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## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### CAPACITY BUILDING 25

The programme can be applied for on two occasions in 2025. The application should be submitted to the Knowledge Foundation before:

- 1. 15:00 on 22 September 2025**  
*alternatively,*
- 2. 15:00 on 8 December 2025.**

Funding decisions will be announced in December 2025 and March 2026 respectively.

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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 Capacity Building

The programme *Capacity building* partially replaces the former programme *Rekryteringar* as of this year's call.

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 or adjunct relevant key competences. Mobility of researchers and teachers between universities and sectors, both nationally and internationally, is a quality-driving factor that contributes to development and strengthened competitiveness in the long run. The Knowledge Foundation therefore offers funding through the programme *Capacity building* in order to facilitate universities in recruiting international guest researcher or adjunct professor/senior lecturer with placement at a university or at a business partner.

## Objectives of the programme

An overall objective of the programme *Capacity building* is to promote mobility as well as to strengthen and develop the capacity of the applicant research and education environment for research and education relevant to the business sector.

- The objective of recruiting an international guest researcher is to establish or deepen collaboration with a strategically important international academic environment and/or to establish new international contacts and networks.
- The objective of recruiting an adjunct professor/lecturer is to establish or deepen collaboration with a strategically important business actor, as well as to exchange knowledge and competence between the academic environment and the business sector.

## The programme's purpose and contribution to development of strong research and education environments

The Knowledge Foundation seeks to support the building of strong research and education environments that create value for academia, business sector, and society. All the Knowledge Foundation's programmes contribute in various ways to enabling environments to establish and maintain a strong national and international scientific or artistic position in the long term, which also constitutes a profile area for the university. For more information on the Knowledge Foundation's view on strong research and education environments, go to [the Foundation's website](https://www.kks.se/en/funding-and-assessment/strong-research-and-educational-environments/)<sup>1</sup>.

The specific purpose of the programme *Capacity building* is to give research and education environments the opportunity to develop research and education through new collaborations.

## Project design

The programme offers funding for the employment/appointment of international guest researcher or adjunct professor/lecturer with placement at a university or at a business partner.

### International guest researcher

For the employment/appointment of international guest researcher, the following applies

- the intended person must be identified at the time of application
- the guest researcher must be employed by a university outside Sweden and must not already be established at the applicant university

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kks.se/en/funding-and-assessment/strong-research-and-educational-environments/>

- the guest researcher must have a doctoral degree<sup>2</sup> and hold an employment at least equivalent to the level of senior lecturer
- the employment/appointment and the recruitment process must meet the requirements of the university's appointments procedure
- any peer review of the intended person may be performed after the Knowledge Foundation has rendered a positive decision.

*Terms of employment:*

Form of employment	Project duration (employment period)	Employment rate
International guest researcher	3–24 months	25–100%

*Principles of funding:*

Form of employment	Maximum amount to apply for from the Knowledge Foundation (total)	Co-financing conditions
International guest researcher	1,400,000 SEK	The university must co-finance the project with direct funds equivalent to at least 10 percent of the amount requested from the Foundation.

### Adjunct positions

For the employment/appointment of an adjunct professor/senior lecturer with placement at a university or at a business partner, the following applies

- the intended person must be identified at the time of application
- the employment/appointment and recruitment process must meet the requirements of the university's appointments procedure (applies to adjunct professor/senior lecturer with a placement at a university)
- for adjunct positions with a placement at a business partner, only professors and senior lecturers employed by the applicant university may be considered
- adjunct professor/senior lecturer may not be from or to companies of sole proprietorship
- any peer review of the intended person may be performed after the Knowledge Foundation has rendered a positive decision.

*Terms of employment:*

Form of employment	Project duration (employment period)	Employment rate
Adjunct professor/senior lecturer with placement at a university or at a business partner	12–36 months	20–50%

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<sup>2</sup> Doctoral degree on scientific or artistic grounds

### Principles of funding:

Form of employment	Maximum amount to apply for from the Knowledge Foundation (per year)	Co-financing conditions
Adjunct professor/senior lecturer from the business sector to a university	800,000 SEK	The university must co-finance the project with direct funds equivalent to at least 10 percent of the amount requested from the Foundation.
Adjunct professor/senior lecturer from a university to the business sector	800,000 SEK	Business actors must co-finance the project with the equivalent of at least 10 percent of the amount requested from the Foundation.

## Terms and conditions

### Applicants

Sweden's university colleges and newer universities<sup>3</sup> may apply. 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.

