




Societal effects and opportunities for transition after Covid-19

Opening Date: 28 May 2020

Application Deadline: 3 September 2020

Date of Decision: 18 November 2020

		
WHAT CAN YOU APPLY FOR? One-year research projects, research that builds on previous or ongoing projects, review of research, or planning of future research projects with a focus on the societal effects of Covid-19 and opportunities for a sustainable transformation.	WHO CAN APPLY? The main applicant must be a researcher who holds a PhD at a higher education institution or research institute.	HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR? SEK 500,000–1 million per project

Revision history

Any changes to the call text are listed below.

Date	Change
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Description of the call

Introduction

This call aims to increase society's preparedness and resilience in order to address future crises. The call will help increase our understanding of the impacts of Covid-19 and the opportunities for transformation and recovery in the face of crises. This will be done through research that explores the current situation that the novel coronavirus has confronted us with, as well as the potential for transformation that it brings.

Researchers from any discipline who hold a PhD and are active at a Swedish higher education institution or research institute can apply under this call. Funding can be sought for any of the following:

- Projects that build on ongoing or previous research projects and enable implementation of their results.
- Review of research of the scientific literature and studies that highlight the current state of knowledge in the field.
- Preparatory projects ahead of major research projects that aim to be funded in another call, by a Swedish or international funding source.
- Shorter research projects of less than one year.

The call will fund one-year projects. You can apply for 500,000–1 million Swedish kronor (SEK) per project. The total budget for the call is SEK 20 million.

The call is a joint initiative by Formas and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) within the framework of Formas' three national research programmes on climate, food and sustainable spatial planning, as well as MSB's responsibility for research within civil protection and preparedness.

Background

In recent months, Covid-19 has impacted the world in ways few could have imagined. The ongoing global pandemic has profound implications for essential public functions and structures, trade, movement patterns and everyday life. On the one hand, society's vulnerability has been laid bare. But the situation has also shown us that many people can adapt their activities and their everyday lives rather quickly.

Agenda 2030 has given the world's countries a common goal and platform to achieve a sustainable future for humanity and our planet, with ambitious targets for a healthier, safer and more just world. How is the crisis affecting efforts to achieve Agenda 2030? Can experiences from this crisis be used to make a positive contribution to society's development and to equip our societies for other crises, today and into the future? How can we address the goal conflicts and conflicts of interest that exist? How can we manage the synergies and collaboration resulting from the crisis so that they last even beyond the end of the crisis?

The huge losses being suffered by society, economies, businesses and individuals because of the coronavirus confer on us a responsibility to learn lessons from it. In parallel with the current pandemic, we are also living in times where climate change is pointing to the need for a transformation of our societies from the ground up. The pandemic and global warming are completely different crises, but perhaps this situation can teach us something about how we can leverage opportunities for a transformation to more sustainable societies in the long term.

There is a real need to explore different forms of societal impact and potential for transformation in response to the current pandemic. Therefore, Formas and MSB are now announcing joint funding to give Swedish research wide-ranging opportunities to explore both the transformation opportunities and the impacts of Covid-19 on society.

Purpose and focus

This call aims to increase society's preparedness and resilience in order to address future crises. The call will help increase our understanding of the impacts of Covid-19 and the opportunities for transformation and recovery in the face of crises. This will be done through research that explores the current situation that the novel coronavirus has confronted us with, as well as the potential for transformation that it brings.

Formas' three national research programmes on climate, food and sustainable spatial planning are combined in this call. Together with MSB, which is responsible for research within civil protection and preparedness¹, the call spans subject areas that often overlap and interact with each other. Project applications must address one of the subject areas described in the research agendas of the national programmes². The call welcomes projects that address several of these topics.

The call focuses on the lessons we can learn from the pandemic. What long-term impacts can we expect due to the current circumstances? What can be learned with regard to future climate change, a sustainable food system and more sustainable communities? One thing is clear: People's everyday lives, perception of risk, consumption patterns, travel patterns, interactions with other people, and lifestyles have been affected. But how has this changed, and what can we learn for the future in a transitional initiative for sustainable societies? What can we learn concerning future civil protection and preparedness, and how must the crisis management system change as a consequence of Covid-19? For example, what conclusions can be drawn about vulnerability in critical infrastructure, essential operations and critical supply flows, and how should risk and vulnerability analyses be developed to equip society for future crises?

The call will fund one-year projects. Researchers can apply for funding for research that builds on previous projects or ongoing research in order to address issues targeted by the call, for smaller-scale, shorter research projects, or for systematic reviews of previous research. Funding can also be

¹ [MSB's research and development strategy](#)

² [Strategic agenda for the national research programme for climate](#)
[Strategic agenda for the national research programme for food](#)
[Strategic agenda for the national research programme on sustainable spatial planning](#)

sought for preparatory projects ahead of major research projects that are intended to be funded in another call. You can apply for 500,000–1 million Swedish kronor (SEK) per project.

