Peer review handbook

Research environment grant 2024
Humanities and Social Sciences

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Foreword

I would like to welcome you as a review panel member within humanities and social sciences at the Swedish Research Council. We are very grateful that you are taking on this task and making an important contribution to the continuous work of ensuring that the Swedish Research Council supports research of the highest scientific quality. A well-executed and systematic peer review of applications is the foundation for ensuring that the best research receive funding. 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 a review panel member. It contains instructions and guidelines for how the review process within humanities and social sciences is carried out.

We hope you will find the review process you have ahead of you rewarding to you personally and once again I warmly welcome you as a panel member to the Swedish Research Council.

Stefan Svallfors

Secretary General
Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences
Swedish Research Council

Introduction

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.

The purpose of the research environment grant is to create added value through collaborations in groups working with a long-term perspective. The grant is open to all research within humanities and social sciences without limitations concerning the research topic.

The research project must be more extensive and challenging than to be possible to undertake by a single researcher. The application must demonstrate that the research team offers a suitable combination of knowledge and competences required for the project.

The applicant and the participating researchers should form a constellation of researchers from different Swedish Higher Education Institutions (or corresponding) or disciplines, nationally or internationally, who work towards a common research goal.

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. Read the guidelines for the use of AI tools.

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. Read the guidelines for peer review.

Conflict of interest

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

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 participating researcher must not be reviewed by your review panel.
- Any application where a close relative of yours is the applicant (does not apply to participating researchers) 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 should consider the gender equality goal and calculate the success rate in its proposal for funding, as well as consider and if necessary comment on the outcome. When ranking applications of equal quality, applicants from the under-represented sex should be prioritised.

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.

Observer

An observer from the scientific council will monitor and safeguard the quality of the review panel's work. The observer reports back to the scientific council and the secretary general responsible after the review.

Swedish Research Council personnel

The research officer and senior research officer ensure that the rules and procedure established for the process are complied with. They also support the chair and panel members in the review process.

Secretary general for scientific council

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

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 the 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.

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 period 1

During the first 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.

Individual review

Each application is reviewed and graded by at least three members of the review panel: one rapporteur and two further reviewers. 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 statement. You should therefore get used to ending 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

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 impacts 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.

Gender perspectives

The Swedish Research Council's instruction from the government include to ensure that gender perspectives are included in the research we fund, when applicable. The Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences have chosen to meet this instruction by ensuring that competence in the area is represented in each panel and that the issue of gender perspectives is part of the scientific evaluation. This can mean drawing attention to the lack of a gender perspective when it ought to have been included given the research question, or paying attention to whether the gender perspective in an application is grounded in previous research. The chair is responsible for including the aspect of gender perspectives in the evaluation. Read the instructions for applicants.

Assessment criteria

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

- Scientific quality of the project
- Novelty and originality
- Merits of the applicant
- Feasibility

The purpose of using several basic criteria is to achieve a multi-faceted assessment. 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 project (1–7)

Assess the quality of the project's research question and method, and also its potential for future research.

- To what extent is the project and its questions of the highest scientific quality?
- To what extent it the project clear and systematic in its definition of the research problem, theoretical basis, and the summary of previous results within the research field?
- To what extent are the methods for material/data collection and analysis suitable and consequential?
- To what extent does the proposed forms of collaboration create a clear added value compared to a smaller project?
- 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)

Assess how well the applicant develops and implements new theories, concepts, methods, and questions.

- To what extent does the project expand or challenge current knowledge, ideas, and practice within its field(s)?
- To what extent does the project combine concepts and theories, approaches, and methods, and/or material/data in a novel way?
- To what extent do the project's goals have the potential to achieve scientific and/or societal impact?

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 research experience and expertise within the field the application relates to?
- To what extent have the project participants displayed abilities for independent and creative scientific work?
- How do the project participants' scientific production, impact and other merits compare in a national and international perspective?
- To what extent do the project participants have the relevant and supplementary competence required to conduct the research task?
- To what extent does the applicant have experience of leading larger research projects or research environments?

- In the event the application includes doctoral students: To what extent do the planned supervisors have experience of supervising doctoral students?

Feasibility (1–3)

Assess the feasibility of the proposed project. An application must be graded as 2 or 3 for feasibility in order to be funded.

- To what extent do the personnel selected have competences and degrees of activity that are suitable for implementing the project?
- To what extent is the project's work allocation and time plan realistic?
- To what extent is the collaborative set up of the team well planned?
- Is there access to material/data, equipment, research infrastructure and/or other resources that are required for implementing the project?
- Does the applicant adequately consider relevant legal and formal requirements for the proposed research, such as ethical permits and guidelines?

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.

Grading scales

The assessment of the scientific quality of the application, novelty and originality, merits of the applicant 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.

External reviewers

All applications that go forward to the second review stage, after the screening at the review panel's spring meeting, shall be reviewed by two external reviewers who are experts in the field of the application.

