International network grant for the SDGs

Opening Date: 10 June 2021

Application Deadline: 2 September 2021

Date of Decision: 25 November 2021

Which of Formas' subject areas does the call relate to?

☐Climate change   ☐Environment, water and ecology

☐Food and animals   ☐Forestry, water use and agriculture

☐Buildings and infrastructure   ☐Spatial planning, urban and rural areas

☐Research policy and funding

Which of the sustainable development goals does the call relate to?

☒1. No poverty   ☒2. Zero hunger

☒3. Good health and well-being   ☒4. Quality education for all

☒5. Gender equality   ☒6. Clean water and sanitation

☒7. Affordable and clean energy   ☒8. Decent work and economic growth

☒9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure   ☒10. Reduced inequalities

☒11. Sustainable cities and communities ☒12. Responsible consumption and production

☒13. Climate action   ☒14. Life below water

☒15. Life on land   ☒16. Peace, justice and strong institutions

☒17. Partnerships for the goals

WHAT CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

Costs associated with networking with one or more global partners (outside Europe) for formulating joint project ideas for achieving the SDGs.

WHO CAN APPLY?

The main applicant must be a researcher who holds a PhD at a higher education institution or research institute.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

Up to SEK 200,000 for network expenses in 2022.

Revision history

Any changes to the call text are listed below.

Date	Change

Contents

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

Description of the call

Introduction

Achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) is now less than ten years away. All countries need to support the sustainable transformation, and international collaboration must be strengthened since global development and sustainable development are interconnected. There is a greater need to fund research that integrates different perspectives and involves researchers from different countries, including low-income and lower-middle income countries, and addresses the challenges of achieving the SDGs.

This call for proposals is being funded within the framework of Intsam, a collaboration among the Swedish Energy Agency, Formas, Forte, the Swedish Research Council and Vinnova, and has been developed together with Sida. The focus of the call is network projects within the areas of responsibility of all participating funders. The projects should run for one year, and you can apply for a maximum of SEK 200,000 per project.

Background

In September 2015, the UN member states adopted Agenda 2030 and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). This represents the most ambitious agreement on sustainable development ever by world leaders. Knowledge creation, innovation and transformation are its central tenets. We have no time to lose if are to stand a chance of reaching these goals – and we now have less than ten years left.

The sustainability challenges know no boundaries and the SDGs are universal. All countries need to support the sustainable transformation, and international collaboration must be strengthened since global development and sustainable development are interconnected. There is a greater need to fund research that integrates different perspectives and involves researchers from different countries, including low-income and lower-middle income countries. There is also a need for research on the linkages, synergies and conflicts between different SDGs in the 2030 Agenda, and on how the SDGs can be achieved and how existing research can be utilised.

According to the government bill on Sweden's implementation of Agenda 2030 (2019/20:188), Swedish research can contribute more to achieving our global challenges through collaboration with low- and middle-income countries. Sweden should also highlight the importance of research collaboration with developing countries that face the greatest challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

This call for proposals is being funded within the framework of "Intsam", a collaboration among the Swedish Energy Agency, Formas, Forte, the Swedish Research Council and Vinnova, and has been developed together with Sida.

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

Purpose and focus

Achievement of the SDGs is now less than ten years away. Global cooperation is central to solving the major global challenges we face. Much research is already available from the international scientific community that addresses the challenges of achieving the SDGs.

The call aims to create better conditions for international research collaboration that can eventually help to achieve the SDGs. More specifically, the call aims to give Swedish researchers the opportunity to **establish and develop networks** together with researchers outside Europe to **formulate new common project ideas**.

The planned collaboration should be jointly developed by all network partners, focus on mutually identified needs and based on equal collaboration. The funding is intended to be used for networking activities only, not research and innovation projects. The goal is for researchers in these networks to be able to apply for grants for joint research and innovation projects in national and international calls.

Collaboration must take place with researchers in non-EU countries, but the call has no other geographical requirements. Collaborative initiatives can be initiated, for example, with countries that have been previous beneficiaries of aid and for which collaboration must build new forms of sustainable cooperation, or with low- and lower-middle-income countries that face the greatest challenges in implementing the agenda.

The focus of the call is network projects within the areas of responsibility of all participating funders. The projects should run for one year, and you can apply for a maximum of SEK 200,000 per project. Some of the funds may be used to finance expenses for parties outside Sweden.

