

Planning for transformation (Stage 1)

National research programme for sustainable spatial planning

Opening Date: 7 November 2019

Application Deadline: 14 January 2020, 14:00 CET

Date of Decision (Preliminary): 21 April 2020



WHAT CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

The purpose of this call is to contribute knowledge and solutions for developing Swedish spatial planning so that it creates the conditions to transform towards a sustainable society.

The call is divided into two stages. In Stage 1, you can apply for a planning grant to develop a project concept and create collaborations for a larger project application.



WHO CAN APPLY?

Researchers, municipalities and other public-sector organisations.



HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

You can apply for a planning grant for between 100,000 and 300,000 SEK.

Revision history

Any changes to the call text are listed below.

Date	Change

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Description of the call

Introduction

Sweden faces major challenges in its transformation to becoming a sustainable society. The challenges include environmental issues such as our overconsumption of resources, the risk of climate change and how to adapt to the climate change we are actually facing, and the widening gaps between different groups in society and different geographies. Spatial planning plays a vital role in managing these challenges and achieving a sustainable built environment. Planning can promote resource-efficient, climate-friendly, inclusive and safe cities and communities where people can and want to live.

Formas is announcing grants to fund research that contributes knowledge and solutions for developing Swedish spatial planning that supports the transformation to a sustainable society.

Formas welcomes applications from researchers in any discipline at Swedish universities, research institutes and government agencies with research assignments, as well as public-sector stakeholders such as municipalities, county administrative boards, regional/county councils and other government authorities.

Under this call, projects can receive funding in two stages. In this stage, Stage 1, you can apply for planning grants for preparatory work on developing a project concept as well as for initiating and developing collaborative partnerships, both interdisciplinary and between academia and practitioners. You can apply for a planning grant for between 100,000 and 300,000 Swedish kronor (SEK). In Stage 2, which opens in autumn 2020, you can apply for funding for up to 4-year projects with a total maximum budget of SEK 8 million per project.

Projects must relate to one or more of the perspectives and themes in the research agenda [Research for integrated and sustainable spatial planning](#).

Background

The ways we plan, build and develop communities bring a number of challenges that must be addressed if we want to succeed in transforming to more sustainable societies. We face major challenges, such as transforming to a fossil-free society, adapting to climate change, and creating the conditions for socially, environmentally and economically sustainable cities and communities. The [sustainable development goals](#) and Agenda 2030, as well as the [UN's New Urban Agenda](#), are major global policy instruments in this process. Central to the transformation of cities and communities are the Agenda 2030 targets of [goal 11 \(Sustainable cities and communities\)](#), as well as several other sustainability goals from Agenda 2030. These goals and how they are linked to different spatial planning challenges are presented in the research agenda [Research for integrated and sustainable spatial planning](#).

Spatial planning is an important transformative tool, since planning lays the foundation for what our cities and communities will look like for a long time to come. The built environment created through planning in turn creates the conditions for how we can live our lives and our possibilities

to shift to a sustainable lifestyle. The concept of *spatial planning* is defined in the agenda as a collective term for several related concepts, such as physical planning and urban planning, or simply planning. The purpose of spatial planning is to meet society's basic needs, and it relates to both urban and rural planning interacting together. It includes both long-term strategic planning and more detailed planning. Cities and communities are in a constant state of flux. A key prerequisite for achieving sustainable cities and communities is for the planning process to be legitimate and transparent regarding who initiates and manages the work, who makes their voice heard and which interests are considered and not considered.

At the same time, today's spatial planning faces numerous challenges. Planning currently takes place at several different levels in society – national, regional and local. Its organisation is complex and consists of a wide range of stakeholders, many of whom have a global footprint. Many issues within the context of spatial planning are closely related, with direct or indirect consequences in related areas. Despite this, planning and management often take place in multiple separate processes. There is therefore a great need to coordinate processes and legislation within spatial planning to create the foundation for a systematic, holistic perspective. The ability of spatial planning to further support the transformation requires a new approach to working methods, organisation and economic conditions as well as to Swedish planning practices in general.

Purpose and focus

The purpose of this call is to contribute knowledge and solutions for developing Swedish spatial planning so that it creates the conditions to transform towards a sustainable society.

The call is divided into two stages. In Stage 1, you can apply for a planning grant for your work on describing the project concept, the stakeholders you will involve and the potential benefits to society. The purpose of Stage 1 is to provide the time and resources needed to prepare for an application in Stage 2.

