



Vetenskapsrådet

## GENDER RESEARCH PROJECT APPLICATIONS IN THE HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



– a follow-up of the Swedish Research Council's  
2004 review process and its outcome

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The Swedish Research Council's Committee for Gender Research,  
Hillevi Ganetz

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– a follow-up of the Swedish Research Council's 2004 review process and its outcome

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# PREFACE

The Swedish Research Council has a national responsibility to support and develop gender research and gender perspectives in research. For this purpose, the Swedish Government has set up a special fund in the Research Council's budget of at least SEK 10 million annually. The Board of the Research Council has appointed an interdisciplinary committee, the Committee for Gender Research, which has been given an overarching proactive and policy-making role. It is supposed to identify the problems of gender research, test solutions and work on issues such as scientific quality and the internationalisation of gender research. In December 2003, at the suggestion of the Committee for Gender Research, the Swedish Research Council decided to give the review work on research grant applications for gender research and research with a gender perspective to four scientific councils and committees (the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences, for Medicine and for the Natural and Engineering Sciences, and the Committee for Educational Science).

In the spring of 2004, the Committee for Gender Research's contacts with the three scientific councils and the Committee for Educational Science showed that the levels of expertise in gender research and gender perspectives varied greatly. This might of course lead to difficulties in judging the scientific quality of gender related research applications. With this in mind there has been a fear that gender research will not be subjected to as qualified assessments as research in more established fields.

In order to improve matters the Gender Committee initiated a follow-up of the 2004 review work/process in the Swedish Research Council. Associate Professor Hillevi Ganetz took upon herself the task of examining the review process in parts of the humanities/social sciences. The follow-up is presented in this report.

Stockholm, September 2005

**Britta Lundgren**

*Chair of the Swedish Research Council's Committee for Gender Research*



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Hillevi Ganetz, September 2005

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# BACKGROUND

## The purpose of the follow-up

With an annual budget of SEK 2.5 billion the Swedish Research Council is the largest public provider of funding for basic research in Sweden. Research projects at Swedish higher education institutions that receive financial support from the Swedish Research Council are mostly initiated by the scholars and scientists themselves. Funding is granted by the three scientific councils and the Committee for Educational Science to those research projects that display the highest scientific quality and best promote innovation in basic research in Sweden. The allocation of funding is done through a so-called peer-review process, a system in which quality is assessed and priorities set through a large number of review panels in which prominent researchers scrutinise the applications of their peers.

(The web page of the Swedish Research Council, [www.vr.se](http://www.vr.se), checked last 11/18/2005)

The Swedish Research Council is a government agency that was founded in 2001. It is divided into three sectors, each represented by a scientific council – one for Humanities and Social Sciences (HS), one for Medicine (M), and one for Natural and Engineering Sciences (NE) – and two committees with the same powers as the scientific councils – the Committee for Educational Science (ES) and the Committee for Research and Infrastructure (RI).

As stated above, the Swedish Research Council annually allocates approximately SEK 2.5 billion to basic research in Sweden, of which a part goes to research that focuses on gender issues in various ways – funding that is gained in competition with other research projects. The Swedish Research Council also handles an annual sum of SEK 10 million which is earmarked for gender research. The present follow-up was initiated by the Research Council's Committee for Gender Research as a response to questions raised on the board of the Research Council about the review process and outcome of gender research grant applications, including the fund earmarked for gender research by the Swedish Government.

The forms for the 2004 application round for research grant applications to the Research Council contained a box that applicants were expected to check if they thought that their project “concerns research on gender or research with a gender perspective.” The box was not intended as obligatory – though it later turned out that this conception was common – but to provide material for follow-up studies such as the present one. This was also

made clear in the Research Council's instructions that guided applicants through the application procedure.<sup>1</sup>

The present follow-up is the first of its kind and would not have been possible without this "gender box," as it limits a material that would otherwise have been unwieldy – the Research Council received a total of 4,866 applications in 2004. It must be pointed out that the present follow-up does not focus on issues of, or statistics concerning, equal opportunity between the sexes, since the Research Council's annual reports discuss such aspects exhaustively. However, I include some of the basic facts in an appendix, as equality and gender research are closely linked and interdependent phenomena.

This follow-up should be viewed against the background of the history of gender research as sketched below. Because the Committee for Gender Research no longer has access to the handling of research grant applications with gender perspectives, it wants to follow up, firstly, that the funding allotted to gender research by the Swedish Government (see further down) is distributed in the best possible way, and secondly, to study the review process and outcome of research grant applications for research with gender perspectives, or the like. This study focuses on the Scientific Council for Human and Social Sciences (HS). The reason is that the time available for the study is limited, so the material had to be reduced. As HS is the scientific council that receives most applications in which applicants have checked the "gender box," it was chosen for a close study. Also, the review work and outcome of the earmarked 2004 funds, which were used for a special grant in legal science, was handled by the HS.

The following objectives have directed the work:

- 1 To map how many of the applications had been marked by the applicants as having a gender perspective and how they were distributed among each of the scientific councils.
- 2 Particularly to analyse from a gender perspective the applications handled by the HS scientific council. First, all proposals marked as having a gender perspective by the applicants themselves are examined and an overview is made concerning what the applicants mean by "gender perspective" etc., through a close reading of the first two pages of the applications. Second, a deep analysis is made of the research projects that were awarded a grant: how have they been assessed by the review panels and how can they be evaluated from a gender perspective?

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<sup>1</sup> Under the heading "Gender perspective," the following text in the general instructions for the 2004 application round is found: "Applicants are expected to indicate whether gender aspects are brought to the foreground in their project. If so, the applicants should give an account of what these gender aspects are and how they will be handled in their research."

- 3 To investigate the outcome of the special grants in 2004, aimed to promote gender perspectives in legal science. Firstly, I study the quality criteria employed by the reviewers in their assessments of the applications and the reviewers' knowledge of gender issues. Secondly, I analyse the applications in terms of their knowledge of jurisprudence and gender research, both of the applicants and of the grant project applications.

## The Research Council's Committee for Gender Research

The Swedish Research Council's Committee for Gender Research is composed of researchers from different disciplines with competence in gender issues, and was founded at the same time as the Research Council itself in 2001. It is subordinate to the board of the Research Council. The Committee for Gender Studies, as well as the SEK 10 million annual budget, was bequeathed when the Swedish Research Council's predecessor, the Swedish Council for Planning and Coordinating Research, was dissolved to form the Swedish Research Council.<sup>2</sup> The present directives make clear that this money should be used to stimulate "gender perspectives in areas where such a perspective is needed or not sufficiently developed."

The amount awarded every year to gender research is SEK 10 million, but as it is spread over three years – the period of time that most grants are accorded for – the scope is limited (approximately SEK 3 million) for new projects each year, since the rest of the amount is reserved for already approved projects in progress. It should be pointed out that the earmarked funding has been called into question, since it is a form of Government control over research, imposing theoretical perspectives, etc. The present follow-up will not discuss this issue, but only wishes to stress that because the earmarked money is comparatively small (only making up 0.4 percent of the SEK 2.4 billion that the Swedish Research Council granted in 2004) it does not influence the direction of research as a whole. However, the earmarked money might be said to encourage gender perspectives in a (comparatively) modest way.

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<sup>2</sup> The Government's directives for the Swedish Research Council in 2004 states that one of the goals is that, "The Swedish Research Council should work for gender perspectives to be reflected in research." There is a requirement that the Research Council make follow-ups that, "Give an account of, and comment on realised and planned contributions towards the goal. The account should make clear how the special funds reserved for gender research has been used, and in what way the Research Council worked at the distribution of the funds."

As was said above, the 2004 application form had a box which applicants were asked to check if they thought that their project “concerns research on gender or research with a gender perspective.” But in 2001–2003 applicants were also supposed to determine and indicate whether their research had a gender perspective, etc., but this did not take the form of a box to check. The idea was that the mark would indicate whether the application was to be reviewed by the Research Council’s Committee for Gender Research and that it was eligible for the special grants for gender research.

In 2001 the special grants were aimed at research in medicine, health and nursing. At that time, the applications were only reviewed by the Committee for Gender Research. In 2002 the grants were again aimed at medicine, health and nursing, but also at the development of gender theories and concepts. The applications were examined by both the Committee for Gender Research and the review panels in the Scientific Council for Human and Social Sciences (HS). There were discussions about the assessment of the quality of the applications, because the Committee for Gender Research examined the applications from a gender perspective, while in some cases the review panels made their assessments on other grounds. In the following year, the advertised grants were only aimed at the theoretical and conceptual development in gender research and the applications were only reviewed by the Committee for Gender Research. In 2004 the earmarked money was aimed at jurisprudence. From that year on, a new way of dividing the review work has been tried; the three scientific councils review applications that have a gender perspective or that concern gender research. The role of the Committee for Gender Research has thus changed. Today, the Committee does not review research grant applications, and has another purpose (Instruction for the Committee for Gender Research at the Swedish Research Council December 10, 2003):

- §1 The Committee is subordinate to the Board of the Research Council and its purpose is to work for gender perspectives to be reflected in research. The Committee’s work should be proactive and policy making. The work should focus on increasing the understanding and support for gender perspectives in the scientific community and to facilitate research with such a perspective in subfields where such a perspective is needed or not sufficiently developed.
- §2 The Committee should also follow the development and integration of gender research as an area of competence and assist the Board and the Scientific Councils with knowledge about gender.

In line with the instructions, the present Committee for Gender Research has produced a small brochure aimed at the scientific community called “Gender Research in Brief” and a book about questions raised in gender

research, its conditions and the challenges that lie ahead.<sup>3</sup> The Committee has also arranged seminars for the scientific councils and the staff of the Swedish Research Council in order to inform them about what gender research and gender can be defined, and has initiated the present follow-up to answer questions about the outcome of gender research grant applications that have been asked on the board of the Research Council. The expertise of the Committee has been placed at the disposal of the scientific councils and the review panels as the Committee for Gender Research is supposed to work as a resource in the scientific councils' assessments of gender competence. However, in 2004 this has not been realised. None of the scientific councils or review panels have asked for the expertise of the Committee for Gender Research in 2004.

## The background of gender research

What is today called gender research began as *women studies* which emerged in universities in the 1970s and which was interlaced with the political movement known as *feminism*.<sup>4</sup> And this is the situation even today: the gender researchers at the universities often have contacts with the feminist movement and refer to themselves as feminists. But all gender researchers are not feminists, just as all feminists are not gender researchers.

