
CALL FOR PROPOSALS

ASSOCIATE SENIOR LECTURESHIPS 26

- The application should be submitted to the Knowledge Foundation before **15:00 on 24 November 2026**.
 - Funding decisions will be announced in March 2027.
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About the Knowledge Foundation

The Knowledge Foundation is a funder with the mission to strengthen Sweden's competitiveness. The foundation funds research and competence development at Sweden's university colleges and newer universities when it takes place in collaboration with the business sector. The Foundation's calls are open to all scientific and artistic subject areas.

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The programme Associate senior lectureships¹

Solving future societal challenges requires both cutting-edge research results and a higher education of high quality. To achieve this, Sweden's universities and university colleges (henceforth called universities in the call text) need to be able to strategically recruit relevant key competences. The Knowledge Foundation therefore offers funding through the programme *Associate senior lectureships* to facilitate the long-term recruitment by universities of promising young researchers in subject areas relevant to the business sector.

Objectives and purpose of the programme

The objective of the programme is to strengthen and develop the capacity of the applicant research and education environment for research and education with relevance to the business sector by recruiting an associate senior lecturer and a doctoral student. The objective is also to enable the associate senior lecturer to initiate their own research group and to develop the qualifications required for a continued academic career.

The purpose of the programme is to develop and strengthen the applicant's research and education environment within its area of specialisation through strategically important and long-term recruitments. The purpose of the programme is also to strengthen the competitiveness of the business sector by enabling it to expand or strengthen its research collaboration with academia in an area of mutual relevance.

Project design

The programme offers funding for the employment of an associate senior lecturer and a doctoral student.

For the employment of the associate senior lecturer, the following applies

- the employment must be announced in open competition
- the employment must meet the requirements set out in the Higher Education Ordinance and in the appointment procedure of the applicant university
- the employment must be full-time², and the university must assume full financial responsibility when the support from the Knowledge Foundation ceases.

The associate senior lecturer must be provided with good conditions for developing their own research. The employment must also provide sufficient room for other qualifying tasks, such as teaching, supervision and collaboration. This so that the associate senior lecturer will eventually be able to meet the requirements for eligibility for a permanent employment as senior lecturer.

For the programme to achieve its objectives, it is important that the associate senior lecturer receives active and adequate support during the project period. This can take the form of mentorship or other suitable support structure/organisation at the university that is linked to the associate senior lecturer.

The programme encourages network building and mobility during the project period. This could, for example, be done through a short stay in other academic environments (nationally and/or internationally), at research institutes, or in the business sector.

In the project, the associate senior lecturer will be given the opportunity to initiate his or her own research group and develop his or her academic leadership. A doctoral student will therefore be recruited and associated to the associate senior lecturer and his or her research area. The associate

¹ The programme *Associate senior lectureships* has partially replaced the former programme *Rekryteringar*.

² Exceptions may be made for employments that involve clinical work, for example. Please contact the programme manager for further discussion.

senior lecturer is expected to act as an assistant supervisor for the recruited doctoral student during the project period, but the Knowledge Foundation would like the university to plan for the associate senior lecturer to be appointed as the main supervisor as soon as possible.

It is of great importance that the associate senior lecturer is involved throughout the entire recruitment process of the doctoral student, which means that both the planning and the actual recruitment of the doctoral student can only be initiated after the associate senior lecturer has started his or her employment at the university.

For the employment of the doctoral student, the following applies

- the employment must be announced in open competition
- admission, registration and examination must be carried out in accordance with the rules in force at the applicant university
- the employment must be full-time³
- the employment must commence no later than 12 months after the associate senior lecturer has started their employment.

Terms and conditions

Applicants

Sweden's university colleges and newer universities⁴ with degree-awarding powers at third cycle level within the subject area of the employment may apply (degree awarding powers should be clearly stated in *Appendix 1*). The Knowledge Foundation welcomes applications within all subject areas. When the application concerns an artistic research domain, the concept *scientific* is to be replaced by *artistic* in the call text.

The universities are invited to submit a maximum of two applications per university per call. If two applications are submitted by the same research and educational environment, this must be specifically justified.

Participation of the university

The project must have a project manager who is operationally responsible for the implementation of the project. The project manager should have a doctoral degree⁵ and be employed by the university at the latest at the start of the project. At the university, there must also be an appointed project owner. The project owner, who must have staff and budget authority at a senior level at the university, is responsible for ensuring proper conditions for the implementation of the project, and for monitoring the implementation. The project manager and the project owner should not be the same person.

Within the programme, the university and/or business actors must co-finance the employment of the associate senior lecturer with at least the amount requested from the Foundation (read more under *Financial framework and budgeting*). Please note that overhead costs can not to be included in the co-financing from the university.

