**FORMAS** | ETT FORSKNINGSRÅD FÖR HÅLLBAR UTVECKLING
A SWEDISH RESEARCH COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# Perspectives on the Sustainable Development Goals

# Part 1: Synergies and conflicts

Last day of application: 23/08/2018, at 2.00 pm

Day of decision: 14/11/2018

## Content

**Formas welcomes researchers from all disciplines to apply for planning grants for preparatory work to lead larger research projects about synergies and conflicts between the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The planning grant is expected to be used for initiating broad consortia, developing a strategic research plan and carrying out pre-studies.**

# Description of the sub-call

## Overall focus

In this sub-call, perspectives on how different Sustainable Development Goals and the efforts to achieve them overlap are sought. The planning grants in this sub-call shall focus on the relation between at least three of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (http://www.globalgoals.org/), in particular goals that concern food and water, land-use, bio-energy, biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate change and related aspects on human systems. In addition, the proposal shall be within one or several of Formas' areas of responsibility: environment, agricultural sciences and spatial planning.

The call is intended for researchers from all disciplines working at a Swedish university, university college, research institute or governmental agency that engages in research. Other Swedish public organisations that fulfil the grant administrating organisation eligibility requirements of Formas can also apply.

The call has a total scope of SEK 30 million. Each planning grant may comprise a maximum of SEK 2 million and projects shall be carried out within 12 months.

## Background

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 constitute common frameworks for decision-makers, researchers and users to set targets, plan for and implement measures for sustainable development. The goals gather basically all significant global issues. They concern the development of society and human living conditions, as well as concerns for the natural environment. The various goals are interlinked and the possibilities to fulfil a certain goal are affected by the work with other goals. Efforts to achieve the goals need to build on a knowledge basis, which develops both in a scientific process and based on experiences and new insights from the practical work on sustainability.

Linkages between the various Sustainable Development Goals create potential for both synergies and conflicts. A particularly complex challenge concerns securing people´s access to food, water and renewable energy, while at the same time maintaining ecosystems and biodiversity. Efforts to mitigate climate change, transformations to a sustainable energy system and a biobased economy, presume that an increasing amount of raw material and products are replaced with biomass and biofuels from forests, agriculture and other land- and waterbased production. At the same time, there is a need to secure the access to nutritious food and work against loss of biodiversity, within the limits of available fertile land. Climate change and societal changes make this equation even more complex, since these factors affect harvest, soil and entire ecosystems. The challenges also relate to, for example, combating poverty and sustainable consumption and production.

In this sub-call, Formas invites proposals which plan for ground-breaking and socially relevant research that illuminates goal conflicts and synergies in the work with Agenda 2030,

nationally or internationally, and preferably in a long-term perspective. In particular, Formas encourages proposals that will plan for research on synergies and conflicts between challenges within any of the following Sustainable Development Goals: (2) Zero hunger, (3) Clean water and sanitation, (7) Affordable and clean energy, (13) Climate action, and (15) Life on land. The proposals may, however, include also additional relevant Sustainable Development Goals. The research may, for example, direct attention to other concerned physical, biological or societal systems, processes and actors, norms and values, or research about the goals themselves.

In projects where it is considered to be relevant, perspectives concerning digitalisation or perspectives on gender, class, ethnicity or other social aspects, are encouraged.

## Planning grants

Formas planning grants are meant to create an opportunity for robust preparatory work ahead of broader research projects that can advance sustainability research and knowledge build-up by bringing together different scientific disciplines around shared research and knowledge challenges and by integrating views on societal relevance in an early stage of research planning. In addition, the planning grants should lead to an increased competitiveness of Swedish-led research consortia to later apply for funding to lead broad research projects with relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Formas plans for a larger call about the Sustainable Development Goals in 2020, but the planning grant can also constitute a foundation for applications in other national or international calls. It is not a requirement to carry out a planning grant project to be eligible to apply in Formas subsequent larger call.

