Knowledge Foundation ><

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

HÖG 22 – Research Projects

The Knowledge Foundation invites Sweden's university colleges and new universities to apply for funding of research projects. The research projects must be carried out in collaboration with the business sector and contribute to the development of all participating actors. In the programme HÖG - Research Projects, universities and companies are given the opportunity to jointly address a well-defined and specified research question which contributes to innovation and renewal.

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> The Knowledge Foundation requires the application no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) on December 9th 2022.

About the Knowledge Foundation

The Knowledge Foundation is a financier with the mission of strengthening Sweden's competitiveness. The Knowledge Foundation finances research and competence development at Sweden's university colleges and new universities that is conducted in collaboration between academia and business partners. The Knowledge Foundation's calls are open for all scientific and artistic research fields.

Contents

HÖG – Research Projects

In the programme HÖG - Research Projects, universities and companies are given the opportunity to jointly address a well-defined and specified research question which contributes to innovation and renewal. By offering this programme, the foundation has stimulated innovation, development and renewal for both academia and the business sector since the first call back in 1995.

The programme makes it possible to initiate the establishment of research environments in early stages of its development, which may have its starting point in a research group to later consist of larger units such as a research environment, institution, centre or similar.

The programme may also be used by established research environments to institute new industry collaborations of importance for its continued scientific development and response to the development needs of the business sector. For such established research environments, it is required to specify the project's added value and its importance in terms of renewal.

Objective and purpose

The objective of the HÖG programme is for researchers at the university to work with business partners to address a research question that contributes to scientific development and creates benefits for the business partners.

The purpose of all the Knowledge Foundation's programmes is to build strong, business-relevant research and education environments. The specific purpose of the HÖG programme is for the academic environment to strengthen its research by renewal.

Strong research and education environments

The Knowledge Foundation seeks to support the development of strong research and education environments that create value for academia, the business sector and society. In different ways, all of the Knowledge Foundation's programmes are aimed at enabling environments to establish and maintain a strong, long-term, national and international scientific or artistic position which also contributes to the profiling of the university. In the view of the Knowledge Foundation, a strong research and education environment is one that has the capacity to develop its research and education in partnership with the business sector and takes a long-term, strategic approach to its development.

Who may apply?

Sweden's university colleges and new universities[1] may apply. The Knowledge Foundation welcomes applications within all scientific and artistic research fields. When the application concerns an artistic field of research, the concept scientific is replaced by artistic in the call.

The project manager must hold a doctorate or a position as senior lecturer (lektor), associate senior lecturer (biträdande lektor) or professor at the university. The project manager must be an employee at the applicant university.

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-funding.

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[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.

How should the funds be used?

Funding from the Knowledge Foundation should be used to pay for researchers employed at Sweden's university colleges or 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.

Note that overhead costs should not be included in the application. Such costs, 20 percent, will be calculated and included in the proposed contract if the Knowledge Foundation approves the application.

Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document General terms and conditions (see www.kks.se).

University involvement

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 authority at a senior level, has responsibility for ensuring proper conditions for implementing and monitoring the project. The project owner may be a head of a department or another appropriate person, in accordance with the internal organization and delegation of the university. The project manager and project owner may not be the same person.

Business sector involvement

The business partners' contribution to the project, primarily through in-kind contributions, must correspond to at least the same amount requested from the Knowledge Foundation in the application.

Projects must be co-produced with business partners. Co-production means that the academic and business sectors, from their respective perspectives, together formulate and address a scientific question/problem. For more information on co-production, go to www.kks.se.

Please note that co-funding companies must fall within the scope of the Knowledge Foundation's definition of business sector (go to www.kks.se for more details). If there is any uncertainty regarding the definition, the applicant should ask the foundation for a prior notice before submitting the application.

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

The business partners input in the project must be described and justified in the application. In companies with fewer than 10 employees and/or less than SEK 10 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. For example, ownership of shares, board memberships, and employment/consultant work should be specified.

Formal requirements

The 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 funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation may not exceed SEK 4 million.
- At least two companies that are independent of each other must be co-producers in the project (co-financing business partners).
- The companies must fall within the Knowledge Foundation's definition of business sector.
- The business sector partners' contribution to the project, primarily through in-kind contributions, must correspond to at least the same amount requested from the Knowledge Foundation.
- Signed letters of intent from each of the co-producing companies.
- The project must include participation from business sector partners, and the project plan and budget must describe the involvement of all partners.
- The project manager must hold a doctorate degree or a position as senior lecturer (lektor), associate senior lecturer (biträdande lektor) or professor. The project manager must be an employee at the applicant university.
- Salaries funded by the Knowledge Foundation must go to employees at Sweden's university colleges or new universities.
- Senior researchers (PhD or position as senior lecturer, associate senior lecturer or professor) must account for at least 50% of the research time financed by the Knowledge Foundation.
- 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.
- Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document General terms and conditions, go to www.kks.se.
- The earliest starting date for the project is June 1st 2023. The latest starting date for the project is December 1st 2023.
- The project duration should be 1 to 4 years.
- The application shall include parts and appendices according to the call instructions.
- The vice-chancellor, the project owner and the project manager must sign the application.

Evaluation

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

Applications that meet the formal requirements will be reviewed by an external evaluation panel. Each application will also be subject to peer review by international scientific experts. Using the findings from peer review, the external evaluation panel will jointly develop an overall assessment.

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

Strong research and education environments
- What is the contribution of the project for the short-term and long-term development of the research and education environment?
- To what extent is there a clear description of the research and education environment´s current situation?
- To what extent is there an adequate ambition for the development of the research and education environment?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to the renewal of the research and education environment?

