



Forskningsrådet för miljö, areella näringar och samhällsbyggande, Formas
The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

Formas' Handbook 2007

- for application of grants and evaluation of proposals

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Contents

New for this year	3
Formas' research financing	4
Instructions for applicants	6
Research projects	10
Employment as a assistant professor	12
Continuation application for employment as a assistant professor	12
Interdisciplinary projects	13
Post-doctoral scholarships	13
Development projects	15
Research equipment	16
Expensive equipment	16
Information projects	16
Urgent grants	17
Travel grants	17
Conferences, symposia and workshops	18
Create an application	20
Appendix A. Research programme	21
Appendix B. Budget	23
Attachment C. CV	23
Appendix D. List of publications	24
Appendix E 'Status Report' for continuation projects	24
Appendix F. Research equipment	25
Appendix G. Post-doctoral grants	25
Appendix H. Interdisciplinary appendix	26
Appendix I. Copy of diploma	27
Common mistakes	28
Evaluation of applications	29
Evaluation of urgent research, travel and conference applications	29
Evaluation of applications within the main annual call	29
Evaluation of applications for post-doctoral grants	30
Expert panels	30
Handling conflicts of interest	31
Guidelines for evaluation of research project applications	36
Guidelines for evaluation of development project applications (within the area of building sciences only)	47
Guidelines for evaluation of information project applications	53
Decisions	60

Formas' handbook for application of grants and evaluation of proposals

This handbook is intended for persons applying for grants as well as members of expert panels evaluating proposals. It contains instructions for grant applications, handling conflicts of interest, guidelines for expert panel members, a description of the evaluation process, the procedure after a decision has been made as well as what obligations persons receiving grants have in terms of reporting at the end of the project.

New for this year

Changes to application instructions, since 2006, that should be especially observed are:

- Applications containing a research programme (appendix A) which exceeds the maximum allowed amount of pages will not be considered and will be rejected.
- The primary applicant shall be the researcher who, according to the application, performs the majority of the research in the project.
- Applications for employment as Assistant Professor is a separate call.
- Appendices A, B, C and D are obligatory
- Appendix B (Budget) is new
- If the applicant of a post-doctoral scholarship is not a Swedish citizen, a certificate of that she/he has a permanent resident permit in Sweden must be enclosed in the application

Formas' research financing

Formas is a governmental, tax-financed research-funding agency that supports basic research and need-driven research within the areas of the environment, agricultural sciences and spatial planning. Formas promotes ecologically sustainable growth and development in the society, multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research as well as international research collaboration and experience exchange. The Council is also responsible for the dissemination of ongoing research and research results.

Formas has an annual call for applications that covers all of its areas of responsibility. Formas also conducts targeted strategic efforts within its areas of responsibility. Such efforts and the connected calls for applications are at times done in collaboration with other national or international research-funding agencies. It is possible to apply for grants consecutively for projects of an urgent nature, research or conference trips, short guest researcher visits as well as for arranging conferences, symposia and workshops.

Formas' mission

Formas has the task of promoting and supporting basic research and need-driven research related to sustainable development within the areas of the environment, agricultural sciences and spatial planning. Research should contribute to sustainable development of society. This presupposes that human and animal health and welfare, biological diversity, the environment, the productivity of ecosystems, economics, ethics as well as social and cultural values are taken into consideration.

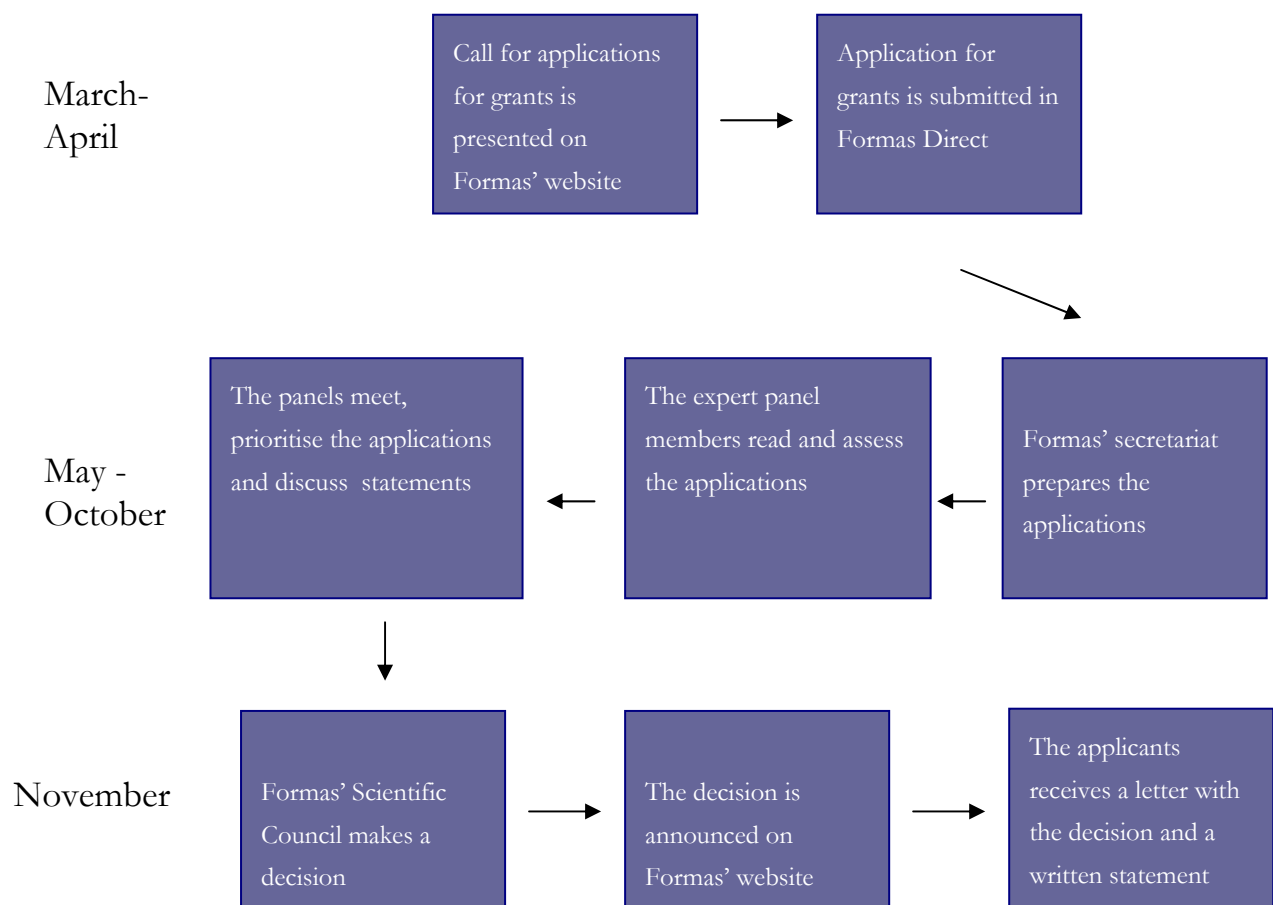
Formas' three primary areas are:

- Environment and Nature
- Agricultural Sciences, Animals and Food
- Spatial Planning

For a more detailed description, see www.formas.se for information on strategies and research programmes.

Formas' proposal evaluation process

Below is a description of Formas' proposal evaluation process for its large call for applications that closes in May. For a more detailed description, see the 'Evaluation of Applications' section, [page 29](#)



Instructions for applicants

Especially observe

- It is possible to apply for a salary of up to 50 per cent of full-time for both the primary and co-applicant/co-applicants (researcher). When several researchers apply for a joint project, the combined effort for these may reach a maximum of 100 per cent of full-time.
- Complete applications contains the completed application form, research programme (or corresponding), CV, list of publications and other relevant supplements.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Supplements after the final date of application – in addition to supplements indicated in the instructions – are not accepted.
- Formas will accept applications for grants only via Formas' web-based application program. A specific form for the purpose of signature should be provided in paper format signed by the applicant and an authorised representative of the university or corresponding facility. This form shall have arrived to Formas within five days of the final date of application.
- Indirect costs i.e. overhead costs, should not be provided in the application.
- The applicant should consider if there are specific ethical aspects to the project.
- In order for new funds to be granted, previously completed projects must have been reported.
- Within the large annual call in may, the primary applicant can be granted a maximum of three applications, these are the following: for employment as Assistant Professor *or* a Post doc scholarship *or* a research grant and in addition to the already mentioned, an interdisciplinary project and an information project.
- The application must be written in English, except for the popular Science description (in the form) which must be written in Swedish. Information projects may be written in English or in Swedish.
- The font size in the application must be Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent.

General instructions

To be eligible to apply for funding at Formas, the applicant has to have a Doctoral degree, exceptions to this rule are applicants who apply for funding for Information projects or for conferences, symposia and workshops. Formas generally decides upon grants for up to three years. For applications concerning assistant professor positions ('forskarassistent' in Swedish), grants are sought for four years. For applications concerning post-doctoral scholarships, funds are sought for one year. In well motivated instances, an extension with one year can be granted (the applicant then have to submit a new application).

There is no age limit for grant applicants, but researchers retired full time cannot obtain funds for their own salary from Formas.

Grants are normally administered by Swedish universities, university colleges, research institutes or authorities with research undertakings.

Applications must be written in Formas' web form. When the application is completed and registered, the applicant should print a specific form for the purpose of signature. Signature is also required from an authorised representative of the university or corresponding facility (generally the head of the department where the project is to be implemented). The signature means that the application is approved and that the project can be implemented (or equipment made available) at the department/institute/authority, that the cost estimation in the application has been approved and that any human or animal experimentation has been presented. The applicant shall have discussed these conditions with the representative for the educational institution or corresponding facility before the application is signed. This form shall have arrived to Formas **within five days** of the final date of the deadline for submitting the application.

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Supplements after the final date of application – in addition to supplements indicated in the instructions – will not be accepted.

A maximum of 5 pages including references is allowed for applications concerning research grants, whereas if applying for an interdisciplinary project, a maximum of 8 pages including references, is allowed. Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent.

The application shall be written in English, except for the popular Science description (in the form) that must be written in Swedish. Information projects may be written in English or in Swedish.

Project grants from Formas may be used for co-financing EU-financed research projects with a corresponding focus.

Indirect costs and standard salaries

Indirect costs (overhead including rent, electricity, heating etc.) should not be included in the application. Formas makes a calculation and adds the amount in accordance with university and university college agreements. For institutions, a specific percentage is in effect for such supplements.

For already existing employment, indicate the current salary at the time of application (including social fees). When indicating salary for new appointments, the standard calculations below should be used:

- Assistant professor post SEK 530,000
- Doctoral student post SEK 390,000
- Senior lecturer grant (50 percent) SEK 300,000
- Research engineer SEK 420,000
- Laboratory assistant SEK 370,000
- Technician SEK 370,000

Public accessibility

The application to Formas is on the whole a public document and accessible to the public. Decisions regarding awarded grants are published on Formas' website.

Intellectual right of ownership and possession issues

When applicable, the applicant shall observe international agreements and contracts that regulate possession, utilisation and exchange of biological material for research purposes, as well as intellectual right of ownership.

Ethical considerations

The applicant should always consider if there are specific ethical aspects to the project. If this should be the case, the ethical issues in question should be presented as well as how they will be treated in the research. This might pertain, for example, to research on people involving utilisation of personal data or experiments on people or animals. The page number in the research programme where the ethical consideration presentation can be found should be indicated in the web form.

Particularly pertinent for the following issues:

Research on humans/personal data (individual data)

If the project concerns research on humans/personal data (information on and from living persons and deceased persons where there is a risk that survivors may feel discomfort due to publication of research results), and approval has not been obtained from an ethical panel, the applicant must present ethical considerations that concern the project. If no ethical problems are presumed to exist with this type of research, this should be indicated and justified. The presentation should also clarify how ethical aspects are observed and related to the ethical codes within the area.