Formas welcomes projects that contribute to the development of Swedish spatial planning practices by investigating good examples, problematising processes or testing new solutions. Your project should focus on how spatial planning could be done differently today in order to contribute to the transformation of cities and communities. The projects can target any level from the local to the national level. International contexts can be studied as long as they are used for comparative purposes to draw lessons that can be used to develop Swedish spatial planning practices.

Projects must relate to one or more of the themes and one or more of the perspectives (see Figure 1) in the research agenda [Research for integrated and sustainable spatial planning](#). These themes and perspectives are based on the various challenges that the built environment and spatial planning currently face.



Figure 1. Perspectives and themes in the research agenda [Research for integrated and sustainable spatial planning](#). For more information on the perspectives and themes, see Chapter 4 in the research agenda.

Projects can, for example, target one or several of these areas for which a knowledge gap has been identified for spatial planning:

- Organisational, decision-making and accountability structures
- Conflicts of objectives and interests
- Power and policy instruments
- Economic models and values
- Cooperation and coordination at and between national, regional and local levels
- Policies and regulations
- Democracy, gender equality and accessibility perspectives

Projects can also involve analyses and solutions regarding how:

- spatial planning and the built environment can create solutions for cities, communities and individuals to become more climate- and resource-efficient;
- the social aspect of planning can be enhanced and have a greater impact for transformation;
- the economic, environmental and social issues interact with each other, problematisations around how this takes place in today's planning, and how this can be improved in the transformation to more equitable, resource-efficient communities.

We expect the research we fund to be innovative and beneficial to society in its contribution to the transformation. The results of the funded projects must be made openly accessible and have practical application for different users (municipalities, government agencies, private companies, civil society, researchers).

Planning grant (Stage 1)

The planning grant enables applicants to prepare for the larger call in Stage 2, scheduled to open in November 2020. The grant aims to allow applicants to develop their project concept, initiate and develop collaborative partnerships – both interdisciplinary and between academia and practitioners – and to enable the aspect of societal relevance to be taken into account early on in the design stage in preparation for the larger research project.

The planning grant should be used to:

1. Develop a project concept into a proposal for a larger research application.
2. Create collaboration between researchers (interdisciplinary collaboration is encouraged), or collaboration between researchers and relevant users for practical application.

Formas encourages applicants to engage in new collaborative initiatives. Relevant stakeholders should be included in the funded projects' activities to enable co-creation between researchers and users at an early stage. Examples of users are stakeholders from public-sector organisations (such as municipalities, county councils, region/county councils and government authorities), private companies, industry associations and civil society.

It is not a requirement to apply in Stage 1 or to have completed a project within the framework of a planning grant in order to be able to apply for Stage 2 funding in this call.

In Stage 2, which opens in autumn 2020, you can apply for funding for up to 4-year projects with a total maximum budget of SEK 8 million per project. The total budget for the call is SEK 30 million per year, for a total of SEK 120 million.

Who can apply under this call

Formas welcomes applications for funding from researchers in any discipline at Swedish universities, research institutes and government agencies with research assignments, as well as public-sector stakeholders such as municipalities, county administrative boards, regional/county councils and other government authorities.

Interdisciplinary collaboration is encouraged. Collaboration between researchers and relevant users is expected to be part of the projects, although it is not required. The proposed collaboration and cooperation that will be developed in your project must be fit for purpose in relation to the project concept's objectives and purpose. In addition, interdisciplinary elements and collaboration between stakeholders must be clearly described and carefully considered. (The organisation is assessed according to the assessment criteria on page 14.)

Formas strives for an equitable, gender-balanced and inclusive development of society. Applicants should design the project so that its results can benefit a diverse group of people and should consider the gender distribution and different backgrounds of project members.

Before you apply

Applicant and organisation requirements

In the first part of this call, Stage 1, the project leader (principal applicant) can be employed at a Swedish higher education institution or a public organisation as described above. Research practitioners and public-sector organisations can apply for funding under this call as co-participants in the project. Project leaders or project participants do not need to have a doctorate degree.

To qualify for a grant in Stage 2 of the call, however, the project leader must have completed their doctorate degree and be affiliated with a Swedish university, college, research institute or government agency that has a research assignment. Participating researchers must also have obtained their doctorate degree. Applicants from the public sector or other staff participating in the project do not need to have a doctorate degree.

Grants for research projects may only be administered by a Swedish university, college or other Swedish public organisation that meets [Formas' criteria for administrating organisations](#). The project leader must be (or, through the project, must become) an employee of an administrating organisation that has been generally approved by Formas.

