Knowledge Foundation ><

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

NU 22 – Online Education for International Positioning

The Knowledge Foundation invites Sweden's university colleges and new universities to apply for funding for the programme *NU - Online Education for International Positioning*. The programme supports the universities to develop and run second cycle and/or third cycle online courses, in collaboration with the business sector.

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> The Knowledge Foundation requires the application no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) on January 26, 2023.

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

The NU programme

Internationalization has become an important tool for the universities to strengthen their competitiveness and enhance the quality of the research and education offered. With the *NU programme*, the Knowledge Foundation wants to give the universities the opportunity to further strengthen their international profile and position as well as enhancing the quality of online education.

Objective and purpose

The objective of the *NU programme* is for the university to work with business partners to develop and run second cycle and/or third cycle online courses that addresses the needed skills from the business sector and position the university's educational offerings internationally. The objective is also to strengthen the university's online education provision.

The purpose of all the Knowledge Foundation's programmes is to build strong, business-relevant research and education environments. The specific purpose of the *NU programme* is to contribute to the international profiling and positioning of the university's strong research and education environments.

The programme's contribution to 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. For more information on the Knowledge Foundation's view on strong research and education environments, go to www.kks.se.

The *NU programme* is suitable for research and education environments aiming to strengthen their international profile and position. By developing pedagogical skills and designing online courses on the second and/or the third cycle in close collaboration with the business sector, internationally competitive courses can be provided. By promoting international positioning and profiling, new contacts and collaborations can be associated to the strong research and education environment of importance to future development.

Project design

In the *NU programme*, the university works with business partners to develop and run second cycle and/or third cycle online courses. The project can *include development of new courses* as well as *further development of relevant pre-existing courses*. The planned courses must have a flexibility to attract an international target group, for example regarding course length (higher education credits), rate of study and mode of assessment.

Companies must participate in the development process to ensure relevance for the business sector. The planned contributions from the participating companies must be clearly described in the project plan (read more in the section *Business sector* involvement). To broaden the scope of the project and include knowledge about general developmental issues within a business area, professional associations or other relevant partners may also contribute to the project.

The courses should be part of the university's regular course offering and its quality should be assessed and approved by the university's internal decision-making body.

The application may comprise a maximum of 15 credits. The maximum funding from the Knowledge Foundation is 100 000 SEK per credit (in total a maximum of 1,5 million SEK per application). The project duration should be 1-2 years.

Considerations in the project design
- The project should have particular focus on pedagogic development to strengthen the digital forms of education.

- The project plan should specify and describe activities for internationalization (for instance, establishing new contacts and collaborations on an international level) and present an external analysis to assess the international position of the courses.

- The project should have a particular focus on the recruitments of students. A description on how the project will handle recruitment and marketing of the programme should be included, as well as an assessment of the number of expected students. The recruitment process can be supplemented by an analysis of possible students.

Who may apply?

Sweden's university colleges and new universities[1] may apply. The applicant's organization must be a university with degree-awarding powers (master's degree or higher) for the subject area addressed by the application.

The Knowledge Foundation welcomes applications within all scientific and artistic fields. When the application concerns an artistic field, the concept *scientific* is to replaced by *artistic* in the call text.

How should the funds be used?

The funds from the Knowledge Foundation should be used for the development and implementation of second and/or third cycle online courses within the university's strong research and education environments.

Below is indicated the delimitations for the funding from the Knowledge Foundation.

The Knowledge Foundation funds the following:

- The development and implementation of one cycle per planned course.
- Costs for project manager/project management.
- Costs for knowledge distribution and feedback of experiences at the university – The Knowledge Foundation will finance a maximum of 50 percent of the costs.
- Costs for hiring external experts.
- Costs for the use of equipment.
- Costs for communication - The Knowledge Foundation will finance a maximum of 50 percent of the costs.

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 supportive functions for online education.

Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document *General Terms and Conditions*, see www.kks.se.

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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.

The application should not include overhead costs. Such costs (20 percent) will be calculated and included in the proposed contract if the Foundation approves the application.

University involvement

The project manager is responsible for the implementation of the project. The project manager must have a responsibility for second cycle courses and study programmes at the university. The application should also state who will be the project owner at 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 manager and the project owner should not be the same person.

Business sector involvement

The project requires a defined and sufficiently comprehensive engagement from business sector partners, to ensure business sector relevance of the developed courses. At least two companies must participate in the development process, contributing with competence, experience, and information about the development needs in the business sector. The co-producing process can include participation in workshops, reference groups, steering groups - which must be presented in the project description. It should also be presented how the companies plan to participate in implementation of the courses and how the collaboration with the business sector will continue after the project has ended. The participating companies and eventual professional associations should bear their own costs related to their contributions in the project.

Please note that participating 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.

If financial or personal associations exist between companies involved, between any company and the university, or between any company and an individual researcher/teacher, this must be disclosed. The project plan must clearly indicate any personal conflicts of interest, and the individuals' various roles in the company or university must be clearly described. Specify, for example, shareholding, board positions, employment, or consulting.

