

Research Environment Grant (NE)

The aim of this grant is to create added value through collaborative research in the form of a larger research collaboration group than a regular project would normally involve. The grant is open to groups of researchers working towards a common long-term objective. The Swedish Research Council supports basic research of the highest quality in national competition.

Within the framework of this call, the Swedish Research Council will fund approximately six research environment grants in natural and engineering sciences with no requirement for any specific focus. Besides these, the Swedish Research Council may fund research environments in strategic energy research (approximately six grants) and strategic research in information and communication technologies (approximately seven grants).

Summary

Type of grant	Research Environment and Research Collaboration funding
Subject field	Natural and Engineering Sciences
Application status	Individual researcher
Participating researchers	No less than two and no more than eight researchers may be invited to join the application.
Grant period	6 years
Grant amount	3-4 million SEK per year including indirect costs
Call deadline	17 May 2016 (at 2:00 PM)
Publication of grant award decisions	No later than December 2016
Grant period start date	January 2017

Grant application requirements

You must fulfil the requirements set out below to be eligible to apply for the grant. We will carry out controls in order to ensure that applications that do not adhere to the eligibility criteria are rejected from further processing.

Applicant

The grant is open to individual researchers. You are the project leader and scientific supervisor of the project and your active participation in the project must equal at least 20 percent of a full-time employment. You must hold a Swedish doctoral degree or an equivalent foreign degree. The doctoral degree must have been awarded at the deadline of this call. The date of issue will be considered to be the point in time when all the requirements of the degree were fulfilled (for example mandatory courses, the oral public defence of the doctoral thesis and the approved doctoral thesis).

The grant will be administered by a Swedish Higher Education Institution (HEI), or another public organisation in Sweden that fulfils the Swedish Research Council's [requirements for administrating organisations](#). Please note that you will not be able to apply unless your organisation is an approved administrating organisation

If you are awarded funding, you must be employed by the administrating organisation when the grant period begins unless the Swedish Research Council, the administrating organisation or another employer (where applicable) agree otherwise. The employment must equal at least 20 % of a full-time employment. You do not have to be employed by the administrating organisation when the application is submitted.

Number of applications and previous grants

What grants may I apply for simultaneously?

You may only submit one application for this grant under this call for applications. Other restrictions in regard to grants you are eligible to apply for in parallel in the same year are presented below.

Applications for Research Environment Grants and Research Project Grants:

You can apply for a research environment grant in parallel with a research project grant. A prerequisite for both to be funded is that the project grant application is not part of the application for a research environment grant. If the project grant application is part of the research environment grant and both applications are awarded funding, the awarded funding amount for the research environment grant may be reduced.

Number of Research Environment Grant applications:

You may only submit one research environment grant application. You can participate in another research environment grant application provided that the project ideas are different. You may not participate as applicant or participating researcher in more than two research environment grant applications.

If you are the applicant of or participating researcher in more than one research environment grant application, you must clearly explain how the applications differ in your research plan.

What eligibility criteria apply to holders of ongoing research grants from the Swedish Research Council?

There are certain restrictions if you are the project leader of an already awarded and ongoing grant, with a grant period (disbursement period from the Swedish Research Council) overlapping the grant period of the current grant application. Please observe that the period of availability, i.e. the period during which you may draw on the awarded grant, generally is longer than the grant period. You will find information on the rules that apply to your ongoing grant in the "Approval of terms" that you received from the Swedish Research Council.

See below for further information on grants that are eligible for holders of ongoing grants.

If you are the holder of an ongoing research project grant:

You can apply for this grant if you are the project leader of an ongoing project grant. A prerequisite for the research environment grant application to be funded is that the awarded project grant is not part of the research environment grant. However, the awarded project grant may be complementary to the research environment grant application.

If you are the holder of an ongoing framework grant:

You can apply for this grant if you are the project leader of an ongoing framework grant with a grant period (disbursement period from the Swedish Research Council) up and until 2016 (additional period of availability not included). If you were awarded a framework grant in the Swedish Research Council's previous call (2014), you can not apply for a research environment grant in this call. You can apply if you are a participating researcher in an ongoing framework grant from the previous call if the scope of the project is new and not overlapping with the previously awarded grant.

