

Syntheses and research projects for sustainable spatial planning

Part 1: Syntheses of knowledge status and knowledge gaps

Last day of application: 28/02/2017

Day of decision: 26/09/2018 preliminary

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What do we currently know and what do we still need to know to achieve a sustainable society? Formas invites applications for syntheses that examine knowledge status and knowledge gaps within subject areas relevant to sustainable spatial planning through multi- or interdisciplinary collaborations. In the assessment of applications for syntheses projects a major emphasis will be placed on the methodology used.

Description of the call sub-category

Overall focus

The “Syntheses” call sub-category is intended for researchers from all disciplines working at a Swedish university, university college, research institute or governmental agency that engages in research. Other Swedish public organisations that fulfil the grant administrating organisation eligibility requirements of Formas can also apply. The call sub-category has a total scope of up to SEK 16.5 million. Each project may comprise a maximum of SEK 1.5 million.

In this call sub-category syntheses are sought that describe the knowledge status and knowledge requirements within sustainable spatial planning. The project must be based on multi- or interdisciplinary collaboration (either within the same scientific discipline, for example social science, or between two scientific disciplines, such as social science and technology). Syntheses that integrate several of the subject areas and perspectives within the sustainable spatial planning area are particularly encouraged.

The synthesis topic investigated must contribute to one or more of the [Agenda 2030 goals](http://www.globalgoals.org/) (<http://www.globalgoals.org/>). It is advantageous if the project also contributes to one or more of the Swedish environmental goals or national cultural environment targets, goals for architecture, structural planning and design, goals for housing, construction, transport policy, infrastructure, spatial planning and safety, crime prevention efforts, social goals and equality goals. The application must state which goal(s) are addressed and how the project contributes to each goal.

The synthesis should have an investigated topic that focusses on one or more of the challenges that are included in the scope of sustainable spatial planning in this call (see description of the scope below). In syntheses where it is considered to be relevant, perspectives concerning digitalisation or perspectives on gender, class, ethnicity or other social aspects, are encouraged.

This call sub-category is a collaboration between Formas and Vinnova, who have appropriated specific funding to support a synthesis within the area of Design for Availability, and with the Swedish Energy Agency, who have appropriated funding to support up to four syntheses within the area of energy challenges for vital, sustainable rural development.

Sustainable spatial planning - scope

In this context sustainable spatial planning encompasses all three dimensions of sustainability: ecological, financial and social. This includes challenges for both urban and rural areas, but the project must be clearly associated with sustainable spatial planning. This may include public access to transport, energy, housing and leisure environments that are sustainable, ensuring safety and security for people and communities, improving the health and well-being of citizens and strengthening the circular economy.

Sustainable spatial planning also means that citizens must have access to a non-toxic daily environment with clean air, pure water and noise levels that are not health endangering, that human, economic and social rights are guaranteed, including access to employment, services, nature and cultural environments. More knowledge is needed about the effects that urbanisation has on ecosystem services, as well as about the different tools that can be used to integrate ecosystem services into planning work. People must also

have access to equal rights to freedom of movement and green, smart and safe transport systems, as well as reliable, resource-efficient, renewable energy provision. To be able to guarantee the safety and security of people and society, security issues need to be examined from many different perspectives that encompass the safety of the community and the individual with regard to different types of internal and external threats, but also with regard to issues originating from natural disasters and climate change.

Sustainable management of waste and sustainable chemical use are essential to strengthening a circular economy. This includes risk assessment and risk management with regard to the environment and health, lifecycle analyses and safe and secure drinking water and energy provision. Sustainable consumption and production are also important aspects of a strong circular economy.

Sustainable spatial planning in this context is also a matter of relating spatial planning, architecture or construction and building management processes to issues concerning collaboration in spatial planning processes, dialogue with residents, the safety and security of people, or choices, attitudes and behaviour patterns of consumers and individual households. Syntheses may also examine the challenges, needs and opportunities or consequences for citizens or actors in the light of sustainable spatial planning or issues that create increased knowledge and understanding of governance and policies, collaborative processes or conflict of objectives.