The project can include participating researchers or other project participants who are employed by an organisation outside of Sweden. Any choice to include experts outside of Sweden should be justified in the project application. The administrating organisation is responsible for transferring funds to foreign organisations in accordance with the administrating organisation's rules and guidelines.

In this call, Formas does not grant funding to private companies or other organisations engaged in economic activity. Services from such organisations can be procured in accordance with the administrating organisation's guidelines and applicable legislation. All types of organisations are welcome to contribute co-funding to the project, although co-funding is not a requirement. Other types of organisations that do **not** engage in economic activity can, depending on the organisational form, participate as applicants in the project (contact Formas in each individual case).

An individual is not allowed to be the principal applicant for more than one application in this call. However, there are no restrictions on how many applications an individual can be a co-applicant for.

Costs that qualify for funding

When you apply for project funding, you can apply for a grant to cover both direct and indirect costs. Direct costs include costs for salaries, equipment and travel. Indirect costs are costs that are shared with others in your organisation, such as for administration, IT and renting of premises. Indirect costs are sometimes called overhead. Read more about [the costs that qualify for funding](#).

Grant amount and project duration

The grant amount sought for a project must be at least SEK 100,000 and a maximum of SEK 300,000. Projects must start on 1 May 2020, and funds can be sought for a maximum of 6 months. The funds can be used for up to two months after the project ends.

Applications with a requested amount or project duration that are not within the above specified ranges will be rejected by Formas in an early stage and will not proceed to review.

Language

We recommend that you write your application in English, since the review panel that will assess your application is international. You can write your application in Swedish, but it will then be translated into English prior to assessment. In this case, you will not be able to see the translation before it proceeds to the assessment. The budget specification will not be translated. Read more about [the language for applications to Formas](#).

Who can read the application?

Applications submitted to Formas become publicly available documents after a decision is announced. However, Formas does not disclose information about an individual's business relationships or operating conditions, inventions or research results if the disclosure would be assumed to cause the individual suffering. If applications are requested, Formas conducts a confidentiality assessment.

How to apply

You apply in Prisma

To apply for a grant from Formas, the project leader should submit an application in the Prisma application system. For this you need:

- A personal account in Prisma for the project leader.
- An organisation account for the project leader's organisation (administrating organisation).

If the project leader's organisation does not have an organisation account, the organisation must apply for an account. Make sure you do this on Prisma's website in good time before the call closes, as it can take a few weeks to have your application approved. If your organisation already has an organisation account in Prisma, then that account can be used.

Participating researchers and project participants from public organisations whose CV should be included in the application also need a personal account. The project leader must invite the participants to submit an application in Prisma.

We recommend that you create an account and an application as early as possible and contact Formas with any questions in good time. The application can be saved as a draft and updated until the time the call closes.

Information your application must include

Your application must include a clear description of how the planning grant will help to develop the project concept under the following sections.

Basic information

- **Number of months applied for:** Maximum of 6 months.
- **Start month:** The start date is 2020-05-01.
- **Estimated project duration:** The project duration is calculated automatically in Prisma, based on the start date.
- **Project title (in Swedish and English):** Maximum 200 characters per project title, including spaces.
- **Popular science description (Swedish):** A maximum of 3,000 characters, including spaces. The popular science description should be able to be used in Formas' project database, which allows the general public and the media to see which projects Formas has funded.
- **Abstract (in Swedish and English):** A maximum of 1,500 characters per abstract, including spaces. A concise and clear description of the project concept, proposed collaboration, and the project concept's potential to develop Swedish spatial planning so that it promotes the transformation of cities and communities.

Project description

- **Objectives and purpose:** A maximum of 5,000 characters, including spaces. Describe the objectives and purpose of the project concept and why it is important to conduct the project. State how the project concept relates to at least one theme in the research agenda *Research for integrated and sustainable spatial planning* and at least one of the agenda's perspectives.
- **Implementation and organisation:** A maximum of 5,000 characters, including spaces. Describe how the planning grant will be used to develop the project concept and initiate collaborative partnerships. Describe the stakeholders you will involve in the project and explain how they are relevant for achieving the project's objectives.
- **Societal benefit:** A maximum of 5,000 characters, including spaces. Describe the potential societal benefit of the project concept. Explain how the project concept can enable spatial planning practices to be done differently than they are today in order to contribute to the transformation of cities and communities. Also describe the stakeholders and target groups that you expect to benefit from the results.

Budget

You report the project budget in Prisma. The budget should include:

- Salaries, including social security contributions for each project participant.