Correspondingly, you as the project leader of a framework grant awarded in 2014 can participate in new applications in this call. In both cases, your research plan must include a clear description of how the new project differs from the previous one.

If you are the holder of an ongoing Distinguished professor grant or are a researcher recruited under the call International recruitment of distinguished researchers:

If you were awarded a Distinguished professor grant or were recruited under the call International recruitment of distinguished researchers, you cannot submit a Research environment grant application. You can however participate in an application.

N.B.: If you have been the project leader for grants from the Swedish Research Council before, you will only be able to apply for a new grant if the final financial report on all previous grants were submitted within the stipulated time period. For questions as to whether all financial statements have been submitted, please turn to your administrating organisation.

Participating researchers

You must include at least two and up to eight participating researchers in your application, i.e. researchers with a doctoral degree whose scientific merits and competence will be crucial for the implementation of the proposed research activities. The participating researchers do not have to be employed by a Swedish HEI.

Participating researchers will themselves have to enter the required information into the application system, and link it to the application. Other collaboration partners (where applicable) and their roles shall be presented in the research plan (see instructions under Research plan below).

Costs and grant funding

The applied grant may be used to cover all kinds of project-related costs, e.g. salaries (including your own salary, which must correspond to your participation rate in the project), rental and property costs, operating costs (such as consumables, travel costs including visits to research centres, publishing costs and minor equipment) and depreciation costs. The grant may however not be used for scholarships. If a doctoral student takes part in the project, the grant may not be used to pay for his/her teaching hours.

Costs intended for the funding of a doctoral programme (i.e., the cost of bringing in lecturers, courses and coordination of doctoral programme) may well be included in the grant.

You may apply for 3-4 million SEK per year, including indirect costs.

The Swedish Research Council expects the administrating organisation to cover any cost exceeding the awarded amount.

Grant period

The grant is awarded for a period of six years, starting from January 2017.

Three years after the start of the grant period the project leader must submit a mandatory report with a focus on collaboration between the participating researchers and the added value of the research environment. This report may result in revised grant amounts for the remaining two years of the grant period.

How do I apply?

You apply electronically through [Prisma](#), which is the application system used by the Swedish Research Council. You create an application in the Prisma system by filling out the text fields, retrieving information from your personal account, and by enclosing the required appendices.

In order for you to be able to apply, your organisation must have become an [approved administrating organisation](#) and created an organisation account in Prisma.

Most of the required steps in the Prisma system are described in the [User Manual](#) and the [FAQ answers](#). We advise you to have a look at these documents when you write your application.

Creating a personal account in Prisma

Before you can apply, you must create a personal account in [Prisma](#), where you will store your personal data and your CV. The information only has to be entered once, and may subsequently be supplemented or amended whenever necessary. Since foreign experts are involved in most of the Swedish Research Council calls, we ask you to enter text in English in your CV data. The account will also enable you to register your publications for future use. Please note that publications stored in your account cannot be transferred to the application form. This is due to the fact that the publications function is still under development and has not yet been implemented in the Swedish Research Council's calls. The publications list must therefore be presented in the form of an attached PDF file (see instructions under Publications below).

Please remember to create your personal account well in advance. The applications that you register in Prisma will be linked to your personal account.

All other participants, who will be involved in the preparation of the application must also create an individual Prisma account, and agree to their participation. Once that has been done, they will be able to link their account data to the application.

Text

Some text fields are formattable, which means that in those fields you can change the font and size and insert certain tables, formulas and symbols. If you have written the text in advance using Microsoft Word, you will also be able to copy paste the text and keep the initial formatting. Pictures can however not be inserted into the text fields.

All text fields have limitations as to the number of characters and this will be illustrated by means of a character counter. If you use too many characters you will not be able to register the application.

Signing

Both you, as applicant, and the official representative of the administrating organisation, must sign the application electronically in the Prisma system. More information can be found under the tab Registering the application below.

What must the application contain?

We ask you to familiarize yourself with the application form in Prisma at the same time as you read through the instructions below.

