

General Terms and Conditions for Research Grants from the Swedish Research Council, the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS), and the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences, and Spatial Planning (Formas)

Ratified by the Swedish Research Council, for its part, on 1 November 2010, and applicable to funding decisions from and including 1 January 2011 (decision *RD-2010-10*). These terms and conditions apply unless otherwise specified in the funding decision. The following document describes how the Swedish Research Council applies the General Terms and Conditions.

Definitions

Administrative entity refers to the legal person that manages the research funds allocated by the Swedish Research Council (the Council).

Project leader refers to the person responsible for the grant application (applicant) submitted to the Council and for planning and implementing the project.

Applicant refers to the person or organisation responsible for the application submitted to the Council. When an organisation serves as the applicant, it has the same responsibilities as a project leader would.

Project refers to the activities supported by the research grant.

General

The Council's funding decision becomes effective when both the administrative entity and the project leader have endorsed the commitments defined below.

For positions awarded by the Council at a higher education institution, the appropriate parts of the terms and conditions shall apply.

Commitments

Commitments by the Council

The Council agrees to pay the sum of the specified grant to the administrative entity in accordance with the payment plan specified in the decision. Payments are monthly (i.e. one twelfth of the annual sum granted) unless otherwise specified in the decision. Payments commence after the decision becomes effective. The amounts specified in the decision are definitive. No compensation will be granted for increases in the cost of salaries, or other cost increases.

Grants for research projects at universities and higher education institutions shall include funding for direct and indirect costs at the same ratio as calculated for the project as a whole.

Decisions on grants apply under the condition that the Council receives the budgetary funds proposed by the Government.

Commitments by the administrative entity

The administrative entity agrees:

- as employer of the project leader, to assure that the project leader can allocate his/her own time and the time of other employees to the extent needed to implement the project in a manner that complies with the project plan as presented to the Council, and to enable publication of the project's results,
- to assure that the project leader and other relevant personnel have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources needed to implement the project,
- to assure that the research conducted in the project meets the terms and conditions specified in Swedish law,
- to assure that the research conducted in the project has no commercial ties that would affect its objectivity, independence, and transparency,
- to report annually to the Council on withdrawal of indirect, project-related costs, in accordance with the instructions issued by the Council,
- to manage the grant in compliance with the terms and conditions of the decision and be responsible for the administration of the project.

The administrative entity may, after consulting with the project leader, decide to delay the start of the project, or temporarily interrupt the project as long as the funding period specified in the decision is not exceeded. This might be necessary, for example, if the project leader is called to perform other duties, or if other key staff members cannot join the project and cannot be immediately replaced. If the need arises to extend the funding period beyond that specified, a request for extension must be submitted to the Council in good time before the funding period expires.

Commitments by the project leader

The project leader (applicant) has the scientific responsibility for the project and its objectives and methods as described in the grant application to the Council. This includes planning and implementing the project in fundamental compliance with the plan submitted to the Council and the terms and conditions specified in the decision – but with any adjustments that might be required if the Council receives less budgetary funding than the amount requested. The project leader has the responsibility to assure that all required permits and approvals have been obtained. If the project includes research involving humans or laboratory animals, the project leader shall assure that approval is obtained from the regional ethics committee and the Ethical Committee on Animal Experiments in compliance with the law and government

regulations. Moreover, the project leader shall assure that ethical principles relative to the directives issued by the Council have been complied with.

Part of the scientific responsibility is to assure that the research results are published in scientific journals with international distribution, or are made accessible in a similar manner. The project leader has an obligation to assure that he/she does not enter into agreements with commercial or other interests that could hinder him/her from publishing the results of research conducted with Council funding, or that could delay publication by more than two months. However, the delay may last as long as four months if the purpose is to apply for patents based fully, or in part, on the aforementioned research findings.

