Peer review handbook

Grant for interdisciplinary research environments
2024

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Foreword

I would like to welcome you as review panel members to the Swedish Research Council. We are very grateful to you for taking on this task and making an important contribution to the continuous work of ensuring the Swedish Research Council supports research of the highest scientific quality. We hope you will also find the review process you have ahead of you rewarding to you personally.

A well-executed and systematic peer review of applications is the foundation for ensuring that the best research gets funded. It is very important that each application is reviewed by experts in the field with the highest possible scientific competence. We are therefore thankful that you are willing to give input to this work. To ensure the scientific review is conducted on clear quality criteria within the framework for a sound evaluation culture and good research practice, the Swedish Research Council has adopted a number of guidelines for the review work.

This handbook is a tool for you as review panel members for our call for grant for interdisciplinary research environments. The handbook contains instructions and guidelines for how the review process for grant for interdisciplinary research environments is carried out.

Although the guidelines apply specifically for the review work for grant for interdisciplinary research environments, they should always be seen as a complement to the general guidelines that have been adopted for the review work of the Swedish Research Council as a whole (see links in the full text).

Some information will be updated during the course of the work. You will receive supplementary information from your review panel chair, or from the research officer responsible at the Swedish Research Council.

Stefan Svallfors
Secretary General for Humanities and Social Sciences
Swedish Research Council

Introduction

The grant for interdisciplinary research environments aims to give opportunities for research teams to develop interdisciplinary research and interdisciplinary research environments, where ground-breaking discoveries may be expected. The call relates to research where theories, methodology, factual knowledge and/or data from differing disciplines are combined in ways that open up new research fields and research approaches. It is a long-term support of 3-5 million SEK per year for a period of four to six years. The grant is announced every two to three years, and the applications are reviewed by an international review panel with an interdisciplinary background.

This handbook is designed to reflect the review process step by step. We want to make it easy for you as a panel member to find the information you need for the tasks to be carried out in each step.

New features in the review process 2024

Additional information regarding the applicant's competence and merits

A new contextualising part has been introduced in the application, which should be seen as a complement to the other parts of the application that deal with the applicant's competence. In this part, the applicant must describe how the merits that has been indicated in the CV and under "Publications and other research output" show the competence to carry out the proposed research.

Publications and other research outputs

The list of publications in the application is now called "Publications and other research outputs." It consists of two parts where the applicant must separate between publications and research outputs that are peer-reviewed and not peer-reviewed.

AI in the assessment of applications

Generative AI tools (ChatGPT or similar) must not be used in the scientific assessment of the applications. The assessment is a task that must be carried out by a specialist researcher who has been recruited based on their expertise in the area. On the other hand, there is no prohibition against using digital AI tools for tasks such as improving the language in written statements on applications, as long as this does not entail factual contents or the applicant's personal data being disseminated.

AI in applications

There is no prohibition against the applicant to use generative AI or other tools (digital or of another type) when they draw up the application. At present, they

do not need to state whether they have used AI. <u>Read the guidelines for the use of AI tools</u>.

Important starting points and principles

Peer review

The Swedish Research Council regards peer review as a guarantor that our support goes to research of the highest scientific quality in all scientific fields. The Board of the Swedish Research Council has formulated guidelines for peer review based on eight principles. <u>Read the guidelines for peer review</u>.

Conflict of interest

To avoid any conflict of interest situation, we have established strict guidelines. <u>Read the Swedish Research Council's conflict of interest policy and guidelines for managing conflicts of interest</u>.

If you have a conflict of interest, you must not take part in the handling or assessment of that application during any part of the process. The following applies for panel members:

- Any application where you are the applicant or co-applicant must not be reviewed by your review panel.
- Any application where a close relative of yours is the applicant (does not apply to co-applicants) must not be reviewed by your review panel.

You are obliged to notify any conflict of interest for all applications handled by your review panel.

