



Advancing Scientific Excellence: Funding Programmes and Forthcoming Calls

Swedish Research Council

Julie Oommen

Division of Research Funding/Monitoring Unit

Vetenskapsrådet



The Swedish Research Council

- An agency within the Ministry of Education and Research
- Largest government funder of research - annual funding budget approx. 8 billion SEK (2023)
- We provide funding for researcher-initiated basic research across all scientific disciplines
- We initiate and support strategic initiatives in research
- We work for an efficient research system
- We work to ensure that researchers gain access to advanced research infrastructure
- We analyze the conditions of the research, evaluate research and give the government advice on future research policy
- We coordinate and develop communication about the significance, results and conditions of research
- We promote international collaborative research



Funding research of the highest scientific quality

- Open competition where the best research ideas are rewarded
- Efficient, clearly-defined processes
- Peer review for highest research quality
- Researchers on subject advisory boards, councils and committees





Call for application, assessment, decision

- Around 50 different calls each year
- About 6 000 applications
- Multiple parallel reviewing processes (>20) every year
- 90 review panels
- Approx. 1 000 reviewers





Our types of research funding & grants

Research project support

- Project grant
- Project grant with focus
- Proof of Concept

Support to one or more researchers to carry out a specific research project

Career support

- International postdoc
- Starting grant
- Consolidator grant
- Grant for research time

Support for individual researchers to improve their academic career opportunities

Research environment and Research collaboration support

- Distinguished professors
- Research environment grant

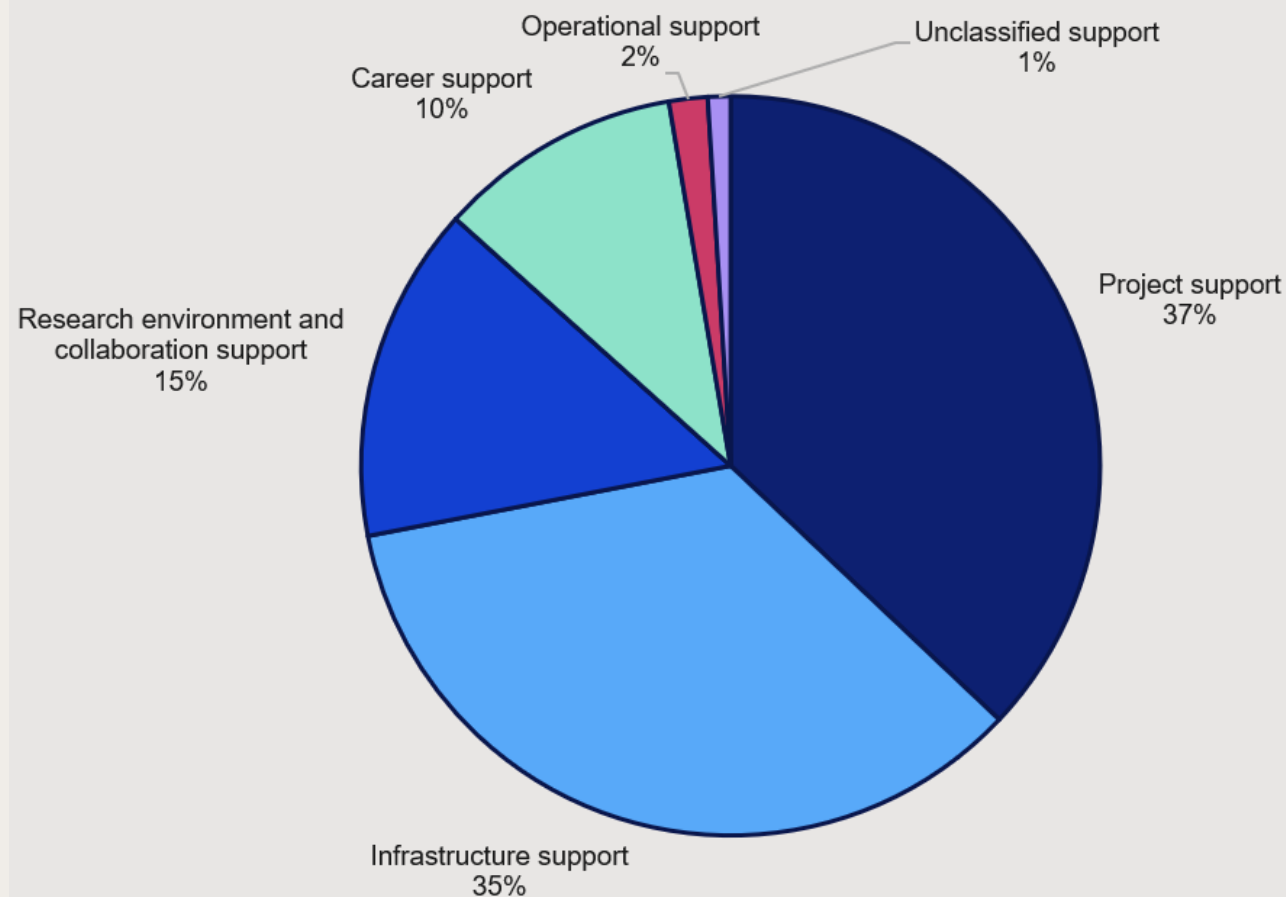
Support to a research objective or a research area in a long-term perspective