The planning grant is expected to be used for:

1.  Building a consortium with potential for ground-breaking research, including:
    a.  Collaboration between researchers (interdisciplinary and/or international collaborations are encouraged, but not mandatory)
    b.  Cooperation with relevant users
2.  Carry out one or several pre-studies, which map the research field and research needs
3.  Develop ideas for a larger research application which is firmly established in the consortium
4.  Develop a strategy for how a forthcoming larger research project can contribute with career paths between research and society and/or links between research and higher education

The proposals for planning grants shall describe how the consortium will be built, in order to involve prominent and relevant researchers and users. Formas also encourages applicants to engage in new collaborations.

Relevant users should be included in the work that is carried out within planning grant projects to allow for co-creation between researchers and users in an early stage. Examples of users are international, national, regional and local decision-makers at different levels, companies, business associations or civil society.

## Webinar about the call

Formas will arrange a web-based seminar (webinar) on 19/06/2018 at 10.00-10.30 am. During the webinar, information about the call will be provided and there will be opportunities to pose questions. A link to the webinar is available in the calendar at Formas website. No pre-registration is necessary and it will be possible to watch the webinar online afterwards.

## Last day of application

The call closes on **23/08/2018 at 2.00 pm**. Generate your application in Prisma preferably well in advance in order to be able to receive help if any problem should occur. Applications can be reviewed in advance at any time during the process. Up until the call closes it is possible to retract the application and make changes to it. Be aware that it is not possible to make any additions to the application after the call has closed.

# Your application

## What you can apply for

- Funding can be awarded to planning grants that are within Formas' areas of responsibility (environment, agricultural sciences and spatial planning) and are within the framework of the call.
- Only one application is permitted per person. This rule applies regardless if the person is a main applicant (project leader) or a participating researcher.
- Funding may be sought for costs associated with the performance of the project.
- Funding may be sought for the salary of researchers and other individuals that are included in the project. The total salary amount awarded for an individual may never exceed 100 per cent of a full-time position. This means that additional funding for salary cannot be awarded for researchers or other personnel who already receive grant funding from Formas or other funders for a full-time salaried position.
- Formas does not grant funding to cover annual salary increases for project participants.
- Funding can be sought for doctoral students' salaries. However, funding cannot be sought for study grants or scholarships for doctoral students.
- Researchers that are employed at a foreign university, or individuals that represents a user perspective, can be included in the project. Such project participants may apply for a limited share of the budget according to the rules of the grant administrating organisation. What constitutes a reasonable limited share in such cases will be up to the applicant to motivate and for the panel to assess.
- Grants may also be used to fund running costs (e.g. consumables, equipment, travel, collaborative activities and conferences), equipment depreciation costs (up to SEK 500,000) and costs for premises.
- Grants can also be sought for costs related to publishing in Open Access journals. Note that researchers who receive funding from Formas must guarantee that their research results will be available through Open Access within six months of publication.

## Funding amounts and project duration

- The funding for a planning grant may compromise a maximum of SEK 2 million. If the amount applied for from Formas exceeds SEK 2 million, the application will be rejected.
- Funds may be sought for up to 12 months.
- The project start date (01/12/2018) is fixed in the application system Prisma and cannot be changed. Funding for the entire project will be paid out at the end of 2018. If the project will start later, this should be described in the application.
- The latest completion date is 31/12/2019. However, funding may be allocated three months after the completion date, if the project must be extended due to extenuating circumstances that are approved by the project leader and the grant administrating organisation.
- A financial and scientific reporting of funded projects must be completed within one month of completion of the funded project duration (including the allocation period of three months).
- No joint funding is necessary for this call.