Who can apply under this call

Researchers from any discipline who hold a PhD, are active at a Swedish higher education institution or research institute, and who wish to collaborate internationally to achieve the SDGs can apply under this call. Applicants are encouraged to engage in interdisciplinary collaboration in the networks.

The funders strive for an equitable, gender-balanced and inclusive development of society. Applicants should therefore design the network so that its results can benefit a diverse group of people.

Before you apply

Formas is administering this call in cooperation with the other funders. However, Formas' guidelines and general terms and conditions apply.

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

Applicant and organisation requirements

- To apply for a grant under this call, the principal applicant must have obtained a PhD degree by the time the call closes.
- Participating researchers must have obtained their PhD degree by the time the call closes. Other staff involved in the project do not need to have a PhD degree.
- The applicant must be the project manager for the application.
- Grants may only be administered by a Swedish higher education institution or other Swedish public organisation that meets Formas' criteria for administrating organisations. See Who can become an administrating organisation?
- There is no upper age limit for the principal applicant and participating researchers. However, researchers who are full-time pensioners are not eligible to receive funding towards salaries.

Costs that qualify for funding

When you apply for funding for a network project, you can apply for a grant to cover both direct and indirect costs. Direct costs include costs for travel, salaries and meetings. Indirect costs are costs that are shared with others in your organisation, such as for administration, IT and renting of premises. Indirect costs are sometimes called overhead.

Formas general guidelines for funding

The budget for this call must include only the costs of networking activities, such as travel expenses for people involved in the project and for organising meetings and workshops or similar activities for developing cooperation. Funding for salary costs may only be sought for shorter periods for conducting activities like planning and conducting meetings or workshops and must be justified in the budget specification. You cannot apply for a grant to fund research or a planning grant to prepare an application for Horizon Europe in this call.

A portion of the funds may be used to finance expenses for participating researchers outside Sweden. The administrating organisation is responsible for the transfer of funds to foreign organisations and use of these funds in accordance with the administrating organisation's rules and guidelines.

Grant amount and project duration

You can apply for a maximum grant amount of 200,000 SEK for a project. The maximum project duration is one year, and the project start is 1 January 2022. The funds can be used for up to six months after the project ends. The application's budget must indicate how the funds will be used in the project.

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

Corporate identity number:	Drottninggatan 89	registrator@formas.se	Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00
202100-5232	Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm	formas.se	Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10

Language

We recommend that you write your application in English, since the review panel that will assess your application is international. You can write your application in Swedish, but it will then be translated into English prior to assessment.

Who can read the application?

According to Swedish law, your application and its appendices are considered as general public documents once they have been submitted to us. This means that anyone can request and read your application. Before we disclose any applications, we always conduct a confidentiality assessment, but we can only hide information as legislated for in the Public Access and Secrecy Act (2009:400). Formas has limited possibilities to keep personal data confidential. Therefore, your application should not contain the personal data of anyone who is not included in the application.

The popular science description and project abstracts in Swedish and English will, if the project is awarded funding, be published in open-access project databases without a confidentiality review. Therefore, the contents of these fields should not contain sensitive information.

Environmental considerations

Formas is eager to fund projects that maximise positive and minimise negative impacts on the environment and climate. We therefore encourage grant applicants to design their networks so that collaboration takes place primarily through online meetings and that any necessary travel takes place in a climate-smart way. We also suggest that, in the planning stage, you include measures that minimise energy use and other resource consumption, emissions and waste. However, this will not be part of the assessment of your application at this time.

[Formas' own sustainability work](#)

Equal opportunities and inclusion

Formas is tasked with working towards achieving a sustainable development of society. Equal opportunities and inclusion are crucial to this direction. We therefore encourage applicants to think as much as possible about designing the network so that it can contribute knowledge that reflects and is relevant to different groups in society. We also encourage you to consider gender balance in the network group and include participants with different backgrounds and experiences. However, this will not be part of the assessment of your application at this time.

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

How to apply

You apply in Prisma

You apply for a grant in our application system, Prisma, where you add the information you need for your application. In Prisma, you must create a personal account.

[Apply for a personal account in Prisma](#)

Information your application must include

All limits for the maximum number of characters refer to characters including spaces. We recommend that you choose the Arial font in font size 12 for the information you enter in all text boxes.

