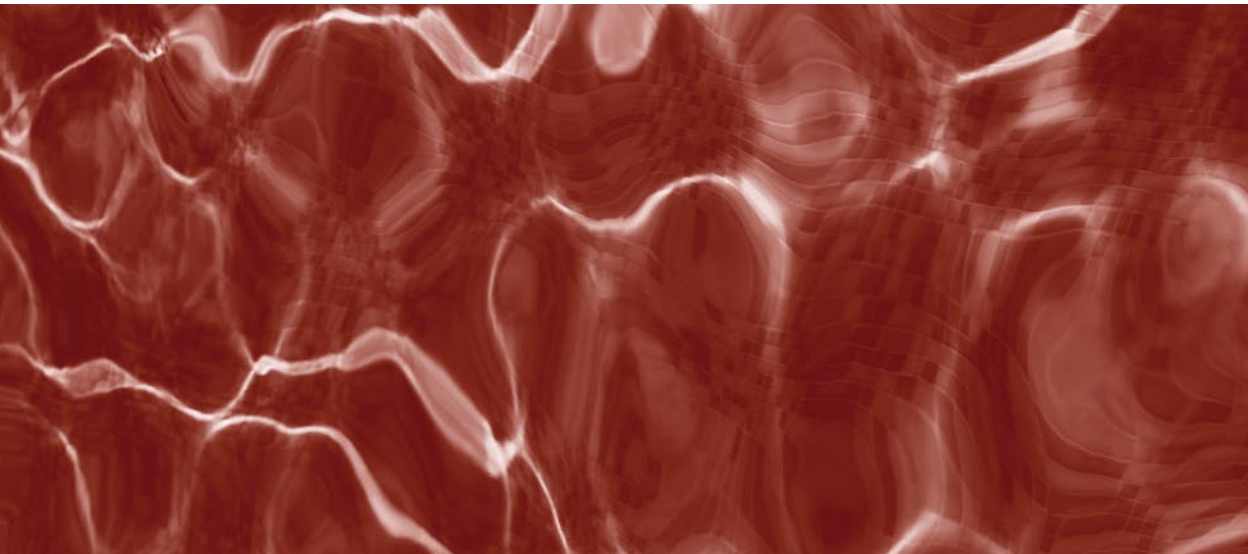Vetenskapsrådet

GENDER IN EDUCATION SCIENCE
PROJECT APPLICATIONS

– A follow-up study of the Swedish Research Council's awards in 2004

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FOREWORD

The Swedish Research Council is committed to promoting gender research and also ensuring that gender issues are included in scholarly research. To achieve this the Swedish Research Council's Board has appointed an inter-disciplinary Committee for Gender Research, giving them a proactive and policy-shaping role. The work of the Committee for Gender Research includes setting out to identify and solve those problems facing gender research, as well as addressing issues such as the scientific quality of research and the internationalization of Swedish research.

Up to and including 2003, applications for gender-related research were assessed by members of the Committee for Gender Research. This then passed to the appropriate Scientific Councils (Humanities & Social Sciences, Medicine, Natural sciences and Engineering Sciences) together with the Committee for Educational Science.

The change in the way projects are commissioned does not necessarily mean gender specialists with recognized qualifications are included on the evaluation panels. In order to gather information about how gender research manages to compete for funding, the Committee for Gender Research decided to examine the awards made in 2004 by the Swedish Research Council. Docent Hillevi Ganetz has examined research commissioned within sections of the humanities and social sciences whilst Dr Gunilla Carlstedt has looked at applications submitted to the Scientific Council for Medicine.

The following report looks at research applications within the field of Education Science and was completed during 2006 by docent Lars Jalmert and Susanne Andersson working in closer collaboration with the Committee for Gender Research.

Britta Lundgren
Chairperson
The Swedish Research Council's Committee for Gender Research

PREFACE

Written by the Committee for Gender Research

The report presents the findings of a follow-up study into how gender fared in funding applications received by the Swedish Research Council (VR)/The Committee for Educational Sciences (UVK) in 2004. The follow-up study took place during two months in the summer of 2006. Working under time constrictions meant that it was imperative to be in contact with the right people as early as possible and with their help get access to the necessary material. Vera Novakova, who is amongst other things a research secretary on the Research Council's Committee for Gender Research, introduced us to much of the material and been of considerable help. The UVK have been most genial in providing considerable support and knowledge. In particular, we would like to thank Barbro Hänström, the section head for the Swedish Research Council/UVK, who has been most accommodating. In addition we would like to thank VR/UVK research secretary Kerstin Nordstand, whose expertise and engagement helped us in our evaluation of the material. This follow-up study has been the subject of many constructive discussions within the Research Council's Committee for Gender Research.

December 2006

Susanne Andersson och **Lars Jalmert**

CONTENTS

AIMS & APPROACHES

The evaluation of gender research applications was previously carried out by the Swedish Research Council's Gender Committee. For the 2004 round of funding this was taken over by the appropriate Scientific Councils (Humanities & Social Sciences, Medicine, Natural sciences and Engineering Sciences) and the Committee for Educational Science. One of the aims of this follow-up report is to assess the effect of this change on gender research.

In order to expedite a follow-up report, applicants applying for funding were asked to tick a box on the application form if the proposed project involved "questions of gender or had a gender perspective". The formulation of this was rather general and open to interpretation in a number of ways by the applicants. It was not obligatory for applicants to tick the box, which many seemed to misunderstand: it was merely meant as a basis for carrying out a follow-up report of this ilk.