So it was researchers, often women, who in the 1970s started to criticise the “gender blindness” in academia, that is, the fact that research in different disciplines such as history and psychology has neglected to study women’s lives, knowledge and specific living conditions. What ensued was the filling in of the existing knowledge gaps through research. These researchers formulated theories and methods for analysing gender, which was often synonymous with women. This kind of research could be called “supplementary research” – adding knowledge about women to the already existing research that mostly took men as its object. This line of research is still found in most disciplines. Literary studies is a good example of an area where women studies started early and where supplementary research is still being done side by side with other research, in Sweden reaching its highest point with the comprehensive *Nordisk kvinnolitteraturhistoria* (A History of Nordic Women’s Literature).

<sup>3</sup> Thurén, Britt-Marie: *Genusforskning – frågor, villkor och utmaningar* (Gender Research: Problems, Conditions and Challenges), Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet, 2003, and *Genusforskning i korta drag* (Gender Research in Brief), Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> The following very compressed history of the origin of gender research is based on Thurén (2003) and the brochure *Genusforskning i korta drag* (Vetenskapsrådet, 2004).

Supplementary research not only brought “ordinary women,” as well as women writers, musicians, artists and journalists to the fore, but also led scholars to ask why women had been excluded from research. People thus started to ask questions about science and academia itself, about whether there was something in science and academia that made certain perspectives valid and worthwhile of study, while others were excluded. This historical, critical and theoretical discussion in science is still going on, and today it not only concerns gender, but also ethnicity, sexuality and class.

This critical questioning of science goes hand in hand with an interest in women’s situation at the universities – women researchers’ situation at university work places. The work on improving gender equality, which is still going on at universities and which aims to increase the representation of women at all levels in the universities, has thus its roots here.

Gender equality work must not be confused with equality research. One usually says that *equality* is a goal that can be reached through gender equality work. Gender equality implies that women and men will have the same rights and obligations, economically, politically, culturally, etc. What is done in *equality research* is therefore to study inequalities or injustices between men and women, for example in wage levels and some legislation.

In English there has long been a distinction between “sex” and “gender,” where “sex” stands for the biological difference between men and women, while “gender” stands for the cultural or societal sex. The Swedish language had no such distinction but in 1988, in an article in the *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift* (Women Studies Journal), Yvonne Hirdman gave a boost to the new concept *genus* (gender). Hirdman discussed this concept in relation to what she called the “gender system” (*genussystemet*). Later the concept gender (*genus*) has become disengaged from Hirdman’s more specific use and has come to stand for itself. Its advocates have argued that the concept mainly opens up two important dimensions: First it includes both men and women and the asymmetrical (power) relation between them. Second, the concept of gender (*genus*) indicates that sex (*kön*) is not reducible to biology but is socially and culturally structured. Today the concept of gender is well established in the research community and the term refers to the culturally and socially constructed sex, what is “made”, while the biological sex just “is.” But this does not imply a denial of biology – something that gender research is often (wrongly) accused of. Also notions about the body, such as biological descriptions of the human body, have cultural and social consequences. The body and biology are part of gender. But they are not given starting points, but part of what has to be examined.

It must be underlined that not all researchers use the term gender (*genus*). Some only use the concept of sex (*kön*) since they argue that it is

an illusion that it is possible to distinguish the biological and socio-cultural sex (*kön*). Sex can only be understood through the representations we make of it, these researchers believe. Thus sex is also gender. Politicians and political organisations do not generally use the Swedish *genus* but the English word “gender,” by which they mean what Swedish gender researchers refer to with “*genus*,” that is, the socially and culturally constructed sex. But there is no great conflict about what term to use – the important thing, as many scholars have pointed out, is to be clear about what one is referring to, whether one uses sex (*kön*) or gender (*genus*) to talk about the social and cultural gender.

Because the area of study has changed, a door has opened to other approaches to gender. It is commonly claimed that today gender research includes research about equality (studying social injustices that have to do with gender and suggesting measures to correct them), women studies (studying women and femininity), feminist research (research on women’s liberation with a focus on power), masculinity studies (studying men and masculinity) and queer studies (criticism of heteronormativity).

## Definitions: gender research, gender perspectives and gender aspects

The question of defining gender research is a very sensitive one. If an area of study is defined too narrowly there is always the risk that promising discussions will be hampered. Many gender researchers have experienced unfruitful, excluding debates and want to avoid such situations. As a consequence there is a broad consensus in the area that no one that seriously engages in gender research should be denied this label. At the same time, because of the earmarked money, research posts, etc., researchers who do not have any relation with interdisciplinary gender research in his or her own field sometimes apply for gender research grants and posts. This is unprofessional. Despite everything it becomes necessary to define the field in order to avoid watering it down. (Thurén, 2003)

As it is the purpose of this follow-up to study the review process and outcome of gender research applications at the Swedish Research Council, the central terminology has to be defined. On page two of the application form in 2004, applicants could check a box about whether they thought that their “Research programme concerns research on gender or research with a gender perspective.” These notions are not defined and delimited there, however, though they are explained in other texts that the Research Council

has produced. In order to follow up and form an opinion about the review process of the applications we must define the concepts of gender research, gender perspective and gender aspect, since they will be used as operative concepts in the following.

What, then, is *gender research*? Simply put, the answer might be that it is the large field where it is problematised how gender, that is cultural and social sex, is “made,” constructed, arises, is formed – on different levels, in different spheres, in culture and society.

Gender research can be both interdisciplinary and intra-disciplinary. Interdisciplinary gender research can be described as the common frame of reference that gender researchers in all disciplines relate to and that have been formulated *across* disciplinary boundaries during the more than thirty years that gender research, as it is called now, has been found in academia. Intra-disciplinary gender research is research about gender that is found *within* a traditionally delimited field of study. Intra-disciplinary gender research often relates in some way to the interdisciplinary one, but employs methods and references from its own field and mainly addresses problems formulated there (Thurén, 2003:19).

What, then, is the difference between gender research and gender perspectives and gender aspects? It must be underlined that there are of course different opinions about this in the field, but since this follow-up uses these terms in the analysis, definitions are required, but they should not be regarded as definite and indisputable. Although, it must be said that the definitions probably do not depart noticeably from the way most people in the field would define them.

We may discuss these concepts in relation to a fictional project about public-service television news. A number of perspectives could be employed, among these a gender perspective. This perspective can be more or less prominent. If the project is called “Gender in Television News,” and has clear links to the theories and methods that have been worked out in the field, then the gender perspective would be so dominant that the project might be described as *gender research*, since gender is the focus of the project.

However, if the project is called “Television News in Public Service,” and one aim, along with others ones, is to analyse and problematise the way gender is represented, constructed or “made” in news, it can be claimed that the research has a *gender perspective*. Also a gender perspective implies that the researcher, or researchers are well-read in the literature, that they have a general view of the field and have knowledge about theory, methodology and data in the field.

That a researcher considers *gender aspects* means that gender does not play very prominent part in the analysis, but that this dimension is still to

be found there. But also the term gender aspect requires that there at least is a certain degree of awareness about and reading in the theories and methods that have been worked out in the field. It is not enough, for example in a research grant application, to point out that gender aspects can be considered in the material and that it will be done. At least a rudimentary description of previous research is relevant, in what way gender will be theorised and how the applicant is going to proceed methodically. Also gender aspects can be more or less prominent.

To do research work on men and women – that is, to use sex as a variable but not as an analytical category – can thus not be said to be an example of gender aspect. This is not to say that research that uses sex as a variable is unimportant. On the contrary, findings such as pictures of men dominating the news is an important basis for further studies. In our hypothetical project about public-service television news, such a find will form an important basis for an analysis, for example of why this is so and how it is done formally (for example in the use of picture angles or perspectives, lighting, sceneries, facial expressions, props) in the light of current gender theories and other research in the field. In this way, the step from sex as variable to gender as an analytical category can be taken.

It should also be noted that a subject might have gender aspects, that is, it is possible and even fruitful to apply a gender perspective in, as it would be in for example television news, like in most other subjects.

# PROPOSALS GENDER-MARKED BY APPLICANTS

## Distribution – all the scientific councils

For the application round in 2004, the Swedish Research Council received 4,866 proposals (see the annual report 2004, Table 14). Of these, 1,035, or more than one fifth or 21 percent, had been gender-marked by applicants. The figure 1,035 is based on a list of all applicants who had checked the box for “gender/ gender perspective,” divided into the sectors Humanities and Social Sciences (HS), Medicine (M), Natural and Engineering Sciences (NE), Educational Science (ES) and Longitudinal Databases (LONG). The list was taken from the Research Council’s internal database called the “Sluice.” However, it is not certain that the list that this follow-up relies on is completely correct, but in order to proceed at this point I have decided to regard it as acceptable. This issue is discussed below under the heading “The handling of proposals gender marked by applicants.”

The proposals that were gender marked by applicants (1,035) are distributed according to the following table for the scientific councils:

Table 1. Distribution of proposals gender marked by applicants 2004.

	Proportion %
HS	49.0
M	26.3
NE	3.4
ES	20.6
LONG	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

If we only look at the distribution of proposals gender-marked by applicants, it is clear that most, almost half, are found in HS, while M represents a quarter, ES a fifth, and NE’s share is marginal. HS also stands for most proposals with some kind of gender profile.

If we compare the number of gender-marked applications with the total number of submitted applications to each sector, HS does not top the list. In each sector, the number of gender-marked applications is as follows:

Table 2: Distribution of proposals gender marked by applicants, according to sector 2004.

	Number of appl.	Number of gender-marked appl.	Percentage
HS	1,003*	508	50.6
M	1,250	272	21.8
NE	2,273	35	1.5
ES	315	213	67.6
LONG	25	7	28.0
Total	4,866	1,035	21.3

\* Including 22 applications for Research and Development in the arts.

Thus, with more than two thirds of the submitted proposals being marked as having a gender profile, ES has the largest share of gender-marked proposals relative to the total number of proposals submitted to the council. Second comes HS, where half the reviewed proposals were gender marked, while one fifth of the proposals in M were so marked. Only 1.5 percent of all applications that the NE scientific council reviewed concerned research on gender or research with a gender perspective. The same pattern was noticeable in the evaluation that the Council for Planning and Coordination of Research's Programme for Gender Research 1991–1997 made (FRN 1999), where it is noted that most of the grants in the period 1995/96 went to the social sciences (except for economic sciences). Then comes humanities, medicine and last engineering and natural sciences. The many gender-marked proposals in educational science should be seen as a confirmation of the strong position of the social sciences in the field.