³ Exceptions may be made for employments that involve clinical work, for example. Please contact the programme manager for further discussion.

⁴ Blekinge Institute of Technology, Dalarna University, Halmstad University, Jönköping University, Karlstad University, Konstfack, Kristianstad University, Linnaeus University, Malmö University, Mid Sweden University, Mälardalen University, Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm University of the Arts, Swedish Defence University, Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, Södertörn University, University of Borås, University of Gävle, University of Skövde, University West, Örebro University.

⁵ Doctoral degree on scientific or artistic grounds, alternatively employment as a senior lecturer, associate senior lecturer, or professor.

Participation of the business sector and other partners

To ensure that the project is designed in relation to the development needs in the business sector, the project must be conducted in co-production with the business sector. For more information on the Foundation's view on co-production, go to [the Foundation's website](#)⁶

At least one external partner must participate in the project.⁷ External parties can contribute to the project by, for example

- contributing problem statements
- providing materials, products, and expertise
- providing access to test environments and data for studies and evaluation
- participating in workshops and focus group meetings.

The relevance of the participating partners for the project, as well as the forms of participation will be assessed based on the assessment criteria *Benefit to the business sector*.

- If the university itself contributes the required co-financing, all types of partners are welcome to participate in the project. These participating partners bear their own costs related to the project but should also attach signed letters of intent describing expected results and benefits of the participation, as well as how the collaboration in the project will take place.
- If, on the other hand, the required co-financing, in part or in full, is to be covered by an external partner, this partner must meet the Foundation's criteria for co-financing business actors (see [the Foundation's website](#)⁸). All co-financing business actors must attach signed letters of intent describing expected results and benefits of the participation, as well as how the collaboration in the project will take place. The letters of intent must also clearly describe the organisation's financial and resource conditions for meeting the obligations described in the project plan and budget.

Any connections, such as financial or personal links, between for example participating partners, between any partner and university, or between any partner and individual project participant(s), must be stated and clarified in the application form and the project plan. Any dual roles must be clarified and will be reviewed by the Knowledge Foundation. Specify, for example, company connections, share ownership, board positions, employment, or consulting activities.

Project duration

The project duration should be 5–6 years. The project duration starts on the day the associate senior lecturer begins the employment at the university. Projects may start no earlier than 1 September 2027, and no later than 1 September 2028.

Financial framework and budgeting

The programme offers funding for the employment of an associate senior lecturer and a doctoral student. The total amount to be requested from the Knowledge Foundation may not exceed the sum of SEK 8 million.

Funding arrangements for associate senior lecturer

The funds from the Knowledge Foundation and the co-financing from the university and/or business actors should primarily be used for salary costs for the associate senior lecturer but may also include salary costs for other project participants employed by the applicant university (e.g. mentor). In

⁶ <https://www.kks.se/en/co-production/what-does-the-business-sector-mean/>

⁷ The application is usually strengthened if several mutually independent partners participate in the project.

⁸ <https://www.kks.se/en/co-production/what-does-the-business-sector-mean/>

addition to salary costs, other direct costs arising within the project at the applying university can be included in the budget.

Funds requested from the Foundation cannot be used for teaching activities at undergraduate level (first cycle).

Form of employment	Maximum amount to apply for from the Knowledge Foundation	Co-financing conditions
Associate senior lecturer	4,800,000 SEK	The university and/or business actors must co-finance the employment of the associate senior lecturer with at least the amount requested from the foundation.

Funding arrangements for doctoral student

The funds from the Foundation should primarily be used for salary costs for the doctoral student. In addition to salary costs, other direct costs arising within the project at the applying university can be included in the budget. For the doctoral student, the funds from the Foundation cannot be used for teaching activities or departmental duties.

Form of employment	Maximum amount to apply for from the Knowledge Foundation	Co-financing conditions
Doctoral student	3,200,000 SEK	Nothing – The Knowledge Foundation offers full funding for the employment of a full-time doctoral student.

Information on approved costs and instructions for budgeting of funds are available in the document *General terms and conditions for projects funded by the Knowledge Foundation*, which can be found on [the Foundation's website](#)⁹. The application should not include overhead costs (OH). An OH surcharge of 20 percent will be added by the Foundation if the application is granted.

Application

The application should be submitted via the project manager's account in the Knowledge Foundation's application system *SBS Manager* via [the Foundation's website](#)¹⁰. Supplementing the application after the closing date of the call is not possible.

Appendices to the application

The following appendices (as PDF files) should be attached to the application 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 may provide supplementary information that is deemed appropriate based on the direction of the call.

The application may be written in Swedish or in English. Note that all body text in Appendices 1 and 2 must follow the format font Arial, font size 11 pt, single line spacing, and normal margins (2,5 cm for all margins).