This follow-up report has been instigated on the initiative of the Swedish Research Council's Gender Committee and is the third follow-up report in a series covering the round of funding applications in 2004. In the first Hillevi Ganetz examined research commissioned within sections of the humanities and social sciences (Ganetz 2005); in the second Gunilla Carlstedt examined applications that fell within the field of medicine (Carlstedt, 2007). This third report examines funding applications that were handled by the Committee for Educational Science in the spring of 2004. Focusing on the issue of gender, the committee looked at:

- How the term gender has been used and interpreted by applicants and members of the evaluation panel.
- The extent to which both applicants and members of the evaluation panel are qualified in Gender.
- What kind of success rate did applications with a gender angle have?

BACKGROUND

Educational Science

The Committee for Educational Science (hereafter abbreviated to UVK) within the Swedish Research Council was only founded relatively recently. In accordance with the budget proposal for 2001, the Swedish parliament (the *Riksdag*) decided to set aside separate funds for research into education in Sweden. This venture was to be administrated by the Swedish Research Council where a committee for Educational Science was thus established with the specific aim of developing and promoting education research of the highest calibre.

The establishment of the Committee for Educational Science was preceded by a number of state investigations which handled matters of education research in a variety of ways. The Committee for Teacher Training (SOU 1999:63) noted that teacher training was poorly connected to research; something which they felt needed to be strengthened both organizationally, scientifically and in terms of funding. The committee thus proposed that a new research council be established. A later study (Prop. 1999/2000:135) dismissed the idea that there should be a separate research council and instead recommended that a committee for education science be established by the Swedish Research Council (See also SOU 2005:31).

In a number of political documents the field of education science has been restricted and defined: according to Aasen, Pröitz & Borgen (2005) this can be described and analyzed from three principles: the principle of property, relevance and content.

The Property Principal characterized earlier political documents. Education Science was primarily associated with teacher- training and thus regarded as a means of unifying and shaping the financing of a teacher-training programme connected to research. Education Science was restricted to concerning the research that was undertaken within the teacher training sector and that which was relevant to training people for careers in teaching; at the same time it also guaranteed teacher-training's connection to research. The idea was that through this it would be possible to provide teachers with a deeper insight into the profession, as well as giving them the opportunity to become researchers themselves.

The Relevance Principal has also been a central feature in the investigation of the focus of Education Science. It has been noted that Education

Science should fulfil the needs of teacher-training and pedagogy. In addition, the research should provide information which can underpin political decisions.

In more recent public state documents there is also a focus on **content**, moving for the field of education science to widen and include, not only formal educational establishments, but companies and organizations. In the proposal *Forskning för framtiden* [Research for the Future] the rapid changes in society are brought into focus. These involve new challenges and are likely to shape the organization and content of research. In relation to Education Science, it is said that the research has a strategic significance for the emerging information society and its constant need of developing knowledge, education and qualified teachers (Prop. 1999/2000:81; Prop. 2000/2001:3).

From this kind of wide perspective, Aasen, Pröitz & Borgen believe that within Education Science it is important to increase the understanding of how knowledge is created, received and used. It is also important to understand the conditions for learning in different stages of life and different contexts as well as studying how learning can be organized. The term "education science" is defined by Aasen, Pröitz & Borgen as follows:

> Education Science can be understood as a more or less integrated interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary subject where different research disciplines enlighten various research issues connected to the development of knowledge, teaching and learning. The field can involve learning and teaching in different educational establishments ranging from preschool to university. It can also involve the development of knowledge and learning in society and the workplace in general. Education Science covers both formal and prescriptive teaching as well as informal unintentional learning processes.
> **Aasen, Pröitz & Borgen, p.28 (trans).**

The Growth of Gender Research

How then can the growth and expansion of gender research be described and how can its central terms be defined? We could have presented a historical overview of interdisciplinary gender research's growth here as well as that of gender research itself. We *could* also have given a detailed picture of gender research's expansion across disciplines and academic fields. Furthermore, we could have immersed ourselves in the lively and all-encompassing debate which has raged for considerable time about the actual term "gender". The format for this follow-up study, however, does not allow for such digressions; instead, we will briefly describe the field and define the central

terms used within it. Where necessary, we rely on other formulations and definitions to help us.

One way of presenting the history of gender research, its theoretical thematics and its expansion is to use metaphors: a good metaphor is to liken gender research to a tree: a massive tree with a crown of thick branches where the central stem grew up during the research into Women's Studies during 1970s, after the roots have grown under the soil for many years. During the 1980s the tree's crown grew its main branches (Thurén 2003). The tree's crown has in recent years been enriched with the sometimes provocative but also necessary new shoots in the form of Men's Studies or Masculinity Studies, research into ethnicity and intersectionality and research into sexuality; queer studies, homosexual studies and bisexual studies.

Another way of presenting just how widely gender research has become established is to analyse where gender researchers are found. As the subject is interdisciplinary in nature, gender researchers are found both in the established fields of academe as well as within the field of gender studies itself. The largest and most influential concentration of gender researchers has, for the longest time, been within the humanities and social sciences. Gender researchers have been fewer within medicine and the natural sciences, although in recent years they have increasingly started to draw attention to their work. Across these disciplines there has, simultaneously, been ambitions to establish Gender Studies as a subject within its own right something which today is now a reality. Many long discussions have been held at conferences and elsewhere as to how best to strengthen gender research or Gender Studies. Is integration into established academic fields the way to go or the creation of a separate discipline of Gender Studies? In recent years a kind of consensus seems to have emerged in favour of both integration and the construction of a separate discipline.