Human/Animal experimentation

If the project contains experiments involving humans or animals, consent must be obtained from a research ethics panel. If such consent has not been obtained when the application is submitted, it should be obtained as soon as possible. Indicate on the application form if consent has been obtained or if it will be applied for. When a grant is awarded, it is assumed that the university/university college/corresponding institution where work will be carried out guarantees that consent has been given prior to research commencing; the representative of the university/university college/corresponding institution confirms this by approving the contract.

Central ethical review board

Since 1 January 2004, The Act concerning the Ethical Review of Research Involving Humans (2003:460), including biological material from humans is in effect (decision U 2003:43). The new law concerning humans is applicable to research that involves physical intervention or is performed with a method intended to affect a human physically or mentally. Research that involves physical intervention of a deceased person or concerns studies of biological material removed from a living person or for medical purposes from a deceased person that can be traced to the persons involved must also be ethics reviewed. The Act also applies to research that is performed without the express consent of an individual and that concerns sensitive personal data according to the Personal Data Act.

Ethical review of research shall in accordance with legislation be performed by regional boards that constitute their own authority. There are six regional boards located in Göteborg, Linköping, Lund, Stockholm, Umeå and Uppsala. Regional board decisions may be appealed to the Central Ethical Review Board.

More information may be obtained on the Central Ethical Review Board's website www.epn.se.

Application for ethical review of animal experimentation is done on a form that can be obtained at the Swedish Animal Welfare Agency's website www.djurskyddsmyndigheten.se.

From the 1st of July 2007, the Swedish Ministry of Agriculture, web address: www.sjv.se will take over the majority of assignments from the Swedish Animal Welfare Agency.

Gender aspects

Formas shall work for gender perspectives to have an impact on research. Applicants should always consider if gender perspectives are brought out in the questions at issue that are dealt with in the project. If this should be the case, they should be presented in the application as should how they will be treated in the research.

Popular science description

A popular science description should be included with every application (page 5 of the application form). The popular science description should be written in Swedish. If the project is granted funds, Formas retains the right to use the popular science description for the purpose of dissemination.

Choice of expert panel

The applicant should suggest an expert panel for the evaluation of the proposal. In the event that the application falls between different subject areas, the applicant may suggest two expert panels in order of priority. Formas decides which panel/panels that will evaluate the application. Further information regarding how applications are evaluated can be found under the 'Guidelines for evaluation of research project applications', [page 36](#).

Types of grants

The types of grants below will be applied by Formas. Additional types of grants may be used in connection to special calls for applications.

Research projects

To be eligible to apply for a research project at Formas, the applicant, which is the person who is scientifically responsible for the research project, shall have defended her/his thesis and also have passed all the Doctoral courses necessary to obtain the diploma. If the applicant has not acquired her/his Doctoral degree (i.e. defended her/his thesis and passed all Doctoral courses) when the application is submitted, a diploma/certificate that the degree has been obtained must be submitted to Formas together with the signed decision (in cases where the application has been granted funding).

Grants are administered by Swedish universities, university colleges, research institutes or authorities with research undertakings.

Project grants may concern financing of doctoral students, assistant professors or researchers; researchers may only receive 50 per cent of a full-time position. When several researchers (two or more) apply for a joint project, the combined effort for these may reach a maximum of 100 per cent of full-time. The names of all the researchers in the project must be stated in the application. In the event that funds are sought for a foreign guest researcher, this persons' name has to be stated, and a CV be attached. Salary for foreign guest researchers may be sought for a maximum of 50 per cent of a full-time position. Funds for what is known as an open postdoc will not be given. For new doctoral student positions, the primary supervisor must be indicated in the research programme.

Researchers should apply on their own merits, but previous supervisors may be co-applicants. The primary applicant must be the researcher who performs the main part of the research in the project, the co-applicant/co-applicants can be another researcher(-s) or a person(-s) without a Doctoral degree which contributes to the analysis and/or interpretation of the results in the project. A description of the work assignments for all people involved in the project who is sought funding for must be described in appendix B, and all the researchers involved in the project who funding is sought for must be named.

The research programme, which should be written in English, may not exceed 5 pages, including references (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent). The application is assessed in terms of question at issue, methods and performance, expertise and relevance. For a more detailed description, see 'Guidelines for evaluation of research project applications', [page 36](#)

Application documentation

The following documents must be supplied in Formas' web form:

- Application form, including budget and popular science description.
- Appendix A. Research programme/information programme comprising a maximum of five pages, including references; for interdisciplinary applications, a maximum of eight pages, including references (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent).
- Appendix B. Budget. In this appendix all the salary costs must be motivated. The research assignments for all personnel with a Doctoral degree in the project, whos' salary is being applied for, must be clearly described. All other costs applied for in the project must also be clearly motivated. The full names of all personnel (with a Doctoral degree) in the project whos' salary is being applied for must be stated. Maximum two pages (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent).

Observe that Appendix B slightly differs concerning applications for information grants and applications for conferences, symposia and workshops. For travel grants, appendix B does not have to be filled in.

- Appendix C. Brief CV for primary applicant and co-applicant/co-applicants (maximum of two pages per person, Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent).
- Appendix D. List of primary applicant's and co-applicants' publications. (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent).

Employment as a assistant professor

Employment as assistant professor amounts to a full-time position (100 per cent). In order to be considered as an assistant professor, a maximum of five years may have passed since the person acquired her/his Doctoral degree. Parental leave, illness, military service or other similar circumstance that has prevented research activities during the time period soon after the degree was earned may be considered as reason for granting an exception to the five-year rule. Observe that salary funds for assistant professors should be applied for by the proposed recipient. In order to grant funds for employment as a assistant professor, post-doctoral qualifications are desirable.

For applications concerning employment as an assistant professor, grants are sought for four years. If a grant is awarded, the funds will be distributed in two stages (2 + 2 years). The second stage is distributed upon the application being renewed (see further information under 'Continuation application for employment as a assistant professor').

Otherwise, what has been stated above regarding application for grants for research projects is applicable.

Continuation application for employment as a assistant professor

The application should be organised as an application for a research project grant. Appendix E should also be attached.

Applicants that have been awarded this type of grant and are applying for an extension, i.e. for the third and the fourth year of the grant, should organise the application as an application for a research project grant. In addition, the following should be attached:

Appendix E. 'Status Report' The following should be presented:

- A brief account of achieved results thus far in the original project. The account may be a maximum of one A4 page.

- *If doctoral students are included in the project, a specific account should be provided that indicates progress in terms of courses and work on dissertation. If possible, a time for when the dissertation is estimated to take place should be indicated as well. References to publications and manuscripts should be attached to the account.*

Interdisciplinary projects

This call for applications is especially directed to researchers who have already obtained their doctoral degree and would like to achieve *new cross-sectoral collaboration* that aims to find solutions to complex problems within Formas' areas of responsibility. They should come from different areas of science/disciplines. One of the researchers should be the primary applicant, while other researchers are indicated as co-applicants. Support for interdisciplinary projects may normally reach a maximum of SEK 2.5 million per year excluding overhead.

The application should be organised as an application for a research project grant, but it should thoroughly describe the interdisciplinary aim and working method. Observe that the maximum number of pages allowed in the project description is eight, including references (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent). An **obligatory** special application Appendix (H) must be attached. The appendix can be downloaded from Formas' website, under information on interdisciplinary projects. The appendix should clearly illuminate the project according to relevant criteria:

- A clear interdisciplinary question at issue with relevance to sustainable development.
- Description of which working methods are multidisciplinary or cross-disciplinary.
- Included disciplines/main scientific fields.
- Whether it is an issue of innovative collaboration, new problem formulation, joint method development and synergies.
- Participants in the research group and their intended work efforts. At least two researchers who have obtained their doctoral degree should come from separate areas of science/disciplines. These researchers shall perform a substantial portion of the work (a minimum of 20 per cent of full-time each) in the project.

Post-doctoral scholarships

The aim of post-doctoral scholarships is to provide young researchers within Formas' areas of responsibility the opportunity of working a period of time abroad in internationally prominent research groups. The applicant of the Post-doctoral scholarship and the recipient of the same must be the same person. This scholarship provide the opportunity for young

researchers with a doctoral degree to spend one year at a foreign university or research institute. The stay may be divided up into several periods. If special conditions exist, a Swedish university or research institute may be considered, but it must be different to the one where the doctoral degree was obtained.

The post-doctoral programme is intended for young researchers within Formas' areas of responsibility who holds a doctoral degree and a Swedish citizenship. If the applicant lacks a Swedish citizenship, she/he must be in possession of a permanent residence permit in Sweden. By young researcher is meant that the person in question's doctoral degree was obtained within three years of when the call in question is closed. Parental leave of absence, illness, military service or other similar circumstance that has prevented research activities during the time period soon after the degree was earned may be considered as reason for granting an exception to the three-year rule. To be eligible to apply, the applicant shall have defended her/his thesis and also passed all the Doctoral courses necessary to obtain the diploma. If the applicant has not acquired her/his Doctoral degree (i. e. defended her/his thesis and passed all the Doctoral courses) when the application is submitted, a diploma/certificate that the degree has been obtained must be submitted to Formas together with the signed decision (in cases where the application has been granted funding).

Applicants which has acquired their Doctoral degree in another country than Sweden must be a Swedish citizen or must have a permanent residence permit in Sweden

The scholarship is awarded for one year, with the possibility of extension upon renewed application for an additional year in well-justified instances. Applications for extensions can be applied for consecutively. The stay may also be divided in several periods, but the shortest amount of time is 3 months per stay. Observe that the research plan should only describe this 12-month activity period.

The grant may be reduced by the amount of time that the applicant has had other similar grants upon receiving his/her doctoral degree.

The recipient of the scholarship will receive economic support according to the following during the stay abroad:

- An annual scholarship of between SEK 250,000 and 350,000 depending on the host country's cost of living level and the number of accompanying family members. The scholarship adheres to the levels established by EMBO (European Molecular Biology Organisation, www.embo.org).
- Formas covers expenses for return tickets for the recipient of the grant and accompanying family members. Discounts shall be utilised.
- An annual extra SEK 50,000 for costs related to research.

The application for a post-doctoral scholarship should be organised in applicable areas in the same manner as regular research applications (observe that for applications concerning Post-doctoral sholarships Appendix B does not have to be filled in). Observe that the grant may only be sought by the presumptive recipient, i. e. her/himself. The scholarship is personal, which means that administrative bodies shall not be indicated in the application form. The applicant's home address should be provided instead of the institution's.

The applicant should specifically present information regarding the proposed host institution as well as justification for the choice based on her/his own expertise development and research undertaking. The application should contain the letter of invitation from the host institution that demonstrates that the applicant will be able to participate in the institution's research as well as be able to carry out his/her own research undertaking.

The application is also reinforced if the faculty professor or the previous supervisor praises the value of the proposed post-doctoral stay (letter of recommendation). If the applicant does not have a Swedish citizenship, she/he has to state (in Appendix G) that she/he is in possession of a permanent residence permit in Sweden. Applicants which has acquired their Doctoral degree in another country than Sweden must be a Swedish citizen or must have a permanent residence permit in Sweden

The following documents must be supplied in Formas' web form:

- Application form, including a popular science description.
- Appendix A. Research programme comprising a maximum of five pages, including references (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent)
- Appendix C. List of the applicant's publications(maximum of two pages)
- Appendix G. Appendix for post-doctoral scholarships where a letter of invitation from the host institution and letters of recommendation from previous supervisors are included. For applicants without a Swedish citizenship, a certificate stating that the applicant has a permanent residence permit in Sweden must be inserted.
- Appendix I. Diploma of doctoral degree.