### Summary:

- Of all the 4,866 proposals submitted to the Research Council in 2004, 21 percent or 1,035 were gender marked by applicants.
- The majority of these 1,035 proposals (49 percent) were found in the HS Scientific Council. A very small portion were found in NE.
- ES has the largest share of gender-marked proposals relative to the total number of proposals submitted to the council (68 percent), followed by HS (51 percent), M (22 percent), and NT (2 percent).
- HS has the most applicants who think that their research has some kind of gender profile, while NT has the least.

# THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL FOR HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

## Proposals gender marked by applicants in HS

The Swedish Research Council's annual report in 2004 shows that 1,003 people applied for funding in HS.<sup>5</sup> More than half, or 508, of the proposals to this scientific council were gender marked. According to the decisions list that was made available on the web by the Research Council, 122 proposals were granted.<sup>6</sup> Of these, 56 were gender marked by applicants.

However, we cannot assume that the large number of proposals gender marked by applicants indicates that gender research has a strong position in HS as a whole. One hypothesis is that many applicants have checked the "gender box" just to be on the safe side, something that might be seen as a rational behaviour if they believe that this would increase their chances. They might not have read the instructions carefully and not understood that the box, which should be checked by applicants who think that their project "concerns research on gender or research with a gender perspective," is not obligatory. Another factor that might complicate the number of gender-marked applications is the way applicants interpret the phrase "research on gender or research with a gender perspective." One might assume that applicants who check the "gender box" are gender researchers, that is, that everyone is well read in this research tradition, that they have an overview of the field and knowledge of theories, methodology and data in the field and that gender is a central category in the proposed research programme. But we might just as well assume that the marking by the applicants implies a gender perspective for most of them, that is, a problematisation of the construction or making of gender, in addition to other problematisations. Or is it a question of the weaker form of gender profile that we here call gender aspect, that is an awareness that gender is an important category to study in the research programme in question, but also that this dimension is not very prominent? Or are all these factors present at once?

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<sup>5</sup> 981 applied for funding from HS plus 22 who applied for grants for artistic research and development. Sometimes the last group is not included as part of HS (the annual report 2004:52, lists them separately), and sometimes it is (as in the list of decisions at [www.vr.se](http://www.vr.se) where approved research and development grants are listed among other HS grants).

<sup>6</sup> According to the list of decisions for Humanities and social science, February 14, 2005, [www.vr.se](http://www.vr.se). According to the Council's annual report, 118 are unspecified projects, but since the list on the web page is more detailed and lists both name, gender, field, project title, form of funding and amounts this list is used here.

In order to problematise the 21 percent gender-marked proposals, and especially the 49 percent found in HS, an examination was made of the 508 gender-marked proposals in order to find what the applicants meant by research on gender and gender perspective, on the one hand, and how these views can be assessed against the background of the definitions of gender research, gender perspective and gender aspect provided above, on the other hand.

## The applicants' use of the terms gender and gender perspective

In order to investigate what the researchers who applied for grants meant by gender perspective and the like, I first examined the first two pages in the 508 (of the 1,003) gender-marked proposals in HS. On these pages, one finds the name of the applicant, a project title, a short project description, key words that the applicant has chosen in order to designate his or her project, and the heading "Aspects," under which applicants are supposed to indicate whether they think that, "The application concerns research on gender or research with a gender perspective."

This way of proceeding, however, turned out to provide a limited amount of information: It was possible to determine with certainty whether an application concerned *gender research* in the first two pages, since gender in such projects is such a fundamental category that it is even observable in a summary. But in order to find out whether there was a *gender perspective* or *gender aspects* in the project, I also made a computer search of the 160 first (when ordered alphabetically) applications. I searched the whole of the documents for the terms "*genus*" (or when relevant, "gender" or "*kön*"/"sex") in order to find out whether there were gender aspects in the projects that were not visible in the summaries.

It turned out that the scope was enormous in the way the concepts "gender/gender perspective" were interpreted by applicants, from those who had no gender perspective at all, to full gender research projects. One example from the former group is from an application by a male researcher who proposed to write a biography of a male Asian government official (all examples are rendered anonymous): "I am inexcusably uninformed about gender theories and do not in any way want to make a show of trying to consider my material, or understand my material, analytically from a gender perspective." Then he goes on and says that he has interviewed the wife of

this particular civil servant: “But to my knowledge, no one has heard [the official’s] wife in this way before.” A little further on in the text he concludes: “It is this saturated, sensual life that I want to place at the disposal of more theoretical gender research... I do not have the ability to do so myself.” Not even a very liberal gender researcher would say that this is a gender perspective, since the applicant himself admits that he lacks knowledge of the field.

But this is an extreme example, as the applicant, despite the fact that the proposal lacks a gender perspective, still discusses his lack. In general, those who do not have a gender perspective do not use the concept of gender at all in their research proposals – they seem to belong to the category of people who have misunderstood what the purpose of the information was, or who checked the box just to be on the safe side. Of the 160 applications that were closely examined, 26 belonged to this group, while among the other 348 applications, there were 166 who belonged here, so that totally 192 of the 508 applicants seem to have checked the box on such grounds. The reason why the number is comparatively much larger among applications where only the first two pages were studied is that they reveal proportionately little information. If gender, or sex, was not even mentioned in the summary or among the keywords, I classify the applications as containing neither gender perspectives nor gender aspects. Some would probably have ended up in the category “gender aspects” if there had been more time for a thorough examination, which just shows that often there is a fine line between what applicants might regard as gender aspects and what is in fact no gender perspectives or aspects at all.

One category of applications that is very hard to judge is the many who claim that they might use a gender perspective or aspects but do not explain how they are going to do this. To this category one might also count those – often social scientists – who say that they will interview or study both men and women, that is, researchers who use gender as a variable. But this is mostly not problematised or theorised, nor do they refer to relevant literature in the field. Below are some short examples of what can be found under the heading “gender perspective” or “gender aspects” in the applications:

“Normally one would not expect differences in syntax between men and women, in the way differences are found in vocabulary or speech patterns. What we expect is possibly a difference in the frequency of dialectal forms; according to prevalent sociolinguistic theories, women are less prone to speak with a marked dialect. We do not expect to get large results in the gender area, but at all points, the XX material contains recordings of both men and women, and we intend to proceed in the same manner in our supplementary recordings and studies of the informants.”

“The preliminary work for this research grant application have shown that gender (or in a more biomedical language, sex) is a factor that is considered in several studies. We will look closer at this and investigate in what way and in what contexts the gender aspect is regarded as relevant in the different perspectives.”

“Gender aspects are taken into consideration since the importance of gender for the distribution of crime in the population is investigated.”

The three research grant applications above, and other, similar ones have here been judged to contain a weak gender aspect, which is debatable. With a stricter standard it could be claimed that they do not have any gender perspectives or aspects at all, since they do not connect to any theories in gender research, although they have a certain gender equality perspective (being aware of distribution according to sex). Biological sex seems also to be uncritically equated with gender. Applications that have been classified as containing strong gender aspects are somewhat more elaborate in this regard than the above examples, but it has often been hard to draw a line in this category:

“Although gender aspects are not the main object in any of the part projects, the gender problematic is of interest in many respects. The study that forms the basis of the studies in question had a clear gender dimension and thematised young men’s identity work from a gender and sexual point of view. Many media industries are male dominated (not least the technology-heavy computer gaming industry), so gender aspects seem necessary in the analyses.”

“As Amanda Lagerkvist has shown in her analysis of Swedish travel writings from the USA in the post-war period (Lagerkvist 1999), there is an interesting gender dimension in the construction of the Swedish image of America. The gender problematic will also be tried in the analysis of Swedish anti-Americanism. Examples of questions that have been asked are whether there are differences between criticism raised by male and female debaters and whether it is possible to find differences between the two main forms of political and cultural anti-Americanism that can be traced back to issues of gender.”

What the applicants in these groups mean by “gender aspect” or “gender perspective” is thus very hard to determine, since for them the concepts seem to be very flexible and can be made to encompass almost anything, from nothing at all to some insights into gender as an analytic category. Of the 160 who were studied more closely, 70 were deemed to contain gender aspects, of which 32 were weak, while 65, of which 27 were weak, were found among the remaining 348. The last figure, which is proportionately

low compared to the former, should be seen in relation to the method: since in this case, only the first two pages were read, both strong and weak gender aspects might hide in the project application and not be visible in the summaries or among the keywords, which have led to the project application being classified as having no gender aspects at all. In total 135 of the 508 projects that were gender marked by applicants had gender aspects according to my classification.

Another way of interpreting the concept of gender perspective in the submitted proposals is to see it as one among other perspectives that can be used to problematise, understand and interpret a material, in line with the definition that was suggested above. In that case the gender perspective is often found together with class, ethnicity, age and sexuality perspectives. In such proposals, the gender perspective might be more strongly or weakly pronounced, depending on what is studied. Applicants also connect to the tradition of gender research and its theories, methods and data in varying degrees. Especially when the gender perspective is weaker the borderline to what should be called gender aspects is porous. Some examples of research grant applications that I have classified as having a gender perspective can be found in the following (all found with the heading gender perspective or gender aspect in the applications):

“We see that a gender perspective will bring valuable insights in two respects. First, the Women’s Movements have been forerunners in providing collective identities in and outside the movements. They have been developed theoretically with an emphasis on aspects such as resemblance, individuality, cooperation and confrontation (Liljeström 1983). Ageism is a concept that has been launched and is modelled on sexism (Levin & Levin 1980; Andersson 2002). Secondly, the description of the problems of old people have had an androcentric character, in the sense that the formulation of problems have been based on the situations and needs of old men (Jönson 2002). A gender perspective makes this androcentrism visible, at the same time as it also works as an outlook from which the obvious can be problematised.”

“As we have explained above in the description of the project, it is important for all the studied levels – practice, the institutional-political level, the level of discourse – to apply a gender perspective. How is masculinity and femininity constructed in the refugee discourse? Men and women refugees were treated differently, and men were seen as the norm of a true refugee (Lewis 1997 & 1992; Hirdman 1990. Cf. SOU 1946:36). Research has shown that there was a clear gender order both on the institutional and normative level. Philanthropy and solidarity work had traditionally had a feminised trait, which might also have been the case in the refugee committees (Florin; Kvarnström, Waldemarson & Åmark; Kvarnström; Bergman, Jordansson).”