Your application must include a clear description of the project under the following sections:

Basic information

- Number of months for which the application applies
- Project title in **Swedish** and **English** (max. 200 characters each, including spaces)
- Popular science description in **Swedish** (max. 4,500 characters including spaces). If the project is awarded a grant, the popular science description will be published in open-access project databases without a confidentiality review. The contents of this field should therefore not contain sensitive information.
- Abstract in **Swedish** and **English** (max. 1,500 characters each, including spaces). Project abstracts for awarded projects will be published in open-access project databases without a confidentiality review. Therefore, the contents of these fields should not contain sensitive information.

Network description

- **Aim and objective** (max. 5,000 characters, including spaces). Describe the challenge that the network will address and explain why it is urgent.
- **Implementation and network** (max. 5,000 characters including spaces). Describe how you will use the grant to establish and develop the network and initiate collaborations. Explain which partners and other actors you expect will be involved and how they are relevant to achieving the network's goal and purpose.
- **Description of the societal relevance** (max. 5,000 characters including spaces). Describe the potential societal benefit of the planned collaboration. Explain how the network will help to achieve the 2030 Agenda SDGs. Also describe the stakeholders and target groups whom you expect to benefit from the challenge addressed.
- **References** (max. 4,000 characters including spaces). List the in-line references pertaining to the above sections in a separate field.

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

Budget

You report the project budget in Prisma. The budget should include:

- **Salaries, including social fees for each project participant**
  Funding for salaries may only be sought for shorter periods for conducting activities like planning and conducting meetings or workshops and must be justified in the budget specification. You can apply for funding to cover salaries for researchers, PhD students, meeting facilitators and technical staff. Social security contributions should be included.

- **Activity level in the project**
  Activity level refers to the percentage of full-time service a participant contributes.

- **Running costs**
  Examples of operating costs are travel and overhead for planning meetings and workshops, including online meeting tools.

- **Premises**
  You can apply for funding to cover the cost of premises if this is not already included as overhead in the project's budget.

- **Indirect costs**
  Specify the indirect costs in the project budget in accordance with the practices at the administrating organisation. Formas does not allow overhead for equipment depreciation costs or costs of premises.

- **Budget specification** (max. 7,000 characters including spaces)
  In your own words, explain the budget. State the total amount per organisation if several organisations are applying for a grant.

Classifications

Formas uses the project's classifications in internal analyses and supporting documentation on an overall level. The classifications are made when the applicant states the subject area, research subject (SCB code), at least one sustainable development goal the project can contribute to, and keywords.

- **Subject area**

Select at least one and a maximum of three subject areas and add a sub-heading.

- **Research subject (SCB code)**

Select at least one and a maximum of three research topics and two sub-levels that together form the entire code.

- **Sustainable development goals**

Select at least one and up to three sustainable development goals (SDGs) the project can help to achieve, in order of relevance. Read more about the Sustainable Development Goals on the UN Development Programme website.

- **Keywords**

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

Enter at least one and a maximum of three keywords describing the project.

Administrating organisation – the organisation receiving the grant

In this call, only the applicant from Formas' generally approved administrating organisations (approved for all calls) can submit an application. Prisma contains a default list of approved administrating organisations.

- Select your administrating organisation from the drop-down list.
- Select the project site from the dropdown list.

CVs

The project manager and participating researchers retrieve the CV information from their personal account in Prisma and add it to the application. Applicants should review in good time that their CV in Prisma is complete and up-to-date. If the participating researchers have not accepted the invitation to participate or completed the required fields correctly, the principal applicant will not be able to complete registration of the application. Participants who are not co-applicants are not able to attach CV information. Instead, their qualifications should be described in the network description.

The following CV information should be added to the application.

- **Education.** Postgraduate (doctoral), undergraduate and graduate level.
- **Employment history.** Current employment and major relevant prior positions, postdoctoral stays, postgraduate exchanges that are relevant for the research, and any significant gaps in the research (such as parental leave, illness, military service or political duties).

Merits and awards:

- **Associate professorships.**
- **Supervision**: Doctoral students, postdocs, graduate thesis students; add either as an individual person or as a group. When adding a group, enter the total number for each category. When adding an individual person, name the most relevant ones (max 10).
- **Grants awarded in competition**: Specify the most relevant ones (max. 10).
- **Merits and awards**: Specify the most relevant ones (max. 10).
- **Other merits, including summary of publications:**
  - List other qualifications that are relevant to the application, such as popular science publications and proven experience of collaboration and research communication (max. 10).
  - The principal applicant and participating researchers should also provide a brief summary of their publications during the past five years as well as the total number of publications if the applicant's active research period exceeds five years (max. 800 characters including spaces). This summary should include the following:

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

Corporate identity number:	Drottninggatan 89	registrator@formas.se	Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00
202100-5232	Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm	formas.se	Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10

- o The number of publications of various types, such as articles in peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, books and other monographs, conference papers and popular science contributions.
- o Any citation metrics should be given, excluding self-citations, and the database they are retrieved from.
- o The summary should **not** contain information about the H-index, the journal impact factor, or any other type of metric used to rank publishers or journals.