Appendix 1. The project's contribution to the development of the research and education environment

Maximum 2 pages. If a project is applied for jointly by several research and education environments, all environments must be described according to the instructions below (the appendix may be extended

⁹ <https://www.kks.se/en/funding-and-assessment/general-terms-and-conditions-for-projects/>

¹⁰ <https://www.kks.se/en/apply-and-report/>

by a maximum of half a page per additional environment). To be uploaded under *Appendix 1. The project's contribution to the research and education environment(s)*.

All the Knowledge Foundation's programmes contribute in different ways to supporting the development of strong research and education environments that create value for academia, the business sector, and society. Therefore, all projects applied for must be situated within a context in which they contribute to strengthening the development and profile of the research and education environment. In this way, the environment can also become a long-term and valuable partner for the business sector. For more information on what the Knowledge Foundation means by strong research and education environments, and how such an environment can be defined, go to [the Foundation's website](#)¹¹.

This appendix should be based on the group (research and education environment) within which the project will be conducted and should be prepared jointly by the management of the research and education environment and the project manager.

1.1. The research and education environment where the project will be conducted

Briefly describe the research and education environment in which the project will be conducted. Tailor the description to what is most relevant in relation to the programme and the project but specifically include information on degree-awarding powers at third cycle level within the subject area.

1.2. The project's contribution to the development of the research and education environment

Describe the ambitions and objectives of the research and education environment for becoming a stronger environment. Justify how the project and the employments will contribute to the environment's desired development in the short and long term. Also describe in what way the project adds value in relation to previous and ongoing projects within the environment.

Appendix 2. Project plan

Maximum 6 pages (including any references). Page numbered. To be uploaded under *Appendix 2. Project plan*.

- Present a preliminary research plan for the associate senior lecturer in a way that reviewers without expertise in that specific subject area can understand the content. Include the following sections:
 - Describe the scientific research focus of the associate senior lecturer and the potential research questions to be investigated.
 - Describe how the research focus and research questions relate to and contribute to the knowledge frontier within the relevant subject area.
- Include a timetable for the associate senior lecturer's career development and describe the qualifying tasks that will enable the associate senior lecturer to meet the requirements for eligibility for a permanent employment as senior lecturer. Specify, among other things, what proportion of the employment that will be devoted to research, teaching and other qualifying tasks
- Describe how the university will support the associate senior lecturer's networking and opportunities for mobility during the project period, for example through a short stay in other academic environments (nationally and/or internationally), at research institutes or in the business sector.
- Present a plan for how the recruitment and appointment of the associate senior lecturer will be carried out through an open call, where multiple candidates can be assessed in competition. Include an analysis of the potential pool of applicants, a description of the qualifications the associate senior lecturer should possess, and how the university intends to identify suitable

¹¹ <https://www.kks.se/en/funding-and-assessment/strong-research-and-educational-environments/>

candidates. Also include a timeline for both the appointment of the associate senior lecturer and the doctoral student.

- Account for how gender equality aspects will be considered in the recruitment processes.
- Account for the support that will be available around the associate senior lecturer. Account for the competence, role and work efforts of all persons who are central to the implementation of the project. The description should relate to information provided in the budget, the appendix *Staff in the project*, and CVs.
- Present other practical and organisational conditions of the employments (including any access to infrastructure and other relevant resources).
- Describe the participating partners and how they will be involved in the project.
- Describe how the project relates to the needs of the participating partners. Also present how the project is expected to lead to benefits for participating partners and benefits for the wider business sector.
- Account for and justify the costs included in the budget so it is clear what the costs consist of, why they are relevant to the project, and which partner will cover the costs. Present the budget (in the project plan) in the form of **one table for the associate senior lecturer** and **one table for the doctoral student**.

Appendix 3. Project participants

Appendix template for project participants (*Staff in the project*) is downloaded as an Excel file from [the Foundation's website](#)¹², but must be converted and attached to the application as a PDF file (ensure that the entire Excel spreadsheet fits on one PDF page). To be uploaded under *Appendix 3. Staff in the project*.

Enter information on planned project participants in the table. For the associate senior lecturer and the doctoral student, only the employment title is entered.

Appendix 4. Qualifications

Maximum 1 page per person. To be uploaded under *Other appendices*.

Attach CVs for all individuals who are crucial for the implementation of the project.