- Network grants
- Conference grants
- Exploratory workshops
- Doctoral programmes/graduate schools
- Guest researchers grant
- **Research infrastructure funding** – support for construction, operation and decommissioning of national or international research infrastructures
- **Science communication support** - support for planning, execution and evaluation of communication activities about science



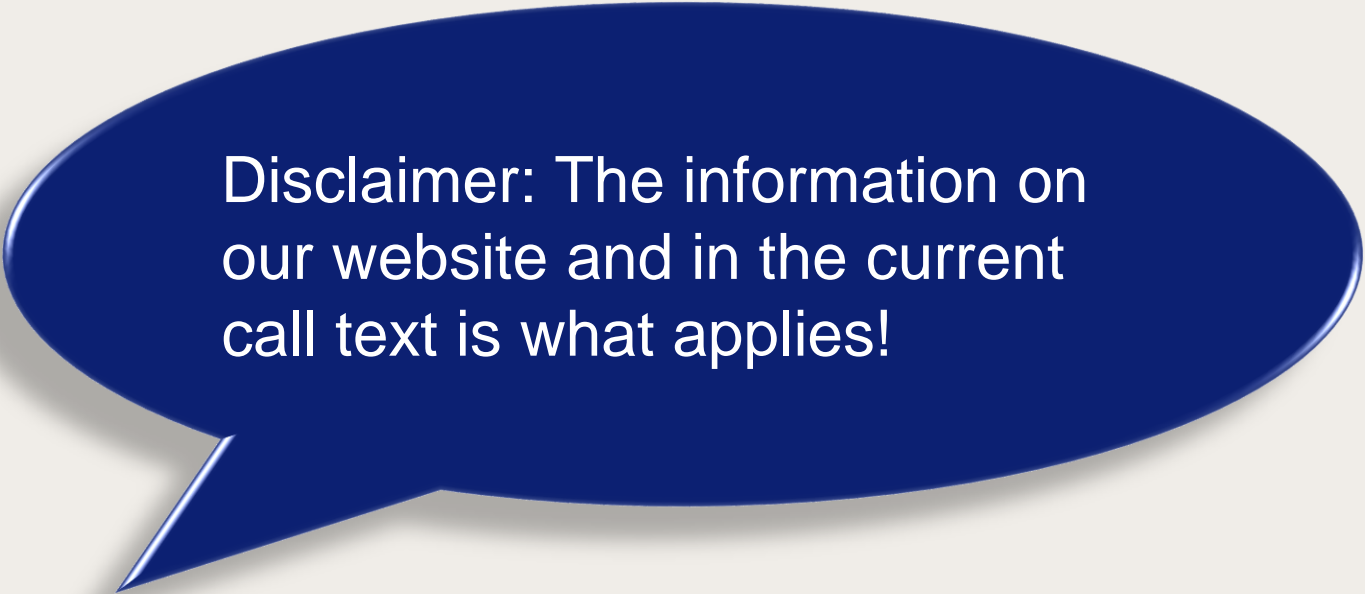
Distribution of forms of grants 2023

- The Swedish Research Council finances just over a tenth of the research at higher education institutes.
- **Distributed research funding 2023:**
SEK 8,1 billion





Calls (an overview)



Disclaimer: The information on our website and in the current call text is what applies!