Your task as a rapporteur is to suggest suitable external reviewers for the applications that you are responsible for. To enable fast recruitment of the external reviewers, you should prepare a suggestion of minimum two external reviewers for each application where you are rapporteur before the review panel meeting, together with university affiliation and email address.

We will collect the names at the spring panel meeting, and start recruiting the day after. Note that you can suggest the same external reviewers for several applications, if they have suitable competence. Generally, it is beneficial for the quality of assessment if the reviewers can compare several applications when writing their assessments.

Review period 1: 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
☐ Suggest a minimum of two external reviewers for each application where you are rapporteur.	Before the deadline
☐ Prepare for the meeting by reading other panel members' comments and any external assessments.	Before the meeting

What you need to do	When
☐ 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, 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

First review panel meeting

First review panel meeting

At the first review panel meeting, the applications are reported on and discussed, using the grading done by you and the other panel members ahead of the meeting as the starting point. The goal of the meeting is to decide which applications that goes on to the second review period.

Suggestions for external reviewers for the applications that go forward to the next review stage will be collected.

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 any 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 reviewers of an application should prepare for the discussion by reading the assessments and grades given by the other reviewers for the applications.

During the panel meeting, the group shall ensure that sex and gender perspectives are included in the assessment when relevant. The chair is responsible for ensuring that this perspective is considered when applicable.

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 and he or she does 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.

Deciding on which applications will be taken forward to the next review stage

At the first meeting, the most important task of the review panel is to identify the applications that are assessed as unlikely to receive funding, hence not be taken forward to the next review stage for further review. Once all applications have been discussed and the panel has agreed on an overall grade for each application, the panel shall carry out a preliminary priority of the applications based on the overall grades. The chair shall identify a cut-off point on the list, where the applications below have received such low grading that it is not reasonable to assume that the application will be awarded funding.

Applications that are borderline or where the panel does not agree should be discussed further until the panel has reached a joint view on which applications should go through to stage two. If agreements are not reached, the application should move forward to stage two. All applications that for some reason have not been fully evaluated, for example because an external review has not been received in time, or because of a reviewer is ill, must be taken forward to stage two.

A rule of thumb is that 25–35 per cent of the applications should go forward to stage two. If the number of applications in the review panel is very high (clearly above 100), it is recommended to set a ceiling at around 30 applications.

It is not necessary to draw up a priority order for the applications that will not go to the next step. Those applications will be formally rejected when the Scientific council for humanities and social Sciences has reached its funding decision in the fall. However, every application that does not go to the next step must receive all subsidiary grades.

First review panel meeting: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Agree on an overall grade for all discussed applications.	During the first review panel meeting
☐ Agree on a proposal for the applications to take forward to stage two.	During the first review panel meeting
☐ Agree on the individual grades for the applications that will not be taken forward to the next review stage.	During the first review panel meeting

Review period 2

The second review period lasts from the review panel's spring meeting until approximately 10–14 days before the review panel's autumn meeting. During this period, as a panel member you shall read all the applications taken forward from stage one, with the exception of those where you have a conflict of interest, write evaluations (assessment or preliminary statement), and grade the applications reviewed by you.

Your task as reviewer also includes evaluating the budgets of all applications, and preparing a proposal for grant amounts for the applications for which you are the rapporteur, and bring to the meeting.

Thereafter, Prisma is closed for editing, at the same time as the system opens for reading, so that you can prepare as panel member for the discussions held at the review panel meeting by reading the assessments by the other reviewers.

Individual evaluation

In stage two, each application should be evaluated and graded by all members of the panel, on as rapporteur and the others as reviewers. The evaluation should be conducted as in stage one.

For the applications where you are the rapporteur, you should write a preliminary statement, which should consist of a numerical grade and detailed written comments on all evaluation criteria, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the project described.

In the role as a reviewer, you should write an assessment, which should also consist of a numerical grade and written comments, stating the strengths and weaknesses on which you base our grading, but here the comments do not have to be detailed.

It is important that you review and as necessary update your grading and comments of the applications you have already read and graded during review period one.

Evaluation criteria and grading scales

In your evaluation, you should use the Swedish Research Council's four basic criteria for evaluating quality as the starting point, and consider the guiding questions, just as during the first review period.

Assessment of project budgets

As a rapporteur, it is your task to assess the awarded grant amount for the applications at the review panel's second meeting. The assessment is presented during the panel meeting with the help of a prepared documentation that you bring with you. This budget proposal is presented as a total amount (in even thousands SEK) for the project, and in number of years.

At the meeting, the review panel will discuss the budget based on your assessment and agree on a granted amount. You should also assess the budget for the other applications, 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. 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.

Activity level and salaries

Evaluate also whether the activity level of the project participants is reasonable in relation to the research task. Note that the Swedish Research Council will normally fund a maximum of 80 per cent of a full-time salary for applicants and participating researchers under this call.