Discussion surround the definition of the term "gender" is ongoing, after all it is a central feature in the establishment of gender theory. This discussion is an indication of the vitality with the field of gender. Gender researchers are in agreement about the following:

- gender is a social and cultural construction.
- gender is not a fixed state: it is something which is continually constructed or "performed".
- the power relationship between the sexes is central for understanding sex, no matter the level of analysis.
- all notions of sex are problematised.
  (Cf Gunnarsson et.al 2003; Wahl et.al 2001; Thurén 2003)

Gender research is such that it is a multifaceted and interdisciplinary field where there is an agreement that gender is a social and cultural construction and that it is gender research's task to examine how this appears and what it involves. Ganetz (2005) gives the following definition of gender research:

> Put simply, the answer can be that the larger area of knowledge that problematises gender, that is to say the cultural and social sex is performed, constructed, becomes and formed on different levels within different spheres in culture and society.

GENDER IN RESEARCH APPLICATIONS 2004

Procedure, Selection, Reliability

Initially, an important part of the follow-up process was to ensure the reliability of the material that was to be examined: in other words, establish how many applications were marked as including a gender angle and how large a portion these made up of the total number of applications received. The follow-up work was planned to take at most a few days as all applications, including those marked as including a gender angle, were stored on the Swedish Research Council (VR) database and easily accessible. However, the process took considerably longer as an huge amount of the time that had been set aside for the follow-up study was taken up going through different stages of the application material. Ganetz (2005) earlier noted how difficult it was to obtain a reliable list of applications that dealt with gender. She discovered a discrepancy in the lists which showed the number of applications that were marked as including a gender angle. The reason for this discrepancy was unclear.

According to the Swedish Research Council's official statistics, stated in the Annual Report 2004, a total of 315 applications were received by VR/UVK after the major round of applications. The IT section at the Swedish Research Council has, for the purpose of this follow-up study, provided raw material showing the division of different types of funding available as well as the division of funds between applications with or without a gender angle. Of the 315 application, 197, or 62.5 percent, were marked as having a gender angle. The material has been examined in accordance with the following:

- The list which Ganetz (2005) used for her follow-up report was compared by us to a list of all the registered applications which had marked that the project included a gender angle.
- In order to establish whether there were additional applications marked as including a gender angle, page 2 of all the applications found in the Research Council's archives –including those that did not claim to include a gender angle– was examined. This was a means of checking the reliability of the list. No other applications marked as including a gender angle were discovered.

• The headings, keywords and abstracts stated in each of the applications were then examined to ascertain whether applications which were not marked as including a gender angle actually treated gender in some way or included a gender perspective. Two applications were discovered that included the study of gender or a gender perspective although his was not marked. Accordingly, these applications were subsequently regarded as gender-marked applications. 199 applications were thus deemed to have included a gender angle.

The Number of Evaluated Applications

In total UVK received 315 application for evaluation in 2004; of these, 197 (62 percent) were marked as including a gender angle. This rises to 199 (63 percent) if we take into consideration the two applications which we classed as including a gender angle. An overview of the forms of funding available and the division of resources is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Applications marked as including a gender angle divided according to type of funding.

Type of Funding	Marked as including a gender angle by the applicant	Marked as including a gender angle by the evaluators	Total
Project Funding	161	2	163
Planning	15		15
Network	4		
Research School	3		
Post-Doc			
Research Assistant (foass)	14		14
Total	197	2	199

Classification of Applications

In order to establish how the applicants interpreted the terms "gender" and "gender perspective", the applications that were marked as including a gender angle were examined. Each application was classified according to a three point scale (CF Table 2) which was first used by Ganetz (2005).

Table 2: An overview and definition of the categories: gender research, gender perspective, gender aspects

Categories	Description of Gender Focus
1) Gender Research	The study of gender is central to the project and is connected to those theories and methodological approaches which have been established within the field of Gender Studies.
2) Gender Perspective	Gender is analyzed and problematized alongside other per spectives with special attention being paid to the way gender is described, constructed or "performed". Researchers "are firmly grounded in traditional gender research and have good knowledge of theories, methodology and empirical studies made within the subject.
3) Gender Aspects	Gender is not a main feature of the project application, but this dimension nevertheless occurs. There is evidence of a conscious and demonstrable understanding and familiarity with those theories and methods that occur within the field of gender studies.
4) No Gender Focus	This group comprises those applications which were marked as including a gender angle but do not fulfil the criteria stated here.

A relatively large percentage of the applications state that they intend to study the differences between boys and girls, women and men, without problematizing this. This is not gender research; instead, it is the study of "sexual difference" which should not be mixed up with "the variable: men or women". The latter is sometimes used to show that a study is not gender research, which can often be misleading, and sometimes even downright wrong. The variable "men or women" often occurs in large statistical studies of comparative quantitative analysis. Quantitative analyses can, of course, be gender research; it has nothing to do with the method whether or not an analysis is Gender Studies: it is more about how sex is studied. In order for a study to be an example of Gender Studies sex needs to be problematized, theorised and conceived in certain terminology. Studies which solely consider the unproblematised differences between the sexes should not be classified under the term gender research.

Furthermore, the classification of the projects is based on the project applications that were submitted and the conclusions that are made are based on this material. Later in this report there is a discussion about researchers' excellent/lack of knowledge when it comes to the field of Gender Studies. We note that the large majority of applicants seem to lack the appropriate qualifications/knowledge of Gender. Of course, it is quite possible that the applicants were more qualified to deal with gender than we judged but that this was not made clear or demonstrated fully in the application for funding.

The Evaluation Process

The next stage of the follow-up study was to investigate and examine how the applications were judged by the evaluation panels, as well as looking at the qualifications and expertise of the panel members to determine just how qualified they were to make their judgement. After that, we looked at how the applications faired against the other applications. Three evaluation panels were formally set up by UVK. Further details are given in Appendix 1. In 2004 a further two temporary groups were set up to evaluate the applications for research assistantships (foass) and research schools, the latter also assessed by the evaluation panel. Follow-up work on the evaluation process was restricted to the three regular evaluation panels, which dealt with the majority (181 of 199) of the applications marked as having a gender angle. Table 3 provides details of how applications were divided between the three groups.