Scientific quality[2]
- 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?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to development and renewal of the research group and research area?
- To what degree will the project generate scientific or artistic results of high quality (e.g. scientific publications/documented artistic research)?
- How relevant and advanced is the level of scientific expertise in the project group?

Benefits to the business partners[2]
- How relevant is the scientific question in relation to the needs of participating companies?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to the development of participating companies?

Implementation
- Is the project plan adequate in relation to the project objectives?
- How well planned and organised is the project, particularly as regards to relevant work distribution and engagement among participating partners?
- How realistic is the project plan in relation to available resources?

Application

Applications are submitted via the 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 of the project.

The abstract, project plan and CV's for project staff from the university should be written in English to enable international peer review.

To facilitate peer recruitment, the applicant is requested to suggest two experts qualified to evaluate the application: one international expert (affiliated outside Sweden) and one national expert (affiliated in Sweden). The applicant must assert that suggested experts are free from conflict of interest.

In the application form, state the city and postal code for the place where the unit within the company that will conduct the main part of the co-production is located. In the application form, the project's main subject focus is stated based on the Standard for Swedish classification of research subjects. For projects of an interdisciplinary nature, a maximum of three (3) different subjects can be selected.

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[2] When the application concerns an artistic field of research, the concept *scientific* is replaced by *artistic* in the call.

A table of planned project participants is to be attached to the application form. From participating companies (and potentially other parties), only key members need to be entered. Attachment template for project participants ("Staff in the project") is downloaded as an EXCEL file from www.kks.se but must be converted and attached as a PDF file (ensure that the entire EXCEL sheet fits on one PDF page).

The project budget is filled out in the application form. Note that the application should not cover overhead costs. Such costs, 20 percent, will be calculated and included in the proposed contract if the Knowledge Foundation approves the application.

Appendices to the application

The following appendices (as pdf-files) should be attached to the application and in the same order as below. The structure of the appendices must follow the headings specified for each appendix. Under each heading, the main characteristics of the information that the foundation expects are stated, however, applicants can provide supplementary information that is deemed appropriate based on the direction of the proposal. All body text in Appendices 1 and 2 must follow the format font Arial, font size 11 pt, single line spacing.

Appendix 1. The project´s contribution to the host research and education environment (may not exceed 2 pages)

To be uploaded under 'Description of host research and education environment and project contribution'.

This appendix should be written jointly by the head of the research and education environment and the project manager. Start from the group or environment where the project has closest context. The nature and scope of the description and the development plan will vary depending on the stage the environment has reached in its development journey. For example, new or early-stage environments do not need to report results going back five years if this is not feasible. Instead, these should describe the results relevant to the current situation of the environment. Design the description based on the following headings:

1.1. The project´s contribution to the development of the research and education environment

Describe how the project will contribute to the development of the research and education environment. Connect to the purpose and the goals of the call.

It must be made clear in what way the project entails added value in relation to previous and ongoing projects within the environment, especially projects with the same project manager.

1.2. The research and education environment (or environments) in which the project will be conducted

Describe the environment´s current situation and ambition.

a) Current situation with results from the past five years (area of activity and direction of related research and education within the environment, personnel composition, scientific production, development of educations, funding, collaborative and business partners etc.)

b) Ambition (set goals to further develop the environment)

Appendix 2. Project plan (may not exceed 12 pages excl. list of references)

To be uploaded under "Project plan".

Scientific quality

- Describe and motivate the scientific/artistic research question that will be addressed and the scientific/artistic methods that will be employed, including how the research question relates to the state-of-the-art.

Benefits to the business partners

- Describe the expected results and effects of the project and how these relate to the needs of the business partners and the business sector as a whole.
- Describe the companies' participation in the project and how the co-production between companies and the university will take place.

Implementation

- 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. Also indicate how much time, financed by the Knowledge Foundation, which consists of senior researchers. Implementation should be described by, e.g. presenting a timetable, risk analysis, publication plan or similar, 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-funding from the companies as well as any grants from the university.
- If the applicant has been previously rejected on a similar HÖG-project application, and re-applies, this must be stated along with comments on how the previous external evaluation panel´s aspects are addressed within the current application.

Appendix 3. Qualifications (may not exceed 2 pages per person)

To be uploaded under "Attachments in accordance with the call and in the same order as stated in the call".

CV with relevant information for relevant project staff, including experts from companies. CV's exceeding 2 pages will not be considered in the evaluation.

Appendix 4. Letter of intent

To be uploaded under "Attachments in accordance with the call and in the same order as stated in the call".

Signed letters of intent, written by and from each of the co-producing companies need to be submitted. The letter of intent should justify ad state the company's interest in the project, their intention and motive to participate, and the perceived value of participation in the project. Letters of intents will be signed either physically or by an e-signature using eg. GetAccept, ebox or similar services. Letters of intent without correct signatures will not be considered.

Appendix 5. Signatures (template)

To be uploaded under "Attachments in accordance with the call and in the same order as stated in the call".

The application must be signed by the project manager, the project owner and the vice-chancellor. The project manager's signature implies responsibility for described implementation. The project owner and the vice chancellor assure through their respective signatures that the university approves the project and will be involved according to the project description.

The template will be downloaded from www.kks.se. The template will be signed either physically or by an e-signature, using eg. eduSign, GetAccept, ebox or similar services. Applications without correct signatures will not be considered.

Timetable and decisions

- The Knowledge Foundation must receive your application no later than 2022-12-09 at 3 p.m. (15:00).
- All applications will be reviewed for compliance with formal requirements.
- International experts will review the scientific quality of applications.
- The external evaluation panel will submit its final recommendation to the CEO of the Knowledge Foundation in April 2023.
- The Knowledge Foundation's CEO will render a decision in May 2023.
- Granted projects may commence after the agreement signing, earliest by 2023-06-01 and latest by 2023-12-01.