Design for availability

Up to SEK 1.5 million may be granted for a synthesis examining Design for availability in spatial planning, supported by Vinnova. Design for availability is about designing operations, environments and services so that these are accessible and able to be used by all people, regardless of gender, age, background or any disabilities. A society that is inclusive and accessible creates preconditions for participation, independence, parity and equality, which in turn reduces needs for adaptation and focussed support efforts. Designing for availability also means that one starts from and designs with awareness of the variations that exist in the population. The results therefore provide a more fit-for-purpose working and living environment for people with disabilities.

Energy challenges for vital, sustainable rural development

Up to SEK 5 million may be granted for syntheses examining energy challenges for sustainable rural development, supported by the Swedish Energy Agency. There are different prerequisites for sustainable energy in urban and rural areas, respectively, and interest is growing in the area of Swedish rural energy provision in connection to food and raw materials. At the same time there are conflicts at the local level between different goals, groups, short- and long-term objectives, global and local interests, city and countryside, conservation and renewal, and expanding and contracting regions. Sustainable energy solutions should function as levers for sustainability, inclusive and non-discriminatory spatial planning and should be integrated aspects in all spatial planning at local and regional levels to contribute to sustainable societal development.

Methods for synthesis

Great importance will be placed on the methodology for synthesis, as Formas wants to ensure that the synthesis provides an accurate reflection of the knowledge status and knowledge requirements. The Formas definition of synthesis is intended as a process through which several research studies are evaluated for the purpose of summarizing results that concern a particular topic. Syntheses must be based on a systematic review of the literature.

It is important to describe both how the supporting material is selected and how it is analysed. Project applications should clarify the methods that have been chosen, for example by describing:

- Search strategies, search terms and sources.
- Delimitations: which criteria will be applied to exclude and include literature data.
- Quality assessment of the literature.
- Processing of results and conclusions.
- Dialogue with users in any parts of the process.

Each project is expected to result in a scientific article and a report written in Swedish. The report in Swedish should contain:

- Analysis of the knowledge status concerning issues relevant to sustainable spatial planning.
- Identification of knowledge gaps.
- Analysis of why these knowledge gaps are important to address.
- A comprehensive description of the methodology.

The conclusions must be discussed clearly and transparently in terms of importance and validity and in terms of likelihood and reliability.

Call dialogue meeting

Formas will offer one or more meeting events for information, inspiration and matchmaking. These will be announced via the [Formas calendar](http://www.formas.se/en/Calendar/) (<http://www.formas.se/en/Calendar/>).

Last day of application

The call closes on **28 February 2018 at 2 pm**. Generate your application in Prisma preferably well in advance in order to be able to receive help if any problem should occur. Applications can be reviewed in advance at any time during the process. Up until the call closes it is possible to retract the application and make changes to it. Be aware that it is not possible to make any additions to the application after the call has closed.

Your application

What you can apply for

- Funding can be awarded to syntheses that are within the responsibility areas of Formas and are within the framework of the call.
- Funding may be sought for costs associated with the performance of the project, for example to support the salary of researchers, doctoral students and technical personnel.
- The total salary amount awarded for an individual researcher, doctoral student or other personnel may never exceed 100 per cent of a full-time position. This means that additional funding for salary cannot be awarded for researchers, doctoral students or other personnel who already receive grant funding for a full-time salaried position. Formas does not grant funding to cover annual salary increases for project participants.
- Subcontractors are welcome to participate in limited parts of the project. Subcontractors can be other societal stakeholders, such as municipalities, businesses or business associations. Other societal stakeholders may also contribute their time (in-kind). In these cases, such contributions should be described in the application.
- Funding may also be sought for running costs, such as travel, collaborative activities, conferences and workshops, procurement of data or materials, analyses, premises and other related costs (excluding study grants or scholarships for research students).

- Grants can also be sought for costs related to publishing in Open Access journals. Note that researchers who receive funding from Formas must guarantee that their research results will be available through Open Access within six months of publication.