The Foundation applies a broadened review of academic merits (more information on [the Foundation's website](#)¹³). Thus, all academically active participants should present a selection of the merits and experiences that are most relevant to the project and the programme form. *For example*, emanate from the following categories:

- **Education and degrees**
- **Employment and assignments**
- **Research output:** select at most ten (10) research results/outputs. In addition to scientific publications, this could be for example: documented artistic merits, instrumental or product development, data set, software, patent, process or policy development, as well as implementation of research results.
- **Teaching:** pedagogical qualification including, for example, teaching, training and supervision, education development including development of open teaching resources and learning objects (learning and teaching materials).
- **Cooperation:** with academia, business sector, or other societal actors, as well as communication efforts.

¹² <https://www.kks.se/en/documents/>

¹³ <https://www.kks.se/en/broadened-review-of-academic-merits-and-advanced-assessment/>

- **Management:** project management, organisational development, assessment assignments, centre management, department assignments, granted funding.

Appendix 5. Letters of intent

Approximately 1 page per partner. To be uploaded under *Other appendices*.

Signed letter of intent from each of the participating partners must be attached. Each letter of intent must include

- expected results and benefits of the participation
- contributions and participation in the implementation of the project
- ability to contribute in accordance with the project plan and budget¹⁴.

Letters of intent should either be signed manually or electronically by, for example, GetAccept, ebox, or similar systems.

Appendix 6. Signatures from the university

Appendix template for signatures is downloaded from [the Foundation's website](#)¹⁵. To be uploaded under *Other appendices*.

The application must be signed by the project manager, the project owner, and the vice-chancellor. 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.

The signature appendix should either be signed manually or electronically by, for example, eduSign, GetAccept, ebox, or similar systems.

Preparation and assessment

The application will be reviewed by the secretariat of the Knowledge Foundation to ensure that the formal requirements are met. If these are met, an external assessment panel will conduct an overall assessment based on the assessment criteria below. Funding decisions are made by the Foundation's board after recommendation by the external assessment panel.

Formal requirements

The following requirements must be met for the application to be considered for evaluation by the Knowledge Foundation. Applications that do not meet the requirements, will be rejected for formal reasons.

- The applicant university must belong to the Knowledge Foundation's target group and have degree-awarding powers at third cycle level within the subject area (degree awarding powers should be clearly stated in *Appendix 1*).
- The project manager must have a doctoral degree¹⁶ and be employed by the university at the latest at the start of the project.
- The application must include appendices according to the call instructions.
- At least one external partner must co-finance or participate in the project (read more under *Participation of the business sector and other partners*).

¹⁴ Refers to applications with co-financing from business actors.

¹⁵ <https://www.kks.se/en/documents/>

¹⁶ Doctoral degree on scientific or artistic grounds, alternatively employment as a senior lecturer, associate senior lecturer, or professor.

- Co-financing business actors must fulfil the criteria set by the Knowledge Foundation.¹⁷
- Signed letters of intent from all participating partners must be attached.
- Co-financing must correspond to what is stated in the call text (read more under *Financial framework and budgeting*).
- Funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation must follow the instructions of the call (read more under *Financial framework and budgeting*) and may not exceed SEK 8 million (excl. OH costs).
- Funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation cannot be used for teaching activities at undergraduate level (first cycle).
- The project duration must be 5–6 years.
- The starting day of the project (that is, the day the associate senior lecturer begins the employment at the university) may start no earlier than 1 September 2027, and no later than 1 September 2028.
- The application must be signed by the vice-chancellor, the project owner and the project manager.

Assessment criteria

Contribution to the development of the research and education environment

- To what extent are there clear and relevant descriptions of the current state of the research and education environment, as well as its ambitions and objectives for strengthening the environment?
- How well justified is the projects and the employment's contribution to the desired development of the research and education environment in the short and long term?

Scientific quality¹⁸

- To what extent is there a clear description of the associate senior lecturer's research plan?
- To what extent does the scientific research focus and the research questions relate and contribute to the current knowledge frontier?

Benefit to the business sector

- How relevant is the project to the needs of the participating partners?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to the benefit of a wider business sector?

Implementation

- To what extent is there a well-thought-out plan for the associate senior lecturer's professional develop and to what extent will it contribute towards the opportunity of being employed as a senior lecturer?
- To what extent is there an adequate plan for the associate senior lecturer's networking and opportunities for mobility during the project period?
- To what extent is there a well-considered analysis and plan for the recruitment and appointment of the associate senior lecturer?
- To what extent is there an adequate description of how gender equality aspects have been considered in the recruitment process?
- To what extent does the university provide adequate support for the associate senior lecturer?
- To what extent has the university created practical and organisational conditions for the appointments?
- How well is the budget described and justified in the project plan?

¹⁷ More information on the Foundation's website: <https://www.kks.se/en/co-production/what-does-the-business-sector-mean/>

¹⁸ When the application concerns an artistic research domain, the concept *scientific* is replaced by *artistic* in the call.