Project grants

Annual calls

- Artistic research
- Humanities & social sciences
- Medicine & health
- Educational sciences
- Natural & engineering sciences

Project support **open to all researchers/career ages.**

- General grant period is **1-5 years** (refer to specific call for details)
- General funding level **400 000 - 2 500 000 SEK per year** (refer to specific call for details)
- Funding for **any project-related costs**
- Undirected project grants – **open in all disciplines**
- Also specific **calls with thematic focus**, where relevance is a requirement



International postdoc 2025

International postdoc:

- Medicine & health
- Natural & engineering sciences
- Humanities & social sciences
- Educational sciences
- Artistic research

16 September

Career support for researchers up to 2 years after PhD.

- *PhD must be awarded when grant period starts, i.e. possible to apply before PhD*
- Grant period **18-36 months**
- At least **2/3 time must be spent abroad**
- Funding for salary and research expenses, **1 300 000 SEK per year**
- Optional funding for family member, **50 000 SEK per year**



Starting grants

Starting grant:

- Medicine & health
- Natural & engineering sciences
- Educational sciences

Career support **for researchers 2-7 years after PhD.**

- Grant period is **4 years**
- Funding level approx **1 500 000 SEK per year**
- Funding for **any project-related costs**
- **50% activity level & employment** during grant period is required
- Mandatory **support letter from university** (not letter of recommendation!)
- **Not eligible to apply for project grant** in parallel



Distinguished professor grant and Consolidator grant

Distinguished professor grant

- Research environment and collaboration support to individual researchers 12 years after PhD
- Standard grant of SEK 4 million per year for 8 years.
- Can be applied for at the same time as a project grant, but both are not granted

Consolidator grant

- Career support to researchers 7-12 years after PhD
- Standard grant of SEK 2 million per year for 5 years.
- Can be applied for at the same time as a project grant, but both are not granted



Research environment grants

- Natural & engineering sciences
- Humanities & social sciences

*The purpose of the research environment grant is to **create added value from collaboration in larger groupings** than in a normal project, and to create a long-term perspective. The applicant shall represent a constellation of **several researchers from different higher education institutions (HEI) and/or different subjects**, nationally or internationally, who are working towards a common research goal in the long term.*



Doctoral programme grant within mining and mineral research

- Natural and Engineering Sciences
- Humanities & social sciences

30 September

The purpose of the graduate schools is to build and strengthen scientific expertise and the long-term need for competence in the mining and mineral sector.



Doctoral programme grant within mining and mineral research

- **Upcoming call: 27 August - 30 September 2025**
(Specific instructions and details are subject to change pending the government's decision)
- **Strengthen basic research in mining and minerals** (Research and Innovation Bill 2024)
- The **purpose** of the graduate schools is to build up and **strengthen scientific expertise and the long-term need for competence** within the mining and minerals research.
- Should cover **at least one, but preferably several,**
parts of the raw materials value chain. Should contribute to increased sustainability in the mining and minerals sector and may include sustainability research.
- **Research programme:** Objective, Description of research environment/s, Planned educational activities, recruitment basis, Organization and administration, Significance, National coordination, national and international collaboration, Relevance



Doctoral programme grant within mining and mineral research

Upcoming call

27 August - 30 September 2025

*(Specific instructions and details
are subject to change pending the
government's decision)*

Applicant: Organisation. A coordinator of the graduate school at the host organisation shall be invited to be the project leader for the application.

Participating researchers: At least one further HEI shall join the application. One contact person per participating HEI shall be invited as a participating researcher.