As a starting point for how the applications had been judged by the evaluation panels, we looked at the written commentary summarizing the panel's findings which was found on the evaluation form under the heading: "Special Conditions". "Special Conditions" were stated on the same form upon which the evaluation of the scientific quality of the project was noted, as well as its relevance for Education Science and overall value.

The qualifications and gender expertise of the evaluators was investigated in part by looking for publications in Libris, the CVs of panel members which were available on their university webpage. It is worth noting that this follow-up study is concerned with 2004 whereas the evaluation panel members' qualifications, as stated on the Net, are more recent.

The Questionnaire

In order to gain greater clarify regarding the evaluation process, a questionnaire was sent to the chairperson of each of the evaluation panels (see Appendix 2). It was possible to engage external "gender evaluators" for part of the evaluation work. This did not occur, though, in 2004.

Success Rate

The final stage of the follow-up study involved examining the so-called "success rate": in other words, the study looked at how well project applications marked as including a gender angle faired in competition with projects that had no gender angle.

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE + COMMENTARY

As stated above, a total of 315 applications came into the UVK in 2004: of these, 62.5 percent had been marked as including a gender angle by the researcher. Including the other two applications which we adjudged to have a gender angle the final figure stands at 63 percent. Compared to the other Scientific Councils, UVK, relatively speaking, had the largest percentage of applications that were marked as having a gender angle, although in real terms the Humanities and Social Sciences (HS) received actual more applications with their 508 (49 percent). (Ganetz, 2005)

At the start of the follow-up study it seemed as if gender research had a strong position within Education Science: this was understandable given that the field of research ought to be of interest and relevant from a gender perspective. However, the extent to which the actual percentage of applications marked as having a gender angle actually reflected Education Science research and the construction of gender, needed closer examination.

Division of Applications According to Gender Focus

It was interesting to examine how many of the applications marked as having a gender angle actually could be considered gender research or had a strong gender perspective, in accordance with the methodological criteria (Cf Table 2). The applications were thus read and classified according to the categories previously outlined. A summary of each level was made and the various percentages worked out. What became evident during this process was just how varied the focus on gender actually was, from projects which adhered closely to the theoretical and methodological framework of the field of Gender Studies to projects where neither gender or sex were mentioned at all, despite the fact that they were marked as including a gender angle. This is something we return to later in this study. An overview of how the applications were classified is found below in Table 3.

Tabell 3: Sammanställning av klassificering av genuskryssade ansökningar uppdelad på bered-
ningsgrupp och sammanlagt i faktiska tal och i procent.

Gender Angle (n=199)	Category 1 Gender Research	Category 2 Gender Perspective	Category 3 Gender Aspects	Category 4 No Gender Angle
UVK 1 (62)	2	3	18	39
UVK 2 (52)	1	4	10	37
UVK 3 (67)	6	3	11	47
UVK 4 (15)	1	0	2	12
UVK 5 (3)	0	0	1	2
Total (n=199)	10	10	42	137
Percent	5	5	21	69

What does the table thus say about gender research within Education Sci-
ence in this year? Depending on where the boundaries are set, it is possible
to interpret this table in different ways, which in turn influences what is
being compared.

Gender Research

Category 1 represents "gender research" and accounts for 5 percent of the 199
applications marked as having a gender angle. Amongst the applications in this
category there is a thematic variation from studies of women within IT to the
analysis of small boys in pre-school and school. They are, however, alike in the
sense that they have well developed theoretical, methodological and empiri-
cal commentary and make reference to relevant secondary research literature.
The majority of the applicants are well-known gender researchers, who have
numerous publications within the field. Many of these projects were awarded
research funding which is an indication of their high academic calibre.

Gender Perspective

Category 2, "gender perspective" is as big a group (five percent) as the pre-
vious one. In these applications gender is dealt with alongside other per-
spectives. One project is concerned with examining the attitudes within
teacher-training to sex, class, ethnicity and learning. The theoretical, met-
hodological and empirical commentary in the applications is, across the
board, well-formulated. Here too the researchers have many publications
within the field of Gender Studies.

Gender Aspects

The second largest group consisted of those applications marked as containing a gender angle that were categorized as 3, "gender aspect" (21 percent). In these applications it is evident that the applicant(s) demonstrates some awareness of the field of Gender Studies and makes some reference to it without integrating and developing it although to a lesser extent than the previous groups. In some instances, the applicant(s) states that Education Science is the focus of the research and that gender only accounts for one aspect of the study.

No Gender Angle

The largest group of applications marked as containing a gender angle (69 percent) fall into the category "No Gender Angle". This category can, however, be divided up into those applications that examine "the differences between the sexes" (54 percent) and "the unclear significance of the different sexes" (15 percent). A significant feature of the applications that examine "the differences between the sexes" is that in these the applicant states that she or he will examine the differences between girls and boys or women and men without problematizing this kind of approach. Typically this is mentioned briefly at the end of the project description without actually relating it to the contents of the application.

The category "the unclear significance of the different sexes" (15 percent) consists of those applications marked as including a gender angle that upon closer examination do not take up gender or a gender perspective or even sex at all in the project description. Because of this it has been difficult to provide a more detailed classification of these projects. Why the applicants chose to mark the application as including a gender angle without actually doing so in the project description itself remains unclear.

In total those applications that fell into categories 1-3, demonstrating their affinity with the tradition of gender research, made up just over a third (31 percent) of the applications marked as including a gender angle. If the criteria for gender research is tightened to cover only those applications that fell into categories 1 and 2, the figure would then stand at 10 percent.