Funding amounts and project duration

- Funding may be sought for up to one year (12 months in total), with the earliest start date being 01/10/2018 and the latest start date being 31/12/2018. The latest completion date is 31/12/2019.
- Funding for systematic knowledge reviews may comprise SEK 1–1.5 million.
- Funding for the entire project will be paid out in 2018. Funding may be allocated up until 31/01/2020 if the project duration must be extended due to extenuating circumstances that are approved by the project leader and the grant administrating organisation.
- Reporting of funded projects must be completed within three months of completion of the funded project duration.
- No joint funding is necessary for this call, but joint funding is welcome in terms of, for example, contributions of time (in-kind).

Prerequisites for application

- To be able to apply for funding the main applicant and the participating researchers must have doctoral degrees.
- Other personnel participating in the project, such as research students, collaborative partners or technical personnel do not need to have doctoral degrees.
- Grants for research projects can only be administered by a Swedish university, university college, research institute, governmental agency that engages in research or other Swedish public organisation that fulfils the [grant administrating organisation eligibility requirements](#) of Formas (find out more about grant administrating organisations below).
- There is no age limit for project participants, but researchers who are full-time pensioners cannot receive grant funding for their own salary.

How to apply

Applications for grant funding are submitted using the application system Prisma. A personal account is needed to be able to create an application in Prisma.

[Link to Prisma](#)

The application may be written in Swedish or English but Formas recommends that the application is written in English. The evaluation panels have an international composition and applications that are entirely written in Swedish will be translated into English before they are given to the evaluation panel for assessment. It is not possible to make changes to the application post-translation. The popular science description must be written in Swedish, but the project summary must be written in both Swedish and English. Please note that the budget specification must always be written in English. A Swedish budget specification will not be sent for translation, but will instead be assessed by the international review panels in its original format.

The application must contain the following information

Basic information

- The number of months the application is intended to fund and the estimated project duration.
- Project title in Swedish and English (200 characters).
- Popular science description in Swedish (4500 characters).
- Summary in Swedish and English (1500 characters each).

Research programme

- Goals and objectives of the project and a background description containing a summary overview of the research area. Here it must also be described how the goals and objectives of the project relate to the Agenda 2030 sustainability goals. When assessed to be relevant, the goals and objectives of the project should also be related to other goals relevant to the National Research Programme for Sustainable Spatial Planning (see [Call background](#) later in this document) (7000 characters).
- Project description, including project design, theory, methods, performance and a plan for scientific publication and publication of reports (max. 15 000 characters).
- Description of the potential societal benefits of the project, focussed communication efforts and interaction with stakeholders. Describe here the groups that the research is relevant for, how these will potentially be included in the research and how the results of the project will be communicated. Describe also how the potential impact of the research will affect different groups in society (8000 characters).
- References included in the narrative text describing the points above are stated in a separate field (4000 characters).

Budget

- Salaries, including social-security contributions. For existing employment positions, the current salary at the time of application (including social-security contributions) must be used for each of the subsequent years. For new employment positions the starting salary at the grant administrating organisation must be used for each of the subsequent years. Note that Formas does not grant funding for annual salary increases.
- State the proportion of activity in the project for all participants, even for project participants who contribute with services in-kind or have other funding for performing the project.
- Specify running costs according to the practice at the grant administrating organisation.
- Specify equipment depreciation costs if relevant for the application.
- Specify costs for premises (if costs for premises are not included in OH-costs) according to the practice at the grant administrating organisation.
- In the project budget “Total budget”, state indirect costs according to the practice of the grant administrating organisation. Indirect costs are considered to be overhead costs (OH-costs). Formas does not permit OH-costs to be included in equipment depreciation costs or costs for premises.
- Budget specification. Here a short motivation for all salary costs and other costs is required. A description of the total budget for the project, including funding from other sources, must also be described. All other costs must be clearly justified, such as participation at conferences, procurement of data, publication through Open Access, etc.

Ethical considerations

The applicant should always state whether the project includes specific ethical aspects. If this is the case, the ethical issues in question and the way they will be treated in the context of the research must be

described. This may be a matter of research that involves the utilization of personal data, for example, or experiments on humans or animals. Read more about ethical considerations in [Formas General Instructions](#).