Language

Foreign peer reviewers participate in the scientific assessment of the applications. To guarantee a well-functioning procedure and a level playing field in the review process, we therefore ask you to submit your application in English.

Application subsections

The application form contains the following tabs:

- Descriptive data
- Research description
- Budget and research resources
- Publications (pdf)
- Administrating organisation
- Review panels
- Participants
- CV

Below you will find an outline of the information required under each tab. Mandatory information is marked with an asterisk* in the Prisma system.

Please note that there is a tab in the form for retrieval of publications from your personal Prisma account. This is however not used in the call and you may therefore disregard from it.

Descriptive data

Under this tab, you are requested to enter the project title in Swedish and English, the project period (six years), and to select keywords and SCB classification codes. In this section, you are also requested to provide an abstract and a popular science description (cf. instructions below).

Abstract

The research plan abstract should contain a short description of:

- The research activities to be undertaken.
- The project implementation: the project organisation, the time table and the scientific methods to be used, and in what way the collaboration within the research environment creates an added value.
- The significance of the planned research.

The abstract should include a brief outline of the aim and the implementation of the research activities. Please use a language that can also be understood by somebody with a different scientific background.

The outline may contain a maximum of 1,500 characters, including blank spaces (approximately half an A4 page in Times New Roman, size 12, single spacing).

Popular scientific description

Describe the project in a way that makes it possible to understand for a person not familiar with the subject. Describe why and how the research will be conducted, and explain in what way the new knowledge might be important.

The popular scientific description is an important tool for us when we provide information about research financed by the Swedish Research Council. If your application is approved, we therefore reserve the right to use the description for information purposes.

N.B.: Unlike the rest of the application, the popular scientific description must be written in Swedish.

The description may contain a maximum of 4,500 characters, including blank spaces (approximately one and a half A4 page in Times New Roman, size 12, single spacing).

Research description

Under this tab, you are requested to enclose your research plan and your description of the added value of the collaboration (both in PDF format) and describe any ethical considerations and the relevance to the special initiatives (if applicable).

Ethical considerations

Present the ethical issues raised by the research, and explain how they will be addressed in the research activities. We also ask you to indicate whether the research includes animal experiments, experiments involving human subjects, or the handling of personal data. If the research does not raise any ethical issues, this should also be stated.

Research plan

In this section you are requested to attach your research plan in a PDF format. Please observe that the appendix may only contain one file, with a maximum size of 10 MB.

The research plan should consist of a short but complete description of the research task. The maximum length is ten A4 pages in Times New Roman, font size 12, single spacing, including references. **The research plan should be given a forward-looking focus.**

The following information must be included under separate headings in the research plan, and be listed in the given order:

- **Purpose and aims:** Present the overall purpose and specific objectives of the research project. Also describe the long-term research objective.
- **Survey of the field:** Outline previous research, either conducted by yourself or by others, as well as earlier research results in the field. Provide key references.
- **Project description:** Summarize the project by describing the theories, methods, time table and implementation. You should also describe the project organisation and clarify your own and the participating researchers' roles in the project. In this section, you may also include other researchers, who are not listed as participants in the application form.
- **Significance:** Describe the project's significance to the research area.
- **Preliminary results:** Describe your own experiments and pre-studies in the research area. If there are no preliminary results, this should also be stated.
- **Other grants:** If you intend to apply for several research grants, or if you have an ongoing grant awarded by the Swedish Research Council, you need to clarify how the projects relate to each other. You should also justify why you submit several applications. Also describe how the current application and the ongoing or applied grants of the participating researchers relate to each other.

Provide information on the following points under a separate heading if you consider them relevant to your application:

- **Equipment:** Describe the basic equipment that you, and the team, will have at your disposal for the project.
- **Need for infrastructure:** Specify the need for international and national infrastructure within the project. Also specify the need for local infrastructure if such equipment depreciation costs are included in the application. [Read more about research infrastructure supported by the Swedish Research Council](#).
- **International and national collaboration:** Describe your and your team's cooperation with Swedish/foreign researchers and research groups. Indicate whether you participate in, or refer to, international cooperation in your research. You may use project grant funds from the Swedish Research Council to co-finance EU projects with a similar aim and direction. Indicate whether such coordination is being envisaged in the research plan.