Grant period: **4-5 years**

Funding level: **7 000 000 SEK per year** (refer to specific call for details)

Funding for ***costs of implementing a national doctoral programme, including salaries to doctoral students. Grants must not be used for scholarships.***



Other open and upcoming calls (a selection)

- Grant for recruiting international visiting researchers to Sweden
- Network grant for planning future excellence clusters for cutting-edge technologies

01 December

19 August



Finding information

- Upcoming calls 2025!
- Call texts are found when call opens
- "Pre-information" available in some cases

Choose your interest

Filter by year and/or area

vr.se/english/applying-for-funding/calls-and-decisions.html

Calls and decisions

The Swedish Research Council fund research by issuing calls for grant applications in open competition. In order to provide Swedish research with the best possible prerequisites, we fund research infrastructure, both in Sweden and abroad.

All subject areas

All years



Open calls



Upcoming calls



Closed calls



Published decisions



Upcoming decisions

Open calls

Grant for research time in a clinical environment within viruses and pandemics

OPEN CALL | 9 April 2025 - 14 May 2025

Starting grant within viruses and pandemics

OPEN CALL | 9 April 2025 - 14 May 2025

Network grant for collaboration in the area of viruses and pandemics

OPEN CALL | 9 April 2025 - 14 May 2025

Project grant for research into knowledge gaps in viruses and pandemics

OPEN CALL | 9 April 2025 - 14 May 2025

Consolidator grant within viruses and pandemics

OPEN CALL | 9 April 2025 - 14 May 2025

Project grant for cross-sectoral collaboration within medicine and health



Follow the guide for applicants

[Start](#) / [Applying for funding](#) / [Applying for a grant](#) / Guide for applicants

Guide for applicants

In this guide, you will find information on how to prepare for your application and how to fill in the application form in Prisma.

FIRST OF ALL

CREATE ACCOUNT

CREATE APPLICATION

REGISTERING

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Make sure you fulfil our requirements

Read what the requirements are for you to be eligible to apply for a grant. They can, for example, relate to career age, focus, activity level, or collaboration. The requirements are always shown in the specific call text. We carry out checks and will reject applications that do not fulfil the formal requirements for the call.


[General information about our requirements](#)

You are responsible for ensuring your application is correctly filled in

Follow the instructions in the call text and in this Guide for applicants about what the application shall include, and how different sections and appendices shall be designed. It is your responsibility to ensure the application form is correctly filled in, and that you have attached the correct appendices. If an application is not completed according to our instructions, this will be weighed into the assessment.

Follow good research practice when drawing up the application

PDF / PRINTOUT

 [Print](#)

If you have any problem

Prisma has a user manual that describes what to do in most steps.

Cannot find the answer to your technical question? Then you can contact Prisma's technical support. It may take 1 to 2 working days to get an answer.

[Prisma's technical support](#)



Good to know

- The most common question from applicants concerns what you can apply for at the same time or what applies if you already have a grant
- The table and our requirements always apply only to the main applicant and NOT to the participating researchers (if any, such requirements can be found in the call text)
- For example, it is fine to combine undirected project grants and research projects with focus, for different project ideas/purposes
- You can not have funding for the same research idea from another funding organization.

[Start](#) / [Applying for funding](#) / [Applying for a grant](#) / Several grants simultaneously

Several grants simultaneously

If you intend to apply for several grants from the Swedish Research Council in the same year, there are certain restrictions. The same applies if you are receiving a grant from us and want to apply for a new grant.

Grants you can apply for simultaneously

Do you want to apply for several grants from us in the same year? This is possible for certain grants. The basic rule is that you can only submit one application for each research project. But in certain cases, you may submit several applications, for example if they relate to different types of grants or different research ideas. You should always report this in your applications to us.

The table in the link below provides information about what you can apply for simultaneously. In some cases you also need to read more in the call texts to find out the applicable conditions.

What grants may I apply for simultaneously from the Swedish Research

Which grants can I apply for simultaneously if I do not have an ongoing grant during the applied grant period and fulfil all other eligibility criteria?