Ganetz (2005) follow-up study of applications marked as containing a gender angle submitted to the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Science (HS) showed that 36 percent of the applications marked as including a gender angle could be categorized as gender research or having a gender perspective. The equivalent figure for Medicine (M) was 12 percent, according to Carlstedt's (2007) study. In both cases, the figure for UVK is lower than both HS and M. On the basis of the available material we cannot give a simple explanation of why the figures for UVK are lower.

Setting the Boundaries – Gender Research or Not

The question of what constitutes gender research and what does not is a very sensitive issue, notes Thurén (2003). Being too strict about what constitutes gender research can actually lead to promising ideas being checked. Many people also have the experience over the years of being caught up in fruitless discussions about whether or not certain areas of research, questions or approaches should be excluded. According to Thurén (ibid.), there is consensus today that everyone who engages in serious gender research should be integrated into the field. A certain amount of setting up boundaries is, however, unavoidable: nevertheless, this becomes more contentious when it comes to the awarding of research funding. Like Ganetz (20005), we believe that knowledge of the field of Gender Studies is paramount. Within gender research quantitative and qualitative studies of the differences between the sexes occur. What differentiates Gender Studies from merely the study of the sexes is that it problematizes, theorises and defines the differences that occur between the sexes within the framework of previously undertaken research within the field. Those applications that we have classified as "the differences between the sexes" have no such ambition to situate their work within the context of previous gender studies: accordingly, their work cannot be viewed as gender research.

Conclusion

In spite of the fact that the clear majority of applicants had marked their applications as involving a gender angle, in other words that the project engaged with questions of gender or had some kind of gender perspective, the follow-up study revealed that the majority of applications did not have any focus on gender. Moreover, project applications were such they clearly lacked evidence of an understanding of the field of gender research. The study also revealed that almost a third of applicants were aware of the field of gender research. A very small proportion of the applications could be classified as Gender Studies or as having a gender perspective. Compared to HS, this proportion was relatively low and somewhat lower than those in the field of Medicine.

The Evaluation Process

The next step in the process was to examine how the actual applications were judged by the evaluation panels. An important context which probably, although not clear how, influenced how the evaluations were carried

out as well as even influenced which type of projects were actually awarded funding in this particular year was that the Swedish Research Council had allocated nine million kronor specifically for projects which were of an:

- interdisciplinary nature,
- had a gender perspective,
- or could be regarded as "risk projects"[1].

In other words the Swedish Research Council placed special emphasis on projects which had a interdisciplinary, gender or risk focus. The Council's aim was to prioritize these areas and the evaluation of applications in these fields, with the possibility of undertaking follow-up work to see how these areas had faired. The instructions regarding how the applications should be evaluated were considerably detailed. Amongst other things it was documented that their evaluation should take place as part of the general evaluation processes along with applications from other fields and with a minimum of special treatment. The evaluation panels were encouraged further to note those projects that fell into the areas that had been prioritized. A list of project applications that could be defined as interdisciplinary, gender or risk projects was to be formulated. The evaluation panels were given a free hand when it came to the ranking of the applications. However, the prioritizing of gender projects was required to take place in consultation with representatives from the Gender Committee; however, this, according to certain information, never took place (The Swedish Research Council, 2004).

The Evaluation Panels' Recommendations

The basis for examining the evaluation panels' recommendations is a form which the panels used when recording their judgement of each project. This written material was not particularly easy to interpret because the annotations are brief. They take the form of everything from a dash, a couple of words to several sentences. Besides, there was considerable variation in the annotations of the various panels. The following quotations illustrate the variation that was found in the material:

> "There is a bit of a gender perspective in the analysis."
> "The gender perspective is considerable and the researchers are open to gender aspects being a significant interpretation variable."
> "The researchers attach considerable importance to gender differences in their work."
> "Gender perspective."
> "No real gender perspectives."

[1] Risk project here refers to those projects which were unsure of success but were nonetheless extremely interesting.

In spite of the brevity of the information available, the material was used to compared how our categorization of the project applications fared with the evaluation panels. A table was compiled where our classifications of the various categories was given in one column and the evaluation panels' descriptions of the projects' gender/gender perspective was stated in the other. If a project was classified by us as "gender research" (category 1) and the evaluation panel noted that the project was "an example of gender research of a high standard" it was interpreted as if we were in agreement about the project. At the same time we would like to make it clear that whilst there may be errors, the comparisons give an indication of certain factors that are worthy of closer scrutiny.

Evaluation Panels: The Chairpersons

When the chairpersons of the three evaluation panels which are under study (UKV1-3) here met on October 6, 2004 six projects were suggested as suitable for the funds that had been earmarked for interdisciplinary, gender and risk projects. This comprised three gender projects, two interdisciplinary projects and one risk project. All six were subsequently awarded funding.

Several months before this the three evaluation panels had met and in the written minutes from their meeting there is a list of the projects evaluated by each panel. At the top of the list were those projects which had been ranked highest followed by the other projects in order of merit. A line had been drawn after a number of projects on the list marking the boundary for those applications which could receive funding "as they fell within the criteria". Above the line each evaluation panel had even marked one project with "gender". The project in question had high points in terms of academic ability and relevance to Education Science. These projects were awarded funding. Research funds were also awarded to other projects which had a gender perspective but were not marked as "gender" in the lists complied by the panels[2].

It was apparent that the evaluation panels had not had an overall agreement as to how many projects had been marked. This is in spite of the fact that the instructions stated that all the projects that could be interpreted as interdisciplinary, gender or risk projects should be noted. Only UVK 2 followed the instructions accordingly. In the minutes from their meeting each project that could fall into the above category is carefully marked. UVK 1 only noted a few of these projects whilst UVK 3 had noted a few more in the minutes from their meeting. Based on the 199 applications that form the basis of this study, we believe UVK 1 and 3 should have marked more projects as examples of gender projects.