List of publications

The principal applicant and participating researchers should list up to ten of their most relevant publications. The publications should be linked from the applicants' personal profiles in Prisma. You must present the publication summary in Prisma under "Other qualifications".

Appendices

Appendix for illustrations. If you need figures, tables or images to describe the project, you can upload them as attachments here. A maximum of one PDF attachment of 4 MB can be uploaded. Note that a CV should **not** be attached as an appendix.

After submitting your application

Control of applications

First, Formas verifies that the application meets the procedural requirements set out in the call. If the application does not meet these requirements, it is rejected.

The following requirements will be verified in this call:

- The administrating organisation has signed the application within seven calendar days of the call's closing date.
- The application has been approved by the administrating organisation.
- The focus of the application falls within the call's scope.
- The application is complete and contains all mandatory information.
- The requirements for project managers, project participants and organisations under "Applicant and organisation requirements" are met.
- The principal applicant responsible for other projects or activities funded by Formas has submitted any requested reports by the stated deadline.

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

How does the assessment process work?

All applications are assessed by an external review panel based on the contents of your application. It is therefore important to write the application as clearly as possible and include all important and relevant information. Each application is read and assessed by several members of the panel. The review process includes researchers who are qualified to assess the potential societal relevance as well as funding organisation representatives who are partnering with us in this call. Prior to decision, the funders have the possibility to consider that the networks granted funding are distributed over several different of the UN's global sustainability goals.

The applications are assessed based on the following criteria on a scale of 1–7, where 1 is the lowest and 7 is the highest.

Network and competence

- o The planned network has skills and experience that are relevant and appropriate for together addressing the challenge.
- o The planned collaboration shows the potential to develop a scientifically significant question for the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Implementation

- o Proposed activities are relevant and appropriate.
- o The timetable and budget are relevant and appropriate.

Societal relevance

- o The planned collaboration addresses challenges that are significant for the implementation of Agenda 2030.
- o The planned collaboration is designed considering relevant stakeholders and target groups.

Funding decisions

Formas' Scientific Council is expected to reach a decision on 25 November 2021 concerning which projects are awarded funding. Decisions will be announced the following day at the latest on Formas' website and later sent via email from Prisma. Grant award decisions cannot be appealed.

Reporting for granted projects

All awarded projects must submit a report to Formas containing financial and project results within three months of the end of the availability period. All reports are submitted in Prisma.

How to report expenses and results

Formas may impose requirements on how projects must be reported in terms of content and results to enable distribution and application. In such cases, the award decision will contain more

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

| Corporate identity number: | Drottninggatan 89 | registrator@formas.se | Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00 |
| 202100-5232 | Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm | formas.se | Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10 |

information about this. Formas may also require you to participate in conferences and similar events in order to create synergies and platforms for learning and knowledge sharing.

SweCRIS

Formas shares information about awarded grants to SweCRIS, a national database of grant-funded research that was instituted by request of the government.

Support and shortcuts

Good to know before you apply

Who can become an administrating organisation for all types of calls

Ethical policy

Formas' own sustainability work

Sustainable development goals

Formas conflict of interest policy

Guidelines on conflict of interest in Formas' operation

Prisma

Prisma online user support

How it works

Contact information

Karin Önneby

For questions about the content of the call

Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 22

Email: karin.onneby@formas.se

Åsa Frisk

For questions about the content of the call

Phone: +46 (0)8 775 41 19

Email: asa.frisk@formas.se

Anna Gellerstedt

For administrative questions and questions about Prisma

Phone: +46 (0)8 775 41 01

Email: anna.gellerstedt@formas.se

FORMAS

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

Formas – Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

Corporate identity number:	Drottninggatan 89	registrator@formas.se	Phone: +46 (0)8 775 40 00
202100-5232	Box 1206 111 82 Stockholm	formas.se	Fax: +46 (0)8 775 40 10