Gender equality

The Swedish Research Council aims to ensure that women and men have the same success rates and receive the same average grant amounts, taking into account the nature of the research and the form of support. The review panel shall calculate the approval rate in the proposal and refer to, and possibly comment on, how this impact the gender equality.

Confidentiality and integrity

Handle the applications and the review of them in a confidential manner:

- Do not disseminate documents that you get access to.
- Delete documents that relate to the review work after completing the task.
- Do not speak to outsiders about what was discussed during the review.
- Do not use information in the application for personal gain.
- Let the Swedish Research Council personnel manage all communications with applicants.

Roles in the review process

Chair and vice chair

The role of the chair is to lead and coordinate the work of the panel. The vice chair's task is to stand in for the chair of the review panel in situations where they cannot or should not take part, such as when the chair has a conflict of interest.

Panel member

As a panel member, you may be a reviewer or a rapporteur. In both roles, you shall read and grade the applications ahead of the review panel meeting. As rapporteur, you are responsible for starting the discussion of the application at the meeting, and for writing a final statement on the application after the meeting.

Swedish Research Council personnel

The research officer and senior research officer responsible administer the review and support the chair and panel members in the process.

Secretary general

The secretary general has overall responsibility for the review process and for questions of a scientific nature. The secretary general also handles any complaints following the grant decision.

Preparations

Preparations	Review outline application	Review panel meeting 1	Review full application	Review panel meeting 2	Final statement	Decision and follow-up

Prisma

As a reviewer, you work in the web-based system Prisma. The first thing to do is to create an account in Prisma, if you do not already have one. Make sure all your account information and personal data are correct. You must also decide whether or not you want to receive remuneration for your review work. Follow the instructions in Prisma's user manual.

If you have any technical questions and cannot find the answer in Prisma's user manual, please contact the research officer responsible.

Reporting any conflict of interest

Once you have been notified that the applications are accessible in Prisma, you must report any conflict of interest. You should therefore check who the project leader and participating researchers are for all applications allocated to the review panel. Please contact the Swedish Research Council personnel and/or the review panel chair if you have any questions about conflict of interest. If you discover later on in the process that you have a conflict of interest, this must be reported as soon as possible to the chair and the administrator responsible.

Reviewers and rapporteurs

When all review panel members have reported any conflict of interest, the chair will allocate the applications to members of the review panel. Each application shall be read by at least three reviewers, one of which is given the role of rapporteur. The rapporteur is responsible for presenting the application for discussion at the meeting. As rapporteur, you are also responsible for summarising the review panel's statement on the application after the meeting. In this type of panel, where a limited number of experts will review applications from many different scientific areas, you will need to be prepared to review applications outside your own core expertise. In step two, two external reviewers, in addition to panel members, will evaluate all remaining applications.

Technical preparations

The review panel meeting will be held via the digital platform Zoom. Download Zoom Desktop client to your computer before the meeting.

Make sure you have access to a stable network connection. Your computer also needs to have a built-in or external camera and microphone. We strongly recommend that you use a headset with a microphone, as this provides the best sound, both for yourself and for other participants. If you do not have access to one, you may buy one at the Swedish Research Council's expense, at a maximum cost of 50 EUR or equivalent. We also recommend that you use a large screen next to your laptop computer, if possible.

Preparations: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Provide account information in Prisma.	Before the first digital meeting
☐ Download Zoom and check your technical equipment.	Before the first digital meeting
☐ Reporting any conflict of interest.	Before the deadline in Prisma

Review outline application

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The review of applications in this call is carried out in two steps. In step one, the panel reviews outline applications and suggests which applicants to be invited to submit a full application. The applicants that are not invited to submit a full application will receive two grades (Novelty and originality, and Interdisciplinary added value) jointly agreed on by the panel, and a standard statement.

During the review period, you shall:
- read the applications allocated to you,
- grade and give a recommendation on the applications you have reviewed.