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[2] Evaluation Panel 1: Minutes of the Meeting held on September 9, 2004. Evaluation Panel 2: Minutes of the Meeting held on September 15, 2004. Evaluation Panel 3: Minutes of the Meeting held on August 9, 2004.

Having analysed the evaluation process regarding the applications, there remained a number of questions, primarily: which discussions had taken place during the evaluation committee's meetings. How did they interpret the gender research in general and, more specifically, how did they regard the applications that were actually marked as including a gender angle? Even it appeared as if there was no overall evaluation system of how gender should be judged in the applications, it was of interest to establish whether or not this was actually the case. To establish a better understanding of the evaluation process a questionnaire was sent out to the chairpersons for evaluation panels 1-3. Of these, only two answered. Their answers revealed that there was considerable interest within both panels regarding gender and both noted that gender studies had much to offer the field of Education Science. This was formulated by one of the chairpersons in the following manner:

> Gender is constitutive for learning, the formation of identity and the organization of learning in all contexts. School is also sexed in many ways concerning such things the male/female ratio of teachers, how schools perform, recruitment to certain programmes, etc.

The chairpersons from the evaluation panels were of the opinion that their panel was suitably qualified to adequately assess projects that dealt with Gender Studies. Asked whether they had used any particular system to classify the applications, one chairperson answered that they had made a difference between Gender Studies research and projects that had a gender perspective. Gender Studies research was seen as research which systematically employs gender terminology and which demonstrats a good methodological awareness typical of the field. Gender perspective was used to categorize those projects which sought to examine the differences between the sexes without situating the research within the framework of gender theory.

The other chairperson answered more cogently and simultaneously took up another issue. According to this chairperson very few applications had a well-grounded, theoretical gender perspective. This person writes:

> The problem with the applications that our group received ... is that only a few exceptions had a theoretical gender perspective. The majority of applicants note that gender is important and central to the project, but what they actually intend to study (in most cases) is the differences between boys and girls, or men and women in a very simplistic, descriptive manner. There are very few applications that have a recognized theoretical gender perspective and aim at developing this theoretical framework. There are some applications that fall into this category, but they are in the clear minority when it comes to those applications which claim they have gender as one of their areas of research.

It is clear from the above that the evaluation panels had certain criteria when it came to judging the qualitative level of the applications marked as including a gender angle; however, there was no unity in their approach. They drew a boundary between projects that could be considered as gender research and projects –which were not considered to be gender research– where only the difference between the sexes was taken up. Herein lies the main explanation as to why we found a discrepancy between our categorization of the applications and those carried out by the evaluation panels.

The other issue that the second chairperson took up is also worth considering. Was it really the case that so few applications received by UVK had a "recognized theoretical gender perspective"? This depends, again, on what this is compared with. This follow-up study has revealed that about ten percent of the 199 applications could be classified as gender research or research with a clear gender perspective. (CF table 3). Compared to HS this is however very low. Ultimately then, the low percentage ought to serve as a prompt for UVK to be more proactive in stimulating more researchers from within the academic Gender Studies community to apply. This in turn would lead to more highly qualified gender applications being considered.

The Evaluation Panels' Gender Expertise

One of the Swedish Research Councils overriding goals is to support top quality research. The evaluation of the projects' scientific significance and quality is, accordingly, a central process which takes place at the Research Council in the form of "peer review": i.e. researchers with well-documented qualifications and considerable experience within the field of research assess funding applications. In terms of this follow-up study the panel members' gender qualifications are of significant interest.

Like many other fields of research Education Science has a broad spectrum of areas of focus. For a single researcher it is therefore impossible to have equal expertise in all the areas. Specialization is therefore necessary and unavoidable. In an evaluation panel, it does not matter what areas of specialization members have as long as they complement each other. The three evaluation panels which have been examined for the purpose of this study are described below. It is worth noting, however, that gender is not stated as an area of expertise for any of the evaluation panels.

Evaluation Panel 1: "The group's expertise is in pedagogical issues concerning IT, Natural Science, Social Science and the Humanities. Other areas

include learning and the workplace/lifelong learning, teaching, teacher-training and general pedagogical issues."

Evaluation Panel 2: The group's expertise is within research on education, society's values, cultural philosophy together with the creative fields, which is the group's central area of expertise."

Evaluation Panel 3: "The group's expertise is within the general areas of learning, development and socialization, culture and communication, language and language development, identity research, difficulties in reading and writing, normalization and marginalization within an institutional context."

A perusal of the panel members list of publications as well as how they present themselves on the internet reveals, however, that each evaluation panel has at least one gender specialist. It is not possible to explain why they have not stated that they have expertise in gender from the material that is available.

The Gender Committee's Categorizations Compared with the Commentary Under the Heading "Special Conditions"

In order to establish a picture of how the evaluation panels judged the applications marked as having a gender angle, a comparison was carried out between our categorizations and the commentary provided by the evaluation panels under the title "Special Conditions". From this heading it was possible to see what kind of evaluation the project had received. The heading "Special Conditions" was also found on the same application where the commentary regarding the application's scientific quality, relevance to Education Science as well as overall evaluation was to be stated. The commentary under the heading were brief and revealed considerable variation, as noted above.

Comparison of Projects in Category 1 – Gender Research, and 2 – Gender Perspective
The projects which we classified as gender research or having a gender perspective (categories 1 & 2) were classified in the same way by the evaluation panels. In other words, it was apparent the evaluation panels had adjudged

these projects to have a strong element of Gender Studies. What follows are a few examples of the kind of comments what were found under the Special Conditions category: "The project has a clear and well-formulated gender perspective", "The project is an example of gender research of a high calibre.", "The project application has explicitly formulated a gender perspective which is both clear and relevant."