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 objective and purpose of the call.
- The application shall include parts and appendices according to the call instructions.
- The project must address development and implementation of second cycle and/or third cycle online courses.
- The applying organization must be a university within the Knowledge Foundations target group and authorized to award degrees at the second-year master's level or higher for the subject area addressed by the application.
- The project manager must hold a doctoral degree and be employed at the applicant university.
- Participating companies must fall within the Knowledge Foundation's definition of "business sector".
- The application may comprise a maximum of 15 credits.

- The maximum funding from the Knowledge Foundation is 100 000 SEK per credit (in total a maximum of 1,5 million SEK per application) to be used for the development and implementation of one cycle per planned course.
- Maximum project time is 2 years.
- The earliest starting date for the project: 2023-06-01. The latest starting date for the project: 2023-09-29.
- Any financial or personal links between the involved companies, between a company and university or between a company and individual researcher(s), must be disclosed on the application form, see above.
- Signed letter of intent from each of the co-producing companies (at least two companies).
- Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document Guidelines on Approved Expenditures, go to www.kks.se.
- The vice-chancellor, 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.

If the application complies with the formal requirements, an external evaluation panel will conduct an overall evaluation based on the evaluation criteria below. Funding decisions are made by the CEO of the Knowledge Foundation, based on recommendations from the external evaluation panel.

No additions or modifications to the application will be approved after the 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 will the project contribute to international profiling and positioning of the research and education environment?

Scientific quality[2]
- To what extent will the project contribute to pedagogical development of online education at the university?
- How relevant is the competence of the project management?

Benefits to the business partners
- To what extent does the proposed project relate to the needs for development of knowledge in the business sector and how does the project ensure that the courses address the needed skills from the business sector?
- To what extent will collaboration with the business sector impact on course development and course content?

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

- Is the companies' planned involvement in the development and implementation of the courses adequately and sufficiently comprehensive?

Implementation
- How clear and adequate is the objectives and expected outcomes of the project?
- Is the project plan realistic in relation to available resources?
- How well is the recruitment of students planned and is the assessment of the expected number of students reasonable?
- How well is the budget described and motivated?

Application

Applications are submitted via the Knowledge Foundation's website, www.kks.se by the project manager. Applications may be written in either Swedish or English.

The project budget is filled directly in the application form. Note that the application should not cover overhead costs.

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 stated.

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).

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 (maximum 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 its closest context. 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 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 10 pages)

To be uploaded under "Project plan".

- **Introduction and objectives**

  General presentation of the projects and its objectives and expected outcomes.

  If the applicant has been previously rejected on a similar *NU* project application, and re-applies, this must be stated along with comments on how the previous assessment group´s aspects are handled within the current application.

- **Project partners and benefits to the business sector**

  Describe the importance of the educational offering and its potential for the participating companies and the relevant industry. Specify the roles and activities of the participating companies (or other relevant partners) and the planned activities to ensure that the courses address the needed skills from the business sector.

  Describe how the collaboration with the business sector shall continue after the project has ended.

- **Planned courses and pedagogic development**

  Describe the planned courses – focus, extent, and design.

  Specify the pedagogic development that will be implemented during the project and how the knowledge and experiences generated in the project will be apprehended.

- **International positioning**

  Present an external analysis of the educational area including a description of the positioning of the planned courses internationally and how the project is expected to contribute to the international profiling and positioning of the university's strong research and education areas.

- **Student recruitment**

  Describe how the project will handle recruitment and marketing and include an assessment of the number of expected students. The recruitment process can be supplemented by an external analysis and an analysis of possible students.

- **Implementation**
  Specify the planned activities and include a timetable. Describe the organization and management of the project and how the project participants will complement each other. Explain the needs and the development work that motivates funding and specify the allocation of costs between the different parts of the project. Describe the rationale for the costs presented in the budget and how the costs have been calculated.

Appendix 3. Curriculum vitae for key persons (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."

Curriculum vitae with relevant information for relevant project staff, mainly project manager and subproject managers. The CVs should include qualifications in both research and education.

Pedagogical development projects and pedagogical skills should be clearly described (CVs exceeding 2 pages will not be considered in the evaluation).

Appendix 4. Letter of intent from participating companies (may not exceed 1 page per company)

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

Signed letter of intent from at least two companies. If the application includes other participants (for example professional associations), they need to hand in a signed letter of intent too. The letters should briefly describe the partner's commitment, role, and contribution, as well as the motives and value for supporting the project.

The letters of intent should either be signed manually or electronically by for example GetAccept, ebox or similar systems. Letters of intent without correct signatures will not be considered.

Appendix 5. Signatures from the university (appendix form).

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 vice-chancellor, the project owner, and the project manager. The project manager's signature implies responsibility for the described implementation. 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.

Appendix template is downloaded from the Foundation's website, www.kks.se. The signature appendix should either be signed manually or electronically by for example eduSign, GetAccept, ebox or similar systems. Applications without correct signatures will not be considered.

Timetable and decisions

- The Knowledge Foundation must receive your application no later than 3 p.m. (15:00) on 2023-01-26.
- All applications will be reviewed for compliance with formal requirements. Applications failing to meet the formal requirements will be rejected. During February, the CEO will render a decision on whether an application will be rejected for failing to meet the formal requirements
- 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 at the latest.
- Granted projects may commence after agreement signing, earliest 2023-06-01 and latest at 2023-09-29.