

“Ingvar Carlsson Award” Programme for homecoming young post-docs

The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research invites returning post-docs to apply for 6-8 homecoming grants, each of SEK 2-4 million

Background

Out of the around 2000 PhD's that graduate annually in Sweden in natural science, engineering and medicine, it is estimated that some 20 per cent go abroad to acquire post-doctoral training. From a national point of view it is highly desirable that well qualified post-doc researchers return to Sweden and draw upon their international experience so as to initiate their own research. In terms of experience, the transition from a post-doctoral position to that of an independent researcher is a "bottleneck" in the young doctor's academic career, however. The provision of initial financing therefore is an important prerequisite to attract the most promising researchers to set up their own research upon return to Sweden.

Understanding these needs, the Board of the Foundation at a meeting on 14 December 2004 decided to establish a programme for homecoming young post-docs. The programme was named after Ingvar Carlsson in acknowledgement of his contribution as Chairman of the Foundation during the period 1997 – 2002.

Aim

The aim of this new programme is to identify highly qualified returning (or recently returned) post-docs to enable them to initiate independent and innovative research activities in Sweden. The recipients are expected to use the grant to promote their own research profile in a strong research environment, as well as to assemble their own research group and/or to purchase laboratory equipment.

Grant/Scope

The Foundation has allocated SEK 20 million to be distributed among six to eight grants of SEK 2-4 million in total (incl. overhead and VAT). In addition, each individual will also be awarded a personal scholarship of SEK 100.000.

The grant is intended for assembling a research group, creating an independent research profile and/or building a laboratory. The recipient's research profile may be established either independently or within an already existing research environment. However, it may also be used to cover the recipient's own salary for a period of maximum three years. The Foundation anticipates that most of the grantholders will have a four-year research position. In cases where the homecoming grant covers the researcher's salary, the university should guarantee the salary for the fourth year. The Foundation will start paying out grants in January, 2006.

Eligibility

This announcement covers research in all areas relevant to the objective of the Foundation according to its statutes. Thus, the Foundation supports research in the natural sciences, engineering and medicine, its aim being to promote the development of strong research environments of the highest international standards and enhance Sweden's future competitiveness. Important areas presently funded by the Foundation include electronics, information technology, life sciences, materials science, production and process technologies as well as interdisciplinary research integrating these areas.

This announcement is addressed to researchers who are again permanently active in Sweden as of 1 June 2004 at the earliest, and as of 31 May 2006 by the latest. (This means that no applications will be processed from persons who have gone back to research earlier, and no payments will be made to post-docs who will return later than the respective date indicated.) The following criteria apply for eligibility for this programme:

- The applicant must be a young researcher who has received his/her PhD at a Swedish university maximum 4 years prior to the application deadline 9 June 2005 (account will be taken of parental leave or, in the case of MDs, clinical service (AT or ST-tjänstgöring = internship or residency))
- The applicant must have done continuous post-doctoral research outside of Sweden for at least 12 months prior to the date of application
- The applicant must be born no earlier than 1970.

Increased mobility between different universities is desired. Thus, the Foundation gives priority to applicants who place their research at a different department/research group, or choose another established research environment, than the one where the PhD research was performed.

Ambition

Our objective is that young homecoming researchers who receive the grant will contribute to renewal of research at Swedish universities. This type of grant should also facilitate for the head of a university department to engage new researchers for research and teaching, thereby giving the recipients access to resources such as laboratories, services etc.

The Foundation would especially like to encourage women to apply for this grant, in order to increase the participation of women in the programme and thus in the application process.

Selection criteria

The following criteria will be applied in the selection process:

- Scientific quality and potential, reflected in previous research as well as in proposed research
- Originality and innovativeness of the individual as well as of the proposal
- Strategic relevance of research and its importance for Sweden's future competitiveness
- Applicant's international experience and network.

Announcement and selection process

This announcement will be sent to Swedish universities and information will also be published in *Science* and *Nature* (issues of 4 and 10 March, 2005, respectively) in order to

address post-docs presently residing outside of Sweden. The Foundation appreciates any assistance in helping to disseminate this Announcement widely to prospective applicants.

The selection process will be a one-step procedure upon submission of the full proposal. Along with the application, three *open* letters of recommendation should be enclosed: from the applicant's dissertation supervisor, post-doctoral supervisor and from one senior researcher to be chosen by the applicant. The applicant should identify the Swedish university and department of his/her choice. The chosen university department must be able to guarantee financing for the equivalent of at least the fourth year in a research assistant position, should the applicant be awarded a grant.

The entire selection process will be performed by a Selection Committee that will consist of about 15 Swedish members in order to have as broad and qualified competence as possible.

The Board of SSF will make the final decision, based upon the recommendations by the Selection Committee.

Application

A full proposal should include the following:

- Application form
- CV
- List of publications
- Description of dissertation work
- Description of post-doctoral work
- Research plan for the initial three years in Sweden
- Strategic relevance and importance of the proposed research
- Three letters of recommendation

Preliminary time schedule

28 February	Programme announcement
9 June	Deadline for submission of applications
October	Final decision by the Board of SSF
December (early)	Award ceremony (Ingvar Carlsson will present the awards)

Submission of application

The application must reach the Foundation **by 16.00 hrs on Thursday, 9 June 2005 in one original set on paper** (without staples) **and 20 complete sets of copies**. The latter should be printed on *double-sided, plain, punched* paper (in A4 or US Letter size) and *stapled, without* any special covers or binders, etc. The application **must not** be sent by telefax. No additional material will be accepted after 9 June. *Note that this also includes letters of recommendation, as these make up an integrated and open part of the application.*

Further, by the same date, the Application Form and Enclosures must be electronically submitted to applications.icaward@stratresearch.se *as one file* in PDF format (= Portable Document Format only, *no other formats will be accepted*). The subject line as well as the heading of the attachment shall read "ICAWARD, applicant's family name, given name".

Please also note that SSF is subject to the principle of public access to official documents (*Offentlighetsprincipen*). Thus avoid submitting material that should not be made public, e.g. information that could prevent patenting.

Postal address:

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Visiting address for personal delivery, etc:

Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research
(Stiftelsen för Strategisk Forskning, SSF)
World Trade Center
Kungsbron 1, level G7
SE-111 22 STOCKHOLM

*(Note that this different postal code **must** be used if a delivery firm is used!)*

Contact person at SSF

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