Once the review process ends, you will get access to all members' assessments. Prepare for the review panel meeting discussion by reading the other panel members' assessments.

Individual review

In step one, each outline application is reviewed and graded by at least three members of the review panel: one rapporteur and two further reviewers. You are asked to provide a grade for Novelty and originality and a grade for Interdisciplinary added value, as well as a recommendation on how the application shall be treated at the first panel meeting (1=should be sifted, 2=should be discussed at the meeting, 3=should be accepted to submit full proposal). Typically, applications with a low grade on the criterion Interdisciplinary added value are not accepted for a full application.

The grades and recommendation are submitted in an Excel-document outside the Prisma system as instructed by the Swedish Research Council personnel. No written statements are required in this step.

Deviations in the application

If you suspect that the content of an application does not follow good research practice, please inform the Swedish Research Council personnel as soon as possible. Continue with the review unless we notify otherwise. The Swedish Research Council is responsible for further investigation in cases of deviations in the application.

Irrelevant information

Base your assessment only on the contents of the application itself. Irrelevant information must not impact on the assessment. Disregard facts that you believe you know despite them not being included in the application.

Ask for advice from others only in exceptional cases

You must not disseminate information about the applications or applicants outside the review panel. Only in exceptional cases may it be justified to ask a colleague about any specific information, for example relating to the use of statistics or new research findings, on condition that you do not show them the application itself.

Assessment criteria

You shall assess the outline application based on two criteria:

- Novelty and originality
- Interdisciplinary added value

The criteria are evaluated on a seven-degree scale.

Please use the guiding questions we have produced for each criterion to support the assessment of the application.

Guiding questions

Novelty and originality (1–7)
- To what extent does the project address new interesting scientific questions?
- To what extent does the proposed research environment show potential for research breakthroughs and ground-breaking research?
- To what extent does the research, through its approach and collaboration, have the potential to open the way to new research fields and research approaches?

Interdisciplinary added value (1–7)
- To what extent does the applicant show that the proposed research environment is a new interdisciplinary grouping with researchers from genuinely different scientific backgrounds, and from genuinely differing disciplines?
- To what extent does the research task defined in the application require collaboration between the applicants in order to succeed?
- In what way does the collaboration between the applicants create synergy effects, and how do the applicants' differing competences contribute to added value for research, both in the separate research fields and in the interdisciplinary field?

Grading scales

The assessment of the novelty and originality, and the interdisciplinary added value is done on a seven-degree scale.

Grade	Explanation
7	Outstanding Exceptionally strong application with negligible weaknesses
6	Excellent Very strong application with negligible weaknesses
5	Very good to excellent Very strong application with minor weaknesses
4	Very good Strong application with minor weaknesses
3	Good Some strengths, but also moderate weaknesses
2	Weak A few strengths, but also at least one major weakness or several minor weaknesses
1	Poor Very few strengths, and numerous major weaknesses

For all criteria, you can also mark "Insufficient", if you consider that the application lacks sufficient information to allow you to make a reasonable assessment of the criterion. Please note that any such mark should only be used in the individual review before the review panel meeting, and not in the final grade.

Review outline application: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Grade and give a recommendation on all applications for which you are the rapporteur.	Before the deadline
☐ Grade and give a recommendation on all applications for which you are a reviewer.	Before the deadline
☐ Prepare a brief presentation of strengths and weaknesses in the applications for which you are the rapporteur.	Before the meeting
☐ Contact the Swedish Research Council personnel and the chair if you discover during the review that you do, after all, have a conflict of interest with any of the applications, if you discover any problem with an application.	As soon as possible
☐ Contact the Swedish Research Council personnel if you suspect any deviation from ethical guidelines or good research practice.	As soon as possible
☐ Identify at least two potential external experts that are suitable to review the full application.	As soon as possible

Review panel meeting 1

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Preparations for the meeting

The purpose of the review panel meeting 1 is for the panel to jointly decide on which applicants that shall proceed to step 2 and to be invited to submit a full application.