Comparison of Projects in Category 3 – Gender Aspects

When we compared the assessment of those applications in category 3 on the basis of the details given under the heading "Special Conditions" we found both similarities and a tendency for our judgement to be different. The following quotation is an example of what can be considered a judgement that is agreed on: *"The gender perspective forms an integrated part of the analysis but it particularly evident in Study 3 where professions dominated by men and women will be examined".* The other example illustrates the differences between our interpretations: *"The gender studies perspective is strong and the researchers are open to the possibility of the gender aspect becoming a significant interpretative variable".*

Comparison of Projects in Category 4 – Marked as containing a gender angle but actually not having one

The discrepancy between the comments of the evaluation panels and those applications which we adjudged to have "no gender angle" whatsoever increased considerably. It was not just the differences between our judgement and those of the panels: there were even differences between the panels themselves. This variation illustrates quite clearly that the evaluation panels did not employ a uniform system for assessing gender in the applications.

In summary, the comparison between our categorizations and those of the evaluation panels reveals that there is considerable agreement in our judgements when it comes to projects which undertake Gender Research or involve a strong gender perspective (categories 1 & 2). There was a discrepancy between our judgement and those of the evaluation groups when it came to category 3 – gender aspects. The difference was more apparent when it came to those projects which we decided contained "no gender angle". Furthermore, there was a discrepancy in the evaluation of gender between the evaluation panels. The reason for this is that there was no clearly standardized system which the evaluation panels should use when assessing the treatment of gender in the project applications.

Success Rates for Gender Applications

How well did gender-related applications perform against non-gender related applications that were awarded funding? The applications that we classified as gender research and projects that had a strong gender perspective (categories 1 & 2) had a success rate of 20 percent. If gender aspects (category 3) is included, the figure falls to a success rate of 17.7 percent. Compared with the success rate of other applications within Education Science (14.6 percent), the figure is actually very good.

Four of the twenty projects which were classified as gender research/gender perspective received funding. Three of these were marked as gender research and subsequently placed on the list of projects which then received funding from the pot the Swedish Research Council had earmarked for interdisciplinary, gender and risk projects.

The absence of a gender focus did not lower the scientific quality of the work because the evaluation panels placed greater importance on how projects were relevant to Education Science. This is not surprising given that the applications were submitted to UVK. However, it is perhaps worth noting that the evaluation of the scientific quality of the projects did not look at the quality of the proposed gender research. Applications which we classified in the lowest category, "No gender angle", did not reduce the overall academic worth of a project.

Table 5: Applications which received funding, divided according to type of funds

Form of Funding	Total Number of Applications	Total Awarded Funding	Applications Gender Research, Gender Perspective, Gender Aspects (categories 1-3)	Applications "no gender angle"	Total percent of projects awarded funding
Project Funding	242	33	9	24	13,6
Planning	30	4	0	4	13,3
Network	13	3	1	2	23
Research School	5	2	1	1	40
Research Assistant	25	4	0	4	16
Total	315	46	11	35	14,6

Tabell 6: Andel ansökningar som erhöll forskningsmedel uppdelade per kategori

Gender Category	Number of Applications	Funding Approved	Percentage Success Rate within each group
1. Gender Research	10	2	20
2. Gender Perspective	10	2	20
3. Gender Aspects	42	7	16,6
4. No Gender Angle (marked or not marked as including gender angle)	253	35	13,8
Total	315	46	14,6

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

This follow-up report of 2004's applications to UVK for research funding took place during the summer of 2006. In spite of a few errors that were found in the material, it was both interesting and informative to have the opportunity to explore one of perhaps the most significant stages of research: the application and evaluation process that results in the awarding of funding or not. The focus of this study has been how applications marked as including a gender angle have faired in this process.

UVK received 315 applications in 2004 for project funding of which 197, 62.5 percent, were marked as including a gender angle. We discovered that in addition to this two other applications should, in our opinion, have been marked as including a gender angle. Significantly more than half of the research applicants had marked that their project took up questions of gender or had a gender perspective. Was this then a strong indicator that gender research is a key feature of Education Science?

The qualitative assessment of the applications revealed that that was considerable variation in what the applicants actually meant by a gender angle. Nine percent of the applications marked as including a gender angle could be classified as *gender research* or that it demonstrated a significant *gender perspective*. If this includes applications with a *gender aspect* almost a third of all applications had some awareness of gender theory, methodology and terminology. The large majority, 69 percent, of the applicants seemed, however, to have a rather limited understanding of this research area. For example, 54 percent of the applications marked as including a gender angle stated that they intended to examine the difference between the sexes without problematizing this or including some kind of discussion of this matter in their application. Accordingly, the application could not be regarded as an example of Gender Studies.

Ten percent of applications were classified as gender research/gender perspective: this turned out to be a relatively low figure in comparison with what previous follow-up studies in other subject areas have discovered. Within HS the corresponding figure was 36 percent and 12 percent in Medicine.

The aim of the follow-up study was also to examine how the gender applications were evaluated. To establish how they were judged, a comparison was carried out between our categorizations of the projects and the evaluation panels' appraisals. When it came to gender research and gender perspective, the findings of the evaluation panels tallied with out own. However, there

were discrepancies in the other categories. In terms of qualifications and expertise, each evaluation panel had at least one member who was a specialist in Gender Studies. However, the evaluation panels did not make this transparent in their presentation of themselves in the Evaluation Handbook.

Finally, it appears that the applications marked as containing a gender perspective faired relatively well in competition with the other applications. Out of the 20 applications which we classified as gender research/ gender perspective, the success rate was 20 percent.

The evaluation process placed most emphasis on the academic quality and relevance of the research to Education Science. The assessment of the academic quality of the project was, however, not influenced detrimentally even if the work on gender was poor.