Development projects

Funds may be sought for development projects within the area of building sciences. Development work entails specific research work, general scientific knowledge and new ideas being utilised in order to achieve new or significantly improved products, processes or systems. Joint financing is a requirement for development projects. Further information

regarding how development projects are assessed can be found in ‘Guidelines for assessment of development projects’.

Otherwise, what has been stated above regarding application for grants for research projects is applicable.

Research equipment

Grants may be sought for research equipment. Research equipment grants concern equipment that costs between SEK 500,000 and 2,000,000,000. Equipment that costs less than SEK 500,000 should be included in the application for the research project.

What has been stated above in applicable parts regarding application for grants for research projects is pertinent. It should be specifically stated in the application in which projects equipment is planned to be used. The scientific objectives of the projects as well as the equipment’s strategic significance in reaching these objectives should be presented in Appendix A. If equipment is planned to be included in a larger strategic effort, this should also be presented. In addition, the application must include:

- Appendix F. Research equipment (application for equipment costing between SEK 500,000 and 2,000,000).

Expensive equipment

Application for funds for equipment that exceeds the cost of SEK 2 million should be sought from The Swedish Research Council, www.vr.se.

Information projects

Grants for information projects concern support for popular science publications, exhibitions, trade fairs, conferences, seminars, film productions, video productions, digital productions as well as popular science events such as science festivals, etc. Information projects should communicate research-based knowledge within Formas’ areas of responsibility.

In addition to a description of the information project itself, a description of target groups for the information, the objective for providing information, a discussion of the choice of channels/media as well as a market analysis should also be included. The entire project budget, not only the portion sought from Formas, should be presented, and it should be made clear what other financing has been obtained/sought.

The applicant’s experience in communicating research-based information should be made clear in the CV. **A doctoral degree is not required when applying for information**

grants. It should also be clear what other people, and their areas of expertise, that will participate in the work.

Further information regarding how information projects are assessed can be found in 'Guidelines for assessment of information projects'.

The following documents must be included with the Formas' web form:

- Application form, including budget and popular science description.
- Appendix A. Information programme comprising a maximum of five pages, including references (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent). The language can be English or Swedish.
- Appendix B. Budget. In this appendix all the salary costs must be motivated. The assignments for all personnel in the project, whos' salary is being applied for, must be clearly described. All other costs applied for in the project must also be clearly motivated. The full names of all personnel in the project whos' salary is being applied for must be stated. Maximum two pages (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent)
- Appedix C. Brief CV for primary applicant and co-applicants (maximum of two pages per person).
- Appendix D. List of primary applicant's and co-applicants' publications.

Grants that may be applied for consecutively

Urgent grants

Urgent grants should enable researchers to tackle problems that suddenly arise or to utilise transient material. Urgent grants are normally awarded for a maximum of one year. For longer projects, the regular application process should be followed. The urgent nature of the project should be specifically verified. Otherwise, what has been stated above regarding application for grants for research projects is applicable.

Travel grants

Formas can award travel grants for trips in addition to the travel grants that are sought within the framework of the project. An application for a travel grant should be submitted to Formas at the latest six weeks before the intended journey is about to start.

Formas may provide the following types of travel grants:

- Grants that enable the researcher to participate in international meetings will be granted on the condition that the researcher is going to participate as a lecturer, and if the meeting is judged to be of great significance to research within Formas' areas of responsibility. The following should be attached to the application: abstract, information on the conference and information regarding the contribution having been accepted for presentation (Appendix A).
- Grants for researcher participation as a Swedish representative in international organisation meetings can be obtained in certain instances.
- Grants may be obtained for travel in connection to research education or in connection to clearly defined research undertakings that take place in collaboration with another country.
- The grant may be awarded to Swedish researchers to enable them on short notice and for a short period of time to relocate their research to foreign institutions and laboratories.
- The grant may be obtained for brief guest researcher visits, shorter than two months, to a Swedish institution. This is meant to cover/contribute to the expenses for the visitors food, lodging and flight (and/or other transport) tickets. The research assignment for the visiting researcher(-s) has to be clearly described (Appendix A) CV and the list of publications (Appendices C and D, respectively) for the primary applicant as well as for the visiting researcher (-s) must be enclosed in the application.

For applications concerning travel grants, what has been stated above in applicable parts regarding application for grants for research projects is pertinent. However, salary costs are not granted for travel grants. Observe that the primary applicant has to have a Doctoral degree. When applying for travel grants, the following does not have to be filled in: Appendix B, the box in the application form for the Popular Science description, and the box for the sectoral relevance (also in the application form).

Conferences, symposia and workshops

Formas may cover expenses that arise in connection to arranging conferences, symposia and workshops (called 'meetings' below) within Formas' areas of responsibility. In order to receive a grant from Formas, the meeting must reach a high level of scientific quality in one or more of Formas' areas of responsibility. Grants may be paid to cover a limited number of primarily foreign participants' travel and per diem expenses in connection to attending the symposium, organisational costs, etc.

The organisation panel or initiator of the meeting should submit an application for funds well in advance, preferably one year prior to the meeting. **A doctoral degree is not required to be able to apply for grants to organise conferences, symposia and workshops.** The application should contain an account of the meeting's scientific target orientation as well as information regarding title, preliminary programme, time and place in addition to a list of invited lecturers. The application should also contain a detailed financial estimate with an explanation of how costs have been preliminarily calculated, distributed to different financing sources.

In the event that lectures and discussions are to be published, the plan for the publication format as well as an estimation of publication costs should be attached.

The standard value for the amount of the grant is up to SEK 200,000 for a large conference, up to SEK 75,000 for a symposium and up to SEK 30,000 for a small workshop.

When a grant has been awarded by Formas, a representative from Formas is expected to be given the opportunity to attend the meeting. Furthermore, Formas expects that the organiser of the Formas-supported meeting will provide information for the meeting in a suitable manner. It should be indicated that support was obtained from Formas in the invitation and documentation.

The following documents must be included in Formas' web form:

- Application form, including budget and popular science description.
- Appendix A. Description of the meeting comprising a maximum of five pages, including references (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent).
- Appendix B. Budget. All the calculations for the costs of the event, and how these costs are distributed amongst the (eventual) different sources of co-funding must be stated, these calculations may be preliminary. In instances where proceedings from the event is planned, a plan for publications from the event and an estimation of the costs for publications must be presented. (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent)
- Appendix C. Brief CV for the primary applicant and co-applicants (maximum of two pages per person).
- Appendix D. List of the primary applicant's and co-applicant/co-applicants' publications (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent)

Create an application

Upon logging onto Formas Direct, click on the 'New application' button. Then follow the steps below to complete the application.

Complete the form

Complete the basic information concerning type of grant and call for applications on the first page. Click on 'Continue' and complete the rest of the form. Don't forget to save often. For more detailed assistance on the various fields, click on the heading of each field.

Attachments

In order to attach documents to the application, go down to the 'Enclosures' section and mark the attachments you would like to attach to the application. Then click on the 'Enclosures' button. Click on 'Browse' in the next window to find the document that is to be attached. Navigate to the correct file and mark it. Repeat this for all the documents you would like to attach at the appropriate time. Then click on 'Save'. The documents will be uploaded to the server, and if they are not in PDF format, they will be converted. The name of the document and a PDF icon will be shown when conversion and/or uploading is complete. In order to show the uploaded document, click on the relevant PDF icon. When conversion/uploading is complete, click on the back button.

Preview

In order to ensure that the application looks the way it should, it is possible to preview it in PDF format. To do this, click on the 'Preview' button. This will open the application in PDF format so that it can be downloaded to the local hard drive or be printed for review. Observe that this is only a preview copy that should not be sent to Formas.

Registration and signature

When the application is complete, it must be registered in Formas Direct by the user. To do this, save the application and click on 'Register'. Read and follow the instructions that appear in the new window. In order to register the application, click on 'OK', or on 'Cancel' if you wish to cancel. A form in PDF format will be created for signature at registration. It should be printed by the user, completed, signed and sent to Formas. This form shall have arrived to Formas within five days of the final date of application. Observe that once the application has been registered, no changes may be made, so be certain that everything is complete before registration.

Finances

Salary for personnel

Information on the amount of time that the primary applicant and other personnel will set aside for the project should be indicated, even if funds for salary are not being sought.

Provide only the name of the primary applicant in the first box. For the research staff in the project provide: name, sex, year of birth, year of doctoral degree as well as monthly salary at the time of application. All information should be entered on one line. The person's work effort in per cent of full-time should be indicated in the next box. In the following box, provide the person's research percentage in current position in relation to full-time. In the remaining boxes, indicate the applied for salary amount including social fees. All amounts should be in SEK thousands (SEK 100,000 = TSEK 100). No letters, full stops or commas may be used in the fields with amounts. If the amount is SEK 0, leave the field empty.

For already existing employment, indicate the current salary at the time of application (including social fees). When indicating salary for new employment, the standard calculations below should be used:

- Assistant professor post SEK 530,000
- Doctoral student post SEK 390,000
- Senior lecturer grant (50 per cent) SEK 300,000
- Research engineer SEK 420,000
- Laboratory assistant post SEK 370,000
- Technician SEK 370,000

Granted joint financing

Indicate the financier and the granted funds for this project. All amounts should be in SEK thousands. If the amount is SEK 0, leave the field empty. One's own efforts may be evaluated at a maximum of SEK 500 per hour

Appendices

Make certain of which appendices are expected to be submitted in each call for applications and for each type of grant.

Appendix A. Research programme

The research programme should be attached to both new applications and applications for continued funding. The attachment should contain a brief text on a maximum of 5 pages,

including references, Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent. (for interdisciplinary projects, a maximum of 8 pages, including references, is allowed) with a complete description of the intended research, including the following:

- Specific objectives; an account of the aim of the proposed research project.
- Overview of the area; outline of one's own and others' research and previous results within the research area. Indicate key references.
- Project description; a summary of the project's organisation.
- Theory, method and performance should be clear.
- Plan for scientific publication and dissemination of popular science information.

In addition, when relevant, the research programme should also present and comment upon:

- Equipment; brief description of existing basic equipment that is relevant to the project that the primary applicant/group may make use of.
- International collaboration; brief description of collaboration with foreign researchers/research groups.
- That international agreements and rules will be adhered to.
- Ethical considerations.
- Gender aspects.
- Preliminary results; a description of one's own experiments/preliminary studies within the research area.
- Relevance; a brief account of the project's significance for the area of research as well as relevance to the societal sector.
- Staff in the research group/project group.
- Co-applicants' other grants; an account of awarded and sought grants from other financiers that are of significance to the project.
- For new doctoral student positions, the primary supervisor must be indicated in the research programme.

Research equipment

The attachment should contain a short description of the projects that have been indicated on page 2 of the form, point 11, and contain:

- The project's scientific objectives and significance for the research area.

- The strategic importance of the equipment in reaching these objectives. Another page in addition to the five in the attachment may be used to describe other projects in addition to the three most important ones, or possibly describe a large strategic effort at the faculty or university/university college where the equipment is included.

Appendix B. Budget

In this appendix all the salary costs must be motivated. The research assignments for all personnel with a Doctoral degree in the project, whos' salary is being applied for, must be clearly described. All other costs applied for in the project must also be clearly motivated. The full names of all personnel (with a Doctoral degree) in the project whos' salary is being applied for must be stated. Maximum two pages (Times New Roman font, smallest size 12 points or the equivalent)

Observe that Appendix B slightly differs concerning applications for information grants and applications for conferences, symposia and workshops. For travel grants, appendix B does not have to be filled in.

Appendix C. CV

CVs should be provided for the primary applicant as well as the co-applicant/co-applicants that are indicated in the application form. The CV should comprise a maximum of 2 A4 pages per person. Observe that the list of publications is presented separately in Appendix D. The following should be specified if nothing else is stated in the call for applications.