The chair and VR personnel will prepare a list based on panel members' individual grading and recommendations, including a suggestion of which applications will be discussed at the panel meeting.

Ahead of the meeting, you as a member will read the list, including suggested applications for discussion. You can consider whether any of the applications should be brought up for discussion at the meeting nevertheless.

Discussion of applications

The chair leads the discussion of the applications. As a rule, the rapporteur begins by presenting an application's strengths and weaknesses. Thereafter, the other members give their assessments.

For each application discussed at the meeting, the panel shall agree on a grade for Novelty and originality, and a grade for Interdisciplinary added value.

All applications shall be treated equally

The review panel is responsible for ensuring each application is assessed on its own merits.

- Irrelevant information shall not be discussed.
- The panel's applications shall compete with each other on equal terms.
- No application shall be given a higher or lower grade because it belongs within a certain subject area.
- The panel shall not carry out any quota-based allocation between the scientific disciplines included in the panel.
- An application is guaranteed a new assessment under each call – even if it has been submitted in conjunction with previous calls.

Conflict of interest during the review meeting

Persons who have a conflict of interest in relation to an application shall leave the room or the digital meeting while the application is discussed. A person who has a conflict of interest in relation to an application shall not take part in the discussion of that particular application. If you discover any possible conflict of

interest (your own or another's) during the meeting, you should bring this up with the chair and the Swedish Research Council personnel in private.

Decision on applications to proceed to step 2

Once all applications have been discussed, and the panel has agreed on a joint grade for Novelty and originality and a grade for Interdisciplinary added value for each discussed application, the panel shall carry out a preliminary ranking of the discussed applications and decide on which applications should be invited for full application (max. 35 applications). Depending on the distribution of the remaining applications, the allocation of reviewers in step two might have to be adjusted to even the workload.

The applications that move forward to step 2 shall include both women and men to such an extent that there is a good chance of achieving a gender-equal outcome in relation to the number of applications received.

The panel shall also agree on grades for both criteria on all applications that do not proceed to step 2.

Review panel meeting 1: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Agree on grades for sifted applications.	At the review panel meeting
☐ Agree on grades for each application discussed.	At the review panel meeting
☐ Agree on a proposal for which applications to screen out and to take forward to step two.	At the review panel meeting

Review full application

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The outline applications that received the highest grade and recommendation will be invited to submit a full application. The full applications are assessed based on more grading criteria than the outline applications.

During the review period, you shall:

• read the applications allocated to you,
• write assessments and preliminary statements,
• grade and rank the applications you have reviewed.

Once the review process has ended, you will get access to all members' assessments in Prisma. Prepare for the review panel meeting discussion by reading the other panel members' assessments and external reviews.

Individual review

Each application is reviewed and graded by up to five members of the review panel: one rapporteur and four further reviewers. Each application is allocated to reviewers with most appropriate expertise. Nevertheless, to distribute the workload evenly and to make sure that each application is read by enough panel members to enable a joint grading and ranking at the end of the meeting, you might be allocated some applications that are outside your field of expertise. In cases where you are unfamiliar with the field of research, you shall assess the application using your general scientific knowledge and knowledge of how to formulate a research project.

If you are the rapporteur, you shall write a preliminary statement. This shall consist of a numerical grade and detailed written comments on all evaluation criteria. The comments shall highlight strengths and weaknesses in the project described.

In the role as reviewer, you shall write an assessment. The assessment shall consist of a numerical grade and written comments, but the comments do not have to be detailed. Your notes will be a support in the discussion during the review panel meeting, and also after the meeting, when the rapporteur writes the final statement. You should therefore end your review of each application by listing the strengths and weaknesses that your assessment is based on.

Deviations in the application

If you suspect that the content of an application does not follow good research practice, please inform the Swedish Research Council personnel as soon as

possible. Continue with the review unless we notify otherwise. The Swedish Research Council is responsible for further investigation in cases of deviations in the application.