The project should address relevant issues for Swedish society by studying national or international contexts. The application should describe and justify why the results of the proposal can help improve society's overall emergency response or help achieve the transformation to sustainable development. The potential of the project to increase gender equality or other diversity and integration in terms of issues like social or cultural background, disability or age should also be clearly stated.

Who can apply under this call

Researchers from any discipline who hold a PhD and are active at a Swedish higher education institution or research institute can apply under this call.

Formas strives for an equitable, gender-balanced and inclusive development of society. Applicants should therefore design their project so that its results can benefit a diverse group of people.

Before you apply

Applicant and organisation requirements

To apply for a grant under this call, the main applicant must have obtained a PhD degree by the time the call closes.

- Participating researchers must also have obtained their PhD degree by the time the call closes. Other staff involved in the project do not need to have a PhD degree.
- The proposed grant recipient must be stated as a project manager on the application.
- Grants may only be administered by a Swedish university, college or other Swedish public organisation that meets Formas' criteria for administrating organisations.
[Who can become an administrating organisation?](#)
- There is no upper age limit for the main applicant and participating researchers. However, researchers who are full-time pensioners are not eligible to receive funding towards salaries.

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.

[Costs that qualify for funding](#)

Grant amount and project duration

The grant amount sought for a project must be at least SEK 500,000 and a maximum of SEK 1 million. Projects must start on 1 December 2020, and funds can be sought for between 6 and 12 months. The funds can be used for up to three months after the project ends. Applications with a requested amount or project duration that are not within the above specified ranges will be rejected in an early stage and will not proceed to review. The application's budget must indicate how the funds will be used in the project.

For administrative reasons, Formas can apply a payout plan that differs from the application's allocation of the budget over time.

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.

[Language in the application](#)

Who can read the application?

According to Swedish law, your application and its appendices are considered as general public documents once they have been submitted to us. This means that anyone can request and read your application. Before we disclose any applications we always conduct a confidentiality assessment, but we can only hide information as legislated for in the Public Access and Secrecy Act (2009:400).

How to apply

You apply in Prisma

You apply for a grant in our application system, Prisma. In Prisma, you must create a personal account where you will add the information you need for your application. Participating researchers whose CV should be included in the application also need a personal account. The organisation that will be the project's administrating organisation must have an organisational account.

Please create your application in Prisma in good time so that you can get help if problems arise.

The application can be saved as a draft and updated until the time the call closes.

Information your application must include

We recommend that you write your application in English because the review panel members come from different parts of the world. However, the popular science description must be written in Swedish, while the abstract should be in both Swedish and English.

All limits for the maximum number of characters refer to characters including spaces. We recommend that you choose the Arial font in font size 12 for the information you enter in all text boxes.

Your application must include a clear description of the project under the following sections:

Basic information

- Number of months for which the application applies
- Project title in **Swedish** and **English** (max. 200 characters including spaces)
- Popular science description in **Swedish** (max. 4,500 characters including spaces)
- Abstract in **Swedish** and **English** (max. 1,500 characters each including spaces)

Research programme

- **Goals and objectives** of the project, and a brief background description (max. 5,000 characters including spaces).
- **Project description** including structure, theory and methodology (max. 9,000 characters including spaces).
- **Description of the potential societal value of the project** (max. 6,000 characters including spaces). Briefly describe the potential societal value of your research, its relevant stakeholders and users, and how the project will benefit them.
- **References.** List the in-line references pertaining to the above sections in a separate field (max. 4,000 characters including spaces).

Budget

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

Salaries, including social security contributions for each project participant

You can apply for funding to cover salaries for researchers, PhD students and technical staff. Social security contributions should be included. 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. For new job positions, you must specify the starting salary at the administrating organisation. The total amount of the salary for a single researcher, PhD 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.

Operating 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 specify the overhead costs 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

In your own words, explain the budget. State how the grant amount you are applying for will be distributed each year, as well as the total amount per organisation if several organisations are applying.

Ethical considerations

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. Even if you do not expect your research to involve ethical concerns, you should state that this is the case in your application and explain why. A description of animal and human testing should be given in separate fields, using a maximum of 4,000 characters including spaces in each field.

[Report any 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.

- **Sustainable development goals**

Select a minimum of one and a maximum of three sustainable development goals (SDGs) that best fit your project. When selecting more than one goal, specify the goals in priority order.

The goal that is most relevant to the project should be stated in the first box. As the meaning of the goals is sometimes narrower than what the title indicates, we encourage you to follow the link and read in more detail about the goals you intend to specify to ensure that the intended research contributes towards achieving that particular goal.

[More information about the meaning of the goals](#)

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.

[Who can become an administrating organisation?](#)

- Select your administrating organisation in Prisma and add your project's department or institution.
- Prisma contains a default list of approved administrating organisations.
- 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.