Please observe that the information in this schedule only applies to the project leader, not participating researchers

Support form	Project Support			Career Support				Research environment and collaboration	
Applying	Project Grant (undirected within ES, HS, MH, NE)	Project grant with focus	Proof of Concept	International postdoc	Starting Grant	Consolidator Grant	Grant for Research Time	Grants for distinguished professor	Research Environment Grant
May also apply									
Project Grant (undirected within ES, HS, MH, NE)	No	Yes, if...	Yes	Yes, but...	No	Yes, but...	Yes, but...	Yes, but...	Read call...
Project grant with focus	Yes, if...	Yes, for...	Yes	Yes, but...	Yes, for...	Yes, for...	Yes, if...	Yes, for...	Read call...
Proof of Concept	Yes	Yes	Yes, if...	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
International postdoc	Yes, but...	Yes, but...	Yes	Read call...	No	No	Yes, but...	No	Read call...
Starting Grant	No	Yes, for...	Yes	No	No	No	Yes, but...	No	Read call...
Consolidator Grant	Yes, but...	Yes, for...	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Read call...
Grant for Research Time	Yes, but...	Yes, if...	Yes	Yes, but...	Yes, but...	No	No	No	Read call...
Grants for distinguished professor	Yes, but...	Yes, for...	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes, but...
Research Environment Grant	Read call...	Read call...	Yes	Read call...	Read call...	Read call...	Read call...	Yes, but...	No
Network Grant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Exploratory Workshop	Yes, if...	Yes, if...	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, if...

Yes, if two different research concepts Yes, but if funded you must choose one of them Yes, for other focus and research concept Read the

Undirected project grant within: ES = Educational Sciences, HS = Humanities and Social Sciences, MH = Medicine and Health, NE = Natural and Engineering Sciences
Clinical Therapy Research, Artistic Research and project grants in international calls are examples of grants with a focus



Information on peer review

- General information on our review process
- VRs principles for peer review and peer review handbooks
- Information on review panels

Swedish Research Council

På svenska Search

[Start](#) / [Applying for funding](#) / [How applications are assessed](#)

How applications are assessed

When you apply for a grant from us, your application is assessed by other active researchers with great expertise in the research field in question. We have clear guidelines for the assessment work, and evaluate the process continuously. The assessment shall be of high quality and be conducted in an objective, impartial and transparent manner.

Evaluation of research infrastructure	→
Review panels	→
Criteria and grading scales	→
Gender equality	→
How we avoid conflicts of interest	→

PDF / PRINTOUT
Print

READ MORE
[Peer review handbooks](#)

Researchers assess researchers – peer review

The Swedish Research Council uses peer review to assess the scientific quality of the applications and the potential of the research. Peer review involves well-qualified researchers within the same or nearby subject areas scrutinising the applications. Peer review is used all around the world, is greatly trusted by researchers, and is considered to be the best way of ensuring applications receive a balanced and fair assessment.

Together with Swedish Research Council personnel, scientific councils, councils and committees put a lot of work into recruiting suitable experts to assess applications. Having a documented high level of scientific expertise is a requirement, and a prerequisite for well-functioning peer review.

How we safeguard the quality of assessment

The Swedish Research Council shall support research of the highest scientific quality within all scientific fields, and ensure that Swedish research is renewed. To ensure this is successful, it is important that the process for assessing applications is systematic and of high quality.

We have eight fundamental principles for ensuring the assessment is conducted within the framework for a sound assessment culture and good research practice.

It is important that the handling of applications is objective and impartial, so that the best research ideas receive funding. All who take part in the assessment process must therefore follow the Swedish Research Council's gender equality strategy and conflict of interest.

The Swedish Research Council handles around 6 000 applications every year, with the help of around 900 researchers.

They are members of around 90 review panels that scrutinise applications within specific areas. In 2021, 17 per cent of all those who applied received a grant from us.