Irrelevant information

Base your assessment only on the contents of the application itself. Irrelevant information must not impact on the assessment. Disregard facts that you believe you know despite them not being included in the application.

Ask for advice from others only in exceptional cases

You must not disseminate information about the applications or applicants outside the review panel. Only in exceptional cases may it be justified to ask a colleague about any specific information, for example relating to the use of statistics or new research findings, on condition that you do not show them the application itself.

Ethical aspects

In step two, the applicant shall state whether there are any requirements for permits and approvals for the research planned. If there are such requirements, the applicant shall also describe how the permits and approvals will be obtained. If parts of the research will be conducted abroad, the applicant must be able to describe how this impact any requirement for permits or approvals. Necessary permits and approvals must be in place when the research begins. The assessment of legal and formal requirements is a part of the feasibility criterion.

The assessment of ethical aspects also includes examining how applicants reflect on ethical considerations. The evaluation of ethical considerations is part of the criterion for the scientific quality of the project.

Sex and gender perspectives

The assessment of scientific quality includes scrutinising how sex and gender perspectives are included in the applications in step two. The applicant shall justify their answer, irrespective of whether it is relevant or not. Read the instructions for applicants.

Assessment criteria

You shall assess the scientific quality of the full application based on four basic criteria:

• Scientific quality of the proposed research
• Novelty and originality
• Merits of the applicant
• Feasibility

The purpose of using several basic criteria is to achieve a multi-faceted assessment. In addition to the four basic criteria, you shall also assess the

applications using an additional criterion: Interdisciplinary added value. The criteria are evaluated on a seven-degree or a three-degree scale.

Please use the guiding questions we have produced for each criterion to support the assessment of the application.

Guiding questions

Scientific quality of the proposed research (1–7)

- Do the scientific questions aim to develop ground-breaking interdisciplinary research and is the project design of sufficient quality to achieve or significantly approach this goal?
- To what extent are the design of the project and its questions of the highest scientific quality?
- To what extent is the project description sufficiently clear and systematic, for example in its definition of the research problem, its theoretical basis, and the summary of previous results within the research area?
- To what extent is the proposed research design suitable for achieving the aims of the project?
- To what extent are the methods for any data collection and analysis well described and suitable?
- When applicable, how are issues relating to sex and gender perspectives justified and handled?
- Are the ethical considerations for the proposed project properly described and addressed? Does the applicant adequately consider risk/value/suffering for humans, animals, nature and/or society?

Novelty and originality (1–7)

- To what extent does the project address new interesting scientific questions?
- To what extent does the project include new ways of combining theories, methods, factual knowledge and/or data from different disciplines for approaching important scientific questions?
- To what extent does the proposed research environment show potential for research breakthroughs and ground-breaking research?
- To what extent does the research, through its approach and collaboration, have the potential to open the way to new research fields and research approaches?

Merits of the applicant (1–7)

Merits are assessed in relation to the applicant's career age and to the research task. Only take into account the "active research years" years when assessing the scope of scientific production. Time off for parental leave, sick leave, or similar circumstances should be deducted. The merits of the applicant in the application (publications and other output as well as CV information) must mainly confirm the applicant's merits to carry out the described research.

- To what extent do the project participants have sufficient research experience and expertise within the area the application relates to?

- To what extent has the previous research conducted by the project participants contributed new knowledge within the research area?
- To what extent have the project participants displayed an ability for independent and creative scientific work?
- How good are the project participants' scientific production, impact and other merits in a national and international perspective, in relation to the research area and the project participants' career ages?
- To what extent do the project participants have the relevant and supplementary competence required to carry out the research task?
- To what extent does the applicant (in the event the application includes doctoral students) have any experience of supervising doctoral students?
- To what extent does the applicant have any experience of leading major research projects or research environments?