### 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 degree<sup>4</sup> 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. In this programme, where the application does not need to be signed by the vice-chancellor, the project owner should have the right of delegation to conclude agreements with the Knowledge Foundation. The project manager and the project owner should not be the same person. For projects that involve the employment/appointment of an adjunct professor/senior lecturer, the intended person cannot be project manager or project owner.

For the employment forms international guest researcher and adjunct professor/senior lecturer from the business sector to a university, the university must co-finance the project with direct funds equivalent to at least 10 percent of the amount requested from the Foundation. The university's co-financing should primarily be used for salary costs related to working hours within the project for the international guest researcher or the adjunct professor/senior lecturer. In addition to salary costs, other direct costs arising within the project at the applying university can be included in the budget. The contributions of the university must be clearly stated in the project plan and budget. Please note that overhead costs can not to be included in the co-financing from the university.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Doctoral degree on scientific or artistic grounds.

## Participation of the business sector and other partners

To ensure that the project is designed in relation to the needs of development 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](#)<sup>5</sup>.

For the employment form adjunct professor/senior lecturer from a university to the business sector, at least one business actors must co-finance the project with the equivalent of at least 10 percent of the amount requested from the Foundation. The business actors' co-financing should primarily be used for salary costs related to working hours within the project for the adjunct professor/senior lecturer. In addition to salary costs, other direct costs arising within the project can be included in the budget. Clarification of the criteria for co-financing business actors can be found on [the Foundation's website](#)<sup>6</sup>. All co-financing business actors must attach signed letters of intent describing expected results and benefits of the participation, as well as how the co-operation 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.

For the employment forms international guest researcher and adjunct professor/senior lecturer from the business sector to a university, where co-financing from the business sector is not a requirement, all kinds 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 where the contributions to the project are described and motivated. The suitability and relevance of the partners for the project, as well as the forms of participation will be assessed based on the assessment criteria *Benefit to the business sector*.

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. Specify, for example, company connections, share ownership, board positions, employment, or consulting activities.

## Project duration

See under the section *Project design* for information about project duration for each employment form.

The project period starts the day the international guest researcher or the adjunct professor/senior lecturer begins the employment/appointment at the university/business actor.

*For applications submitted no later than 22 September 2025:* Projects may start no earlier than 1 January 2026, and no later than 1 January 2027.

*For applications submitted no later than 8 December 2025:* Projects may start no earlier than 1 April 2026, and no later than 1 April 2027.

## Financial framework and budgeting

The programme *Capacity building* offers partial funding for the employment/appointment of international guest researcher, or adjunct professors/lecturers with placement at a university or at a business partner. The amounts to be requested from the Knowledge Foundation are stated in the section *Project design*.

The funds from the Foundation should primarily be used for salary costs related to working hours within the project for the international guest researcher or the adjunct professor/senior lecturer. In addition to salary costs, other direct costs arising within the project at the applying university can be

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.kks.se/en/co-production/>

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

included in the budget. Teaching activities at undergraduate level (first cycle) cannot be funded by the Knowledge Foundation.

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](#)<sup>7</sup>. 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](#)<sup>8</sup>. The system will be open for applications from 22 August 2025.

Supplementing the application after the closing date of the call is not possible.

Please enter the project title in the application form with the *employment form* and *subject area*, for example '*International guest researcher in Building Production*' or '*Adjunct professor in History of Art*'.

## 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, and single line spacing.

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

Maximum 2 pages, see instructions below if several environments apply jointly. To be uploaded under *Appendix 1. The project's contribution to the research and education environment(s)*.

This appendix should be written jointly by the head of the research and education environment and the project manager. Emanate from the group or environment where the project has its closest context. Frame the description based on the below headings.

If a project is applied for jointly by several environments, all environments must be described. However, the appendix may only be extended by a maximum of half a page per additional environment.

#### 1.1. The research and education environment(s) where the project will be conducted

- Describe the environment's current status and results of the last five years, including, for example, scope and focus of research and education, staff composition, scientific output, development of educations, funding, collaborations.
- Describe the ambition and objectives for the further development of the environment.

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

- Describe how the project will contribute to the development of the research and education environment and its activities. The connection to the objectives and purpose of the call must be

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.kks.se/en/funding-and-assessment/general-terms-and-conditions-for-projects/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.kks.se/en/apply-and-report/>

clearly stated. It must be made clear in what way the project adds value in relation to previous and ongoing projects within the environment.