- Doctoral degree (year, discipline/scientific field, title of dissertation as well as supervisor).
- Post-doctoral stays (year and placement).
- Senior lecturer expertise (year).
- Current position, length of appointment and the amount of time for research in the position.
- Previous employment and length of employment.
- Paternal leave, etc.
- Rewards of honour and commissions.
- Persons who have completed their doctoral degree for which the applicant has been the primary supervisor (name and year).
- Persons who have completed their doctoral degree for which the applicant has been deputy supervisor (name and year).

- Post-doctoral students who collaborate or have collaborated with the applicant in the research group (name, year).

Appendix D. List of publications

The primary applicant's and the co-applicants' publications over the last eight years should be accounted for on the list. The primary applicant's and the co-applicants' publications should be compiled on separate lists. Organise the publications under the following headings:

- Articles in international journals, with peer-review.
- Articles, books or chapters in books with international coverage.
- Articles in regional or national journals.
- Proceedings and other reports in languages of common international currency.
- Reports solely in Swedish.
- Popular science articles/presentations.
- Personally developed generally accessible computer programs.
- Presentations at conferences (the applicant should specifically note if s/he was invited as key-note speaker).

Appendix E 'Status Report' for continuation projects

The 'Status Report' appendix only pertains to applications for continued grants for employment as assistant professor or doctoral student. The following should be presented:

- A brief account of achieved results thus far in the original project. The account may be a maximum of one A4 page.
- In case of continuation of a project with a doctoral student (phase 1 granted latest 2003), a specific account should be provided that indicates progress in terms of courses and work on dissertation. If possible, a time for when the dissertation is estimated to take place should be indicated as well. References for publications and manuscripts should be attached to the account.

Appendix F. Research equipment

Research equipment (SEK 500,000 – 2,000,000). Formas presupposes that the applicant has first investigated if necessary equipment can be obtained from the institution. Observe: it is important that the applicant indicate in the form (point 11, page 2) within which project/projects the equipment will be utilised. The appendix should contain:

- An account of how equipment will be used within the project/projects.
- Information concerning the opportunities and improvements that the equipment offers.
- A status report for ongoing projects with grants from Formas in the event that it is only an equipment grant that is being sought on this occasion.

Appendix G. Post-doctoral grants

The applicant should indicate:

- Home address – Indicate home address including home telephone number, mobile number and email address.
- Degree – Indicate the date of your first degree (by first degree is meant the degree that was obtained prior to research studies, for example, master's degree). Indicate the date you were accepted to research studies. Indicate the date for your expected doctoral degree, or the date you received your doctoral degree (may not be older than three years).
- Host institution – Indicate the contact person at the host institution (given name and surname as well as phone number and email address to the contact person; this is normally the same person that wrote the letter of invitation from the institution). Indicate the host institution's mailing address (in the following order: university/institution, address, country).
- Time for the stay at the host institution – Indicate the dates for when the stay at the host institution is planned to begin and end. The period should be 12 months long. The stay may also be divided up into several periods, but the shortest amount of time is 3 months per stay. The maximum time of the grant may be reduced by the time that the applicant has had other similar grants.
- Accompanying husband/wife/partner/children – Indicate if husband/wife/partner or children will be accompanying you on your planned stay. Also indicate the number of accompanying children and their ages.

- Similar application – Indicate if funds from another financier are being sought or have been granted for the same purpose. This should also be indicated under points 4 and 16 in the application form.

The applicant should also attach:

- The letter of invitation from the host institution, i.e. certificate from the foreign host institution. The certificate should contain a statement regarding the planned research as well as assurance that necessary facilities will be made available.
- A letter of recommendation from the Swedish home institution/supervisor. The letter should contain a statement concerning the applicant and the applicant's research as well as what the value of a stay abroad might be for the applicant. Other issues that might be of interest to mention are justification of the choice of foreign institution, the planned project's scientific relevance as well as what significance the newly gained knowledge might have for Swedish research when the person returns. Always indicate the sender's email address so that Formas can easily verify the authenticity of the certificate/letter by contacting that person.
- For applicants without a Swedish citizenship: a certificate of a permanent residence permit in Sweden.

Appendix H. Interdisciplinary appendix

This appendix should provide the expert panel with a quick overview of the organisation and purpose of the proposed project. The appendix should be provided on a specific form. The form can be downloaded from Formas' website, under information regarding interdisciplinary projects. This appendix is only a clarification of the interdisciplinary aspects.

The appendix should contain:

- A clear interdisciplinary question at issue with relevance to sustainable development.
- Description of which working methods are multidisciplinary or cross-disciplinary.
- Included disciplines/scientific fields.
- Whether it is an issue of innovative collaboration, new problem formulation, joint method development and synergies.
- Participating parties in the research groups and their intended work efforts. At least two researchers who have obtained their doctoral degree should come from separate areas of science/disciplines. These researchers shall perform a substantial portion of the work (a minimum of 20 per cent of full-time each) in the project.

Appendix I. Copy of diploma

When applying for a post-doctoral grant, a scanned copy of the diploma is sufficient to be included in the appendix.

Common mistakes

Observe that incomplete applications or applications that do not adhere to Formas' instructions may not be treated. Below are some examples of common mistakes.

Examples:

- grants are sought in the incorrect call for applications,
- grants are sought for a longer period of time than what is indicated in the call for applications' text and/or in the instructions to applicants,
- the total of salary costs to the researchers in the project exceeds 100%,
- the primary applicants' research effort is too low in proportion to the co-applicant/co-applicants (the primary applicant should perform the majority of research in the project)
- the research programme contains too many pages,
- co-applicants' CVs are missing
- the names are missing for the researcher (primary and/or co-applicant) whose funding is sought for in the project
- material (e.g. articles/manuscripts/reports) that has not been requested is included as extra attachments,
- information regarding other projects in which the applicant is involved is missing from the application form,
- text on the relevance of the project and the popular science summary are missing in the application form,
- the project description for the application for a post-doctoral grant is sketched out for a two-year period and
- the institution's address rather than the applicant's home address is indicated on the post-doctoral grant application.

Evaluation of applications

Evaluation of urgent research, travel and conference applications

Urgent research applications are prepared by Formas' secretariat. If the application is assessed to be of an urgent nature, it will be sent for review by at least two researchers familiar with the subject. These should be prominent and active researchers. They should be associate or full professors, or be assessed to have corresponding expertise. The reviewers will provide a written statement of their opinion. The responsible research officer proposes a decision based on these statements. Uncomplicated matters are often completed within a month, while matters requiring external reference and a decision from the Scientific Council takes longer.

Travel and conference applications are also prepared by Formas' secretariat. The responsible officer proposes a decision.

Decisions concerning urgent research, travel and conference applications are made by the Head of the research unit, the Director of the Department of Research or the Director of the Department of Communications for amounts up to SEK 100,000. By the Director General, after consulting with the Director of the Department of Research for amounts up to SEK 500,000. By the Chairman of Formas' Scientific Council together with the Director General for amounts up to SEK 100,0000. However, in cases where it is called for, the Scientific Council will make the decision.

Evaluation of applications within the main annual call

Applications that arrive to Formas within the framework of the main annual call will be assessed by the regular expert panels. Normal procedure is for all the panel members to read and assess all the applications that the panel has to evaluate. Each application has a person who presents it at the meeting and who proposes a statement of opinion. The panel prioritises applications, and provides a proposed decision to Formas' Scientific Council. The Scientific Council then makes a decision.

A panel is responsible for a limited research area. The group should be able to handle approximately 70-80 applications and consist of 8-10 members. The members should to the furthest extent possible cover the group's areas of responsibility.

If a panel should receive a large number of applications to prepare, a two-step process may be utilised. Step 1 entails all the applications being assessed by a minimum of three members who are the most suitable for each application in question. In step 2, the entire group reads what amounts to about a third of all the applications that were assessed to be the best in step

1. If the group has over 100 applications to assess, this working method should be considered.

Evaluation of applications for post-doctoral grants

Applications are prepared in two steps. Formas' regular panel makes an assessment in step 1. After that, Formas' secretariat makes a considered ranking and estimation of the size of the grants for the applications that are assessed to be worthy of financing. Formas' Scientific Council then makes a decision.

Expert panels

The panels (members, chairman and vice chairman) are appointed annually by Formas' secretary general through an administrative decision. This decision should be made by 1 June every year. Few members can be added afterwards if needed and formally decided. Panels are made public on Formas' website when they have been appointed.

Panel members should primarily be prominent and active researchers. They should be senior lecturers or professors, or be assessed to have corresponding expertise. Deans and similar persons who operate in advanced positions with a great deal of collected responsibility should not be appointed to Formas' panels, as problems related to conflicts of interest can be troublesome.

Preferably, persons who have previous experience of proposal evaluation and who have sound awareness of the Swedish research system should be appointed as chairman and vice chairman. A person who might be suitable as the next chairman should be appointed as vice chairman. The vice chairman steps in when the chairman is unable to lead efforts for some reason, such as illness or conflicts of interest. Supported by Formas' secretariat, the chairman/vice chairman is responsible for assessment being done in accordance with Formas' general commission, research strategy, rules concerning conflicts of interest, guidelines for proposal evaluation and what is otherwise good ethics (Codex Ethicus). The panel chairman and vice chairman should originate from different universities, and have different areas of expertise. Formas' collected group of chairmen and vice chairmen should have an even distribution in terms of sex, and have a broad representation from the country's universities.

Panels that are responsible for applied research areas, should have one or two members from an authority, organisation or company that serve as a 'relevance person'. This member should function as support to the panel when discussing the application's relevance. This person should be well-informed of societal/sectoral research needs and of ongoing research in the relevant area. A doctoral degree is desirable.

Each panel should have an as even distribution of sex as possible. Each group should also have a relatively even age distribution as well as have representation from most of the country's universities that are relevant to the research area in question.

The proportion of foreign panel members should be approximately 30-50 per cent. Foreign members are primarily recruited from the Nordic countries, and then from the rest of Europe. English may be the working language of panels.

It is possible to be a panel member for a connected period of four years. Chairmen may serve an additional year. When five years have passed from a concluded period, a person may be appointed anew as a member/chairman of one of Formas' panels. It is important that switching out of panel members is done gradually, so that only a minority is switched out each year. For this reason, the transition to a 4-year mandate period (from the previous 6 years) should take place over a period of 2-3 years.

Handling conflicts of interest

Panel members, chairmen and vice chairmen may not apply (neither as primary applicant nor as co-applicant) for funds in their own panels. If a member/chairman/vice chairman would like to apply for funding from Formas and another relevant panel is non-existent, Formas will provide a replacement panel member for that year. Any of the above-stated persons who wish to apply for funds in his/her own group should inform Formas of this as quickly as possible, preferably two months prior to the call for applications closing.

A basic requirement for work performed by panels is that it must be characterised by impartiality. Provisions related to conflicts of interest can be found in sections 11-12 in The Administrative Procedures Act (1986:23). A conflict of interest is considered to be present in the following cases:

- The issue concerns the member or someone close to the member, or if the outcome of the matter can be expected to entail particular usefulness or damage for the member or anyone close to the member.
- The member or someone close to the member is the deputy or is active at the same university department or company as the applicant, or is deputy for someone else that can be expected to receive particular usefulness or damage from the matter's outcome.
- The member has an ongoing or recently concluded close collaboration with the applicant.

- Reason for conflicts of interest may also exist if there is any particular circumstance that can affect confidence for a member's impartiality in the matter. Examples might be friendship, enmity and economic dependency.

Members are obligated to observe grounds for conflicts of interest, and on their own initiative account for if there are circumstances that might be considered to influence his/her standpoint. In the event of a conflict of interest, the member shall refrain from participating in the administration and assessment of the application in question, as well as leave the premises when discussions regarding the application take place. During panel meetings, minutes concerning conflicts of interest shall be kept.