Feasibility (1–3)

- To what extent is the design of the project realistic, including the time plan?
- Is there access to competence, materials, equipment, research infrastructure and other resources required for the implementation of the project?
- Are the division of work and collaboration between the participants in the project clearly described?
- How good is the balance between the feasibility and risks of the project and its potential gains? (High risk/high gain)
- Does the applicant adequately consider relevant legal and formal requirements for the proposed research, such as ethical permits and guidelines?

Interdisciplinary added value (1–7)

- To what extent does the applicant show that the proposed research environment is a new interdisciplinary grouping with researchers from genuinely differing scientific backgrounds, and from genuinely differing disciplines?
- Does the applicant describe convincingly how the combination of theories, methods, factual knowledge and/or data from the different disciplines can be expected to lead to ground-breaking knowledge?
- Does the applicant describe convincingly how the project participants plan to jointly build up, develop and manage the interdisciplinary research environment?
- To what extent does the research task defined in the application require collaboration between the applicants in order to succeed?
- To what extent will the proposed project strengthen and increase the quality of research within the research areas in question at the HEI(s), and also in Sweden and internationally?
- In what way does the collaboration between the applicants create synergy effects, and how do the applicants' differing competences contribute to added value for research, both in the separate research fields and in the interdisciplinary field?

Overall assessment (1–7)

Weigh together the above subsidiary criteria into an overall grade that reflects the review panel's joint assessment of the application's scientific quality. As a guidance for the review panel's assessment, the novelty and originality as well as the interdisciplinary added value are the two most important criteria.

Grading scales

The assessment of the scientific quality of the application, novelty and originality, merits of the applicant, and interdisciplinary added value is done on a seven-degree scale.

Grade	Explanation
7	Outstanding Exceptionally strong application with negligible weaknesses
6	Excellent Very strong application with negligible weaknesses
5	Very good to excellent Very strong application with minor weaknesses
4	Very good Strong application with minor weaknesses
3	Good Some strengths, but also moderate weaknesses
2	Weak A few strengths, but also at least one major weakness or several minor weaknesses
1	Poor Very few strengths, and numerous major weaknesses

The assessment of feasibility is done on a three-degree scale.

Grade	Explanation
3	Feasible
2	Partly feasible
1	Not feasible

For all criteria, you can also mark "Insufficient", if you consider that the application lacks sufficient information to allow you to make a reasonable assessment of the criterion. Please note that any such mark should only be used in the individual review before the review panel meeting, and not in the final grade.

Ranking applications

Rank every application in relation to the other applications you have reviewed. The ranking is a supplement to the grading when the review panel's applications are compared with each other. You shall rank all the applications you have been allocated, both those that you are rapporteur for, and the other ones you have reviewed. Ahead of the review panel meeting, the individual rankings of all the reviewers are weighed together into a preliminary ranking factor for each application. For instructions, please see Prisma's user manual.

External reviewers

All applications in step two are reviewed by two external reviewers. In normal cases, the administrator responsible at the Swedish Research Council will contact the external reviewers. The assessments from external reviewers are available in Prisma. The assessments shall consist of grades for subsidiary criteria and detailed written comments. External reviewers shall not provide an overall grade. You shall read external assessments before the panel meeting.

Assessment of project budgets

As a rapporteur, it is your task to propose a grant amount to award for the applications at the review panel two. The proposal is presented during the panel meeting with the help of a prepared documentation that you bring with you. The proposal is presented as a total amount (in even thousands SEK) for the project, and in number of years. You shall also assess the budget for the other applications that you have reviewed, so that you can agree to or propose changes to the rapporteur's proposal at the meeting.
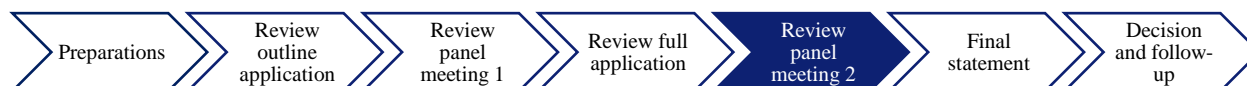
The guiding principle for your assessment of a project budget is that the budget should be sufficient to conduct the research proposed in the application. The assessment should include costs for salaries, premises, operating costs and depreciation of equipment, and other costs that the applicant has indicated. All items should be justified in order to facilitate the assessment. In particular, consider whether there are elements in the budget that stand out, such as unreasonable or unjustified costs.