Added value of the collaboration

Here you are required to attach a description of the added value of the collaboration in PDF-format. Please observe that the appendix may only contain a single file, with a maximum size of 4 MB.

The description may comprise a maximum of five A4 pages in Times New Roman, font size 12, single spacing, including references.

Describe how the proposed research environment enables the researcher constellation to jointly, and through close cooperation, undertake research tasks that are more comprehensive and challenging than what would be possible if the researchers were active each on their own. Indicate the key scientific issues of the environment, how the environment should be established and developed and how it significantly improves the education, training and career opportunities for the young researchers, postdocs and graduate students active in the environment. Explain how a doctoral programme, if the intention is to include this, can be linked to the research environment. Describe how the research environment should be integrated with the HEI's activities, and how you intend to organize the work in order to reach the objectives of the research environment in the most effective way.

Special initiatives

The Swedish Research Council has a clear responsibility to offer support in some areas, and there are also areas that are considered to need special attention. In this call, those areas include:

[Strategic energy research](#)

[Strategic research in information and communication technologies](#)

If your research project is relevant according to the definitions in the links above, you may include and outline this circumstance here. Describe in what way your project would be strategically relevant to the area, and how it could contribute to the scientific development in the described field.

The description may contain a maximum of 9,000 characters including blank spaces (equivalent to approximately two A4 pages in Times New Roman, font size 12).

Budget and research resources

Under this tab, you are requested to include staffing costs, other costs and other project funding sources (where applicable).

Project staffing

Specify the dedicated time in the project (as a percentage of full-time employment) for all project staff members, both for participating researchers and other personnel. Your dedicated time as project leader must at least equal 20 % of a full-time employment.

You must also include salaries for which you request funding, for yourself and/or other project staff members. Quote the amounts both in proportion to the full-time monthly salary and as actual annual earnings (including social security contributions). A person that you include in your salary request can, but does not have to, be one of the invited participating researchers. Quote the rounded amounts in SEK.

Other costs

Describe other project-related costs (e.g. rental and property charges, operating costs including costs for a doctoral programme (if applicable) and depreciation costs). Quote the rounded amounts on an annual basis.

You may evoke depreciation costs relating to equipment that will be used in the project, provided that:

- The equipment has an economic life span of at least three years.
- The acquisition value of the equipment exceeds a certain threshold (please turn to your administrating organisation for information on the amount used by your department).
- The equipment need for the proposed project cannot be met by means of freely available national or international infrastructure.

[Read more about research infrastructure supported by the Swedish Research Council.](#) 

You may only evoke the part of the depreciation costs that corresponds to the use of the equipment in the project for which you request funding. You may not evoke depreciation costs relating to equipment that is fully financed by means of other grants. If you have questions about what qualifies as local research infrastructure, acquisition values, or about how to calculate the depreciation costs, please contact your administrating organisation.

Total project cost

The application system will automatically add up the budget items that you enter in a table. The total amount requested shall also include indirect costs. You will have to add the indirect costs yourself to the table. In this section, you are also requested to add any other additional project costs (for which you do not request funding within the framework of this call).

For questions as to what qualifies as a direct or indirect cost, please contact your HEI.

Explanation of the proposed budget

Write a brief justification statement for each item in the proposed budget. The outline may contain a maximum of 4,000 characters including blank spaces (equivalent to approximately one A4 page in Times New Roman, font size 12, single line spacing).

Other funding

List any other funding (either subject to an application or awarded) besides the funding requested under this call. Quote the rounded amounts in SEK.

Publications (pdf)

Under this tab, we ask you to attach your and the participating researchers' publications lists in a PDF format. Please observe that the appendix may only contain a single file, with a maximum size of 10 MB. If the attachment contains several files, you will therefore have to join them into a single file.