Codex Ethicus

It is important that those who work in or for a research council observe rules of ethics in their work. Members of the Research Council that have as their task to distribute public funds for research have particular duties, and the Council's confidence is based upon all those who participate in the Council's work acting in such a manner that confidence in them is maintained both during and after the mandate period. Specific demands are placed on research councils to be impartial and correct in treating and prioritising applications. The Research Council also expresses research policy prioritisations.

It is for this reason that Formas has produced a Codex Ethicus. The rules are intended to serve as guidance to everyone involved in the Research Council's activities: members of the Scientific Council, members of the expert panels, specialist groups and reference groups as well as employees of the authority.

Issues that concern impartiality and correct treatment of applications, conflicts of interests, prioritisations, argumentation accounts, extent of research grants, etc. are related to morality. Basis for assessment, for example in terms of employment and applications that are assessed within the Research Council, should be such that principles of conflicts of interest and scientific standpoints are clearly accounted for. A prioritisation group's morality is, thus, about what it does and does not do. No shadow of a doubt regarding unfair treatment of applications or employment appointments may be allowed to fall over the Research Council.

Formas has, therefore, determined that members and specialists shall be made familiar with the rules and legislation that concern research ethical issues and issues concerning conflicts of interest, assessments of conflicts of interest, etc. Formas has also determined that panel members, chairmen and vice chairmen may not apply for funds in their own panels.

It is not possible to anticipate every individual situation and all issues that may arise in terms of assessment and distribution of posts, grants and other issues. It is, thus, necessary for members of expert panels and specialists in the Research Council to discuss problems and

find support in certain common and relatively general guidelines. Anyone affected must assess his/her own actions and activity.

Ethical guidelines

Presented below are the guidelines that direct the Council's efforts, formulated as rules of ethics with comments.

- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' various bodies shall work to promote good research, as well as to support researchers and provide them with opportunities to develop their research ideas.
- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' various bodies shall demonstrate respect for other researchers and their work.

Comments: Condescending statements or ungrounded claims in written or oral form concerning research colleagues/research groups or their research efforts may not occur.

- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' various bodies shall promote scientific credibility as a result of objectivity when making assessments of applications and official matters.

Comments: Assessments of applications and official matters shall be objectively formulated in a fair manner, and shall as objectively as possible account for the applicant's and the applicant's scientific merits and possible weaknesses.

- When assessing applications and official matters, the applicant's scientific, pedagogical and other merits should be carefully presented and placed in relationship to corresponding merits of other applicants. Discrimination due to sex, race, ethnicity or similar may not occur.
- Consideration shall be taken of that research within the various subject areas has different prerequisites in terms of methodology and theories.
- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' different bodies have an official responsibility. Personal consideration or narrow consideration of own activities or colleagues' activities must not impede impartial assessment of matters that concern research grants or appointment of positions.

Comments: Members of the Scientific Council and specialists in the Research Council should assess and openly account for relevant connections that might exist that can be of significance to an impartial assessment of research applications or official matters. A high level of personal integrity is assumed.

- In order to avoid potential bias, the member shall refrain from assessing applications or official matters where close friendship, personal antagonism or other animosity may exist. In the same way, assessment should not be done by researchers within the same university department as the applicant, or if the department is large, the same unit. Neither should members assess applications from their own doctoral students or guest researchers/post-doctoral students.
- Close collaboration with colleagues should also result in the member refraining from assessing the matter. It is impossible to set an absolute time boundary for when previous collaboration with doctoral students or colleagues no longer affects objectivity, or is of a minor nature, but a suitable time period is 5 years after conclusion of the collaboration.
- The member in question shall leave the meeting premises when discussions on applications in which his/her impartiality can be questioned are discussed.
- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' different bodies shall in their assessment of research grants be aware that the culture within their own scientific field can lead to bias against deviating scientific perspectives.

Comments: Members shall promote research collaboration when suitable, and counteract the occurrence of splitting between various scientific perspectives.

- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and Formas' various bodies may not utilise information from researchers that has been provided in applications or corresponding manner to benefit their own research, or at the expense of other people's activities create scientific advantage for him/herself or close colleagues.

Comments: Information provided in applications may not be utilised to benefit one's own research or that of close colleagues by various measures such as delaying, complicating or in any other manner impeding the researcher from implementing his/her ideas or presenting results.

- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' various bodies shall observe and adhere to Swedish, EU and by Sweden other ratified agreements concerning research and professional ethics rules and legislation that are set up by other organisations, such as ethics rules pertaining to animals, plant protection rules, rules regarding dispersal of infection and rules for transgenic organisms, as well as right of ownership and possession issues.
- Members of the Scientific Council should at the same time work for rules concerning management of research organisms being produced so that they take consideration of and enable research and development work.
- It should be particularly emphasised that permission from ethical panels must be obtained prior to research projects being commenced for applications containing segments that must be tested by such panels.
- Members of the Scientific Council or specialists on the Council should work for research being carried out in an ethically acceptable manner and for rules being formulated that take this into consideration. Formas' is responsible for rules and legislation being communicated and known. Responsibility for rules being adhered to rests upon the Scientific Councils' members, specialists and Council officials.
- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' different bodies shall clearly present the benefit of other researchers' ideas and results when providing information. If these have not been made public, approval shall be obtained from the researcher in question prior to the results or theories being presented.
- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' different bodies shall generously provide information regarding ongoing research to other colleagues and the public. During public appearances, the person shall clarify if s/he is acting as the representative of the Research Council or in another role, for example, university employee. In such settings, the person must carefully distinguish between what is scientifically based and what is based on values and hypotheses. Misleading or exaggerated statements should be avoided.
- Members of Formas' Scientific Council and of Formas' different bodies, as well as officials in the Research Council shall work for the essence of these rules being followed.

Guidelines for evaluation of research project applications

General

What follows here is a description of what should be observed when assessing a research application to Formas. In addition, dealing with issues of gender equality as well as the procedure for ranking applications and for panel statements are described.

Formas' research support concerns *basic research* and *need-driven research*. Research should be of the highest scientific quality and relevant to the development of a sustainable society within Formas' areas of responsibility, i.e., the environment, agricultural sciences and spatial planning. Research support is granted to universities, university colleges and research institutes in Sweden. Swedish authorities with research undertakings and their own research staff may also be considered.

Evaluation of applications

An application should be assessed in an objective and impartial manner. Discrimination of any kind shall not take place.

Both *scientific quality* and *relevance* will be assessed. Scientific quality is assessed in the categories of *question at issue*, *methods* and *performance* as well as the applicant's *expertise*. Relevance is assessed regarding *sectoral and societal relevance*.

As points are set within the various assessment categories, the aim should be to utilise as large a portion of the relevant point scale as possible.

When making assessments, it is also important to observe the instructions and directions that the applicant received.

Question at issue

Aim, *theory* and *hypothesis* as well as *novelty* are assessed here.

The question at issue should be relevant to the area of research that is indicated in the call for applications. In principle, research of great general value should be given priority over research of limited general applicability. In terms of intra-scientific quality, the question at issue is assessed from established theories and in the light of existing knowledge. The applicant's awareness of and the application's position on existing national and international literature and knowledge within the area should, therefore, be included in the assessment. The application's originality is also assessed under question at issue. New ideas, bold hypotheses, gender perspectives and cross-disciplinary approaches should be considered advantageous.

The assessment is performed based on a scale of 10, where the value 10 corresponds to a question at issue of the highest international quality and originality.

Method and performance

Scientific method is what is primarily assessed here, but *work schedule*, *cost plan* and *plan for publication and dissemination of information* are also assessed.

The scientific method is assessed in terms of the extent to which it can be considered well chosen and correctly applied considering the objective of the project. Choice of method is assessed in relation to alternative solutions.

The work schedule is assessed in terms of if the schedule of the project is feasible and if the different parts are well co-ordinated.

Fairness of the cost plan is also assessed. If stated costs are assessed as unreasonable, a revised cost plan will be recommended. This should be commented upon in the panel statement. The application for grants for equipment or materials should be placed in relationship to the application's question at issue, method and performance as well as the applicant's or group's collected resources.

If the application only comprises part of a larger project, the entire project's work schedule and cost plan should be made clear in the project description with a specification for the relevant part of the project.

The application should contain a plan for *scientific publication* and dissemination of *popular science information*. This plan will be assessed. An assessment should also be made of how the applicant is expected to succeed in publishing and disseminating information. This assessment is primarily based on the applicant's previous activities.

The assessment is based on a 10-grade scale. When setting points, scientific method should receive primary consideration. A value of 10 corresponds to the best possible method and a completely realistic work schedule, cost plan and plan for dissemination of information.

Expertise

Assessed here is if it will be possible to implement the project in accordance with the provided description when considering the applicant's documented experience and scientific excellence. In the event that several researchers are going to collaborate, for example, in cross-disciplinary or multidisciplinary projects, each individual researcher is assessed separately as is the group's collected ability to handle the project's undertaking. In addition, the applicant's/project manager's experience of project management and ability to implement the project according to the sketched-out plan will be assessed.

The applicants are assessed based on previous written work and expertise that has been demonstrated in other ways in the application. Usually, publication in the following categories is taken into consideration, in the given order of ranking:

1. international journals, with peer-review,
2. regional or national journals with peer-review and articles, books or chapters in books with international coverage,
3. proceedings and other reports in internationally common languages, and
4. reports solely in Swedish.

Included in the assessment is consideration of the applicant's international and national activity within his/her field, for example, commitment to negotiation support and recognition in the form of awards and invitations to conferences as key-note speaker.

Consideration is also taken of the applicant's ability to inform the community of his/her research.

The publication culture within various subject areas may vary, which should be taken into consideration when making an assessment.

The applicant's publishing and documented experience is assessed in relationship to his/her age and the amount of time that has passed since defending his/her doctoral thesis. This means that frequency of publication and of activity rather than the total accumulated volume is important when making an assessment. Special emphasis will be placed on activities from the past eight years.

Expertise will be assessed based on the applicant's previous work, regardless of whether s/he has experience of the project area or if it is a new area.

The assessment is based on a scale of 10. A value of 10 is given when the applicant/research group is assessed to be exceptionally well-equipped to perform the undertaking with the highest possible level of scientific quality and in an efficient manner.

Sectoral and societal relevance

Formas has the task of supporting basic research and need-driven research that is *relevant* to the development of a sustainable society. Formas' primary task is to promote ecologically sustainable development. Long-term, balanced and sustainable societal development, however, not only comprises ecological aspects but also social and economic aspects in a complex network of connections and conflicting objectives on local, regional and global levels. This places demands on efforts from several scientific areas in terms of research, for example, in the form of interdisciplinary research.

For Formas, relevance primarily entails research that treats issues that are significant for sustainable development within Formas' areas of responsibility and sectors; sectoral relevance. In the assessment of a project's relevance, consideration is also taken of if the project additionally contributes knowledge that is important for the development of the whole society in a sustainable direction, i.e. societal relevance, and if it contains a balanced view of the various sustainability aspects. Sustainable development demands that quality, efficiency and environmental adaptation are sought. Ethical aspects are also included here.

Protection of the environment and living organisms entails preservation and restoration of biological diversity as well as ensuring that pollution emissions do not harm human or animal health or surpass nature's ability to absorb or break them down. Efficient and sustainable utilisation of resources means utilising energy and other natural resources efficiently, that utilisation to an increasing extent is based on renewable resources and that the ecosystem's long-term production ability is ensured. If the project contributes to developing appropriate and efficient methods for conservation of the environment and nature is also assessed here. Socially sustainable development concerns the population's/society's ability to survive – public health, social solidarity, welfare and security. The human need for natural and cultural experiences is a part of the social dimension. Economically sustainable development entails, among other things, that long-term costs for consuming finite resources is considered.

A valuation of a project's relevance primarily entails an assessment of the expected benefit of research results. They should be useful and result in benefits for the affected sector, and preferably also for society on the whole.