You should not weigh in the level of indirect costs in your assessment. Please note that the assessment of the budget should be separated from the evaluation of the scientific quality of the project.

Review full application: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Grade and write detailed comments (preliminary statement) on all applications for which you are the rapporteur.	Before the deadline
☐ Grade and write comments (assessment) on all applications for which you are a reviewer.	Before the deadline
☐ Rank all applications allocated to you.	Before the deadline
☐ Prepare for the meeting by reading other panel members' comments and external assessments.	Before the meeting
☐ Prepare a brief presentation of strengths and weaknesses in the applications for which you are the rapporteur.	Before the meeting
☐ Prepare for the meeting by making proposals for the budget to award for all applications for which you are the rapporteur.	Before the meeting
☐ Contact the Swedish Research Council personnel and the chair if you discover during the review that you do, after all, have a conflict of interest with any of the applications, or if you discover any problem with an application.	As soon as possible
☐ Contact the Swedish Research Council personnel if you suspect any deviation from ethical guidelines or good research practice.	As soon as possible

Review panel meeting 2

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At the review panel meeting 2, all applications are discussed on the basis of the individual grading and ranking as the starting point. The review panel shall agree on joint subsidiary grades and an overall grade for each application. The review panel is also expected to provide a list of priority for the expected number of proposals to be funded, supplemented by a number of reserves in priority order.

Discussion of applications

The chair leads the discussion of the applications. As a rule, the rapporteur begins by presenting an application's strengths and weaknesses. Thereafter, the other members give their assessments. The chair is responsible for ensuring external assessments are included in the discussion.

For each application discussed at the meeting, the panel shall agree on subsidiary grades and an overall grade. The rapporteur shall take notes to support the wording of the panel's statement.

All applications shall be treated equally

The review panel is responsible for ensuring each application is assessed on its own merits.

- Irrelevant information shall not be discussed.
- The panel's applications shall compete with each other on equal terms.
- No application shall be given a higher or lower grade because it belongs within a certain subject area.
- The panel shall not carry out any quota-based allocation between the scientific disciplines included in the panel.
- An application is guaranteed a new assessment under each call – even if it has been submitted in conjunction with previous calls.
- A balance shall be found in the time the panel allocates to each application.

Conflict of interest during the review meeting

Persons who have a conflict of interest in relation to an application shall leave the room or the digital meeting while the application is discussed. A person who has a conflict of interest in relation to an application shall not take part in the discussion of that particular application. If you discover any possible conflict of interest (your own or another's) during the meeting, you should bring this up with the chair and the Swedish Research Council personnel in private.

Prioritisation

Once all applications have been discussed, and the panel has agreed on joint grades for each application, a prioritisation shall be carried out of the applications with the highest scientific quality. This prioritisation shall conclude with the review panel's proposal for applications to be awarded grants within the panel's budgetary framework. A prioritisation list with reserves shall also be produced.

The review panel shall take into account the approval rate for women and for men during the summarising prioritisation.

Proposal for budget

The review panel as a whole is responsible for the evaluation and proposal for budget for each application. At the meeting, the panel shall agree on a proposed grant amount to award to each prioritised application, including reserves. The budget discussion goes hand in hand with the prioritisation discussion, as the number of applications that can be prioritised within the review panel's budget framework is dependent on the proposed project budgets.

The rapporteur opens the budget discussion with his or her proposal, and a justification for the proposal.

The review panel then discusses the budget and agrees on a reasonable project budget range. Please note that the assessment of the project costs shall not affect the evaluation of the scientific quality of the project.