The project leader shall guarantee that the research findings are accessible to all (Open Access) within six months of publication. In cases where publishing involves parallel publication in open institutional archives, arrangements should be made at the time of publication for open accessibility within six months. Until further notice, the Open Access rules apply only to peer-reviewed texts in journals and conference reports, not to monographs and book chapters.

The project leader shall also assure, when relevant to objectives presented in the grant application, that findings of more general interest are disseminated to recipients outside of the scientific community. Furthermore, at the Council's request, the project leader shall allow access to all material for possible scientific review.

In disseminating the results, the project leader must indicate that the research was conducted with funding from the Swedish Research Council. When publishing original scientific articles, the registration number (Reg. No.) of the research grant must be included under the heading, "Acknowledgements".

Funding Period of Grant

The decision specifies the *funding period* for which the grant is given and for how long the funds may be used. The commitments by the Council, the administrative entity, and the project leader come into effect starting on the day that all aforementioned parties approve the terms and conditions. The commitments remain in effect up to and including the day that the Council approves the final report and any unused funds are repaid.

Right of Use

The decision specifies the period during which funding is disbursed. Unless otherwise stated in the decision, the grant may be used during the period specified plus one additional year, calculated from the final day of the funding period (funding period of grant). Under special circumstances the funding period may be extended. Such a request may be submitted jointly by the administrative entity and the project leader in good time before the funding period has expired. The request should be accompanied by information on yet unused funds and a general plan for concluding the project.

The grant shall be allocated in fundamental compliance with the project plan submitted to the Council – however, with the adjustments that might be necessary if the Council receives less budgetary funding than the amount requested. Further, the grant shall be allocated in accordance with the terms and conditions of the decision, including any general rules that apply. Upon written request from the administrative entity and the project leader, the Council may consider more substantial changes concerning the use of the grant, or the terms and conditions of the decision. Following a review the Council may approve the changes.

Unless otherwise stated in the decision, the grant may not be used for scholarships.

Employer Situation and Terms of Employment

Regarding the Senior Research Positions, Junior Research Positions, and Postdoctoral Positions decided on by the Council, the employer responsibilities are transferred to the administrative entity, which decides on the final terms and conditions of employment and handles the day-to-day administration of human resources.

The project leader shall be employed by the administrative entity, unless otherwise agreed on by the Council and the administrative entity. If the project leader has another employer, that employer must confirm his/her commitment.

Equipment

The administrative entity holds the property rights for equipment and other inventory acquired by a project through grants from the Council. The equipment, however, shall remain at the disposal of the project for as long as the project continues.

Obligation to Disclose Other Funding

The applicant shall disclose any applications to and any grants received from other funding bodies concerning resources for the same or similar objectives. If the applicant does not disclose such information, the Council reserves the right to re-evaluate its funding decision. If, during the research project, grants from other funding sources are offered or received for such objectives, the project leader must immediately notify the Council. This notification to the Council must specifically address the extent to which other funding bodies might influence the implementation, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of the findings and who will have access to the results.

The administrative entity, in consultation with the project leader, may decide that part of the grant received from the Council should be used to finance participation (so-called reciprocal funding) in an EU-supported project in the same field, or aimed in the same direction as the project funded by the Council.

Reporting

The administrative entity has the responsibility to provide the Council with the information it requests in conjunction with follow-up and evaluation of the research, either during or after the funding period. Presentations and reports concerning the project shall be submitted as specified in the funding decision or on special request by the Council. An auditor or other reviewer appointed by the Council has the right to review the bookkeeping related to the grant decision and has the right of full access to project records, e.g. the right to receive copies of all receipts of expenses and revenues related to the project.

If an accounting of research results is submitted in conjunction with an application for new funding from the Council, for research in the same area, it is not necessary to submit a special scientific audit unless otherwise specified in the decision.

Final Financial Statement Report

Using a special form provided by the Council, the administrative entity shall submit a final financial statement report when the project is complete, but no later than three months after the funding period has expired. This report must present information on the accounting date on which the administrative entity's reporting of grant funding is based (*date of record*; the final day in the funding period is considered the date of record unless otherwise specified). The report regarding the decision in question must show the funds granted, the balance, and costs distributed according to the cost categories for which the Council has requested a financial accounting. The Council's aforementioned right to audit the accounting also applies to the final financial statement report.

