy projects, a partial report (half-time report) must have been submitted.

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will be calculated and included in the proposed contract if the Knowledge Foundation approves the application for funds.

Maximum funding from the Knowledge Foundation is:

- If the university has not previously been granted funds from the Graduate Professional Development Programme: **SEK 3 million**,

- If the university has previously been granted funds from the Graduate Professional Development Programme, but not for the current research and education environment: **SEK 2.5 million**,

- If the current research and education environment previously has been granted funds from the Graduate Professional Development Programme: **SEK 2 million**.

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 is required 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 Step 1 based on the university's ambitions.

The application should state a project manager. The project manager is responsible for the implementation of the project. The application should also state who will be the project owner within the university. The project owner, who should have staff and budget responsibility at a senior level, has responsibility for ensuring proper conditions for implementing and monitoring the project. In this programme the project owner may be deputy vice-chancellor for education or dean of basic education.

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Business sector involvement

The development work requires engagement of companies in the target group and possibly industry associations/equivalent which are extensive enough to ensure relevance for the business target group. At least five companies should participate in the development of each course/course module. The participating companies/industry associations must cover their own contributions in the development work.

For the Knowledge Foundation's definition 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 developing second-cycle courses in co-production with business partners (first version).

- A well-founded plan for achieving the required flexibility in the courses.

- A planned curriculum within the field of comptence 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 describing the work performed in Step 1 (needs assessment, courses development, etc.).

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Formal requirements

The application must meet the following requirements before the Knowledge Foundation will consider it for evaluation:

- Only Sweden's university colleges and new universities with authorization to award degrees at the 2-year master's level or higher in the proposed area of expertise may apply.

- The project owner should have overall responsibility (as stated above) and could be the deputy vice-chancellor for education or the dean of basic education (or corresponding).

- The project manager must have a doctoral degree and be employed at the university.

- The project must be aligned with the purpose and objectives of the call.

- The planned curriculum, which should be developed and implemented in Step 2, should be at advanced level and encompass 45 to 90 higher education credits.

- Reporting of current research and education environment with at least one recently completed or ongoing project within one of the larger programmes of the Knowledge Foundation, i.e. 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 (see also footnote 4 and 5).

- Reporting of the university's ambition with flexible training for professionals, both related to the current research and education environment, and to related educational issues (as described above) in order to create conditions for a sustainable activity.

- 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.

- The costs presented in the budget must be in compliance with the document 'Guidelines on Approved Expenditures' (see www.kks.se).

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- Maximum funding from the Knowledge Foundation is 2 million, 2.5 million or 3 million SEK (see above).

- The earliest starting date for the project is 2020-07-01. The latest starting date for the project is 2020-09-01.

- The application shall include parts and appendices accoroding to the call instructions.

Evaluation

The secretariat of the Knowledge Foundation reviews the applications. In addition to the formal requirements, the assessment is based on the university's overall aspirations and conditions for developing a sustainable advanced level education activity, but also on the corresponding ambitions and conditions for the current research and education environment. Furthermore, the business sector's benefit from the skills development initiative will be considered.

No additions or modifications to the application will be accepted after it has been submitted.

Application

Applications are submitted by the project leader via the Knowledge Foundation's website, www.kks.se. This is important as the applicant's account will be linked to the project and to the reporting.

The application should be signed by the project manager, the project owner and the vice-chancellor. The signature of the project manager means that he/she is prepared to take responsibility for the implementation of the project according to the application. The project owner and the vice-chancellor confirm by their signatures that the university supports the project and will participate according to the project description.

Applications must be written in Swedish or English.

Budget is stated in the application form. Note that the budget should not include overhead costs (see above).

The following appendixes (as pdf-files) should be attached to the application and in the same order as below:

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1. **The project's host academic environment** (not exceeding 2 pages).
   Upload under 'Host research and education environment'.

Describe the academic environment and it´s research and education activities so the current position and future plans are shown. What is the environment's development needs, strategies and ambitions regarding research and education in collaboration?

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

- current position and development needs,

- strategies and ambitions,

- main results of the past few years,

- staff composition,

- funding,

- collaboration partners (academic and non-academic).

2. **The project's contribution to the research and education environment** (not exceeding 1 page)
   Upload under 'Host research and education environment'.

Describe the value of the proposed project by demonstrating how the project will support the development of the host environment, in line with the aspirations for collaborative education and research. Specify in particular:

- How the addressed field of competence is part of the environmental research and education at the undergraduate level, advanced level and research level,

- How the planned initiative is important for the environment's development in research, education, collaboration and for positioning,

- How possible academic cooperation partners (universities and research institutes) complement the current environment.

3. **The benefits of the project for the business sector** (not exceeding 1 page)
   Upload under 'Attachments in accordance with the call and in the same order as stated in the call'.

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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 possible industry associations that participate in the project from start.

4. **The university's ambition with flexible education for professionals** (not exceeding 1 page)
   Upload under 'Attachments in accordance with the call and in the same order as stated in the call'.

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 Step 1, based on the university's ambitions.

5. **Letter of intent from each of the participating partners** (not exceeding 1 page per partner)
   Upload under 'Attachments in accordance with the call and in the same order as stated in the call'.

Signed letter of intent from each of the participating partners - universities, research institutes, companies, industry associations etc. should be added. The letters should briefly describe the partner's commitment, role and contribution, as well as the motives and value for supporting the project.

6. **Signatures** (use template from www.kks.se)
   Upload under 'Attachments in accordance with the call and in the same order as stated in the call'.

The application must be signed by the vice-chancellor, the project owner and the project manager. The form for signatures can be downloaded from www.kks.se

Applications without signatures will not be considered.

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Timetable and decision

- The Knowledge Foundation must receive the application no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) on May 28, 2020.

- The Knowledge Foundation's secretariat will review applications during June 2020.

- The CEO of the foundation may decide to reject applications failing to comply with the formal requirements

- The CEO will render a decision on financing and applicants will be notified by the end of June 2020.

- After the signing of agreements with the Knowledge Foundation, projects may start between July 1 and September 1, 2020.

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