## Prerequisites for application

- To be able to apply for funding the main applicant and the participating researchers must have doctoral degrees (by 01/08/2018).
- Users and other individuals that are included in the project without having a leading research role must not have a doctoral degree. These individuals shall not be included as participating researchers in the application form and contribute with CV in Prisma. Instead, they should be described shortly in the project description and, if they seek funding, in the budget and budget specification.
- Grants can only be administered by a Swedish university, university college, research institute, governmental agency that engages in research or other Swedish public organisation that fulfils the grant administrating organisation eligibility requirements of Formas (find out more about grant administrating organisations below).
- The main applicant must be employed by a Swedish grant administrating organisation by the project's start date.
- There is no age limit for project participants, but researchers who are full-time pensioners cannot receive grant funding for their own salary.

# How to apply

Applications for grant funding are submitted using the application system Prisma. A personal account is needed to be able to create an application in Prisma.

The application may be written in Swedish or English but Formas recommends that the application is written in English. The evaluation panels have an international composition and applications that are entirely written in Swedish will be translated into English before they are given to the evaluation panel for assessment. It is not possible to make changes to the application post-translation. The popular science description must be written in Swedish, but the project summary must be written in both Swedish and English. Please note that the budget specification must always be written in English. A Swedish budget specification will not be sent for translation, but will instead be assessed by the international review panels in its original format.

The application must contain the following information (the maximum number of characters, including spaces, are within brackets):

Basic information
- Number of months and estimated project duration
- Project title in Swedish and English (200 characters each)
- Popular science description in Swedish (4,500 characters)
- Summary in Swedish and English (1,500 characters each)

Project description
- Goals and objectives of the project and a background description containing a summary overview of the research area. Here it must also be described how the goals and objectives of the project relates to Sustainable Development Goals. (7,000 characters).
- Project description, including project design, methods, performance and a plan for publication (15,000 characters).
- Description of the potential societal benefits of the project and interaction with stakeholders. Describe here the groups that the research is relevant for and how these will be included in the project. Describe also how the potential impact of the research will affect different groups in society (8,000 characters).
- References included in the narrative text describing the points above are stated in a separate field (5,000 characters).

Budget
- Salaries, including social-security contributions. For existing employment positions, the current salary at the time of application (including social-security contributions) must be used for each of the subsequent years. For new employment positions the starting salary at the grant administrating organisation must be used for each of the subsequent years. Note that Formas does not grant funding for annual salary increases.
- State the proportion of activity in the project for all participants, even for project participants who contribute with services in-kind or have other funding for performing the project.
- Specify running costs according to the practice at the grant administrating organisation.
- Specify equipment depreciation costs if relevant for the application.
- Specify costs for premises (if costs for premises are not included in OH-costs) according to the practice at the grant administrating organisation.
- In the project budget "Total budget", state indirect costs according to the practice of the grant administrating organisation. Indirect costs are considered to be overhead costs (OH-costs). Formas does not permit OH-costs to be included in equipment depreciation costs or costs for premises.
- Budget specification. Here a short motivation for all salary costs and other costs is required. All other costs must be clearly justified. A description of the total budget for the project, including funding from other sources, must also be described.

- Specify costs per calendar year, according to how the work will be carried out. If the project starts in 2019, write 0 for 2018. Funding for the entire project will still be paid out in 2018.

## Ethical considerations

The applicant should always state whether the project includes specific ethical aspects. If this is the case, the ethical issues in question and the way they will be treated in the context of the research must be described. This may be a matter of research that involves the utilization of personal data, for example, or experiments on humans or animals. Read more about ethical considerations in [Formas General Instructions](#).

## Classifications

- Select a subject area.
- Select at least one, and at most three, SCB codes.
- Select at least one, and at most three, of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that best apply to the project. More information on the Sustainable Development Goals is available [here](#).
- Select at least one, and at most five, key word(s) to describe the project.

## Appendices

The following appendix may be uploaded if relevant for the application:

- Appendix J. Illustrations. If figures, tables or images are needed to describe the proposed project, an appendix may be enclosed. A maximum of one 4 MB appendix in PDF format can be uploaded.

