**Knowledge Foundation** ＞＜

# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

# **HÖG 23**

- Deadline for application is **15:00 on 9 November 2023.**
- Decisions will be communicated to applicants in April 2024.
- After signing the agreement, approved projects may start on 1 June 2024 at the earliest and on 1 December 2024 at the latest.

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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.*

# Contents

### The programme Hög

In the programme Hög, 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 Knowledge Foundation has stimulated innovation, development and renewal for both academia and business sector since the first call, back in 1995.

The programme makes it possible for research and education environments in early stages of development to initiate the establishment of their environment. The programme may also be used by established environments for renewal of research through collaboration with the business sector.

### Objective of the programme

The objective of the programme Hög is for researchers at the university together with business partners to address a jointly formulated research question that both contributes to the scientific development and creates benefits for the business partners.

### The purpose of the programme and its 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 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 specific purpose of the programme Hög is for the academic environment to strengthen its research by renewal.

### Who may apply?

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

Several universities within the Foundation's target group may collaborate in the project if this strengthens the application and the project, but only one university may be the main applicant and contracting party vis-à-vis the Knowledge Foundation.

### How should the funds be used?

The programme Hög allows funding of a research project conducted in collaboration with the business sector. The funding from the Knowledge Foundation should primarily be used as salary funds for project participants employed at the applicant university(s) regarding working time within the Hög-project. In addition to these salary costs, expenses directly related to the project, e.g., costs for materials and equipment, can be included in the budget.

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[1] 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.

The application must present a budget that encompasses the entire project. This means an account of both funding from the Knowledge Foundation, the company's resources in the project, as well as any contributions from the university. The budget should present the direct costs of the project.

Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document *General terms and conditions for projects funded by the Knowledge Foundation*, go to www.kks.se.

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

A project manager employed by the university should be responsible for the implementation of the project. The project manager must hold a doctoral degree or a position as Senior Lecturer (lektor), Associate Senior Lecturer (biträdande lektor) or Professor.

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 at the university, 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 must be co-produced with business partners. For more information on co-production, go to www.kks.se.

For an appropriate level of co-production at least two companies must co-finance each project. 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. The business partners input in the project must be described and justified in the application.

There must be a balance in the companies' co-funding, which means that a single company cannot account for more than 70 percent of the companies' total co-funding.

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). The applicant should contact the programme manager well in advance if there is any uncertainty regarding the definition. Other relevant partners, that fall outside the scope of the Foundation's definition of business sector, like Swedish universities outside the Foundation's target group, trade associations, research institutes or public bodies, may also participate if they strengthen the application and the project. These partners bear their own costs in the project, and these costs cannot be counted as co-financing. The contributions of all partners must be clearly described and justified in the application and signed letters of intent should be attached.

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 motivation and prerequisites for co-financing the project according to project plan and budget must be clearly stated.

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 applicant university(s) must belong to the Foundation's target group.
- The project must be in line with the objective and purpose of the call.
- The application must include parts and appendices according to the call.
- All body text in Appendices 1 and 2 must follow the format font Arial, font size 11 pt, single line spacing.
- At least two companies that are mutually independent must co-produce in the project (co-funding business partners).
- Co-funding companies must fall within the scope of the Knowledge Foundation's definition of 'business sector'.
- The business sector partners' total co-financing of the project, primarily though in-kind contributions, must correspond to at least the same amount requested from the Knowledge Foundation. A single company may not co-fund more than 70 percent of the total share of corporate co-funding.
- Signed letters of intent, with detailed co-financing, from each of the co-producing companies should be attached.
- The project must include participation from business sector partners, and the project plan and budget must describe the involvement of all partners.
- The funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation may not exceed SEK 4 million.
- The start date of the project is 1 June 2024 at the earliest and 1 December 2024 at the latest.
- The duration of the project should be 1–4 years.
- The project manager must hold a doctoral 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 the applicant university(s).
- At least 50 percent of working time financed by the Knowledge Foundation must refer to staff with a doctoral degree, or staff with a position as Senior Lecturer (lektor), Associate Senior Lecturer (biträdande lektor) or Professor.
- Any financial or personal links must be clearly stated in the application.
- Budgeting of funds must be in accordance with the instructions presented in the document *General terms and conditions for projects funded by the Knowledge Foundation*, go to www.kks.se.
- The vice-chancellor, project owner and the project manager must sign the application.