If a doctoral student participates, project funds must not be paid out as salary during teaching, other departmental duties or for courses that are not directly relevant or necessary to carry out the research project. This means that doctoral students are funded to a maximum of 75% of a full-time equivalent over four years, or 100% over three years.

Instructions for budget assessment

The calculations according to steps below are made by the rapporteur for each project to be discussed at the second meeting. This must be done before the second meeting and not during the meeting.

1. Does the application contain salaries of more than 80 % for any of the participants in the project? If yes, is this motivated?
2. If it is not motivated, by how much must the salaries be cut in order not to exceed 80% of full time?
3. Are there other major budget items (comprising at least SEK 100,000) in the application that are clearly unnecessary or of an unreasonable extent?
4. Calculate the project budget: Applied amount minus the amounts under points 2 and 3.

Review period 2: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Grade and write comments (preliminary statement) on all applications for which you are the rapporteur. If necessary, update your grading and comments for the applications that you have read and graded already before the first meeting.	Before second review panel meeting
☐ Grade and write comments (assessment) on all applications for which you are a reviewer. If necessary, update your rating and comments for the applications that you have read and rated already before the first meeting.	Before second review panel meeting
☐ Prepare for the meeting by making proposals for the project budget to award for all applications for which you are the rapporteur.	Before second review panel meeting
☐ Prepare for the meeting by reading the other panel members' comments, and by preparing a brief presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the applications for which you are the rapporteur.	Before second review panel meeting
☐ Contact the Swedish Research Council personnel and the chair if you during the review discover that you do after all have a conflict of interest with any of the applications you are to review, or if you discover any problem with an application.	As soon as possible
☐ Contact the Swedish Research Council immediately if you suspect any deviation from ethical guidelines or good research practice, or if you suspect scientific misconduct.	As soon as possible

Second review panel meeting

At the second review panel meeting, the applications are reported on and discussed, using the grading done by you and the other panel members ahead of the meeting as the starting point. The goal of the meeting is to agree on which applications that should be suggested for funding.

Discussion of applications

The chair leads the discussion of the applications that have not been sifted. 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 the external assessments are included in the discussion.

The panel should agree on subsidiary grades and overall grade for each application. The reviewers of an application should prepare for the discussion by reading the assessments and grades given by the other reviewers for the applications. The rapporteur shall take notes to support the wording of the panel's statement.

Before the discussions, the panel should agree on if and how the subsidiary grades are weighed against each other when deciding on which applications that goes to the second round, for example if novelty and originality should be given more weight than merits. The chair is responsible for presenting a proposal.

During the panel meeting, the group should ensure that gender perspectives are included in the assessment of the perspectives that are applicable in the applications. The chair is responsible for ensuring that this perspective is considered when applicable.

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 and he or she does 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 a joint grade 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 top-ranked first reserves goes on to the redistribution panel (see below).

Gender equality

The review panel shall jointly consider the success rate for women and men respectively in the overall prioritization of applications. The Scientific Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences has established that, if necessary, the review panel shall prioritize the application from applicants of an under-represented gender when applications are deemed to be of equivalent quality. This shall, however, not be applied by individual reviewers in their work ahead of the review panel meeting and shall not be weighed into the grading.

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 should agree on a proposed grant amount to award to each prioritised application. 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 assessment. The review panel then discusses the budget and agrees on a reasonable project budget range. Please note that the assessment of the project costs should not affect the evaluation of the scientific quality of the project.

In a second phase, it is examined whether the highest-ranked project on the reserve list can be financed if the budget for the projects proposed for financing is reduced somewhat. In such cases, cuts can be made with the same percentage for each of the projects proposed for financing. Such cuts may not cover more than 10% of the remaining project budget after the first cuts are made.

Second review panel meeting: summary

What you need to do	When
☐ Agree on subsidiary grades and an overall grade for each application discussed.	During the second review panel meeting
☐ Agree on a proposal for the applications to be awarded funding within the review panel's budgetary framework.	During the second review panel meeting
☐ Agree on a priority list with reserves.	During the second review panel meeting
☐ Agree on an amount to award each prioritised application	During the second 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 final 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 final 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 meeting receive a full 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 the subsidiary criteria and a summarising grade.

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

Completing the final 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 final 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.

Final statement: summary

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

Decision and follow-up

Decision

The Board of the Swedish Research Council has delegated to the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences the decision on postdoc grants in this field. The Scientific Council'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.

The chair shall write the report in consultation with the observer, and with support from the Swedish Research Council personnel. The panel chairs are provided a template for the report that they should follow. The research officer will send the template to the chair ahead of the review panel's autumn meeting. Following the grant decisions, the research officer will also deliver the overall statistics for the year's review, which shall be part of the report. The chair shall complete the report ahead of the Scientific Council's December meeting.

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