“Gender aspects occupy an altogether central role in the framing the project. The whole project starts out from observations that seem to cast a previously unknown light on the Medieval gender order in the Baltic area. However, for us, gender is indissolubly linked to questions of kinship. The different kinship systems represent different rules for the socialisation of children, management of property, inheritance, etc. To us, the question of the gendered division of labour and social position in the social microcosm is of particular interest. The question of status will also be related to women’s and men’s life cycles (Arwill-Nordbladh 2001). Men’s role will be problematised in NN’s planned dissertation, where an attempt will be made to present a more complementary and pluralistic view of gender (cf. “queer theory”). On the whole the relation between gender, work and status must be set in the widest possible social framework.”

Despite the variations mentioned above there seems to be greater agreement among applicants about what we here call gender perspective and what it might mean, than in the large group that could be said to consider gender aspects. Among the 160 applications that were studied closely, 42 had a gender perspective, while 63 of the remaining 348 had a gender perspective. In total, 105 applications of 508 had a gender perspective. In these cases there were no great difficulties in classifying the application on the basis of the first two pages: they revealed the applicants’ awareness of gender as an analytical category and gender was often found among the keywords, sometimes alongside keywords such as ethnicity or class.

There seems to be an even greater agreement as to what constitutes gender research among the applicants. Since gender is such a central category in these projects, these proposals stand out since they often have the word “gender” already in the title or they thematise socially or culturally constructed sex in some other way, for example: “Men who nurse: an analysis of subversive masculinity in nursing relations,” “Gender constructions in baroque opera conventions: a study of the representation of masculinity and femininity in 18th-century opera seria,” “Work in woodland households: a gender perspective on the living conditions and doings of workers in North-Swedish forestry ca. 1920–1975,” or “Gender perspectives on historical landscapes.” Under the heading “Research areas” on the first page of the application form, several applicants also indicate that they are doing gender research although this category does not exist among the review panels. The word gender or sex (as an analytic category) are always found centrally among the keywords on the first page of the form. In the project applications the gender perspective is the governing concept. Citations that are made come from gender research in the applicant’s own discipline and from interdisciplinary gender research. If the headings “Gender perspectives” and “Gender aspects” are found in the applications, the authors just point out that the gender perspective runs all through the project and is a fundamental to the design of the project,

something that is already clear from the research programme. Of the 160 applications that have been subjected to close study, 22 were gender research projects, while 54 are found among the remaining 348.

So, what can be said all in all and be expressed in percentage figures about all the 508 HS research projects, of the total of 1,003 applications that had been marked for gender? There is a great degree of agreement about what gender research and gender perspective is among some of the applicants. However, this group only makes up a small part of the whole: 15 percent of the proposals that had been gender marked by the applicants consist of what is here defined as gender research, while 21 percent have been classified as having a gender perspective. Under the umbrella of what is here called gender aspects, there are many ideas of what gender perspectives or gender aspects might involve, something that is the greatest difference in relation to the 36 percent who are either gender researchers or work with a gender perspective. Knowledge about the field seems to be the thing that divides the two groups: if the 36 percent seem to be totally familiar with the gender research tradition, have a general view of the field and know the theory, methodology and data, the knowledge among the other applicants seems to vary greatly. The research grant applications that can be said to consider some gender aspects make up 27 percent of the 508 applications, and display extraordinarily heterogeneous, sometimes minimal insights into gender. So, even if the estimation 27 percent for this group is uncertain, it is clear that it could be made somewhat bigger as it borders on the large group of 38 percent who have checked the “gender box” but who on closer inspection consider very weak gender aspects in their material or none at all. This last group might thus in turn be made smaller. But all in all, it is justified to claim that the “weak” group (in the sense of displaying only a few weak gender aspects or none at all) of 64 percent is clearly distinguishable from the “strong” group of 36 percent, since there is such a clearly observable line between applicants who are either gender researchers or adopt a gender perspective, and the rest. This can also be formulated in the way that there is a clearly discernible difference between applicants who view gender as an analytical category, on the one hand, and those who see gender – often in the sense of biological sex – as a variable, on the other hand.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Distribution according to sex among applicants in the different categories among the 160 HS research grant applications that were studied closely:

	Men	Women
Gender research	3	20
Gender perspectives	15	25
Gender aspects	46	25
No gender profile	22	4

The distribution according to sex gives a hint of the way gender equality work in academia forms the basis of gender research. More women researchers seem to lead to more gender research, fewer women to less. This is probably part of the explanation of why gender research is not so common in the natural and engineering sciences where the proportion of women researchers is generally low or very low (see the Swedish Research Council's annual report, 2004: 35).

## Summary:

- The ideas about gender perspectives, gender aspects and gender varied greatly in the HS research grant applicants.
- Only a small portion of the 508 proposals submitted to HS that were gender marked by applicants (76, that is 15 percent) could be said to be gender research projects, that is, projects in which the category of gender is central to the project and applicants show that they are well-read in the theory, methodology and data of the field.
- A somewhat larger part of the proposals that have been gender marked by the applicants (105 of 508, or 21 percent) were classified as having a gender perspective, that is, it is one perspective among others that are applied with the purpose of problematising, understanding and interpreting the material. Also a gender perspective implies good knowledge about the research tradition, a general view of the field and knowledge about the theory, methodology and data in the field.
- The greater part of the proposals that have been gender marked by the applicants (327 of 508, or 64 percent) consider a few gender aspects, or none at all, in their material.
- Of all the 1,003 applications submitted to HS in 2004, 8 percent consisted of gender research and 10 percent had a clearly discernible gender perspective.

## The review panels' use of the concept of "gender"

As is clear above, there are highly varied ideas about what gender is and what gender perspectives or gender aspects are among those who applied for research grants from HS in 2004. So, what is the situation in the reviewing panels, among the judges? Is there the same variation as among applicants? In order to investigate this issue, 56 of the 122 applications awarded by the Scientific Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences in 2004 were subjected to close readings. These 56 applicants had all indicated that their applications concerned "research on gender or research with a gender perspective," by checking the appropriate box. Of these 56, the review panels judged that 27 had a gender perspective, or the like. These projects were marked "Gender," which is the way projects judged to have a gender perspective or the like are marked in the decision list. This list is presented to the HS Scientific Council for their decision, and among other things it lists the recommendations of the review panels for what new projects ought to receive funding and lists name, sex, amount, grade, ranking, etc. In the present

context it is the note “Gender” that is interesting: as was stated above, this marking was found in 27 projects.

The nine review panels (RP) are:

- RP 1 Aesthetic Sciences
- RP 2 Economic Research and Statistics
- RP 3 Sociology, Social Anthropology, Ethnology, Social Work
- RP 4 Jurisprudence and Philosophy
- RP 5 Political Science and Media and Communication
- RP 6 Psychological Research
- RP 7 Vacant
- RP 8 Historical Sciences and Archaeology
- RP 9 Linguistics and Modern Languages
- RP 10 Religious Studies, non-European Languages and Cultures, Ancient History

Each of the nine review panels, which each consist of six to twelve members, is led by a chairperson who is also a member of the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences. He or she is elected by electors who in turn have been elected by colleagues at the universities. The members of each review panel are suggested by the chair, sometimes in consultation with his or her predecessor. The proposals have to be approved by the HS Science Committee, however. The term of office for a chair is three years.

As said, 56 of the 122 approved proposals were gender marked by the applicants, but only 27 had received the mark “Gender” in the list of decisions. More than half of the approved proposals had thus “lost” its gender perspective somewhere along the line in the review process. In addition, one research grant application had received a gender perspective (the applicant had not checked the box for gender perspective). There were thus discrepancies between what the applicants and what the review panels regarded as, for example, a gender perspective.

In order to understand this process, I sent an email with two question to the nine review panels: What were the review panels’ criteria for using the mark/notation “Gender” (for example in the decision list)? And what were the criteria for removing (or adding) a “Gender” marking in other cases? One answer given by the chairperson of Review Panel 3, who was the only chairperson to answer the questions, was, “An application is marked ‘Gender’ when it contains a clear gender perspective, that is, when the relation between the sexes is theorised and when this is a central aspect of the empirical investigation. The ‘Gender’ marking is removed when this is not the case, for example when the difference between the sexes is considered

but where there is no ambition to explain or understand this difference.” There was also a long answer from the section leader of the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences at the time, an answer which forms the basis of the following description of the process.

HS is the only scientific council at the Swedish Research Council where applications are reviewed in two rounds by review panels and programme groups before the HS Scientific Council makes the final decision. In the beginning of the summer each year, there is an assessment in which two thirds of the proposals are rejected. One third of the applications go on to a second review round. In this second round, it is decided which applications will be granted funding.

In the first round, the review panels note on a so-called report page for each application whether they think that it is interdisciplinary, has a gender perspective or if it is a so-called risk project. The last term is used to signal whether the application contains untried points, innovative thinking, etc., which means that it is not clear that it can be carried through, but if it is it could produce some exciting new knowledge. These notes are made because there is a so-called Director General’s Pool of Money, which contained SEK 7 million in 2004, from which these kinds of projects could receive special funding. The pool is distributed across all the sections and not just to HS. The Director General makes the decision after the secretaries have put together and presented their suggestions. All the review panels are invited to nominate projects to be funded from this pool among the project that they have approved.

It is thus the experts themselves who judge whether an application has a gender perspective or the like. Thereafter, in the first round, further discussions follow about which projects will go on to round two. Here, according to what is said, only scientific quality is taken into consideration and not the direction or perspective of the application. Sometimes the different review panels consult with one another, especially when it comes to interdisciplinary applications.

The statistics that are made to form the basis for the decisions for the Director General’s Pool of Money show that it is Review Panel 3 and 1 that get most applications that, according to the review panels, are characterised by gender perspectives or the like, while Review Panel 6 for Psychological Research did not even have a single one. Review Panel 2 for Economic Research and Statistics does not seem to have received many gender application, but on the other hand they had three that were marked already in the first round and all received funding in the end. It must be underlined that the total number of approved project in the table bellow is only 110, compared to the 122 listed by the Swedish Research Council on their web pages. This is explained by the fact that the table is a kind of work-in-progress document rather than a definitive list of approved projects. However, the number of “gender projects”

is constant, that is, 27 in total. But, since no more definitive list is obtainable from the HS Scientific Council, this table still has to work as a rough indication of the distribution of gender applications in each review panel. Note that the table below does not list the applications according to the applicants' indication in the "gender box" that their project is gender related, but the applications that the review panels have marked "Gender."