The peer-review process

Evaluation panels comprising active researchers

- 90 panels, 900 researchers
- 5 to 12 members in each panel
- Academic and geographical spread
- International panel members (40%) contribute with an international perspective

Constant turnover of reviewers

- 1 year term, can be extended up to 6 years

Strict guidelines on conflicts of interests, unconscious bias and gender equality to achieve an impartial process





Review panels

- Panel name and responsibility available at call opening
- Ambition to publish the majority of reviewers' names during the call - however, it is affected by the recruitment and decision-making process
- The applicant will suggest review panel, VR will decide the final panel





Evaluation criteria

- The scientific quality of the application is assessed using four basic criteria:
 - Scientific quality of the project (1-7)
 - Novelty and originality (1-7)
 - Merits of the applicant(s) (1-7)
 - Feasibility (1-3)

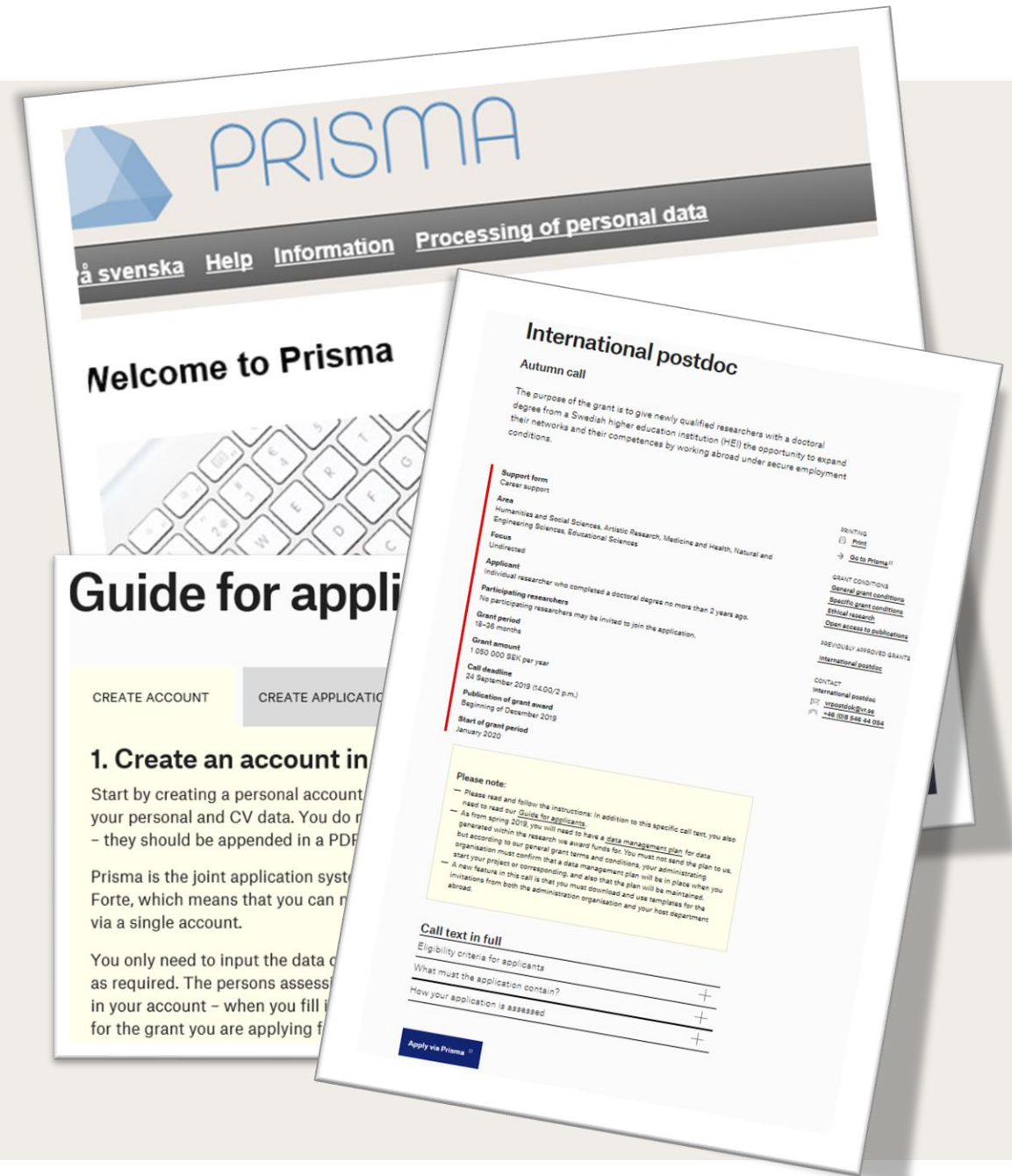
Can be supplemented with special additional criteria, e.g. Relevance, Internationalisation, Research Environment or something else that is relevant to that particular call