Include publications made in the last eight years and mark the five publications on each researcher's list that are the most relevant to the project with an asterisk (*). Highlight the current researcher's name in bold. Sort the publications in each list under the following numbered headings in the given order:

1. **Peer-reviewed original articles**
2. **Peer-reviewed conference contributions** (the findings presented may not have been reported in other publications).
3. **Monographs**
4. **Research review articles**
5. **Books and book chapters**
6. **Popular science publications including. books/presentations**

N.B.: You shall only include articles (or equivalent) that have been published or accepted for publication. The application cannot be complemented with publications after the call has closed.

Citation data, including the number of citations per publication, must be provided after each publication reference. The number of citations (n) must be preceded by the phrase "Number of citations: n". The first part of the list of publications must include the total number of citations for the listed publications, as well as the total number of citations reduced by the number of self-citations.

You are also required to present information on the five most cited publications in the same way, independent of the publication year.

Citation data must be presented for:

- Peer-reviewed original articles
- Peer-reviewed conference contributions
- Research review articles, books and book chapters

List the database used at the top of the publications list. You may choose from the following databases:

- Web of Science
- Google Scholar
- Scopus (Elsevier)
- SPIRES
- ADS (The SAO/NASA Astrophysics Data System)
- MathSciNet

N.B.: The Swedish Research Council has a restrictive view on bibliometric comparisons between individuals. The citation data given will only be used as one part of an overall evaluation performed by experts in the respective subject field. Bibliometric indices that are not quality-related, such as h-index, are of no value in such an assessment.

Administrating organisation

Under this tab, you are requested to list the administrating organisation and the project site. The administrating organisation is the organisation that administers and accounts for the funds of the awarded project under the terms and conditions laid down. The project site is the organisational unit where the project will be based. The

administrating organisation and the project site generally correspond to the HEI and the department where the project leader will be employed.

An application can only be linked to an administrating organisation with an approved Prisma account. Unless your administrating organisation already has such an account, you will have to ask it to [apply for an organisation account](#) with the Swedish Research Council.

Please contact your administrating organisation if your project site does not appear on the list. You have to provide the project site information to be able to finalize the registration of the application.

Review panels

Under this tab, you are requested to enter the review panel NT-FOMILJO for assessment of your application.

[Review panels](#)

Participants

In this section, you invite participating researchers and administrators to join the application. By participating researcher we refer to a person with a doctoral degree involved in the project and whose scientific merits and competence will be crucial for the implementation of the proposed research activities and will have a key role in the realization of the proposed research. A participating administrator is a person, who does not take part in the project itself but can help you register and edit information in the application.

You may invite participants who do not yet hold a Prisma account. Each one of them must however open a personal Prisma account to be able to contribute to your application.

All participants must accept the invitation and participating researchers must retrieve and enter their CV data into the application before you can finalize the application registration. Remember to make sure that you use the right email addresses when you send invitations to participants, and that each address is linked to invited person's Prisma account.

CV

Under this tab, you are requested to retrieve and enter relevant CV data stored in your personal Prisma account. Participating researchers have to enter their respective CV data into the application. **As the project leader, you are requested to account for your leadership merits under Other merits.**

The following information must always (where available) be provided in each CV and limited to the number specified:

- **Education:** Graduate studies, specialist degree, as well as basic and advanced education.
- **Professional history:** Current employment and longer relevant positions you have held, postdoctoral visits and research exchanges that are relevant for the described research and any longer interruption in the research that has affected your ability to qualify as a researcher.

- **Merits and awards:** Fellowship, supervised persons (postdocs and postgraduate students; indicate the total number for each category and indicate up to 10 persons that are most relevant), up to 10 of your most relevant awarded competitive grants, up to 10 of your most relevant awards and distinctions, as well as up to 20 potential other merits (including leadership merits for you as the project leader) of relevance to the application.
- **Intellectual property:** E.g., patents and freely available computer programs that you have developed, please indicate up to 10 of your most relevant.

Registering the application

When you open the Registering the application tab, the system will perform a check to verify if any mandatory information is missing and inform you of any need for supplements. The application will not be registered unless you click the Register button.

Remember to use the preview function in order to double-check your application before submitting it!

N.B.: Please note that all invited participants must accept your invitation and enter their data into the application before you can proceed to register it. Invitations that have not been accepted have to be removed.