Formas does not grant funding for annual salary increases. You can therefore apply for funding for salaries that apply at the time of the application, but not for funding to cover salary increases. For any current job positions, you must state the salary in effect at the time of the application submission. This will then apply to all subsequent years in the project. For new job positions you must state the starting salary at the administrating organisation.

The total amount of the salary for a single researcher, doctoral student or other staff must not exceed 100 percent of full-time employment. This also means that someone who is already receiving full salary funding from any funder cannot receive additional funding for salary. Researchers who are full-time pensioners cannot receive funding for their own salary.

- **Activity level in the project**

Activity level refers to the percentage of full-time service a project participant contributes.

- **Running costs**

Operating costs can include the cost of consumables, travel, conferences and publication fees for open-access journals and databases. Equipment costs and depreciation costs for equipment used in the project are also considered operating costs.

- **Premises**

You can apply for funding for the cost of premises if this is not already included as overhead in the project's budget.

- **Indirect costs**

When you state the cost of overhead in the application, do so according to the practice of the college, university or public administration that will manage the funds. Formas does not grant funding for overhead costs that you write off for equipment or premises.

- **Budget specification**

Explain the budget in words. Provide a brief justification for all salaries and other expenses. Indicate how the grant amount you are applying for will be distributed per organisation if several organisations are applying.

Ethical considerations

Fill in only if relevant for completing the project. You must describe the relevant ethical issues and how they should be managed. Examples include research that uses personal data, or experiments on humans or animals. Read more in [Formas' general instructions](#) under the section on ethical considerations.

Classifications

Formas uses project classifications in analyses and supporting documentation on an overall level. The classifications are made when the applicant states the subject area, SCB codes and at least one sustainable development goal the project can contribute to.

- **Subject area**

Select the project's subject area and add a sub-heading.

- **SCB code**

Next, select at least one SCB code with two sub-levels that together form the entire code.

- **Keywords**

Select at least one and a maximum of three keywords describing the project. Choose what best represents your project, even if it does not entirely match the field you work in.

- **Global sustainable development goals**

Select a minimum of one and a maximum of three sustainable development goals that best fit your project.

Administrating organisation – the organisation receiving the grant

An administrating organisation is the organisation that receives the grant money from Formas when a grant is awarded. Applicants under this call must be administrating organisations that are approved by Formas. Applying for an organisation account in Prisma means that you are applying to become an administrating organisation under this specific call. If your organisation is already an administrating organisation, you do not need to submit this application. If you are not sure whether your organisation is already approved as an administrating organisation, contact the responsible research officer at Formas. A registered application is automatically sent to the administrating organisation after the call is closed. The administrating organisation then has seven business days to digitally sign the application.

The administrating organisation is responsible for transferring part of the grant to any co-applicant project partners. This grant money must be transferred, not invoiced.

[Read more about administrating organisations.](#)

CVs

Add the following information to the application. The project leader retrieves the information from his or her personal account in Prisma:

- Education – Add basic education. If the project leader is a researcher, also state postgraduate education.
- Employment – Add a maximum of three job positions.
- Other relevant qualifications.

If the project leader is not a researcher, this person can also upload their CV as an appendix. Note that the project leader must also upload their CV from their profile in Prisma. This is, however, primarily designed for researchers.

Participating researchers add their CV details from their Prisma profile to the application themselves. For other project participants who are not researchers, CVs can be uploaded as appendices.

List of publications

Researchers should list their most relevant publications. Up to ten publications can be specified per person. The publications should be linked from the applicants' personal profiles in Prisma. If other participants want to add publications (such as reports or articles), this can be done in an attached appendix.

Appendices

The following appendices can be uploaded if relevant for the application:

- CVs.
 - CV project leader, not researcher (PDF, max. 4 MB, max. 2 pages)
 - CV co-applicants, not researcher (PDF, max. 10 MB, max. 2 pages per CV)
- Publication list for all project co-applicants, not researchers (PDF, max 10MB, max 10 publications per project co-applicant including project leader).
- Appendix Illustrations. If figures, tables or images are needed to describe the project. Only one attachment (PDF) with a maximum size of 4 MB can be uploaded.

After submitting your application

First, Formas verifies that your application complies with requirements. If your application passes these checks, it continues on to a review panel for assessment. If it does not, it is rejected.

Any applications containing errors in basic requirements will be rejected. The following errors in basic requirements will result in a rejection of your application:

- The administrating organisation has not signed the application.
- The total grant amount sought is too low or too high.
- The specified project duration is too short or too long.
- The application is incomplete. Required information is missing on the application form or in the appendices.
- The application does not meet the requirements set out in the call text.
- The project does not fall within one of Formas' areas of responsibility (environment, agricultural sciences and spatial planning).