Participants

- The main applicant invites participating researchers.
- A participating researcher is a researcher **who holds a PhD** and is considered a co-applicant for the project.
- You can also have participating administrators who are **not** involved in the project but who help you fill in the application form.
- Each participant must have created a user account in Prisma.
- Main applicants invite people to participate in the application process by searching for their given name, surname and email address in Prisma (note that exact spelling of names and email addresses is required).
- Note that invited participating researchers must transfer their CVs and publications in the application so that the main applicant can register the application when it is completed. See the next section, "CVs".

CVs

- The project manager retrieves the information from his or her personal account in Prisma.
- Participating researchers add their CV details from their profile to the application in Prisma themselves.
- Applicants should review in good time that their CV in Prisma is complete and up-to-date.
- If participating researchers have not filled in the required fields correctly, the main applicant will not be able to complete registration of the application.

- Participants who are not co-applicants are not able to attach CV information. Instead, their qualifications for the project should be described in the research programme.

The following CV information should be added to the application.

- **Education.** Postgraduate, undergraduate and graduate level.
- **Employment history.** Current employment and major relevant prior positions, postdoctoral stays, postgraduate exchanges that are relevant for the research, and any significant gaps in the research (such as parental leave, illness, military service or political duties).
- **Qualifications and merits:**
 - **Lectureships**
 - **Supervised students:** Doctoral students, postdocs, graduate theses; specify the total number for each category and name the most relevant ones (max 10).
 - **Grants received in competition:** Specify the most relevant ones (max. 10).
 - **Awards and distinctions:** Specify the most relevant ones (max. 10).
 - **Other merits:** Here, the main applicant and participating researchers can give a brief summary of all their publications (max. 800 characters including spaces), as well as other merits relevant to the application, such as experience of documented collaboration and research communication (max. 10).
- **Intellectual property:** For example, patents and open source software that you have developed (max. 10).

List of publications

The main applicant and participating researchers should list up to ten of their most relevant publications. The publications should be linked from the applicants' personal profiles in Prisma.

Appendices

Appendix for illustrations. If you need figures, tables or images to describe the project, you can upload them as attachments here. A maximum of one PDF attachment of 4 MB can be uploaded. Please note that a CV should **not** be attached as an appendix.

After submitting your application

We first verify whether your application falls within Formas' or MSB's areas of responsibility and the scope of the call. If it does, it continues on to a review panel for assessment. If it does not, it is rejected.

Your application can also be rejected if it contains procedural errors or is incomplete, meaning that it lacks the necessary information in the application form or appendix.

[Some applications are rejected early](#)

How does the assessment process work?

Formas and MSB both participate in the assessment process. All information submitted to Formas in connection with this call will be made available to MSB.

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.

In order to enable high-quality projects broadly within the framework of the call, a portfolio approach will be sought.

The applications are assessed based on the following criteria on a scale of 1-7, where 1 is the lowest and 7 is the highest.

Assessment criteria

- **Purpose and question**
 - The project's purpose is aligned with the focus of the call.
 - The research question is of high scientific quality.
- **Method and implementation**
 - The method is clearly described, suitable for the purpose and feasible.
 - The timetable and budget are reasonable in relation to the project's implementation and expected results.
 - Ethical considerations are well described and the applicant's plan for managing them is appropriate.
- **Scientific competence**
 - Applicants have the skills and experience to carry out the project according to plan.
- **Potential societal value**
 - The project can significantly contribute to improving society's general crisis preparedness capacity and contribute to the transition towards sustainable development.
 - The project has the potential to contribute to increased equality or other diversity and integration in society in terms of for example social or cultural background, disability or age.
 - In the design of the project, relevant considerations of stakeholders or users have been taken into account and it is well described how the project will be of value for them.

Grant award decisions

MSB and Formas' Scientific Council are expected to reach a decision on 18 November 2020 concerning which projects are granted funding. Decisions will be announced the following day at the latest on Formas' and MSB's websites and later sent via email from Prisma. Grant award decisions cannot be appealed.

Reporting for granted projects

Each project that is awarded funding must submit a report to Formas containing a financial and a scientific report in accordance with the decision, three months after the end of the appropriation period. Formas and MSB 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 and MSB may also require you to participate in conferences and similar events in order to create synergies and platforms for learning and knowledge sharing.

[How to report expenses and results](#)

Open access to publications and research data

Results from research funded by Formas and MSB must be published using open access.

[Open access to research results and data](#)

If you receive funding from us, you must have a data management plan for the data produced in the project. This plan does not need to be submitted, but it must be presented on request. We recommend that you follow the proposal developed by Science Europe on what a data management plan should contain. For more information about the proposal, see the [Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management](#).

Support and shortcuts

[Strategic agenda for the national research programme for climate](#)

[Strategic agenda for the national research programme for food](#)

[Strategic agenda for the national research programme on sustainable spatial planning](#)

[MSB's research and development strategy](#)

[Prisma](#)

[Prisma's user support](#)

[Ethics policy](#)

[Conflict of interest policy](#)

[Conflict of interest guidelines](#)

[Who can become an administrating organisation?](#)

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