Assessment is made with consideration to the project's character in terms of *basic research* and *need-driven research*. For basic research, it is important that it be justified by a need for knowledge or expertise build-up within an area of great significance for development within Formas' sectors and a sustainable society. For need-driven research, sectoral relevance is primarily assessed for the areas of the environment, agricultural sciences, animal husbandry, food and spatial planning, in addition to societal relevance.

For assessing a project's sectoral and societal relevance, a scale of 10 is utilised where 10 corresponds to a project proposal with the highest levels of sectoral and societal relevance.

Ranking and panel statements

Evaluation of applications is done in Formas' electronic assessment system called Formas Review. Assessment (awarding of points) of each application is first done individually by all of the panel members. Formas' secretariat then calculates the average number of points for each application within each individual assessment category as well as for scientific quality, which is the sum of the first three assessment categories (question at issue, method and performance as well as the applicant's expertise).

Prior to the group meeting, a rapporteur appointed by Formas' secretariat together with the chairman of the expert panel will have made a preliminary statement. The statement should be $\frac{1}{4}$ - max. $\frac{1}{2}$ A4 page. It should comment upon the application and contain a critical scrutiny as well as provide constructive guidance regarding both its strong and weak aspects. A proposal for a revised cost plan and work schedule should be treated in the statement.

The statement should treat the four areas of assessment:

- question at issue,
- method and procedure,
- applicant's expertise, and
- sectoral and societal relevance.

In addition, the statement should provide a considered recommendation regarding if the application should be recommended for a grant or not. Condensing statements shall not be included in the statement. The statement will be distributed to the entire panel via Formas' secretariat prior to the panel meeting.

The aim of the meeting is to rank the applications. The awarding of points that was done on the applications serves as the first basis for this ranking. At its meeting, the panel can then amend the ranking that was established from the average number of points.

A practice that has been developed for ranking is that applications are divided up into three groups:

- A. granting is recommended; first group of priority (high level of scientific quality and relevance),
- B. granting is recommended; second group of priority, and
- C. granting is not recommended (low level of scientific quality and/or relevance).

The abovementioned ranking normally only needs to be done for applications in Group A and the best applications in Group B.

The group should also propose a project budget for the projects that might be considered for financing (those that can be placed within the secretariat's stated framework plus a few more). Cuts should be made when costs are unjustifiably high. Implemented cuts should be clarified. General cuts that are made in order stretch available funding so that as many projects as possible may be funded is not acceptable.

The rapporteur is also responsible for adjusting the report so that it mirrors the group's collected assessment. Based on the discussion at the meeting, the panel secretary (Formas' officer) may make this adjustment after the meeting if it is for some reason not done by the rapporteur. In that case, consultation should occur with the rapporteur and/or the panel's chairman. The panel's chairman bears ultimate responsibility for final statements.

Individual applications may have a subject profile or breadth that prompts Formas' secretariat to place them in more than one panel. It is then up to Formas' officers to communicate results to one another. The panel that ranks an application the highest normally retains financing responsibility in the event that it fits into the group's budget. Ranking of an application that is being treated by two groups should not be communicated between the groups before their meetings are concluded.

Supplementary assessments

An application from a member of the Formas' Scientific Council must also be evaluated by at least two people outside the panel.

A supplementary assessment can also be considered if the panel lacks an important skill or if the chairman or the Formas officer of the panel considers that such an assessment is required for other reasons. Supplementary assessments are conducted by at least two persons outside the panel. No score is given in a supplementary assessment; only a written statement is issued. The principles described above for conflicts of interest also apply to supplementary assessments of this type. The supplementary report should be taken into account in the panel's assessment. The person to carry out the supplementary assessment is appointed by the Formas officer after consulting the panel chairman.

If an application has gender aspects, the panel should consider the need for external scrutiny.

Interdisciplinary research projects

Formas has a special call for applications for interdisciplinary projects. This call is issued simultaneously with the main call for ordinary research applications. 'Interdisciplinary project' is considered to mean a project in which at least two researchers with Doctoral degrees, from different faculties/scientific fields or from separate departments in disciplinary terms will work together.

A special application appendix (H) must be completed by the applicants for interdisciplinary applications in order to clearly illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of the project. There is a special budget for the best interdisciplinary applications.

Each applicant and co-applicant, who must come from different faculties/scientific fields or from separate departments in disciplinary terms, is required to devote at least 20 per cent of his or her research working time in the project. The application *must clearly show in what way the*

interdisciplinary working method is multidisciplinary or cross-disciplinary and also whether it involves a *new* collaboration, problem formulation, method development, and synergies.

Preparation of interdisciplinary applications

Interdisciplinary applications will be evaluated in accordance with the special guidelines described below. However, the applicable parts of the ‘Guidelines for evaluation of research project applications’ will form the grounds for assessment of interdisciplinary projects and the instructions described below are supplementary to those guidelines.

Applications will be evaluated electronically in the Formas computerised assessment system – Formas Review. Evaluation is carried out in two stages. At the first stage, the individual application is evaluated by at least three members of the interdisciplinary panel. If required, statements are obtained from specialists in the discipline either in or outside the regular expert panels of Formas. At this stage, an assessment is carried out of the interdisciplinary approach and whether the application meets the formal requirements stated in the call for applications. Applications are evaluated according to criteria for research projects and the following criteria for interdisciplinary applications.

Step 1

The panel's three specialists will:

- carry out a full assessment of whether the application is interdisciplinary in accordance with the call for applications,
- carry out additional scrutiny of whether forms have been completed, and
- evaluate the interdisciplinary question at issue, method and procedure, the applicant’s expertise and the relevance of the project to the sector and to society as a whole in accordance with the criteria stated below (a score from 1-10 is given for the question at issue, methods and expertise and for relevance).

In addition, the appointed rapporteur will issue a preliminary statement accompanied by a recommendation – A, B or C (see below).

Grading of applications as A, B, or C relates to:

- A. granting is recommended; first group of priority (high level of scientific quality and relevance),
- B. granting is recommended; second group of priority, and
- C. granting is not recommended (low level of scientific quality and/or relevance).

Using this scrutiny as a basis, the full panel meets and carries out a full assessment of the application, awarding a grade of A, B or C. This process narrows the applications down to a smaller number of A and possible B applications, which go on to the next stage.

Step 2

The applications remaining are scored by all the panel members in accordance with criteria for research projects and the above criteria for interdisciplinary applications. At the same time, assessments are obtained from specialists outside the panel on applications that require expertise falling outside that possessed by the panel. One of the panel's specialists acts as rapporteur and writes a proposal for a statement, accompanied by a recommendation of A, B or C.

Assessment criteria

Question at issue

- Is the question at issue novel and innovative?
- Are the theories creative/combined?
- The degree of integration among disciplines (multidisciplinary – cross-disciplinary); are clear synergies described?
- To what extent does the content lie within the specific call-area of ‘sustainable development’ and has it sufficient breadth?
- Are those who are to carry out interdisciplinary work sufficiently grounded in their ‘own’ discipline?

Applications are scored on a scale of 1 - 10, where 10 points corresponds to top class in international terms.

Method and performance

- To what extent does the project involve new collaboration and new combinations of methods?
- Is the structure of the project clearly defined, well thought-out and satisfactory in terms of methods, forms of co-operation, time schedules, project management, etc.?

- Is the balance between the different representatives of the disciplines or the commitment by them (in principle, they must each devote at least 20 per cent of their full working time) appropriate in relation to what they wish to achieve?

Applications are scored on a scale of 1 - 10, where 10 points corresponds to top class in international terms.

The applicants' expertise

- Have the applicants sufficient expertise and experience of collaborating in order to implement the proposed project satisfactorily?
- Special importance is ascribed to experience of managing and collaborating in multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary projects.

Applications are scored on a scale of 1 - 10, where 10 points corresponds to top class in international terms.

Sectoral and societal relevance

- Is the implementation of the project significant for work on sustainable development within the Formas areas of responsibility?

Applications are scored on a scale of 1 - 10, where 10 points corresponds to top class in international terms.

Using this evaluation as a basis, the panel meets and agrees on a proposal for joint ranking of the current applications. The highest ranked applications are made subject to estimates in terms of financial volumes and in relation to established budget frameworks. This then forms the basis for the Scientific Council's decision.

The panel statement

The panel will issue a joint report on each interdisciplinary application. That report should be no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ an A4 page in length. In accordance with the Formas guidelines on evaluation of research project applications, the report must comment on the application and must contain a critical scrutiny which provides constructive guidelines on both strong and weak aspects of the application.

The comments should cover the four assessment categories referred to above:

- the interdisciplinary question at issue,
- method and performance in cross-disciplinary and disciplinary terms,
- the applicant's and co-applicant's expertise; leadership skills in the case of a group and,
- sectoral and societal relevance.

In addition, the report must include an overall recommendation on whether or not the application is recommended for a grant. The report must not contain patronising statements.

Processing of projects concerning doctoral students , Post-doctoral scholarship or assistant professors

Doctoral student projects

Formas grants support for new doctoral students for a maximum of three years.

Projects with doctoral students have previously (up to and including 2003) been granted for two years with the possibility of an extension for a further two years after a renewed application. For continuation of such ongoing projects, the assessment will assess whether the project is progressing according to plan and has started up in a reasonable manner. If so, the project will be granted continued support. If the project has obvious difficulties or does not follow the original plan and if the applicant fails to give good reasons for these deviations, the financing will be terminated. Assessment of an application for continued funding is carried out by two members of the respective panel, preferably the previous rapporteur and the chairman. For ongoing doctoral-student projects (receiving grants in 2003 or earlier) no score is needed and assessments need only assess whether continued funding is to be granted or whether the project will be terminated. However, an evaluation of an application for extension should be accompanied by a written statement.

Post-doctoral scholarships

The aim is to provide young researchers with an opportunity to work in internationally prominent research groups abroad. The grants provide young researchers who have passed the doctoral examination with the opportunity to spend a year at a foreign university or research institute. A Swedish university or research institute may be considered in special circumstances, though not the institution where the researcher took his or her doctoral degree.

The grant is awarded for one year, with a possible extension for one further year in well-justified cases subject to a new application. The stay may also be divided into several periods of at least 3 months.

The post-doctoral programme is aimed at young researchers within the Formas areas of responsibility and who have permanent residence permits in Sweden. By young researcher is meant that the person in question's doctoral degree was obtained within three years of when the call in question is closed. Parental leave of absence, illness, military service or other similar circumstances hindering research activities in the period soon after the examination can constitute grounds for granting exemption from the three-year rule.

Assistant professors

In order to be considered as an assistant professor, the person concerned must have gained his or her Doctoral degree within the previous five years. Parental leave of absence, illness, military service or other similar circumstances hindering research activities in the period immediately after the examination can constitute grounds for granting exemption from the five-year rule. An application for funds for employment as an assistant professor may be granted for two years with a possibility of an extension for a further two-year period. The application must be submitted by the individual candidate for the position. The assistant professor will be assessed again after two years. The assessment is then carried out by two members of the respective panel, preferably the previous rapporteur and the chairman. In the same way as for continuations for doctoral students, the assessment will assess whether the assistant professor's work is carried out according to plan or whether the financing should be terminated for some reason. If the work conforms to the established plan, continued funding will be granted. When applications for extensions are assessed, no score is needed and assessments need only assess whether continued funding is to be granted or not. However, a statement from the panel will also be issued for applications for extensions.

Gender equality

No discrimination on grounds of gender may exist in the processing of applications. The scientific quality and relevance of applications must take precedence over the equality aspect, though in equal assessments, precedence will be given to the under-represented gender.