Table 3. Applications marked "Gender" by the review panels, distributed according to review panel, HS research grant application round 2004.

Review panels		Total submitted applications	Total approved applications	Gender applications			
				Received acc. to RP	Nominated to round 2	Prioritised in round 2	Granted acc. to RP
1	Aesthetic Sciences	107	12	34	13	9	6
2	Economic Research and Statistics	162	14	3	3	3	3
3	Sociology, Anthropology, Ethnology, Social Work, Demography, Criminology, Pedagogy,	191	21	46	8	6	4
4	Jurisprudence, Philosophy	69	10	14	5	3	3
5	Political Science, Media and Communication	86	11	16	7	6	3
6	Psychological Research	78	11	0	0	0	0
7	Vacant						
8	Historical Sciences, Archaeology	134	10	6	6	5	3
9	Linguistics, Modern Languages	50	9	8	5	3	3
10	Religious Studies, Non-European Languages and Cultures, Ancient History	69	12	4	3	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>HS</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>

The comparatively high portion of applications that Review Panel 1 and 3 marked with "Gender," reflects the situation at the universities. Gender research has a strong position, also in a historical perspective, in the aesthetic sciences (for example comparative literature). The same is true for sociology,

social anthropology, ethnology and social work. Inversely, the low portion of research projects marked with “Gender” in Review Panel 2, 6 and 10 ought to be seen as a reflection of the weak position of gender research in the disciplines covered by these panels. The exception to this rule is Review Panel 8, which handles applications in history and archaeology, where the former discipline in particular has a long history of gender research, while proportionately very few applications were marked with “Gender” in this panel.

In round two the panels arrive at a number of projects that they want to give priority and eventually each panel agrees on an order of precedence for the projects that ought to be granted funding. The official statements are written at this point. The decision is made in the Scientific Council, though, but it is rare that it votes against the recommendations of the review panels.

Before we leave the table above, I also want to comment on the high “success rate” that is observable for projects marked with “Gender” by the review panels. Generally, the projects designated with the “Gender” marking have been very successful when one considers the relation between the number of approvals and the total number of applications. For example, Review Panel 2 received three projects that were marked with “gender” and all three were approved for funding in the end, which gives a success rate of 100 percent. The table below shows the distribution in the other review panels and it is notable that the “gender marked” applications in most cases did better than applications that were not so marked. Review Panel 3 and 6 are exceptions.

Table 4. Success rate HS 2004: total approval rate and approved “gender marked” applications.

Review panels	Total approved %	“Gender” acc. to RP %
1 Aesthetic Sciences	11,21	17,65
2 Economic Research and Statistics	8,64	100,00
3 Sociology, Anthropology, Ethnology, Social Work, Demography, Criminology, Pedagogy	10,99	8,70
4 Jurisprudence, Philosophy	14,49	21,43
5 Political Science, Media and Communication Science	12,79	18,75
6 Psychological Research	14,10	0,00
7 Vacant	0,00	0,00
8 Historical Sciences, Archaeology	7,46	50,00
9 Linguistics, Modern Languages	18,00	37,50
10 Religious Studies, Non-European Languages and Cultures, Ancient History	17,39	50,00
<b>Total HS</b>	<b>11,63</b>	<b>20,61</b>

But what kind of beast is it that hides behind the label “Gender” in the decision record? Are all 27 of the total 122 approved projects, that is 22 percent, gender research? Or, is it a question of gender perspectives, weak or strong gender aspects? In order to investigate how the label “Gender” is understood by the peer-review panels all 56 proposals that were gender marked by the applicants were subjected to close readings. The first question that needed an answer was why 29 of the research grant applications had been deprived of their gender mark by the review panels. Why did not the review panels mark these applications with “Gender” although the applicants had checked the “gender box”? The other question was how the nine review panels defined “gender.”

The first question is fairly easy to answer after a reading of the 56 applications. The majority of the 29 projects where the applicants had checked the box for gender perspective but which was not marked with “Gender” in the decision list, consider no or very weak gender aspects. However, there are two exceptions that might be debatable: one sociological project that belongs to Review Panel 3 and one in economic history in Review Panel 8. Both projects might be described as having a prominent gender perspective but have not received the marking “Gender” by the review panels. There is one example of the opposite in Review Panel 9: one applicant who had not checked the box for gender perspective was given the marking “Gender” by the review panel. In this case, it is indisputably the main applicant who has made the correct judgement: the project has minimal gender aspects. But almost all the review panels seem to be agree with the chairperson of review panel 3: “Gender marking is removed [...] for example when the difference between the sexes is considered but where there is no ambition to explain or understand this difference.”

What about research grant applications whose checked box for gender perspective is not removed and also has been supplied with the marking “Gender” by the review panels? May they be classified with the terms gender research, gender perspective or gender aspects? In order to study this issue the 27 approved project grant applications that had received the marking “Gender” were subjected to close readings and were ordered according to the mentioned categories, whose definitions are discussed above. The following variations are then found according to the review panels:

Table 5. Specification of “Gender” according to the review panels

Review panels		“Gender” acc. to RP	Gender research	Gender perspective	Gender aspects	No gender profile
1	Aesthetic Sciences	6	3	2	1	0
2	Economic Research and Statistics	3	0	2	1	0
3	Sociology, Anthropology, Ethnology, Social Work, Demography, Criminology, Pedagogy	4	3	1	0	0
4	Jurisprudence, Philosophy	3	3	0	0	0
5	Political Science, Media and Communication Science	3	2	1	0	0
6	Psychological Research	0	0	0	0	0
7	Vacant	0	0	0	0	0
8	Historical Sciences, Archaeology	3	3	0	0	0
9	Linguistics, Modern Languages	3	0	0	2	1
10	Religious Studies, Non- European Languages and and Cultures, Ancient History	2	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>HS</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

- RP 1: 3 gender research projects (literature, art, music), 2 gender perspective (music, architecture) and 1 gender aspect (film).
- RP 2: 2 weak gender perspectives (economic history, social geography) and 1 gender aspect (social geography).
- RP 3: 3 gender research projects (2 anthropology specialising on jurisprudence, 1 demography), 1 gender perspective (sociology).
- RP 4: 3 gender research projects (all in the Gender Committee’s special grant for jurisprudence with gender perspective).
- RP 5: 2 gender research projects (media and communication), 1 strong gender perspective (political science).
- RP 6: no projects have been gender marked.
- RP 8: 3 gender research projects (social geography, history, history of ideas).
- RP 9: 2 gender aspects (phonetics), 1 no gender profile (linguistics).
- RP 10: 2 gender research projects (both religious studies).

Of the 27 approved “gender applications,” 16 could be classified as being gender research projects, 6 as having a prominent gender perspective, 4 as having gender aspects and 1 as having no gender aspects at all – all these applications had received the marking “Gender” by the review panels. If one studies the assessments of the review panels with a critical eye, according to the way gender research, gender perspective and gender aspect are defined above, 22 of the 27 application which were marked with “Gender” have a gender perspective or constitute gender research.

As is clear above, the marking “Gender” is used with different meanings both within and between the review panels. For example, in Review Panel 9, only a few gender aspects, or none at all, are required in a project for it to be marked with “Gender”, while Review Panel 8 only used the marking “Gender” for gender research projects. As suggested above, these differences between review panels are probably due to differences in position and extent of gender research in the different disciplines and as a consequence, differences in access to peers with gender competence in the review panels.

But there are also variations within the individual review panels: for example, in Review Panel 1, the label “Gender” has been used for a range of projects, from gender research projects to projects with gender perspective and those with gender aspects. The variations are probably connected to variations in gender competence. However, the peers do not only read applications from their own disciplines and areas of competence: in round one, two people are chosen to report on each application and the chairperson often reads all the applications. In addition, in round two the people reporting might be exchanged, so the variations in the understanding of the concept of “gender” cannot only be due to the experts. One conclusion that can thus be drawn is that the review panels have not had many joint discussions about how “Gender” ought to be interpreted.

At the same time it should be emphasised that all in all the agreement in the review panels that the term “Gender” should be reserved for gender research and clearly discernible gender perspectives is greater than among the applicants. As was discussed above, a majority of the latter (64 percent) thought that “gender/gender perspective” included considering gender aspects – strong, weak, or none at all – in one’s material. This category only include 19 percent according to the review panels. In addition, the review panels picked out 29 applications, with two questionable exceptions, which the applicants themselves had marked for gender research, but which could and should be questioned. One could say that the review panels were less liberal in their definitions than the applicants.

The above discussions about the interpretations made by the review panels of what gender research might mean should not be seen as directions

that “Gender” should be marked only when an applications concerns gender research. It is rather a question of making a problem visible and go on in the debate.

### Summary:

- The number of “gender” applications that each of the nine review panels in the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences receive differs. This might be explained by the fact that gender research has developed differently in different disciplines: those review panels where gender research has the strongest support and has the longest tradition receive more “gender” applications.
- The review panels’ use of the marking “Gender” varies, both within one and the same review panel and between the different review panels. In many cases, the review panels seem to have reserved the marking “Gender” for either gender research projects or projects with a clear gender perspective. The variations in usage indicate that there have not been sufficient joint discussions within and between the review panels about the meaning of the marking “Gender.”
- 22 of 27 projects that were granted funding and that the review panels marked “Gender” might be described as having a clear gender perspective or being gender research. These 22 make up 18 percent of the total number of the 122 accorded applications that are listed on the Swedish Research Council’s web pages. Gender research projects or research with gender perspective also make up 18 percent of all applications submitted to the HS Scientific Council. It should be noted that the so-called earmarked money, which was handled by Review Panel 4, “improves” the figure. Without it, the approval rate for gender research or projects with gender perspective would have been 16 percent.