- Based on the assessment of these criteria, the review panel then gives the application an overall grade
- For each criterion, there are **guiding questions** to support the panel members' assessment of your application. These can also function as guidance for you when you write your application!
- In the call text you can find "**How your application is assessed**" describing the evaluation process for that specific call.



"What constitutes a successful application?"

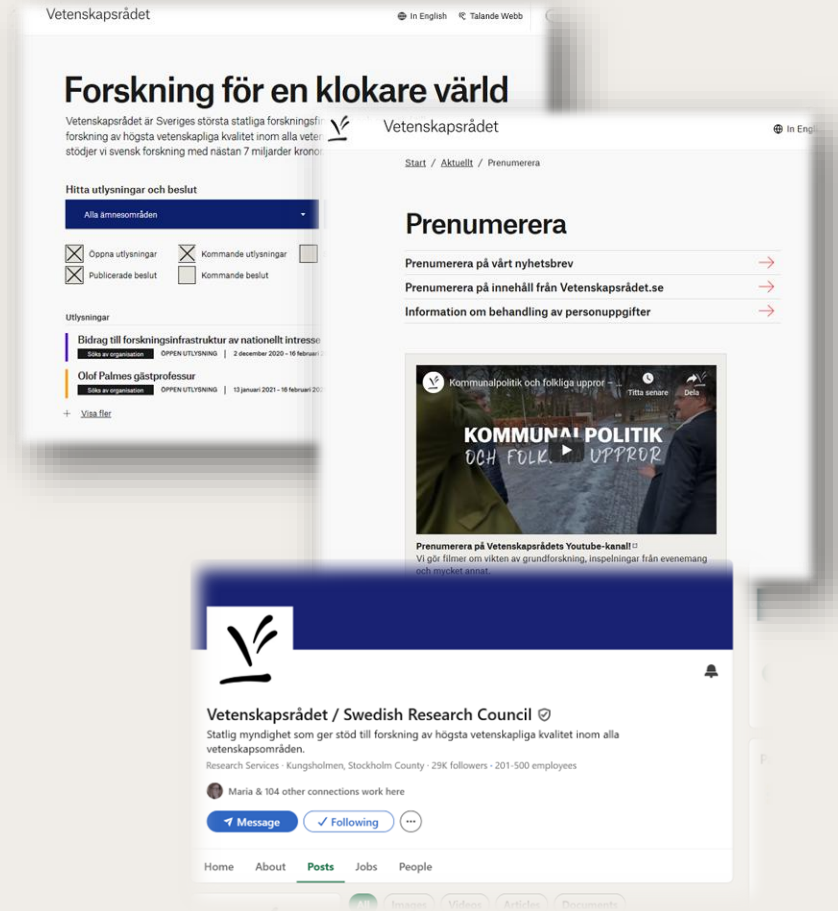
- Read the instructions carefully (including info on how the application will be evaluated) **and follow them**
 - *Guide for applicants*
 - *Call text*
 - *Prisma user manual*
- Allow for sufficient time for preparing the application
 - *Our calls close at 2.00 pm*
 - *"Check and register" well before deadline*
- Ask a colleague to read your application and give advise before submitting it





Contact & more info

- Before the call opens:
 - vr.se: List + pre-information for some calls
 - Previous call text on vr.se
 - Newsletter + web (subscribe!)
 - LinkedIn
 - E-mail: utlysningar@vr.se (only general questions about the call or grant)
- When the call opens:
 - Name of a contact person is available!





Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

julie.oommen@vr.se

gabriella.spiik@vr.se