Classifications

- Select a subject area.
- Select at least one, and at most three, SCB codes.
- Select at least one, and at most three, of the 17 Global Sustainable Development Goals that best apply to the project. For more information on the Sustainable Development Goals, please click [here](http://www.globalgoals.org/) (<http://www.globalgoals.org/>)
- Select at least one, and at most five, key word(s) to describe the project.

Grant administrating organisations

Select your grant administrating organisation and add the project department or unit where the project is based. [Read more about the Formas requirements for grant administrating organisations](#) in [Formas General Instructions](#).

- Approved grant administrating organisations are pre-listed in a menu in Prisma. If your research organisation is not included in the list, contact your organisation. Your organisation must create an organisation account in Prisma.
- A registered application is automatically sent to the grant administrating organisation when the call closes. The administrating organisation then has seven calendar days to sign the application.

Participants

- The main applicant invites participating researchers (i.e. researchers that are considered as co-applicants) and participating administrators (not a part of the project, but persons that help you fill out the application form). Participants must themselves be registered and have their own personal account in Prisma. The main applicant invites participants by searching for their name and e-mail in Prisma (note that correct spelling of names and e-mails is required).

CV

The applicant retrieves the relevant information from their personal profile in Prisma to be added the application. Participating researchers add their CV-information from their personal account in Prisma and should ensure that their CV in Prisma is complete and up to date. The information should include:

- **Education:** Post-graduate (doctoral) education, undergraduate and graduate education.
- **Professional history:** Current position and relevant previous longer-term positions, postdoctoral residencies, research exchange visits relevant to the described research project, as well as any extended period of interruption to the research (for example parental leave, illness, military or public service).
- **Merits and awards:**
 - **Associate professorships.**
 - **Supervision:** doctoral students, postdoctoral students, and exam project students; state the total number in each respective category and provide the names of the most relevant supervisions (max. 10).
 - **Grants awarded in competition,** state the most relevant grants (max. 10).
 - **Prizes and awards,** state the most relevant grants (max. 10).

- **Additional merits, including information about publications:** Here the main applicant and the participating researchers must state the number of their publications over the past 5-year period and the total number of publications if the applicants have been active within the profession for a period longer than five years (max. 800 characters). This must include the following: the number of publications of different types (such as articles in peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, books and other monographs, conference contributions, popular science contributions). Under additional merits other merits relevant to the application may also be listed, such as documented experience of collaboration and research communication (max. 10). **Intellectual property:** For example patents and public access software programs developed by the applicant (max. 10).

Publication list

The main applicant and participating researchers should specify up to ten of their most relevant publications. Be aware that the publications must be linked from the applicants' personal accounts in Prisma.

Evaluation of applications

The applications are evaluated by an international evaluation panel that is composed of active scientists and people with the competence to assess the relevance of the research. Applications are evaluated according to criteria for scientific quality (research question, methods and execution, as well as scientific competence) and according to criteria for societal benefit (the societal benefit of the research question, focussed communication efforts and interaction with stakeholders). The feasibility of the budget is assessed in relation to the structure of the project and the anticipated results.

All of the criteria must be addressed in the application and the applicant is encouraged to clearly and distinctly relate the application to these criteria. The applicant is encouraged to be very thorough with the structure and clarity of the application, as the review will be based solely on the information provided in the application.

Please note that the evaluation criteria described below are specifically structured for this thematically focussed call and are therefore not identical to the criteria described on the Formas website.

Criteria for Scientific Quality

Scientific topic investigated:

- Possibility of scientifically significant results.
- Originality and novelty of the purpose, theory and hypotheses.
- Objectives consistent with the call.

Clarification

The objective should focus on one or more of the challenges that are included in the scope of sustainable spatial planning in this call. Multi- and interdisciplinary approaches should be particularly considered.

Methods and performance:

- Relevance and feasibility of the synthesis methodology.
- Specific and realistic work plan.
- Specific and realistic plan for publication and dissemination of information.
- Coordination of the project and composition the research group.
- Feasibility of a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach.
- Ethical considerations.
- Feasibility of the budget in relation to the structure of the project and the anticipated results.

Clarifications

The feasibility and relevance of the synthesis methods shall be of primary consideration.