## Success rates

It is now time to sum up – by using the results above – the outcome in the form of success rates for proposals that were gender marked by the applicants themselves, on the one hand, and for the projects that the review panels marked “Gender”, on the other, and finally for gender research and projects with a clear gender perspective as defined in this follow-up. Of the 1,003 applications submitted to HS in total, 129 received funding, that is 12.9 percent. Of the 508 applications in which applicants had checked the

“gender box,” 11 percent were granted funding, which shows that gender marking one’s own project does not automatically give an advantage. On the other hand, it is possible to say that gender research applications and applications with a gender perspective are granted funding to almost the same high (or low) degree as other research, since the success rate of these applications (12.2 percent) is close to the average success rate of the scientific sector council in question as a whole (12.9 percent). While the outcome in these three categories are comparatively close, the outcome for project grant applications that were marked by the review panels with “Gender” is different: almost 21 percent were granted funding. Since the panels have not explained how they have understood these marking of “Gender,” it is difficult to interpret the figure, but it is possible that they have marked the applications with “Gender” fairly late in the process and have then only taken the time to judge the applications that were at the head. If we return to Table 4, it appears that Review Panel 2 has specified that only 3 of the 162 submitted applications are “Gender” applications, and they have approved them all (along with 11 other applications), while Review Panel 8 “Gender” marked 6 of 134 applications and awarded 3 of these 6 (along with 7 other application). There, the success rate for applications marked with “Gender” was almost 100 percent and 50 respectively, to be compared to the total success rates in these panels, which were 8.6 percent and 7.5 percent respectively. There would probably have been a good many more “Gender” marked applications if the marking had been systematic on all submitted applications. In any case, the result is that the success rate for the “Gender” marked projects is greatly overrated and that the figure 20.6 cannot be given a satisfactory explanation given the nature of the material.

Table 6. Success rate: comparison of proposals gender marked by applicants, “Gender” project according to review panels and gender research/gender perspective HS 2004

	Submitted applications	Approved applications	Success rate % applications
HS total*	1003	129	12,86
Gender acc. to applicant	508	56	11,02
Gender research/ gender perspective	181	22	12,15
“Gender” acc. to RP	131	27	20,61

\* In addition to 981 HS applications, 22 applications concerning Research and Development in the arts are included in the total number of 1,003. In addition to 118 approved HS applications, 11 approved Research and Development projects in the arts are included. See the Swedish Research Council’s annual report 2004, Table 14.

## Summary:

- A calculation of success rates shows that the chance of getting funding in HS does not automatically increase by checking the “gender box” on the application form, since the success rate for the whole HS is 12.9 percent, while the success rate for applications that the applicants themselves have gender marked is 11 percent.
- The success rate for applications that concern gender research or research with a gender perspective is 12.2 percent and is close to the average success rate in HS at 12.9 percent.
- For applications that the review panels marked “Gender” somewhere along the line, the success rate is very high – 20.6 percent.

## Funding granted to gender research 2004

As in all fields, there have been discussions in gender research for a long time about the turnout of research grant applications in gender research. One line of thought is that gender research is treated unfairly in terms of funding, as this kind of research has less chances to compete with more traditional projects since there are no experts with sufficient gender research competence in the scientific councils and review panels. There have been many suggestions as to how this situation can be improved. Basically, there are two main suggestions: one is that gender research projects ought to be judged by a special review panel made up of experts from different disciplines but with special competence in gender research. The suggestion can be said to be a specialisation strategy. The other suggestion is that the assessment of gender research is best done by the scientific councils and review panels: the condition for this is that the knowledge about gender in these bodies is good. This is might be called a mainstreaming strategy. The purpose of this follow-up is not to argue for either one of the strategies, but to provide a basis for further discussions using the outcome of the application round in 2004 for gender research.

The table below lists the sums granted in HS to what we have here classified as gender research, research with a gender perspective, and research with gender aspects in the application round in 2004. First, the total sum that each project was granted is listed (most are spread over three years, but some are granted for one or two years) and the second column shows the part of the grant that was payable in 2005. The special grants for gender research (SEK 3.3 million) directed at jurisprudence is listed separately. In the application round in 2004 there were two projects from HS that got funding

from the so-called Director General's Pool of Money: one of them was a gender research project that received SEK 800,000 from this fund, spread over two years, which has been indicated. The sums have been taken from the decision list for Humanities and Social Sciences, February 14, 2005, the Swedish Research Council's web pages, [www.vr.se](http://www.vr.se).

<b>TOTAL GRANT</b>	<b>GRANT 2005</b>
<b>Gender research</b>	<b>Gender research</b>
1,501,000	486,000
1 369,000	443,000
3,090,000	1,000,000
1,700,000	500,000
1,075,000 (DG Pool 800,000)	400,000
1,020,000	340,000
150,000	150,000
1,824,000	590,000
1,657,000	536,000
1,227,000	427,000
1,619,000	563,000
<b>16,232,000</b>	<b>5,435,000</b>
<b>Gender perspective</b>	<b>Gender perspective</b>
1,706,000	553,000
1,603,000	788,000
2,796,000	932,000
1,824,000	608,000
1,020,000	340,000
<b>8,949,000</b>	<b>3,221,000<sup>8</sup></b>
<b>Gender aspects</b>	<b>Gender aspects</b>
1,456,000	471,000
1,950,000	643,000
270,000	270,000
2,025,000	675,000
5,701,000	2,059,000

<sup>8</sup> In the decision list that was presented by the HS Scientific Council, one project with a clear gender perspective was listed (in Review Panel 3). But since this project is not included in the official decision list that takes up 122 approved projects, it has not been included in the table. This project received a sum of SEK 2,200,000 in total and SEK 1,000,000 in 2005.

**Special funding for gender research**

2,100,000	700,000
1,680,000	560,000
1,398 000	452,000
2,479 000	802,000
1,896 000	790,000
<b>9,553,000</b>	<b>3,304,000</b>

**No gender profile**

1,950,000

**No gender profile**

650,000

As shown in the table above, in 2005 gender research (the special grant included) and research with a gender perspective received almost SEK 12 million. Of these SEK 11,960,000, SEK 3.3 million came from the earmarked money for jurisprudence projects with gender perspective and SEK 8,656,000 from money that has not been earmarked for gender research, that is, grants gained in competition with other projects in the review panels. The sum can be compared to the total sum that HS accorded in 2004 for research in 2005: it amounted to SEK 82 million (including artistic Research and Development). At least 15 percent of the grants went to gender research and research with a gender perspective. Gender research is thus somewhat underrepresented economically among the projects that received grants in relation to how large part it makes up of the total number of applications. However, it should be noted that it is risky to compare the share of applications and the share of granted means, since different kinds of projects involve different kinds of costs.

**Summary:**

- In 2005 at least SEK 12 million (of approximately SEK 82 million in total) went to gender research projects or projects with an obvious gender perspective in HS. Of these grants, SEK 3.3 million was the result of the special funding of legal science projects with a gender perspective. Almost SEK 9 million consisted of grants that had been gained in competition with other projects.

# THE SPECIAL GRANTS FOR GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN JURISPRUDENCE

Before the application round in 2004, the earmarked money was advertised (approximately SEK 2.8 million, or SEK 10 million spread over three years) with a special focus on gender perspectives in jurisprudence. This was in line with the Committee for Gender Research's task of stimulating "gender perspectives in subfields where such a perspective is needed or not sufficiently developed" (from the instructions for the Swedish Research Council's Committee for Gender Research, December 10, 2003). Jurisprudence, which falls within HS's area of responsibility, was judged to be a fitting and important area. In order to initiate and to get funding for this kind of research the Committee also organised a conference on this theme in January 2004 in Stockholm, where more than 30 researchers participated and the discussions were lively. The text of the call for proposals was as follows:

## Grants for gender research and gender perspectives in research

This year, applications concerning gender research or projects that deal with a research subject from a gender perspective will be reviewed and assessed together with applications in the appropriate subject area by the respective scientific council. Decision will be made by the board of the Swedish Research Council.

Applicants are asked to indicate whether their application concerns Gender and the appropriate subject area.

Within the framework of a focused support effort for gender research (approximately SEK 2.8–3 million) research that deals with gender perspectives in legal science is prioritised. This research is characterised by being problem-oriented instead of regulation-oriented, it is often interdisciplinary, concerning both different parts of law and other fields, and it normally uses the concept of sex to analyse the law's relation to and consequences for women and men and gender as an analytical category in order to study law as a construction. Examples of urgent projects are analyses of the social welfare state and social citizenship, of the consequences on gender equality of family law, also from a comparative EU perspective, and men's abuse of women as expressed in deeds, descriptions of sexuality and media images.

## The gender competence in the review panel and the handling of the matter

Since the Committee for Gender Research no longer had the responsibility for assessing applications in 2004, the matter ended up in the knee of Review Panel 4. In 2004, this review panel for legal science and philosophy was made up of seven people. Professor Sten Lindström, the Department of Philosophy and Linguistics at Umeå University, was the chair of the panel. The other members were Professor Torbjörn Andersson, Faculty of Law, Uppsala University, Assistant Professor Ingar Brinck, Department of Philosophy, Lund University, Professor Staffan Carlshamre, Department of Philosophy, Stockholm University, Assistant Professor Erik Carlson, Department of Philosophy, Uppsala University, Professor Per Cramér, The Centre for European Studies, Göteborg University, and Professor Marie Sandström, Department of Law, Stockholm University.

In discussions about assessments of gender research projects, gender researchers often argue that competence in gender research among the experts is utterly important, as in any other scientific field. A common counter argument is that competence in gender research is not necessarily essential for the experts – good research is always good research, whether it is gender research or research in any other area, and accordingly no special competence is necessary among the experts.

In order to investigate whether competence in gender science is of importance in the present case with the earmarked money for gender research, which was directed at legal science in 2004, I made a computer search on the writings of the members of Review Panel 4, both via the Swedish national library system Libris and on the web pages of the institution of each member, when existent, where CVs and lists of publications were sometimes found. Thus the competence of the review panel members is judged in the same way as applicants are judged when they append their CV and publication list to their research grant applications.

Libris turned out not to be a completely reliable tool for this task: sure, it was possible to get the relevant titles, which in no case (with one exception) showed that anyone of the seven had written anything extensive with a gender perspective. At least it was not discernible from the titles. The exception was Ingar Brinck who was the co-author of a book about 20th-century, Swedish women artists. On her home page, where there was a CV, it appeared that in addition to scientific publications she had written a large number of articles in the daily press and been a reviewer in radio, among other things

of feminist works. Also Marie Sandström's presentation of herself on her department's web site revealed more sides than the purely bibliographic search had revealed, which did not produce any titles that seemed to contain a gender perspective. At the present, according to the department web page, the jurisprudential methodology's relation to social factors – mainly sex and class – is the focus of her scientific endeavours. Searches on the other members did not produce any extra information on the question about their competence in gender research, and the two women experts seemed to have most competence in this field.