Review panel meeting: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Agree on subsidiary grades and an overall grade for each application discussed.	At the review panel meeting
☐ Agree on a proposal for the applications to be awarded funding within the review panel's budgetary framework.	At the review panel meeting
☐ Agree on a prioritisation list with reserves.	At the review panel meeting
☐ Agree on a budget for each prioritised application, including reserves.	At the review panel meeting

Final statement

The rapporteur writes a final statement

The discussion at the review panel meeting forms the basis for the review panel's joint statement. The final statement is the end product of the review process to which each application is submitted. It forms the Swedish Research Council's basis for decision-making in the matter, and is also sent to the applicant in conjunction with the grant decision being published.

You are responsible for writing statements on the applications for which you have been the rapporteur. After the meeting, you shall modify the *preliminary statement* that you drew up before the meeting so that it reflects the review panel's joint assessment of the application. You usually have one week in which to write final statements following the end of the review panel meeting.

Only applications that have been the subject of discussion at the review panel meeting 2 receive a full final statement. The sifted applications are instead handled by the Swedish Research Council personnel. These applications receive a standard statement describing the sifting process and gradings for Novelty and originality, and Interdisciplinary added value.

The chair reviews all statements

Once the final statements are completed, they are checked by the chair and by the Swedish Research Council personnel. The chair is responsible for ensuring the final statements on the applications discussed at the review panel meeting reflect the panel's discussion, and that the written justifications correspond to the grades. In conjunction with the chair's review, you may be asked to supplement or adjust a statement.

General advice and recommendations on statements

The **final** statement shall reflect the review panel's joint and overall assessment, including any external assessments.

Completing the statements, you must
- focus on describing the main strengths and weaknesses of the application.
- ensure the written justifications correspond to the grading – feel free to use the definitions in the grading scale in your written comments.
- consider the guiding questions for the different assessment criteria.
- write concisely, but not too briefly – the content is more important than the length of the text.

- comment on whether the review panel has weighed in deviations from the Swedish Research Council's general instructions in the assessment of the application.
- be constructive and factual in your comments.

Completing the statements, you must not

- make a long summary of the contents of the application or the merits of the applicant.
- introduce personal comments – the statement shall constitute the review panel's joint assessment.
- state quantifiable data.
- state any personal information about the applicant.
- write any recommendation whether to refuse or approve an application in the statement.
- comment on whether an application belongs in the review panel, as all the applications allocated to the panel shall be assessed.

Statement: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Write the review panel's final statement in Prisma on the applications for which you are the rapporteur.	One week after the review panel meeting
☐ Supplement final statements following review by the chair if you have been asked to do so.	After the review panel meeting

Decision and follow-up

Preparations → Review outline application → Review panel meeting 1 → Review full application → Review panel meeting 2 → Final statement → **Decision and follow-up**

Decision

The Board of the Swedish Research Council takes the decision on grant for interdisciplinary research environments. The Board's decision is based on: the priority lists (including reserves) arrived at by the review panels; any justifications from the chairs; and the review panels' statements. The decision is published shortly thereafter on vr.se and in Prisma. In conjunction with the publication, the applicants are informed about the outcome.

Follow-up

Following each review, internal follow-up is also carried out of the process and the outcome. An important starting point for this follow-up is the feedback you provide as a panel member in conjunction with the review panel meeting. We also produce statistics of various kinds.

Complaints and questions

If you as a review panel member receive any question about the assessment of an individual application, you must refer this to us. The Swedish Research Council personnel make sure that all complaints or requests for clarification are registered and handled by the secretary general responsible in consultation with the chair of the review panel. The chair will contact you as necessary.

Decision and follow-up: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Refer any questions about the assessment of individual applications to the Swedish Research Council personnel.	As they arise
☐ Be prepared to assist the chair and the secretary general responsible in the event of any questions.	As they arise