The panel must pay attention to differences between the genders with regard to the design of the application and the amount of funding sought for similar projects. The panel should also take care that the gender distribution among the proposed projects does not deviate in a significant and unwarranted way from the gender distribution among the applications. When an applicant's scientific production is evaluated, only years in which research has actively taken place are considered, which means that time spent on parental leave or military service, for example, will be disregarded.

Guidelines for evaluation of development project applications (within the area of building sciences only)

General

The factors to be taken into account when assessing applications for development projects submitted to Formas are described below. Gender equality aspects are also described, along with the procedure for ranking of applications and for panel statements.

Research grants from Formas relate to *basic research* and *need-driven* research. **Grants are also provided for development projects in the area of building sciences.** Research and development work must be of the highest scientific quality and must be relevant to the development of a sustainable society within the Formas areas of responsibility, i.e. environment, agricultural sciences and spatial planning. Research and development work allowances are granted to applicants at universities, university colleges and institutes in Sweden. Swedish authorities responsible for research and Formas's own research personnel may also be considered.

Development projects within the area of building sciences

A well-established definition of development work is given in the OECD's so-called 'Frascati manual': 'a systematic, methodical use of research results, scientific knowledge and new ideas to bring about new products, new processes, new systems or significant improvements in those already existing'.

Evaluation of applications

Applications will be evaluated in an objective, impartial manner. No discrimination of any kind may exist.

The assessment will relate to both the scientific/technical quality of the application and its relevance.

The scientific/technical quality is evaluated according to the following categories: the *question at issue, method and performance*, and the *applicant's expertise*. Relevance is evaluated according to *sectoral and societal relevance*.

When a score is given in the various assessment categories, attempts should be made to use as much of the current points scale as possible.

The assessment work should also take into account instructions and directions given to applicants.

Question at issue

This involves assessment of the aim and, as appropriate, the description of the theory and hypothesis/question at issue and the novelty and degree of innovation.

The question at issue must be relevant to the research areas stated in the current call for applications. In principle, development projects of great general value are given priority over projects with more limited general applicability. The question at issue is assessed on the basis of established theories and in the light of existing knowledge. The assessment must also assess the applicant's knowledge of existing national and international literature and command of knowledge within the field and the application's position in relation to that literature and knowledge. The originality and degree of innovation of the application is also assessed under the question at issue. New ideas, gender aspects and cross-disciplinary approaches should be considered as advantageous.

A score is given on a scale of 10, with 10 corresponding to a question at issue of the highest international quality and originality.

Method and performance

This primarily involves assessment of the method, but also of the work schedule, the cost plan and the plan for publication and dissemination of information.

As far as the method is concerned, the panel evaluates if it is well chosen and correctly applied according to the aims of the project. The choice of method is assessed in relation to alternative solutions.

As far as the work schedule is concerned, the panel evaluates whether the timeframe of the project is reasonable and whether the different parts of the project are well coordinated.

There is also an evaluation of the level of planned costs and whether the cost plan is reasonable. Are costs proportional to the intended work and the expected results? If the stated costs are considered unreasonable, a revised budget may be recommended. This should then be commented on in the panel statement. Applications for grants for equipment or material should be considered in the light of the question at issue, method and performance as contained in the application and the combined resources of the applicant or the group. The panel should also evaluate whether the total financing is acceptable. Co-funding with trade bodies or companies is a requirement.

If the current application only covers parts of a larger project, the work schedule and cost plan for the entire project must be clearly stated in the project description, specifying the parts of the project to which the current application relates.

Applications should contain a plan for scientific/professional publication and dissemination of popular scientific information. This plan is included in the evaluation. The panel must also evaluate the applicant's chances of success with publication and information. That evaluation

should primarily be based on the applicant's previous activities. There is a requirement that results should be made publicly available. An implementation plan is also desirable.

A score is given on a scale of 10. The scoring ascribes greatest importance to the method. A score of 10 corresponds to the best possible method and work schedule, cost plan and plan for dissemination of information.

Expertise

This involves an assessment of whether the project will be implemented according to the description, in the light of the applicant's documented experience and scientific and professional ability. As far as the applicant's expertise is concerned, special importance is ascribed to knowledge and experience of development work and project management. The panel assesses the applicant's/coordinator's ability to implement the project according to plan.

In the case of cooperation involving more than one person, for example in multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary projects, the panel evaluates each individual researcher and the group's combined chance of implementing the project. It also evaluates the primary applicant's/project manager's experience of project management and his or her ability to implement the project according to the outlined plan.

Applicants are assessed on the basis of their previous written work and their expertise shown in other ways in the application. Publications will be ranked in the following order:

1. international journals,
2. regional or national journals and books or chapters of books with international coverage,
3. proceedings and other reports in languages of common international currency, and
4. reports solely in Swedish.

The assessment includes consideration of the applicant's international and national activities in his or her field, for example as a researcher and evaluator of projects in international organisations, his or her work in support of negotiations, recognition such as prizes and invitations to speak at conferences. Patents held and documented inventions and industrial applications are considered as merits in the appropriate cases.

The applicant's ability to inform society about his or her R&D activities is also taken into account.

The assessment should also take into account the fact that the culture of publication can vary within different disciplines.

The applicant's publications and documented experience is evaluated in relation to his or her age and the length of time passed since his or her doctoral examination. This means that, for the purposes of the assessment, the frequency of the applicant's publications and activities is more important than the total accumulated volume.

Expertise will be assessed on the basis of the applicant's previous work, regardless of whether the applicant has experience of the project area or whether it is a new area.

A score will be given on a scale of 10. A score of 10 is given when the applicant/research group is considered exceptionally well equipped to implement the project efficiently and with the highest quality.

Sectoral and societal relevance

Formas is responsible for supporting both basic research and need-driven research and development that is relevant to progress towards a sustainable society. The main objective of Formas is to promote ecologically sustainable development. However, long-term, balanced, sustainable community development involves ecological aspects as well as social and economical aspects in a complex network of connections and conflicting objectives – both at a local and regional level, as well as globally. As far as research and development work is concerned, this requires input from a number of scientific fields, for example in the form of interdisciplinary research.

As far as Formas is concerned, the *relevance* of a development project primarily means that it deals with issues of significance for sustainable development within the building sciences sector. Any assessment of the relevance of a project should take into account whether the project also contributes important knowledge for the development of society as a whole in sustainable directions, i.e. societal relevance, and whether the project contains a balance between the different aspects of sustainability. Sustainable development requires efforts to achieve quality, efficiency and adaptation to the environment. This also includes ethical aspects.

Protection of the environment and living organisms means preserving and restoring biological diversity and ensuring that emissions of pollutants do not damage human or animal health or exceed nature's ability to absorb them or break them down. Efficient, sustainable use of resources means that the use of energy and other natural resources must be efficient and must be increasingly based on renewable resources and ecosystems' secure, long-term production capacity. This also involves evaluating whether projects contribute to the development of suitable, efficient methods for conservation of environment and nature. Sustainable social development involves the ability of populations/society to survive – in terms of public health, social solidarity, welfare and security. People's need for natural and cultural experiences is part of the social dimension. Sustainable economic development

means, among other things, taking into account the long-term costs of consumption of non-renewable resources.

An evaluation of the relevance of a project primarily involves evaluating the anticipated benefits deriving from the results. They must be usable and provide benefits for the sector concerned and preferably also for society as a whole. For development projects, this primarily involves evaluation of the project's relevance to the planning, building and property sectors, but also of its significance/benefit for the conversion of the community as a whole to sustainable development (relevance to society).

A 10-point scale is used to evaluate a project's relevance to the sector and to society, in which a score of 10 corresponds to a project proposal that is highly relevant to both the sector and to society as a whole.

Ranking and specialist reports

Applications will be evaluated in the Formas computerised assessment system – Formas Review. Each application is first given a score by all the panel's individual members. The Formas secretariat then calculates the application's average score from scores given by all members and within the respective assessment categories. An average value is also calculated for 'scientific/technical quality', which is the sum of the first three assessment categories (question at issue, method and performance, and the applicant's expertise).

One rapporteur, appointed by the secretariat together with the chairman of the expert panel, issues a preliminary panel statement before the panel meets. The report should be between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ an A4 page in length. The report must comment on the application and contain a critical scrutiny which provides constructive guidelines on both strong and weak aspects of the application. Proposals for revised cost plans and work schedules must be discussed in the statement.

The report should consider the four assessment categories:

- question at issue,
- method and performance,
- the applicant's expertise, and
- sectoral and societal relevance.

In addition, the statement must contain an overall recommendation as to whether the application is recommended for further processing. If the application is not recommended, the reasons must be clearly stated in the report. The report must not contain any

condescending statements. The report is distributed to the whole panel through the Formas secretariat prior to the meeting.

The panel then meets and ranks the applications. The scores obtained by the applications form a preliminary basis for this ranking. The panel may change the ranking resulting from the preliminary average score when it meets.

The customary practice developed for ranking applications is to divide them into three groups:

- A. granting is recommended; first group of priority (high scientific/technical quality and relevance),
- B. granting is recommended; second group of priority, and
- C. granting is not recommended (low scientific/technical quality and/or relevance.

The above ranking normally only needs to be carried out for applications in group A and for the best applications in group B.

The panel should also suggest a project budget for projects that may be considered for funding (those falling within the budgetary framework established by the secretariat, plus some additional). Cuts will be made when the costs are unduly high. Any cuts should be clearly reported. General cuts that are made in order stretch available funding so that as many projects as possible may be funded is not acceptable.

The rapporteur is responsible for ensuring that the specialist report after the meeting is adjusted to reflect the panel's collective assessment. The panel secretary (the Formas officer) can make this adjustment after the panel discussion if it was not done by the rapporteur for some reason. In that case, the rapporteur and/or the chairman of the panel should be consulted. The chairman of the panel has ultimate responsibility for the final statements.

Individual applications may be placed in more than one panel by the Formas secretariat due to their disciplinary profile or breadth. In such circumstances, the Formas officer is responsible for communicating the results of each panel's assessment to the other panels. The panel that ascribes the highest ranking to an application normally assumes responsibility for financing it, if the panel's budget is sufficient to cover it. The ranking ascribed in different panels for an application processed in parallel will not be communicated among the panels until after they have met.

Supplementary assessments

An application from a member of the Formas Scientific Council must also be assessed by at least two experts outside the panel.

A supplementary assessment can also be considered if the panel lacks an important skill or if the chairman or the Formas officer on the panel considers that such an assessment is required for other reasons. Supplementary assessments are conducted by at least two persons outside the panel. No score is given in a supplementary assessment; only a written statement is issued. The principles described above for conflicts of interests also apply to supplementary assessments of this type. The supplementary report should be taken into account in the panel's assessment. The person to carry out the supplementary assessment is appointed by the Formas officer after consulting the panel chairman.

If an application has gender aspects, the panel should consider the need for external scrutiny.

Gender equality

No discrimination on grounds of gender is allowed to exist in the evaluation of applications. However, the scientific quality and relevance of applications must take precedence over the gender equality aspect, though in equal assessments, precedence will be given to the under-represented gender.

The panel must pay attention to differences between the genders with regard to the design of the application and the amount of funding sought for similar projects. The panel should also take care that the gender distribution among the proposed projects does not deviate in a significant and unwarranted way from the gender distribution among the applications. When an applicant's scientific production is evaluated, only years in which research has actively taken place are considered, which means that time spent on parental leave or military service, for example, will be disregarded.

Guidelines for evaluation of information project applications

General

Applications relating to information projects are not evaluated according to the same criteria as applications for research projects, even though many of them are joint projects. Below is a description of the particular aspects to be taken into account when evaluating applications for information projects submitted to Formas.

Formas provides grants for popular scientific information that is primarily aimed at professionals working within Formas sectors of responsibility. That information need not be based on research projects financed by Formas.