In a telephone conversation with the members of the review panels, it appeared that they regarded the gender competence in the panel to have been relatively good. There had been talk about asking for help from an external gender-competent researcher in the field of jurisprudence, though, but they did not succeed in finding any good names, as such competence is hard to come by in the field. They also believed that it was the responsibility of the review panel to familiarise themselves with the field. The panel members also thought that they had had good and interesting discussions when they handled the gender-focused legal science projects. They also believed that they had been very thorough – the review process of these applications was allowed to take a lot of time. The problem, as they saw it in the panel, was to find any scientifically acceptable projects at all.

According to members in the panel, the review work in relation to gender perspectives in jurisprudence might be described in the following way: in the first round, each application was read by three experts. According to the statistics that was made as a basis for the Director General's Pool of Money, 14 were judged as having a gender perspective of some sort (of 69 applications in total). According to the chairman of the panel, they did not use any other criteria than strictly scientific ones at this stage. Five of the 14 applications that had been marked "gender application" continued to round two. At this stage, a stated opinion was written for each application and from these a ranking was made that included three research projects in the legal sciences with a gender perspective.

## Problem 1: the overall grading

A survey shows that 18 proposals of the 69 that ended up in the review panel had been gender marked by the applicants. Out of these, four belonged to philosophy, so that Review Panel 4 had 14 gender-marked grant applications in legal science. A reading of the 14 applications reveals that

7 of them hardly can be said to have a gender perspective, and even less to constitute gender research. However, all 7 say that they will study men and women in different way, but this is neither problematised nor theorised. Possibly, one might say that these 7 applicants have acknowledged that their material is open for some kind gender aspect.

As a consequence, 7 applications remain, of which 6 are to be labelled gender research, that is, gender is the central category in the projects. In addition, the projects relate to the theories and methods developed in the field – or more simply put, it is noticeable that the authors know what they are writing about, as they are well-read in the area, and besides, they have produced research in the field previously. In one project it is not obvious that it is gender research; but, a gender perspective is discernible in addition to class and ethnic perspectives.

Three of these 7 applications were then granted funding from the special fund for support of gender perspectives in legal science. From the perspective of gender research, the choice of these three applications (here called A, B, and C) seems good, as they all seem well-informed about the research tradition, seem to have a good overview of the field and to possess knowledge about relevant theories in the area. In addition, these three research grant applications, and especially two of them, do not only relate to intra-disciplinary gender research but also to interdisciplinary research. In this way, the three projects stand out from the rest. In addition, all the main applicants and contributors are part of networks that have been built by gender researchers in legal science. But there are a couple of question marks in the review process, of which the first one is about the overall grade, the other about left over funding.

Each of the approved applications were given the overall grade 2 (good, worth funding from the Swedish Research Council if there is money). The scale goes from 1 to 5 however, where at least 3 (very good, international, competitive research), preferably 4 (excellent, high class in an international perspective, a top position in Sweden) or 5 (top position in the world in its field), should be given in order for research funding to be granted. Of all the 122 projects that were granted funding from HS in 2004, none had a grade lower than 3, except these three from Review Panel 4. In the decision data that are available in the form of short written statements, it is evident that the experts primarily had views on the methodology of the projects, but also the relation between method, theory and material, or in other words how the parts fit (or do not fit) together. One such problem is expressed in the following manner: “It is hard to separate the discussion of theory from the discussion of method in the project description. As to method the project seems to be interdisciplinary.” One can also see an opposition between

interdisciplinary gender research and jurisprudence research in formulations such as, “In addition, there is an evident jurisprudential trait in the project, which is unusual in gender research in legal science, and it is obvious that the applicant has avoided gender science terminology which often excludes legal scholars in favour of a more legal usage.” The members of the review panel said that they afterwards understood that they had been very strict in their grading. The Swedish Research Council’s grade system did not fit jurisprudence, and the low grades could partly be explained by a “clash of cultures.”

But nonetheless, the three projects received grade 2 of 5 as a judgement of their scientific quality.

In order to proceed with the assessment of the applications an external expert was contacted, who was highly qualified in gender and legal science and this person was asked to review the applications, first by writing a short statement and second give them an overall grade.

## The examination by the external expert

In relation to project A, the expert starts out by pointing out that the project consists of five parts, each one of which is innovative. “The central problem in the project is in what way the constitutional principle of equality is realised in a constitutional state. All in all, the project is expected to produce new knowledge of normative patterns. Here I would like to refer to Professor Anna Christensen’s research. It showed that laws in general protected an established position, with marriage as an exception. Now another normative principle is in force here: the personal freedom of the individual. The freedom of the man to end a marriage without any large economic sacrifices knocked out the earlier protection for the wife. As this example shows, to a large extent the problem has to do with the relation between autonomy and dependence, which are also central to the project and one of the most central gender-related issues in jurisprudence, which traditionally assumes that the individual is free and independent. The project is expected to show various deficits in justice and ultimately show alternatives for how to avoid reproducing inequalities and how to implement social justice more effectively [...] The project is very complex. It is particularly strong in its ambition to develop both the theory and method through a methodological view of theory and through being problem oriented, multidisciplinary.” “The project meets all the examples of urgent areas for analysis that the Swedish Research Council mentioned when

they advertised the grants and I would argue that they could provide a very important analysis of the way these areas are connected. The project might also be seen as strategically important for exposing the norms in the basic structures of the law, something that ought to be able to influence future reforms and work as an inspiration for continued gender research in legal science.” Overall grade: 4.

About project B, the expert reviewer starts out by saying that, “The fundamental problem in the project is what ideas laws give of women, men and sexuality. The answers are pursued in analyses of how sexualisation and gender are reproduced in the law’s deep structures in order to show how social representations of gender are transmitted and reproduced in the law on a national level, in Europe as well as internationally.” The expert reviewer continues, “The project is supposed to be realised with both theoretical and concrete case studies in different branches of law. The purpose is to integrate these different branches of law and different legal systems, so-called “cross-section perspectives” that enable an in-depth and multidimensional gender analysis [...] The project also aims to develop the theory and analytical tools of jurisprudential gender research through influences from discourse analysis and masculinity, sexuality and ethnicity research. This includes a self-reflexive perspective about masculinity in relation to issues of gender equality. This project is also important strategically for laying bare the norms in the basic structures of the law, which has value for both reforms as well as for continued gender research in legal science.” Overall grade: 4.

In the statement about project C, the expert reviewer observes, “A project with a theory from traditional legal science supplemented with gender research in law [...] The project might seem simpler to follow than the other two since it stays within the boundaries of jurisprudence [...] However, the project is introduced by an study of the international literature, covering both jurisprudence and sociology. After that, Swedish legal sources are studied. The third part of the project is an analysis of sex-based arguments in the verdicts of lower courts and court proceedings.” The expert reviewer concludes by saying that the project has great social relevance and the overall grade is 4.

It is evident that the expert reviewer judges the applications from a more pure gender research perspective, and the view of the scientific quality therefore differs from the review panel’s. The review panel’s and the external expert reviewer’s opinions differ in the insights into the legal system. But above all, the differences become clear in the views of the relation between method, theory and data, which is one of the four criteria of scientific quality that is listed in the concluding, short judgement that is sent to everyone who is granted funding. The other criteria concern the researcher’s/

research group's general competence, the scientific importance of the problem at issue. These four criteria are graded from 1 to 7. The question of how well the projects seem to be supported in the relation between method, theory and data seems to be the issue on which the review panel and the external expert reviewer differ most. The expert reviewer sees the combination of interdisciplinary and intra-disciplinary gender research as an important criterion of scientific quality, while the review panel's assessment seems to give priority to intra-disciplinary gender research, not to say intra-disciplinary research.

## Problem 2: the handling of the left over funding

B and C were granted full funding, that is, they got more or less the grants they applied for. But A's grant was halved, which probably will make it difficult to fund all the part projects (among other things two projects for PhD students) that were part of the research project. In all, the funding that was granted to the three projects did not correspond to the sum of earmarked money that was at their disposal. Review Panel 4 got money left over. The board of the Swedish Research Council then decided to delegate the question of the left over money to the HS Scientific Council. According to the protocol, one member of the board made a reservation to this decision.

At a meeting in the HS Scientific Council, where the chairman of Review Panel 4 is a member, the question was about what to do with the remaining funding was raised. It was stated that there were other projects of high scientific quality in legal science which lacked funding. Therefore it was decided in the meeting that two anthropological projects specialising in legal science from Review Panel 3 (sociological, anthropological and pedagogical research) would be granted the remaining earmarked gender money. These two projects had both received a 4 as an overall grade and the main applicants are two very qualified gender-oriented anthropologists. Here, I am neither going to question these qualified researchers or the scientific quality of their projects, but a justified question in this context is whether these projects really falls within the scope of the special grant, as they have to be classified as anthropological research with a gender and jurisprudence perspective and not as jurisprudence with a gender perspective. The purpose of the special grant was to stimulate new research in jurisprudence where gender research does not have such a strong position and not to stimulate anthropological research where gender-related research is already lively.

The external expert reviewer in gender and legal science also got to read the two anthropological applications. The reviewer thought that, “the themes of the projects are also very interesting, although their validity outside the studied countries remains unclear,” and “both anthropologists seem to be very competent, including their knowledge of gender,” but the reviewer thought that it was difficult to say anything as an expert in legal science.

The expert reviewer writes, “The question that is raised is whether these projects belong to anthropology or jurisprudence. This question is particularly relevant since the funding was specifically made available in order to stimulate research in legal science because it lacked developed gender perspectives. If the purpose was to strengthen Swedish legal science research environments, a minimum requirement would be that Swedish legal scholars took part in the projects for them to be granted this kind of funding.” In view of the above and also of the fact that the external expert reviewer gives the highest grade to research project A and thinks that the project “consists of five parts each one of which is innovative” and which at the same time form an interesting and relevant whole, it can be discussed whether project A should have been granted full funding.