The following appendix is mandatory for all applications:

- Appendix K. – Research Data. Appendix K should be filled out and uploaded for all project applications. If data collection is not part of the project or if it is not possible to make the data available through open sources this should be stated in the Research Data form. Please note that Swedish universities, university colleges and other authorities are responsible for the safe storage of data collected as part of their activities. Funding to enable data storage that can be regarded to be within the responsibility of these authorities must not be included in the application. Formas recommend that scientific data is published within a reasonable period of time and made accessible via relevant national and/or international organisations for data publication. Use this [template](#) for Appendix K. The appendix will not be reviewed but will be used in Formas' forthcoming development work on open data.

Find out more about the Formas policy for open access to research data [here](#) (in Swedish).

## Grant administrating organisations

- To be able to seek funding at Formas, the main applicant must be employed by an organisation that fulfils the requirements of a [grant administrating organisation](#) by the start of the project.
- Approved grant administrating organisations are pre-listed in a menu in Prisma.
- Select your grant administrating organisation and add the project department or unit where the project is based.

- If your research organisation is not included in the list, contact your organisation. Your organisation must create an organisation account in Prisma and thereby submit a request of becoming a grant administrating organisation. It can take a few weeks for a new organisation to be approved to be a grant administrating organisation, so make sure to check this in time.
- A registered application is automatically sent to the grant administrating organisation when the call closes. The administrating organisation then has seven calendar days to sign the application.

## Participants

- The main applicant invites participating researchers (i.e. researchers that are considered as co-applicants) and participating administrators (not a part of the project, but persons that help you fill out the application form).
- Participants must themselves be registered and have their own personal account in Prisma. The main applicant invites participants by searching for their name and e-mail in Prisma (note that correct spelling of names and e-mails is required).

## CV

The applicant retrieves the relevant information from their personal profile in Prisma to be added the application. Participating researchers add their CV-information from their personal account in Prisma and should ensure that their CV in Prisma is complete and up to date. The information should include:

- Education: Post-graduate (doctoral) education, undergraduate and graduate education.
- Professional history: Current position and relevant previous longer-term positions, postdoctoral residencies, research exchange visits relevant to the described research project, as well as any extended period of interruption to the research (for example parental leave, illness, military or public service).
- Merits and awards:
  o Associate professorships.
  o Supervision: doctoral students, postdoctoral students, and exam project students; state the total number in each respective category and provide the names of the most relevant supervisions (max. 10).
  o Grants awarded in competition, state the most relevant grants (max. 10).
  o Prizes and awards, state the most relevant grants (max. 10).
- Additional merits, including information about publications: Here the main applicant and the participating researchers must state the number of their publications over the past 5-year period and the total number of publications if the applicants have been active within the profession for a period longer than five years (max. 800 characters). This must include the following: the number of publications of different types (such as articles in peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, books and other monographs, conference contributions, popular science contributions). Under additional merits other merits relevant to the application may also be listed, such as documented experience of collaboration and research communication (max. 10).
- Intellectual property: For example patents and public access software programs developed by the applicant (max. 10).

- Publication list: The main applicant and participating researchers should specify up to ten of their most relevant publications. Be aware that the publications must be linked from the applicants' personal accounts in Prisma.

# Evaluation of applications

The applications are evaluated by an international evaluation panel that is composed of active scientists and people with the competence to assess the relevance of the research. All of the criteria must be addressed in the application and the applicant is encouraged to clearly and distinctly relate the application to these criteria. The applicant is encouraged to be very thorough with the structure and clarity of the application, as the review will be based solely on the information provided in the application.

Please note that the evaluation criteria described below are specifically structured for this thematically focussed call and are therefore not identical to the criteria described on the Formas website.

The applications will be evaluation both with regards to (1) the work that is going to be carried out within the planning grant project and (2) the potential in the research which the planning grant will lead to (the research that is going to be conducted long-term in a larger forthcoming project).