In addition, Formas asks applicants who have received funding earlier but have not submitted their scientific or financial reports on time to submit their reports. Otherwise, the project leader risks not being granted new funding.

How does the assessment process work?

Applications will be assessed by an international review panel that is qualified to cover the current theme in the call. Applications are assessed based on their contents. It is therefore important to write the application as clearly as possible and include all important and relevant information. Each

application is read and assessed by several members of the panel. The review panel is composed of active researchers as well as individuals outside academia with the expertise necessary to evaluate the relevance of the research. The review panel is appointed by Formas. Read more about [Formas' assessment process](#).

Criteria

The following gives an overview of the criteria used to assess applications in Stage 1 and in Stage 2. The application must address all the criteria, and we advise applicants to clearly relate their application to these criteria. Each criterion will be scored by the review panel on a scale of 1–7, where 1 is the lowest and 7 is the highest. All criteria are equally important. Note that it is only the criteria for Stage 1 that are assessed in this call.

Stage 1

- Research topic
 - The research topic is relevant in relation to the purpose of the call.
 - The challenge that the project addresses is an important one to solve.
 - The project concept has the potential to result in scientifically significant results.
- Organisation
 - The proposed cooperation and collaboration that will be developed in your project are fit for purpose in relation to the project concept's objectives and purpose.
 - The elements of interdisciplinary research and stakeholder collaboration are clearly explained and carefully considered.
- Societal benefit
 - The project concept has the promise to evolve into a project with significant potential for change in Swedish spatial planning.
 - Relevant stakeholders and target groups are identified, ensuring that the project results can contribute to transformation.

Stage 2

- Research topic
 - The research topic is relevant in relation to the purpose of the call.
 - The challenge that the project addresses is an important one to solve.
 - The project has the potential to result in scientifically significant results.
 - Theories or hypotheses are original or innovative.
- Methods and implementation
 - The scientific method is clearly described, appropriate to the topic and feasible to implement.
 - Any multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approach is clearly described and fit for purpose.

- Ethical considerations are described well, and the applicant's plan for managing them is appropriate.
 - The project addresses gender equality and diversity perspectives in a relevant way.
 - Coordination of the project and research group is clearly described and fit for purpose.
 - The timetable and budget are reasonable in relation to the project's objectives.
 - The work plan is well-defined and realistic.
 - Risks are analysed and reasonable alternatives described.
 - The plan for scientific publication and communication is well-defined and realistic.
- Organisation and competence
 - The project team has the skills and experience required to complete the project.
 - The elements of interdisciplinary research and stakeholder collaboration are clearly explained and well thought out.
 - The cooperation and collaboration that will be developed in your project are fit for purpose in relation to the project's objectives and purpose.
 - The principal applicant has the ability to lead and implement major collaborations.
 - The composition of the project team reflects the distribution of genders, skills, experience and different perspectives on spatial planning for the transformation.
 - The project promotes the exchange of experiences and increased expertise in the field of spatial planning.
- Societal benefit
 - The project has the potential to contribute to significant change in Swedish spatial planning.
 - The project has the potential to contribute to the transformation of cities and communities.
 - In the short or long term, the expected results have the potential to be able to guide society towards transformative changes, nationally or internationally.
 - The project relates to one or more of the themes and one or more of the perspectives in the national research agenda.
 - In the project's design, relevant consideration is given to the needs of stakeholders or users.
- Communication with stakeholders or users
 - There is clearly defined plan for communication initiatives.
 - Stakeholders or users who will be involved are relevant to the project's objectives.
 - Plans for the involvement of stakeholders or users are realistic.
 - The project team has the skills required to carry out the activities planned for communication or interaction with stakeholders or users.

Grant award decisions

Formas' Scientific Council is expected to reach a decision on 21 April 2020 concerning which projects are granted funding in Stage 1. Decisions will be announced the following day at the latest on Formas' website and later sent via email from Prisma. Grant award decisions cannot be appealed. Read more about our [grant award decisions](#).

Reporting for granted projects

Each project that is awarded funding must submit a report to Formas containing a financial and a popular scientific summary in accordance with the decision. Read more about [reporting](#).

Formas may impose requirements on how projects must be reported in terms of content and results to enable distribution and application. In such cases, the award decision will contain more information about this. Formas may also require you to participate in conferences and similar events in order to create synergies and platforms for learning and knowledge sharing.

Support and shortcuts

- [Prisma](#)
- [Prisma's user support](#)
- [Ethics policy](#)

Contact information

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