Formas does not provide continuous support to journals, but can provide a start-up grant to a new journal or for a special edition whose contents fall within the Formas areas of responsibility. The same applies to Internet projects, which may receive a start-up grant but not funds for permanent operation. In both of these cases it is important for the applicant to

carefully state how future publication of the journal or operation of the Internet project is to take place.

As a rule, Formas does not provide general support for commercial publishing firms. However, Formas can provide grants for production of a manuscript on condition that Formas is given an option on any future book publication.

Formas does not provide primary grants for teaching materials.

The language in the application can be English or Swedish

Formas does not provide grants for pure language translations of existing productions.

The applicant (primary and/or co-applicant) do not have to have a Doctoral degree.

Evaluation of applications

Applications will be evaluated in an objective, impartial manner. No discrimination of any kind is allowed to take place. The assessment must include both the *quality of the information* and *sectoral and societal relevance*.

The quality of the information is evaluated in relation to the following categories: the question at issue, method and performance, and the applicant's expertise.

A central issue that is not covered by the four main categories is the origin of the knowledge. Information projects must relate to publicising research-based knowledge. Previous experience shows that many applications relate to publicising knowledge that does not originate from research but is based on laws, standards, rules or public property.

When a score is given in the various assessment categories, attempts should be made to use as much of the current points scale as possible.

Question at issue

This involves evaluation of the *aims* and the *novelty*. The project's aims must be clearly stated. What does the applicant wish to achieve with the product or activity? The project must provide something not previously seen – even through other channels. An earlier information project that is transferred to an IT-based information channel, for example, has little newsworthiness.

A 10-point scale is used, in which a score of 10 corresponds to a project proposal of the highest quality and originality.

Method and performance

This involves assessment primarily of the *communication method*, the *work schedule* and the *cost plan*. For information projects, this means evaluation of the possibilities for co-funding (co-funding with commerce, organisations or state bodies is considered an advantage) and the market potential of the product or activity. If the project involves co-funding, the co-funder and the amount sought/granted by the co-funder must be clearly stated.

For information projects, the scientific method involves the choice of an information channel, pedagogical work and the design of the product or activity. The chosen information channel must be clearly stated and must be suited to the message and the content to be communicated and to the chosen target group.

Evaluation of the target group and the market also falls within this category. The target group for the project must be clearly stated and will be evaluated in combination with the marketing benefit for the target group of the message communicated. What will the target group use the knowledge for? The market for the product or activity will also be evaluated. How large is the target group and what proportion is expected to become acquainted with the product or take part in the activity.

One important aspect is to ensure that the target group is exposed to the information and then motivated to become acquainted with it. Short exposure to a well-motivated target group is sometimes better than broad exposure to a large target group in which low motivation is to be expected.

The assessment of the work schedule examines the feasibility of the project. Is the project reasonable in terms of time and are the different parts of the project well co-ordinated? The application should clearly state the persons or expertise to be called in to take part in the work and how the process is to be implemented. A timetable must also be included.

The evaluation of the cost plan tests if it is fully realistic and reasonable. Are costs proportional to the intended work and the expected results? If the stated costs are considered unreasonable, a comment should be included in the panel statement. A revised budget may then be recommended. The cost plan should include all costs for work carried out until the information has reached the target group.

A 10-point scale is used. The scoring ascribes greatest importance to the communication method and the work schedule. A score of 10 corresponds to the best possible method and realistic work schedules and cost plans.

Expertise

This involves assessment of the applicant's documented experience and ability on the basis of previous work, the expertise shown in the application and the applicant's experience of

project management/project implementation and information work. The applicant does not therefore need to be a researcher in order to apply for information funds.

Experience in publicising research-based knowledge is the most important skill for those who are to implement information projects, although a doctoral examination is considered a merit.

Besides experience in publicising research-based knowledge, the applicant should have experience and knowledge of the discipline and target group to which the information project relates. The assessment is based only on the information referred to in the application or attached to it and cannot be based on members' personal knowledge of the applicant's ability or chance of implementing the project.

It is important for the applicant's experience in publicising research-based knowledge to be reported and that lists of publications contain publications relating to publicising knowledge.

The applicant must report on his or her experience of project management and implementation of information projects.

The application is scored on a 10-point scale. A score of 10 is given when the applicant and the possible information group are considered to be exceptionally well suited to implementing the project efficiently with the highest quality.

Sectoral and societal relevance

Formas is responsible for supporting information inputs that are *relevant* for progress towards a sustainable society. The main objective of Formas is to promote ecologically sustainable development. However, sustainable community development involves ecological aspects as well as social and economical aspects. This requires that knowledge from natural science should be supplemented by knowledge from social sciences.

As far as Formas is concerned, *relevance* primarily means that research and information work should deal with issues that are significant for sustainable development in the sectors of agriculture, animal health and veterinary medicine, horticulture, fisheries, food production, reindeer husbandry, forestry, built environment and community systems. Any evaluation of the relevance of a project should take into account whether the project also makes a contribution by communicating important knowledge for the development of society as a whole in sustainable directions and whether it contains a balance between the different aspects of sustainability.

Protection of the environment and living organisms means preserving and restoring biological diversity and ensuring that emissions of pollutants do not damage human or animal health or exceed nature's ability to absorb them or break them down. Efficient, sustainable use of resources means that the use of energy and other natural resources must be efficient and must be increasingly based on renewable resources and ecosystems' secure,

long-term production capacity. This also involves evaluating whether projects contribute to the development of suitable, efficient methods for conservation the environment and nature. Sustainable social development involves the ability of populations/society to survive – in terms of public health, social solidarity, welfare and security. People's need for natural and cultural experiences is part of the social dimension. Sustainable economic development means, e.g. taking into account the long-term costs of consumption of non-renewable resources.

An evaluation of the relevance of a project primarily involves evaluating the anticipated benefits deriving from the results. The knowledge communicated must be usable and must provide benefits for the sector and preferably also for society as a whole.

Co-funding with stakeholders in the sector strengthens the relevance to the sector. Information included in information projects does not include information intended only for scientists. Information projects must therefore relate to information to target groups outside the research community.

Relevance to the sector refers to the ability of the information project to contribute to increased knowledge on issues relating to environmental targets and/or production and development targets within the sectors for which Formas is responsible. Sustainable development requires efforts to achieve quality, efficiency and environmental adaptation. This also includes ethical aspects. Information support must be motivated by the fact that the project is expected to disseminate important knowledge that can benefit the sector.

An information project that receives financial support from sector bodies, state bodies or other funders is likely to have been considered of relevance by the co-financier/trade. On the other hand, if closely related interested parties in the sector are unwilling to co-finance the application, it is doubtful whether Formas would assume responsibility for financing it alone.

For information projects, 'relevance to society' is assessed according to whether the project contributes to the communication of important knowledge to society (outside of sector-specific knowledge).

A 10-point scale is used to assess the relevance of a project to the sector and to society, in which 10 corresponds to a project proposal of the highest relevance to the sector and to society a whole.

Ranking and panel statement

Applications will be evaluated in the Formas computerised assessment system – Formas Review. Each application is first given a score by all the panel's individual members. The Formas secretariat then calculates the application's average score from scores given by all members and within the respective assessment categories. An average value is then calculated

for 'communication quality', which is the sum of the first three assessment categories (question at issue, method and performance, and the applicant's expertise).

One rapporteur, appointed by the secretariat, issues a preliminary written statement before the panel meets. The statement should be no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ an A4 page in length. The statement must comment on the application and contain a critical scrutiny that provides constructive guidelines on both strong and weak aspects of the application. Proposals for revised cost plans and work schedules must be discussed in the statement.

The report should consider the four assessment categories:

- question at issue,
- method and performance,
- the applicant's expertise, and
- sectoral and societal relevance.

In addition, the statement must contain an overall recommendation as to whether the application is recommended for a grant or not. If the application is not recommended, the reasons must be clearly stated in the report. The report must not contain any patronising statements. The report is distributed to the whole panel through the Formas secretariat prior to the meeting.

The panel then meets and ranks the applications. The scores obtained by the applications form a preliminary basis for this ranking. The panel may change the ranking resulting from the preliminary average score when it meets.

The customary practice developed for ranking applications is to first divide them into three groups:

- A. granting is recommended; first group of priority (high communication quality and relevance),
- B. granting is recommended; second group of priority, and
- C. granting is not recommended (low communication quality and/or relevance).

The above ranking normally only needs to be carried out for applications in group A and for the best applications in group B.

The panel will also suggest a project budget for projects that may be considered for funding. A total budget is stated for the panel and the proposed funding must not exceed this budget. Cutting will take place when the costs are unduly high. Any cutting should be clearly reported. General cuts that are made in order to stretch available funding so that as many projects as possible may be funded is not acceptable.

The rapporteur is responsible for ensuring that the written statement after the meeting is adjusted to reflect the panel's collective assessment. The panel secretary (the Formas officer) can make this adjustment after the panel discussion if it was not done by the rapporteur for any reason. In that case, the rapporteur and/or the chairman of the panel should be consulted. The chairman of the panel has ultimate responsibility for the final statements.

Supplementary assessments

An application from a member of the Formas Scientific Council must also be assessed by at least two people outside the panel.

A supplementary assessment can also be considered if the panel lacks an important skill or if the chairman or the Formas officer on the panel considers that such an assessment is required for other reasons. Supplementary assessments are conducted by at least two persons outside the panel. No score is given in a supplementary assessment; only a written statement is issued. The principles described above for conflicts of interest also apply to supplementary assessments of this type. The supplementary report should be taken into account in the panel's assessment. The person to carry out the supplementary assessment is appointed by the Formas officer after consulting the panel chairman.

If an application has gender aspects, the panel should consider the need for external scrutiny.

Gender equality

No discrimination on grounds of gender may exist in the processing of applications. However, the information quality and relevance of applications must take precedence over the gender equality aspect, though in equal assessments, precedence will be given to the under-represented gender.

The panel must pay attention to differences between the genders with regard to the design of the application and the amount of funding sought for similar projects. The panel should also take care that the gender distribution among the proposed projects does not deviate in a significant and unwarranted way from the gender distribution among the applications. When an applicant's information production is evaluated, only years in which research has actively taken place are considered, which means that time spent on parental leave or military service, for example, will be disregarded.

Decisions

Decisions are taken by the Scientific Council of Formas after the panel's proposal has been reported. Decisions on grants for research and information projects are not subject to appeal.

Decisions on grants awarded in Formas calls for applications are published on the Formas website. All applicants receive written notice of the decision, along with the panel statement. The written statement is the overall assessment of the application.

The processing/status of applications is also shown on the Formas website. Applicants can log in, in the same way as when preparing their applications, and view previous applications and their current status.

Decisions on urgent, travel and conference grants are notified in writing. No written statement is issued on these applications.

Applications granted funding

Project managers granted funds must return the decision notice, signed by the head of department or corresponding person and the project manager, within three months from receiving notification of the decision.

If the applicant has not acquired her/his Doctoral degree (i.e., defended her/his thesis and passed all Doctoral courses) when the application is submitted, a diploma/certificate that the degree has been obtained must be submitted to Formas together with the signed decision (in cases where the application has been granted funding).

The primary applicant for allowances granted funds must submit a financial report and a scientific report, containing the parts of the report intended for scientists and the popular scientific summary, to Formas after the end of the project. Grants below SEK 25,000 only require financial reports. Grants for travel to conferences also only require financial reports, regardless of their amount. The implementation time and the deadline for reporting projects are stated in the notification of the decision. Information on how to report the project is published on the Formas website www.formas.se. Please note that previously completed projects must have been reported in order for new funds to be granted.

Publication of results from Formas-funded projects must clearly state that Formas has contributed funding.

When grants for workshops/symposia/conferences are granted by Formas it is presumed that a Formas representative may attend the meeting. Furthermore, Formas presumes that organisers of meetings supported by Formas will inform Formas of the meeting in a suitable manner. The invitation and documentation for the meeting must state that the meeting has received support from Formas.