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STIFTELSEN för
STRATEGISK FORSKNING

Research Institute Doctoral Student 2015

The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research (SSF) announces SEK 20 million in a national call for research institute doctoral students. Each grant in the programme provides funding for research and postgraduate studies for a doctoral student who is employed at a Swedish research institute, in collaboration between industry and academia. The grant runs for four to five years and shall result in a doctorate (Ph.D.). SSF expects to fund eight projects at SEK 2.5 million each (including indirect costs) in this call for proposals.

Introduction

Research institutes play an important role in the creation and dissemination of knowledge and technology in society. According to its statutes, SSF shall foster the development of strong research environments with high strategic relevance, support postdoctoral studies and collaboration between academia and industry, and promote the international mobility of researchers between universities, institutes and companies. SSF has two existing programmes that contribute to these goals: Strategic Mobility (SM) and Industry Doctoral Student (ID). A new programme being launched by SSF, Research Institute Doctoral Student (FID), aims at supporting doctoral students active at research institutes. Calls for grants under these three programmes are planned to be issued annually at intervals of six months (FID) in the autumn and SM + ID in the spring). When the programmes are fully implemented, they will fund some 32 doctoral students active at the 30 or so research institutes in Sweden that pursue research in SSF's main fields: engineering, medicine and natural science.

The purpose of the programme is to contribute to excellent research within SSF's areas of activity and to foster cross-fertilization between academia and industry. This can also lead to greater knowledge of the different driving forces and conditions prevailing in academia and industry.

How the programme works

The programme is aimed at persons who have not yet been admitted to doctoral studies. The doctoral student must have at least 80% employment at the research institute for the entire period of the grant. Two qualified persons shall serve as supervisors for the doctoral student during the period of the grant – one at the higher education institution (HEI) and one at the research institute. The supervisor at the research institute is the applicant (who submits the application and ensures that it meets the requirements) and assumes the role of project leader (responsible for reporting to SSF) if the project is granted funding. The research institute where the project leader is employed is the administering organization (receives and administers the grant). There shall be a steering group consisting of, at least, the two supervisors for the project, who shall be firmly embedded in their respective bodies' line organizations. A co-supervisor can also be appointed at a collaborating company or clinic (if any).

The application shall include a project description defining the planned research. The project description must be formulated jointly by the research institute and the HEI. The project description shall also describe planned ways to facilitate an exchange of knowledge between the

institute and the HEI and dissemination of this knowledge to industry and society, for example the fact that the doctoral student works in both environments, joint seminars, etc. On submission of the application, declarations of intent shall be provided by both the HEI (department head or equivalent) and the institute (research director, department head or equivalent). Both of these parties shall confirm the need for knowledge exchange and new knowledge acquisition, and ensure that the necessary practical arrangements are made for the execution of the project. The parties shall furthermore state that the supervisors have a mandate and time allocated for this purpose.

The institute doctoral student who is the intended recipient of the grant shall meet the requirements for admission to the doctoral programme and be employed at the research institute before the project begins. The doctoral student shall devote the equivalent of four years full-time to the project. Beyond that, up to 20% of the doctoral student's working hours can be devoted to other activities such as departmental duties, if this work is funded by the HEI or a company. During the period of the grant, the doctoral student shall pursue research and her/his postgraduate studies in natural science, engineering or medicine.

The HEI must be Swedish. The institute shall be well-established and must have sufficient competence to be able to both contribute to and benefit from the research findings. The research institute shall be registered in Sweden.

Project collaboration with industry and/or the health care sector is a merit.

The parties are jointly responsible for framing agreements on how IPR-related matters are to be handled.

The Foundation's grant is SEK 2.5 million, which is expected to cover about half of what a doctoral project normally costs, in particular the doctoral student's salary and operating costs. The institute and the HEI are expected to provide whatever additional funds are required for a smoothly functioning project.

The grant may not be used for supervisors' salaries, but solely for costs directly related to the institute doctoral student's project. Representatives of the parties shall attest at the time of application that they are agreed on the total cost of the project and how the costs are to be shared between them. Indirect costs (overheads) may only be paid from the grant up to the equivalent of a surcharge of 35% on the direct costs. The grant may not be used to cover costs for unspecified "bench fees" for the doctoral student.

The grant shall result in a PhD. 25% of the grant will be withheld until a final report has been submitted, including a copy of the PhD certificate, and approved by SSF. If a doctorate has not been obtained when the final report is submitted to SSF, 25% of the grant must be returned to SSF (with reservation for extensions on account of parental leave or illness).

Evaluation criteria

The applications will be assessed by a specially composed evaluation committee consisting of external experts. The following criteria will be taken into account in the selection process:

- The quality of the proposed research project
- Strategic relevance for Sweden
- Mutuality (regarding needs and engagement) in the declarations of intent from both parties, including a professional development plan for the institute doctoral student
- Qualifications of steering group/supervisors

- Relationships: For example, that there are no financial or personal dependencies between the institute, the doctoral student, the HEI and the supervisors or with beneficiaries of the results, e.g. companies.

Instructions

The applicant is a project leader and a supervisor at the research institute. The entire application, including appendices, is filled out electronically at <http://apply.strateresearch.se> and shall include a complete application form consisting mainly of (in addition to what is stated in the portal):

- Research plan
- CV and list of publications for both supervisors
- Declarations of intent from the academic party and the institute describing the need for the applied-for project (signed by a department head or equivalent at the university and the research director or equivalent at the research institute)
- Brief description and required qualifications of a prospective doctoral student (education and experience)
- Strategic relevance for Sweden, including description of how intellectual property rights (IPRs) are to be handled contractually between the parties.
- Budget
- Description of the institute with specifics such as corporate ID number, number of employees, net turnover and activities
- Description of any and all dependency relationships (past or present) between the institute, the doctoral student, the HEI and the supervisors or with other actors and stakeholders in the project.

The application must be written in English.

The deadline for applications is 14:00 hrs on 3 March 2016. The estimated earliest possible project start is 1 September 2016, but not later than 31 March 2017.

Note that all Foundation records are open to the public (offentlighetsprincipen). For this reason, do not send material that may not be made public at the present time, for example because it might jeopardize patenting.

Contact persons at the Foundation:

Henryk Wos, Scientific Secretary. +46 (0)8 50581671
Email: henryk.wos@strateresearch.se

Joakim Amorim, Research Programmes Manager, +46 (0)8 50581665
Email: joakim.amorim@strateresearch.se