Applications that do not fulfil the formal requirements for this call will be rejected before the evaluation begins. Reasons for early rejections are found in [Formas' general instructions](#).

## Criteria for scientific quality

Scientific topic investigated
- Scientific importance of the objectives
- Originality and novelty of the purpose
- Possibility of scientifically significant results
- Objectives consistent with the call

*Clarification:* The potential in the research which the planning grant will lead to should be particularly considered. The purpose should be clearly linked to at least three Sustainable Development Goals and be in line with the call text.

Methods and performance
- Specific and realistic plan for developing a research strategy which can support a larger research application
- Specific and realistic plan for developing a strategy for how a forthcoming larger research project can contribute with links or career paths between research and higher education, as well as research and society
- Methods to carry out one or several pre-studies
- Specific and realistic plan for publication and dissemination of pre-studies
- Coordination of the project and composition the research group.

- Specific and realistic plan for attracting additional prominent and relevant scientific competence
- Specific and realistic plan to involve users
- Feasibility of interdisciplinary approaches, if relevant.
- Ethical considerations.
- Feasibility of the budget in relation to the structure of the project and the anticipated results.

*Clarifications:* Methods to prepare for a larger application must be primarily considered.

Scientific competence
- Strength and competitiveness of the research group.
- Scientific quality of the publications.
- Ability to carry out the project according to the project plan.
- Experience of supervision of younger researchers (postdoctoral and doctoral students, as well as degree project students for applicants who are young researchers themselves).
- Experience of project leadership.
- National and international activities, including projects, networks, commissions, honorary commissions, participation in or organisation of workshops and conferences.
- Interest in, experience and ability to disseminate research and research results to stakeholders or users.

*Clarifications:* The quality of the scientific publications must be assessed, taking into account the standards within each scientific field. When several researchers collaborate the scientific competence of the individual researchers and the collective scientific competence of the group is assessed.

## Criteria for societal relevance and impact

The potential societal value of the research topic
- The project addresses important socially relevant issues within the focus area of the call.
- The structure of the project has in a pronounced and relevant manner taken into account the needs of different stakeholders or users.
- The project over the short- or long-term can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

*Clarifications:* The taking into account of stakeholder or user needs can include reference to, for example, directives, different goals and strategies, or discussion with groups in society.

Communication with stakeholders and users
- How stakeholders and users are engaged in the planning grant project
- Strategy for how to identify the most important areas where an impact can be anticipated
- Strategy for including competence in the consortia to carry out communication with stakeholders and users

*Clarifications:* A communication may for example include answers to the following questions: What efforts are planned to be carried out? Who or what are these directed towards? Are there different efforts for different stakeholders or groups in society? What is the goal of these efforts? What prior experience does the research group have of working with communicating research results and involving, bringing together to participate or engaging stakeholders. Are there other planned efforts or resources for communication that the project will use?

## How is the evaluation process carried out?

Formas evaluates the applications in accordance with the instructions and stipulations stated in the respective call announcement text. The research must be of relevance to the sustainable development of society and must be of the highest scientific quality.

Find out more about the evaluation process at Formas website.

## Decision about grant awards

The Formas Scientific Council will make its decisions about grant funding at the Scientific Council meeting 14 November 2018. The decisions will be published shortly afterwards on the Formas website. Decisions cannot be appealed.

## Call background

Formas work builds on the vision "Knowledge builds a sustainable world" and the mission "We enable research for a sustainable development". Guiding principles for this work are the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030. The decision to announce a call for planning grants were taken by the Formas Scientific Council in May 2018.

## Support and hyperlinks

- General instructions (http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/General-instructions/)
- Ethical policy (http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/Ethical-Policy/)
- Requirements for grant administrating organisations (http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/General-instructions/Grant-administrating-organisation/)
- Prisma (https://prisma.research.se/Start)
- Prisma support (https://prismasupport.research.se/)

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