## Appendix 2. Project plan

Maximum 5 pages (including any references). Page numbered. To be uploaded under *Appendix 2.*

*Project plan.*

- Describe the objectives of the project.
- Briefly describe the academic environment/business actor that the applicant research and education environment intend to establish or deepen collaboration with and justify why the collaboration is of strategic importance to the applicant environment.<sup>9</sup>
- Describe the intended person's competence and justify why it is relevant to the project. Also describe how the project is expected to contribute to new perspectives in the scientific direction of the environment.
- Describe the intended person's network, contacts, and opportunities for collaboration that may benefit the applicant environment.
- Account for the employment period and employment rate.
- For employment forms that refers to employment/appointment at the applicant university<sup>10</sup>, present how the recruitment and employment/appointment will take place in relation to the appointments procedure of the applicant university.
- Describe the work tasks that will be included in the employment/appointment.
- Account for the support that will be available around the intended person and present the practical and organisational conditions for the project (including any access to infrastructure and other relevant resources).
- Describe preliminary plans for building a long-term collaboration that extends beyond the current project.
- For all employment forms, present how the project relates to the needs of participating partners. Also present how the project is expected to lead to benefits for participating partners and benefits for a wider business sector.
- Describe and justify the costs included in the budget table so that it is clear what the budget items consist of and how they relate to the project objectives and planned activities.

## Appendix 3. Project participants

Appendix template for project participants (*Staff in the project*) is downloaded as an Excel file from [the Foundation's website](#)<sup>11</sup>, 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.

<sup>9</sup> For international guest researcher - describe the academic environment that is the intended person's regular residence. For adjunct professor/senior lecturer from the business sector to a university - describe the external partner that the intended person is employed by. For adjunct professor/senior lecturer from a university to the business sector - describe the business actor to which the intended person will be adjunct to.

<sup>10</sup> International guest researcher and adjunct professor/senior lecturer from the business sector to a university.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.kks.se/en/documents/>



#### Appendix 4. Qualifications

Maximum 2 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](#)<sup>12</sup>). 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:

- **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 development, as well as implementation of research results.
- **Educational activities:** 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.
- **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 budget<sup>13</sup>.

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](#)<sup>14</sup>. To be uploaded under *Other appendices*.

The application must be signed by the project manager and the project owner. The project manager's signature implies responsibility for the described implementation. The project owner assures through his/her signature that the university approves the project and will be involved according to the project description. The project owner should have the right of delegation to conclude agreements with the Knowledge Foundation.

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

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.kks.se/en/broadened-review-of-academic-merits-and-advanced-assessment/>

<sup>13</sup> Refers to forms of employment where co-financing from business actors is required.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.kks.se/en/documents/>

## 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 CEO 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.
- The project manager must have a doctoral degree and be employed by the university at the latest at the start of the project.
- The intended person for employment as an international guest researcher must have a doctoral degree, be employed by a university outside Sweden, hold an employment at least equivalent to the level of senior lecturer, and must not already be established at the applicant university.
- 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*).
- Co-financing must be in accordance with the instructions in the call text (read more under *Project design*).
- Co-financing business actors must fulfil the criteria set by the Knowledge Foundation.<sup>15</sup>
- Signed letters of intent from all participating partners must be attached.
- Employment period and employment rate must follow the instructions of the call (read more under *Project design*).
- Adjunct professor/senior lecturer may not be from or to companies of sole proprietorship.
- Funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation must follow the instructions of the call (read more under *Project design* and *Financial framework and budgeting*).
- Funds requested from the Knowledge Foundation cannot be used for teaching activities at undergraduate level (first cycle).
- For applications submitted no later than 22 September 2025: Projects may start no earlier than 1 January 2026, and no later than 1 January 2027.
- For applications submitted no later than 8 December 2025: Projects may start no earlier than 1 April 2026, and no later than 1 April 2027.
- The application must be signed by the project owner and the project manager.

### Assessment criteria

#### Contribution to the development of the research and education environment

- To what degree is there a clear description of the current state of the research and education environment?
- To what degree is there an adequate ambition for the development of the research and education environment?

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<sup>15</sup> More information on the Foundation's website: <https://www.kks.se/en/co-production/what-does-the-business-sector-mean/>.

- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to the development of the research and education environment in the short and long term?

#### **Scientific quality<sup>16</sup>**

- To what extent is the intended person's competence considered relevant to the project?
- To what extent is the project expected to contribute to new perspectives in the scientific direction of the environment?

#### **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 are the objectives of the project adequate and realistic?
- To what extent is the project designed to lead to a long-term collaboration?
- To what extent does the university provide adequate support and to what extent has the university created appropriate practical and organisational conditions for the project?
- How well is the budget described and justified in the project plan? To what extent is the amount requested from the Foundation reasonable in relation to the project design?

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<sup>16</sup> When the application concerns an artistic research domain, the concept *scientific* is replaced by *artistic* in the call.