The registered application can then be viewed in your personal Prisma account, under Applications and Applications and grants in the menu. If necessary, a registered application may be de-registered, edited and re-registered up to the call deadline.

You are responsible for ensuring that the application is complete, that is to say that the application form is filled out correctly, the required appendices are submitted, and that the requested information is provided in accordance with the instructions. We ask you to only submit specifically requested information. After the closing date, application addenda will only be accepted in cases where we have asked for supplements.

Signing the application

When you register the application, it will automatically be signed by you in your capacity of project leader. The application must also be signed by the official representative of the administrating organisation in order for it to be considered complete and be processed further in the review process. This representative is normally the head of the department where the research will be conducted, but that will depend on the organisational structure of your administrating organisation.

The signature *of the applicant* confirms that:

- The information contained in the application is correct and in line with the instructions from the Swedish Research Council.
- Any side-line occupation and/or commercial ties have been reported to the administrating organisation, and that no conflict with the principles of good research practice has been established.
- The necessary permits and approvals are in place at the start of the project, e.g. concerning the ethical review.

The signature *of the administrating organisation* confirms that:

- The organisation will accommodate the research and the equipment, and employ the applicant during the time period and to the extent presented in the application.
- The organisation approves the cost estimate presented in the application.
- The project will be conducted in accordance with Swedish law.

The parties must have discussed the above-mentioned points before the representative of the administrating organisation approves and signs the application.

N.B.: The official representative of the administrating organisation must have signed the application in Prisma within a week (seven calendar days) of the application deadline for it to be considered further in the review process.

What happens next?

When the call closes (at 2:00 PM on the final day for submission of applications), the registered application will automatically become final and given a registration number.

Your registered application will automatically be forwarded to the official representative of the administrating organisation, who shall sign the application within a week (seven calendar days) of the application deadline. You will receive an auto-generated email when the application has been signed.

You will find information about the status of the application, the registration number and the application signature under the tab Applications and grants in your account.

Scientific evaluation

The scientific assessment of the application will be made by active researchers. These peer reviewers evaluate each application (in competition with the other applications) on the basis of the assessment criteria established by the Swedish Research Council.

If an application does not comply with the instructions, this will be taken into account in the application review.

[How your application is evaluated](#)

[The Swedish Research Council's conflict of interest policy](#)

[The Swedish Research Council's gender equality strategy](#)

Decisions

Shortly after the grant funding decisions have been taken, information on the awarded grants will be published on the web page of the Swedish Research Council. After that, a notification of decision and a final statement for your application can be found in your personal account under the tab Applications and grants. The final statement contains the application grading and, in some cases, written comments.

N.B.: As from 12 October 2015, anyone who uses genetic resources (genetic material of actual or potential value) and traditional knowledge pertaining to genetic resources, which were accessed after 12 October 2014, shall follow the EU ABS declaration and declare that the resource and the knowledge used have been obtained in line with the applicable legislation, and distribute any benefit deriving from the use thereof in a fair and reasonable way. This only applies for granted applications.

Exceptions apply to human genetic resources, material covered by the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, material included in the WHO's Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework and genetic material obtained from the Deep Seas.

For questions about the EU ABS declaration, please contact [the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency](#) (information in Swedish).

Contact

For questions relating to the application content:

For questions relating to the application content, please email or call the contact persons listed below.

Emma Olsson, e-mail: Emma.Olsson@vr.se, telephone: +46(0)8-546 44 204

Camilla Grunditz, e-mail: Camilla.Grunditz@vr.se, telephone: +46(0)8-546 44 155

Annika Johansén e-mail: Annika.Johansen@vr.se, telephone: +46(0)8-546 44 251

Erika Godoy e-mail: Erika.Godoy@vr.se, telephone: +46(0)8-546 44 029

Technical questions

We kindly ask you to first consult the help menu in the Prisma system, where you will find instructions and [FAQs](#) as well as a detailed [user manual](#), which describe most of the required steps in Prisma.

If you cannot find the answer to your technical question in the above-mentioned information material, please contact [our technical support team](#). Please note that depending on the workload, it may take up to 1-2 working days before you get a reply.