## Assessment

The application will be reviewed by the secretariat of the Knowledge Foundation to ensure that it complies with the formal requirements.

If these are met, an assessment of the project's scientific quality will be performed by international scientific experts (peer review). Thereafter, an external assessment panel will conduct an overall

assessment based on the assessment criteria below. Funding decisions are made by the Foundation's CEO after recommendation by the external assessment panel.

## Assessment criteria

Strong research and education environment
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to 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(s) 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 area by expected scientific or artistic results of high quality?
- To what extent is there an adequate description of whether sex and gender perspectives are relevant in the project? If considered relevant, are the perspectives appropriately included in the project design and content?

Benefits to the business partners
- How relevant is the scientific question(s) in relation to the needs of participating companies?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to the development of participating companies as well as the wider business sector?

Implementation
- Is the project plan adequate in relation to the project objectives?
- How well planned and organised is the project, with particular focus on relevant work distribution and commitment from participating partners?
- How realistic is the project plan in relation to available resources?
- How well on an aggregated level are the merits and experiences of the project group fulfilling the requirements for an adequate project implementation?
- To what extent is there an adequate description of how gender equality aspects have been considered in the composition of the project group?

## Application

The application should be submitted via the project manager's account in the Knowledge Foundation's application system (www.kks.se). Supplementation of the application after the closing date of the call is not possible.

Applications should be written in English to enable international peer review.

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

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.

The project budget should be entered directly in the application form and should not include overhead costs (OH).

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.

One Swedish and one international peer with extensive knowledge within the research field, and without known conflicts of interest, should be suggested.

A table of planned project participants is to be attached to the application form. From participating companies (and potentially other partners), only key participants need to be entered. Attachment template for project participants (*Staff in the project*) is downloaded as an Excel file from [www.kks.se](http://www.kks.se) but must be converted and attached as a PDF file (make sure that the entire Excel spreadsheet 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.

**NOTICE:** 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 research and education environment** (may not exceed 2 pages, see below for more information if the project is planned in collaboration between several environments)

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. When a project is planned in collaboration between several environments all environments shall be included, however, the appendix may only be extended by half a page per additional environment. 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** and objectives for the further development of the environment.

**Appendix 2. Project plan** (may not exceed 12 pages excl. list of references, the project plan must be page numbered in its entirety)

To be uploaded under *Project plan.*

**Scientific quality**

- Describe and motivate the scientific[2] research question(s) that will be addressed in the project and the scientific methods that will be employed, as well as how the research question(s) contribute to the state-of-the-art.
- Account for whether sex and gender perspectives are relevant in the project design and content, and if so, how these will be included (more information on www.kks.se).

**Benefits to the business partners**

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

**Implementation**

- Describe the implementation of the project so that for example the contributions of the respective partners and how their expertise complements each other's is clear.
- Account for how gender equality aspects have been considered in the composition of the project group (more information on www.kks.se).
- The work of staff included in the budget, including staff from the companies, must be described.
- The implementation should be clarified through, for example, a timetable, risk analysis, publication plan or equivalent, possible milestones and work components in the project where the activities of the various partners are specified.
- Describe the rationale for costs included in the budget so it is made clear how the total costs have been calculated, their relevance for the project and what, for example, costs for equipment or material consist of. This also applies to the co-funding from companies, as well as any contributions from the university.

If the university has been previously rejected on a similar Hög project application, and reapplies, this must be stated along with comments on how the previous assessment panel's aspects are handled within the current application. This should be included within the page limit of the project plan and should not be no longer than half a page.

**Appendix 3. Qualifications** (may not exceed 1 page per person)

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

Attach CVs for individuals crucial for the implementation of the project. Include merits of relevance in relation to the project using the following selection of headings (more information on www.kks.se):

- **Degrees**
- **Positions**
- **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 contributions, and implementation of research results.

- **Teaching:** the full diversity of academic teaching, training and supervision activities, education development including open teaching resources.
- **Cooperation:** with academia, business and other societal actors including communication efforts
- **Leadership:** project management, activity development, assessment assignments, centre management, department assignments, etc.

## Appendix 4. Letters of intent

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 each of the co-producing companies must be attached. Each letter of intent must include the company's:

- needs and motives for participation,

- contributions and participation in the implementation of the project,

- expected results and benefits of participation,

- co-financing (total amount must be stated)

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

## 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 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](www.kks.se). The signature appendix should either be signed manually or electronically by for example eduSign, GetAccept, ebox or similar systems.