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SWEDISH FOUNDATION *for*  
STRATEGIC RESEARCH

**Announcement**

**The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research  
(SSF) announces synergy grants for research in  
Infection biology:**

**Molecular mechanisms in the interplay between  
microorganisms/parasites and their hosts (man,  
domestic animals, plants and forest trees)  
in relation to disease**

The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research announces a total of SEK 200 million in a national call for proposals for problem- or application-driven research projects of the highest international scientific standard with the aim of stimulating interdisciplinary research collaboration within the Infection biology area, of strategic relevance for the Swedish biopharmaceutical industry, clinical medicine and veterinary medicine as well as forest/plant breeding industry.

Selected research projects will be supported by synergy grants (previously denoted as framework grants, "rambidrag") in the range of SEK 4 - 7 million per year (incl. overhead) to be used for salaries, supplies etc. according to the needs of the projects over a period of five years. Funding during the two last years will be dependent upon a successful mid-term evaluation.

**Prioritised area**

All species, including humans, domesticated animals and plants are subject to infection by microorganisms like viruses, bacteria, fungi as well as unicellular and multi-cellular parasites. The pathogens in most cases attack the host using specific molecular mechanisms during colonization and invasion. Examples of such mechanisms are attachment to and interactions with specific cell membrane molecules on host cells and extracellular matrix components; hijacking of endocytic pathways; penetration of microorganisms into host cells to avoid detection; intracellular survival strategies, secretion of microbial proteins interfering with host defenses etc.

Research projects within this call should be directed to elucidate mechanisms in the interplay between parasites and their hosts in relation to disease. Studies on resistance towards antibiotics are not targeted by this call.

## Eligibility

The application must be submitted by a main applicant who should be an outstanding scientist associated with a Swedish university/college or research institute. If the main applicant is active at a research institute, at least one co-applicant must be working at a university. The presumptive project leader must be prepared to assume the scientific responsibility for the project during the whole period of the grant.

In these synergy grants, all proposed projects should be based on reliable interdisciplinary collaboration between at least 2 and maximally 4 senior scientists (ie not PhD students or Postdocs) with different types of relevant complementary scientific expertise, from the same or different research groups. The co-applicants should take active part in the project and their activities should be at least partly financed by the project budget. Applications not conforming to these conditions will not be further treated.

A maximum of 25% of the grant may be used for salary for the main applicant and/or the co-applicants, but only to cover up to a maximum of 25 % of the salary of each applicant. Each applicant may be represented in no more than one application as a main applicant and no more than one application as a co-applicant.

Please note that the main applicant from on-going SSF-projects from the calls "New antimicrobial agents - the role of innate immunity" and "Parasite resistant trees and crop plants" (2010-2014) may not apply as main applicant in this call.

## Application

The application is submitted via the SSF portal at: <http://apply.stratresearch.se>. A complete application must contain, among other data specified in the portal, a full description of the research programme and details of the relevant competence. It should contain a clear account focusing on the strategic significance of the research programme. It is also important that the application presents a clear picture of the resources available and shows that the proposed constellation of research groups will be effective. To get a complete view of all data required for submission it is necessary to consult the portal. Please log on to the portal in due time before the deadline.

## Evaluation

Applications will be assessed by an evaluation committee, including scientists from industry and academy. In a first selection the applications will be judged primarily on their strategic relevance and their scope (as described above). Furthermore, applications that the committee judges are too low in quality or too incomplete to be able to be assessed will not pass this first step. The selected applications will be judged by international experts regarding their scientific quality. The result of the scientific assessment and the strategic value of the applications will then be weighed together by the evaluation committee in order to produce a final proposal on which the SSF board will make its decision.

The applications will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- Conformity to the scope as outlined above
- Scientific quality; originality, strengths, weaknesses, interdisciplinarity, and feasibility of the research plan
- Qualification of the applicants, previous scientific accomplishments, international experience, and networks
- Strategic relevance to Swedish industry and/or society and importance of the proposed research

Justifications for the rejection of proposals (evaluation reports) will be provided only for applications selected for international review.

## Time table

- Last date for applications: **October 1, 2012, 14.00 hrs.**
- Decision by the SSF board: June, 2013 at the latest.

No additional material submitted after the deadline will be considered.

Please note that the Foundation is subject to the Principle of Public Access to Official Records (Offentlighetsprincipen). Thus, applicants should avoid submitting material that they do not wish to be made public, eg information that could prevent patenting.

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