Because of the above there are reasons to discuss the following points:

- Should the special grants go back to the scientific council and be given to other gender research grant applications when a review panel does not think that there are any sufficiently qualified projects to fund fully with the earmarked money? Since funding cannot be saved for another year, a thorough discussion is needed about the handling of this kind of situation.
- There is a contradiction in that the Swedish Research Council grants funding to “facilitate research with a gender perspective in fields where such a perspective is needed or not sufficiently developed,” on the one hand, and to research that “has a high degree of scientific quality and promotes innovation in Swedish basic research,” on the other.
- Experts with gender competence should be used at least for the review work on the earmarked money from the Swedish Research Council for the promotion and funding of research with gender perspectives in neglected fields. This is to get as varied data to base decision on as possible. In today’s situation no one is pleased: neither gender research representatives nor non-gender-oriented researchers. However, a varied assessment is not dependent on one specific review panel for gender research only.

# THE HANDLING OF PROPOSALS GENDER MARKED BY APPLICANTS

As mentioned before, there are certain problems in getting reliable data about the research grant applications in which the applicants have checked the so-called “gender box.” The background to the problem is as follows: In order to get an idea of how many of the applicants think that their own project concerns “gender/ gender perspectives,” the Swedish Research Council’s IT Unit was asked to produce lists of the names of those who had checked the “gender box” in 2004. As described above, this box was introduced in order to facilitate follow-ups such as this one, among other things. The lists were also supposed to be divided according to scientific council: HS, M, NE, ES and LONG (longitudinal databases). The IT Unit quickly produced the lists. But an inspection revealed that there were names missing on them, including several who had been granted funding from HS and which had been marked that they had a gender perspective of some sort on the decision list for internal use.

The IT Unit was made aware of this problem and eventually it was discovered why the list was not complete. It was because they had based their lists on the applications as registered in VRAPS, the internal database of the Swedish Research Council. The result was 975 names. So, when the IT Unit produced the lists based on the submitted applications *before* they were registered in VRAPS, when they had been in the so-called Sluice, the result was completely different, namely 1,035 applications – a difference of 60 names.

On the Sluice lists there were also names that were missing in the VRAPS lists. How can this difference be explained? In a random sampling of the full applications in VRAPS it turned out that in some applications the “gender box” had not been checked. On the same applications in the Sluice the box had been checked. These gender markings had thus disappeared somewhere along the line. How this happened and why is a mystery.

A closer comparison limited to the applications submitted to HS revealed further details. In the Sluice lists, there were 508 HS applications and in the VRAPS list 410. Here is a discrepancy of minus 98. A comparison between these lists showed that some applications that had had a gender marking lost this marking when it got to VRAPS. Random samplings were made in order to find out if there was pattern in the additions and removals. Perhaps the checked gender boxes had been removed because there actually were no

gender perspectives in these applications; had the applicants misunderstood the gender box and interpreted it as obligatory? It appeared that there was no such pattern. Several of the applications that have had their gender marking removed in VRAPS have a very conspicuous gender perspective – in a few cases they even concerned gender research. On the other hand, there also seemed to be projects that applicants had marked wrongly, which so to say “deserved” to get the gender marking removed. On the third hand, projects remained that were found on both lists and that even with a very generous understanding of what constitutes a gender perspective, clearly should not have had a gender marking. There was thus no pattern. How this had happened and why has not been answered as yet. One explanation that cannot be ruled out is that it was due to the Swedish Research Council’s IT system, which has not yet been fully developed since the Council is a fairly new agency.

Table 7. The number of applications with gender marking in the “Sluice” and in VRAPS, all scientific councils, 2004.

	Number of submitted applications	Gender marked by researchers themselves	Gender marked applications in VRAPS	Difference
HS*	1003	508	410	-98
M	1250	272	256	-16
NE	2273	35	39	4
ES	315	213	222	9
LONG	25	7	11	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>4866</b>	<b>1035</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>-97</b>

\* Including 22 Research and Development projects in the arts.

It might seem unnecessarily pedantic to dwell upon this detail. But the fact that it is important for a follow-up of this kind to discuss the difference between the lists becomes evident if one compares the different lists, one based on VRAPS and the other on the material found in the Sluice. The lists from the Sluice material show how the applicants themselves judge their research grant applications, while the lists from VRAP show how someone else evaluates the applications. Or else, the discrepancy might depend on flaws in the computer system. Among other things, the purpose of this follow-up, which was initiated by the Committee for Gender Research, was to chart how large a part of the submitted application that the applicants themselves judged as having a “gender perspective” under the heading “Aspects,” and therefore we chose to see the Sluice list as the most acceptable.

## Summary:

- It cannot be said with any absolute degree of certainty how many of the applicants regard their own research projects as gender research or as containing gender perspectives or gender aspects, since the total number of projects where the applicants have checked the box for gender perspective varies according to which database is used. Why some research projects have lost or gained a gender marking during the handling at the Swedish Research Council is still an open question.

# CONCLUDING REMARKS

This report was initiated by the Committee for Gender Research in order to follow up the reviews and results of the gender research project applications, mainly in the 2004 application round. Has this follow-up succeeded in meet the objectives set for it? In part, this question must be answered in the negative, since it has not been possible to find completely reliable data for how many of the applicants thought that their own research had a gender perspective or such like. However, one of the databases, the so-called Sluice, could give a fairly satisfactory idea. In order to make similar follow-ups in the future, an analysis of the system is needed in order to avoid the problem of gender markings that disappear. However, the second and third objective was fulfilled.

- This follow-up has made it evident that gender research in the HS sector is a multifaceted and expanding field. The terminology also varies greatly. In order to be able to handle the applications in a consistent manner, it is suggested that the terms used in this follow-up, *gender research*, *gender perspective* and *gender aspect* should be employed as tools in the review process. This terminology should be given a short definition and be made available in information from the Swedish Research Council.
- The competence in gender research needs to be strengthened in the review panels, and the expertise of the Committee for Gender Research ought to be used more efficiently. In addition to guaranteeing the highest possible scientific quality this would stop earmarked money from going to other things than intended.
- The present study ought to be used as a model for follow-ups in M and NE. The combined results of the follow-ups will provide an operative possibility in the strategic work to make the Swedish Research Council's efforts and Swedish gender research a hub in European gender research.

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# APPEDIX

## Gender equality figures, applications 2004

Table 8. All the applications: distribution in all scientific fields 2004 and success rates.

	Submitted applications	Approved applications	Approved applications %
HS	981	118	12,0
M	1250	347	27,8
NE	2273	505	21,7
ES	315	46	14,6
L	25	13	52,0
Artistic R&D	22	11	50,0

This table shows that of a total of 4,866 applications, 1,040 (21.4 percent) were granted funding. In 21 percent of the approved applications a women was the main applicant. This is slightly less as compared to the total proportion of women who applied, which was 29 percent. But the approval rate varies between the different scientific councils. In the 2004 application round, the approval rate for women, calculated in relation to the total number of applications, looks as follows (according to the annual report of the Swedish Research Council 2004, Table 11b):

Table 9. The proportion of women as main applicants in submitted and granted project applications 2004.

	Submitted %	Granted %
HS	34,8	43,4
M	39,8	32,0
NE	17,0	15,2
ES	48,9	43,5

As can be seen in the table, the approval rate is lower for women than for men, with the exception of the humanities and social sciences, where women in all age groups are granted funding more often than men.

In little more than half, 508 of 1,003 (22 of which were artistic Research and Development projects), the applications in HS, the applicants had checked the box for gender research/perspectives: 276, or 54 percent, were from men, while 232, or 46 percent, were from women.

Of the 27 projects that had been granted and that the review panels had marked with "Gender," 24 had women as main applicants and 3 men.



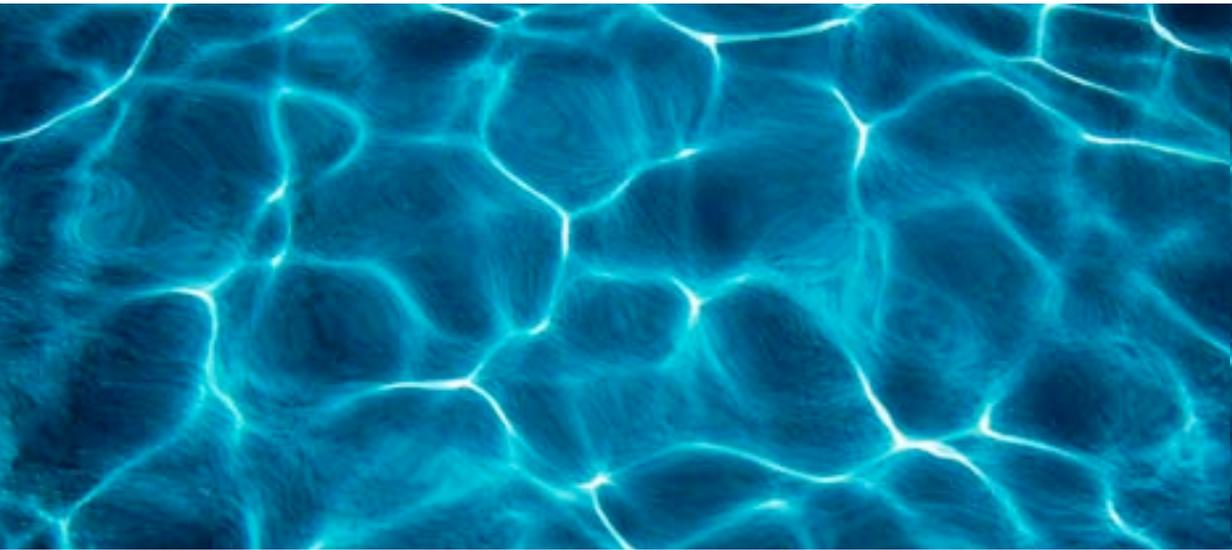
One of the tasks of the Swedish Research Council is to support gender research and to work for the development of gender perspectives in research.

An interdisciplinary committee which is subordinate to the board of the Swedish Research Council, the Committee for Gender Research is supposed to identify problems in gender research, test solutions and work on issues such as scientific quality and internationalisation. The review of applications for funding of gender research and research with a gender perspective is handled by the four scientific councils, though.

How has the scientific quality of the gender research related applications been judged? In order to form an opinion, the committee for gender research made a follow-up of the 2004 review process in the humanities and social sciences.

The follow-up answers questions such as:

- How large grants were given to gender research in these areas?
- How has gender research been assessed by the review panels?
- In what way might gender research, gender perspective and gender aspects be defined?



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The Swedish Research Council is a government agency funding basic research of the highest scientific quality in all disciplines. The Swedish Research Council has a national responsibility to support and develop basic research and promote research innovation and research communication. The goal is for Sweden to be a leading nation in scientific research.

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