Scientific competence:

- Competence to carry out the synthesis.
- Scientific quality of the publications.
- Ability to carry out the project according to the project plan.
- Experience of supervision of younger researchers (postdoctoral and doctoral students, as well as degree project students for applicants who are young researchers themselves).
- Experience of project leadership.
- National and international activities, including projects, networks, commissions, honorary commissions, participation in or organisation of workshops and conferences.
- Interest in, experience and ability to disseminate research and research results to stakeholders or users.
- Strength and competitiveness of the research group.

Clarifications

The quality of the scientific publications must be assessed, taking into account the standards within each scientific field. When several researchers collaborate the scientific competence of the individual researchers and the collective scientific competence of the group is assessed.

Criteria for societal relevance and impact

The potential societal value of the research topic:

- The project addresses important socially relevant issues within the focus area of the call.
- The structure of the project has in a pronounced and relevant manner taken into account the needs of different stakeholders or users.
- The project over the short- or long-term can contribute to the sustainability goals of Agenda 2030, and where relevant to additional goals relevant to the National Research Programme for Sustainable Spatial Planning.

Clarifications

The taking into account of stakeholder or end-user needs can include reference to, for example, directives, different goals and strategies, or discussion with groups in society.

Communication with stakeholders and users:

- The most important areas where an impact can be anticipated have been identified.
- Clear, realistic and appropriate impact goals have been formulated.
- Planned efforts (communication efforts or interaction) to enable the impact of the project have been described in detail.
- Competence of the research group to carry out the planned efforts in relation to the project are described in detail.

Clarifications

Guiding principles for questions the applicant should answer: What efforts are planned to be carried out? Who or what are these directed towards? Are there different efforts for different stakeholders or groups in society? What is the goal of these efforts? What prior experience does the research group have of working with communicating research results and involving, bringing together to participate or engaging stakeholders. Are there other planned efforts or resources for communication that the project will use?

How is the evaluation process carried out?

Formas evaluates the applications in accordance with the instructions and stipulations stated in the respective call announcement text. The research must be of relevance to the sustainable development of society and must be of the highest scientific quality.

[Find out more about the evaluation process in Formas Direct](#)

Decision about grant awards

The Formas Scientific Council will make its decisions about grant funding at the Scientific Council meeting in September 2018. The decisions will be published shortly afterwards on the Formas website. Decisions cannot be appealed.

Call background

The call sub-category “Syntheses” is part of the second call within the National Research Programme for Sustainable Spatial Planning. The first call concerned housing policy for social sustainability.

In 2016 the Swedish Government tasked Formas to introduce a comprehensive ten-year National Research Programme for Sustainable Spatial Planning, as part of the “Collaborating for knowledge” research policy bill. The mandate Formas was tasked with stated that this programme should be based on the different societal challenges faced by urban areas. These include the transition to a fossil fuel-free society and climate change, the sustainability goals of Agenda 2030, the UN New Urban Agenda, as well as relevant environmental goals. Also included are national cultural environment targets, goals for architecture, structural planning and design, as well as the Swedish Government's goals for housing, construction, transport policy, infrastructure, spatial planning and safety, crime prevention efforts, social goals and equality goals. The programme shall also promote universal design.

Support and hyperlinks

- [General Instructions](http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/General-instructions/) (<http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/General-instructions/>)
- [Ethical policy](http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/Ethical-Policy/) (<http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/Ethical-Policy/>)
- [Requirements for grant administrating organisations](http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/General-instructions/Grant-administrating-organisation/) (<http://www.formas.se/en/Financing/General-instructions/Grant-administrating-organisation/>)
- [Prisma](https://prisma.research.se/Start) (<https://prisma.research.se/Start>)
- [Prisma support](https://prismasupport.research.se/) (<https://prismasupport.research.se/>)

Contact information

Responsible Senior Research Officer

Katarina Buhr

Telephone: +46(0)8-775 40 19, +46(0)73-068 60 08

E-mail: katarina.buhr@formas.se

Administrative assistance:

Anna Kuznetcova

Telephone: +46 (0)76-000 24 95

E-mail: anna.kuznetcova@formas.se