The Council may decide that the financial report should be submitted at another point in time. Such a decision must specify the date of record and shall be communicated to the administrative entity at least three months before the date of record.

If a project is terminated prematurely the following special regulations apply.

Repayment of Surplus

In conjunction with submitting the final financial statement report, the administrative entity shall repay all unused funds to the Council. If the surplus is less than one half of one price base amount (a Swedish index that changes from year-to-year) it may be kept and used for research objectives similar to those for which the funding was granted. If the surplus is greater, the entire balance shall be repaid to the Council.

Premature Termination of the Project

Difficulties in completing the project – general

If the project funded by the Council cannot be completed according to plan, and if the discrepancy is not insignificant, the administrative entity shall immediately notify the Council. The same applies if equipment, for which the Council has provided funding, cannot be acquired. In such cases, the administrative entity must also report on how this affects the

project for which the equipment was intended. The Council and the administrative entity shall, in consultation with the project leader, reach agreement on how the situation should be handled.

Difficulties in completing the project – changes affecting the project leader

If the project leader cannot complete the project due to death, extended illness, change of employer, or other reason, the administrative entity must immediately notify the Council. The Council, after conferring with the administrative entity and if possible the project leader, shall decide whether the project should receive continued funding or should be terminated. If the project is terminated, the administrative entity shall repay any unallocated funds intended for the project.

If the change is a result of the project leader transferring to become an employee of another administrative entity, the Council may decide to move the project to the other administrative entity so the work can continue under the same project leader. Before such a decision is rendered, the Council shall confer with the affected administrative entities regarding the terms and conditions of the move.

The costs of prematurely phasing out a project will be settled as described below.

Breach of commitment

The Council has grounds for a decision to immediately discontinue payment of a grant if the project leader is found to deviate from good scientific practice, as based on findings by the Council's expert panel on evaluation of suspected misconduct in research, or the Central Ethical Review Board's expert panel on research misconduct.

In other cases where the Council, or the administrative entity, or the project leader substantially violate the terms and conditions of the decision and do not cease and desist within one month (30 days) of written notification, the Council or the administrative entity may immediately terminate their commitment.

The following circumstances in conjunction with research may constitute grounds for a decision by the Council to terminate payment of a grant:

- * incorrect information in the application, or omission of required information
- * failure to report, during the course of the project, any new circumstances that shall be reported under the terms and conditions of the decision,
- * economic irregularities,
- * unethical actions,
- * commercial ties that affect the objectivity, independence, and transparency of the project,
- * the project leader, through other actions, is clearly shown to be an inappropriate recipient of Council funding.

Equipment

In prematurely phasing out a project, the Council, after consulting with the affected institutions of higher education, may decide that equipment acquired through Council funding should be surrendered to the Council or to another administrative entity.

Final financial statement report in prematurely terminated projects

If the Council decides to terminate payment of a grant, or if a project is prematurely terminated for other reasons, the project's final financial statement report must be submitted no later than three months from the date that the parties agreed to terminate the project or that any of the parties unilaterally made such a decision. The Council shall require that funding received by and dispensed to the administrative entity be repaid within three months (90 days) after the Council has received the final financial statement report.

Costs of prematurely phasing out projects

If the Council decides to terminate payment of a grant, and this is not due to a breach of the terms and conditions on the part of the administrative entity, then the administrative entity and the Council are expected to reach agreement on how to finance the legitimate phase-out costs.

Disputes

Disputes between the Council and the administrative entity shall be settled primarily through negotiation.

Changes and Additions

To be valid, any changes and additions to the terms and conditions shall be in writing. The Council, the administrative entity, or the project leader cannot decide unilaterally to make substantial changes in the terms and conditions once the funding decision becomes effective.