Final Points:

This follow-up study was carried out in 2006 and based on material from the evaluation of applications for project funding in 2004. In the process of carrying out this work we have discovered there is today within the UVK both an interest and expertise in gender issues. This is quite probably greater today than back in 2004. Ultimately, the UVK needs to ensure the quality of its evaluations by, on the one hand, using the categorizations that now have been presented, and on the other, by developing consistent and defined categories which would thus create better consensus between the evaluation panels.

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APPENDIX

1 The Evaluation Panel 2004

Group 1

Chairperson:
Per-Olof Erixon, Docent, Umea University

Members:
Jan Johansson, Professor, Luleå University of Technology
Heléne Lundkvist, Professor, Lund University
Solveig Mårtensson, University Lecturer, Lund University
Torbjörn Tambour, Docent, Stockholm University
Inger Wistedt, Professor, Stockholm University

Secretary:
Birgitta Mattson, The Swedish Research Council

"The group's expertise is in pedagogical issues concerning IT, Natural Science, Social Science and the Humanities. Other areas include learning and the workplace/lifelong learning, teaching, teacher-training and general pedagogical issues."

Group 2

Chairperson:
Eva-Lena Dahl, Professor, Gothenburg University

Members:
Kenneth Abrahamsson, Head of Programme. Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research
Donald Broady, Professor, Uppsala University
Gunn Engelsrud, Senior Lecturer, University of Oslo
Lars Lindström, Professor, Stockholm Institute of Education
Tore Nordenstam, Professor Emeriturs (Bergen)

Secretary:
Kerstin Nordstrand, The Swedish Research Council

"The group's expertise is within research on education, värdegrund, cultural philosophy together with the creative fields, which is the group's central area of expertise."

Group 3

Chairperson:
Roger Säljö, Professor, Gothenburg University

Members:
Peter Aronsson, Professor, Linköping University
Shirley Booth, Professor, Lund University
Anna Hallgren, Head of Programme, Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems
Moira Linnarud, Professor, Karlstad University
Ingegerd Tallberg-Broman, Professor, Malmö University
Gaby Weiner, Professor, Umeå University
Leif Östman, University Lecturer, Uppsala University

Secretary:
Ann-Margret Lindberg, The Swedish Research Council

"The group's expertise is within the general areas of learning, development and socialization, culture and communication, language and language development, identity research, difficulties in reading and writing, normalization and marginalization within an institutional context."

2 Letter & Questions to the Chairs of the Evaluation Panels

To: The Chairperson
Evaluation Panels 1, 2 & 3
The Committee for Education Science

The Swedish Research Council's Gender Committee has commissioned a follow-up study of the applications submitted in 2004 to the Committee for Education Science (UVK) that applicants marked if their project included a gender angle.

   This follow-up study is the third of its kind: previously, studies have taken place in Humanities & Social Sciences and Medicine. As with the previous studies, the aim of this follow-up is to examine how many applications submitted were marked as including a gender angle, investigate how gender and gender perspectives were interpreted by the applicants as well as looking at how the applications marked as having gender angle were judged during the evaluation process.

   In order to get a better understanding of the evaluation process and the way in which applications were handled, we need answers to a few questions. We hope you can answer these questions as quickly as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Susanne Andersson, fil. dr.
Center for Gender Studies,
Stockholm University

Lars Jalmert
Chair, The Swedish Research Council's
Gender Committee
Department of Education,
Stockholm University

Questions:

1. How has gender and gender perspective been defined by your panel? Has there been discussion regarding the matter?
2. Do you consider that there has been sufficient expertise within your panel to make an assessment of the gender applications?
3. How much interest do you consider there is in gender within your panel?
4. Has there been any overall system of classification or similar for noting the degree to which applications deal with gender?
5. Do you consider it would be useful to have such a classification system?
6. We would appreciate any further comments that you would care to make.

SUMMARY

The evaluation of gender research applications was previously carried out by the Swedish Research Council's Gender Committee. For the 2004 round of funding this was taken over by the appropriate Scientific Councils (Humanities & Social Sciences, Medicine, Natural sciences and Engineering Sciences) and the Committee for Educational Science. One of the aims of this follow-up report is to assess the effect of this change on gender research.

In order to expedite a follow-up report, applicants applying for funding were asked to tick a box on the application form if the proposed project involved "questions of gender or had a gender perspective". The formulation of this was rather general and open to interpretation in a number of ways by the applicants. It was not obligatory for applicants to tick the box, which many seemed to misunderstand: it was merely meant as a basis for carrying out a follow-up report of this ilk.

This follow-up report has been instigated on the initiative of the Swedish Research Council's Gender Committee and is the third follow-up report in a series covering the round of funding applications in 2004. In the first Hillevi Ganetz examined research commissioned within sections of the humanities and social sciences (Ganetz 2005); in the second Gunilla Carlstedt examined applications that fell within the field of medicine (Carlstedt, 2007). This, the third report, examines funding applications that were handled by the Education Science Committee in the spring of 2004. Focusing on the issue of gender, the committee looked at:

- How the term gender has been used and interpreted by applicants and members of the evaluation panel.
- The extent to which both applicants and members of the evaluation panel are qualified in Gender.
- What kind of success rate did applications with a gender angle have?

The UVK received 315 applications: 63 percent of these were marked as having a gender angle. After examining these applications it was decided that only 31 percent actually had a gender angle. A considerable percentage of the applicants were deemed to have insufficient expertise about the filed of gender research. After studying the expertise of the members of the evaluation panels it was evident that each panel had at least one person who was a specialist in gender.

How did the gender applications fair in competition with the other applications which did not include a gender angle but were awarded funding? The applications with a gender angle had a success rate of 17.7 percent compared to an overall success rate of 14.6 percent for research applications within Education Science.