



STIFTELSEN för
STRATEGISK FORSKNING

Strategic mobility, 2014 – Grant for personal mobility between academia and industry.

The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research has allocated SEK 15 million for a strategic mobility programme covering a period of two years. Each grant within the programme covers the salary of a researcher or equivalent person during an exchange service period of four to twelve months in another sector than the one in which the person is currently active. During the exchange period, the visiting researcher shall conduct research, research-based activities or technical development within one of the Foundation's spheres of responsibility.

Introduction

Personal mobility between different sectors in society is an important factor for disseminating knowledge and technology, but also for spreading understanding of the activities pursued in different sectors. The term "mobility" can refer to many different things, for example personal mobility between disciplines, between different universities, between academia and industry, or between different geographic regions, nationally and internationally. Swedish researchers generally have good international contacts and also usually have first-hand experience of working abroad. Mobility between industry and academia is more limited, however. A number of factors contribute to this, but important inhibiting factors are probably conditions of employment and views regarding what kind of qualifications and experience are considered valuable in academia and industry. In the USA there is an established system of leaves of absence, sabbaticals, aimed at stimulating mobility. Very little funding is available in Sweden today for such purposes.

Purpose

The Foundation can be said to be thematically located somewhere between academia and industry, since its mission is to fund research of the highest quality which also contributes to Sweden's future competitiveness. Furthermore, according to its the statutes, the Foundation is supposed to promote "the mobility of researchers internationally and between universities, institutes and companies". The Foundation has decided to issue a call for proposals aimed at increased mobility between academia and industry (both manufacturing and the service sector). The target group comprises well established individuals in academia or industry who can be expected to return to their original activities after a limited period of exchange service in a sector in which the person is not currently active. The purpose of the programme is to increase personal mobility and cross-fertilization between academia and industry and thereby also increase knowledge of the different conditions under which people work in academia and industry.

How the programme works

The programme is aimed at individuals who wish to both acquire and contribute relevant knowledge in another sector and subsequently return to the sector in which they are employed. Both university researchers who do an exchange as visiting researchers in industry and industrial researchers (or the equivalent) who do an exchange as visiting researchers at a university are eligible for this type of program (in other words, not to or from research institutes). During the exchange period the visiting researcher shall conduct research, research-based activities or technical development within one of the Foundation's spheres of responsibility. Applicants should be well established in their current work and should have tenured posts or such appointments that they are expected to be able to return to their original activities (i.e. not short-term employed researchers, persons with temporary positions in industry or the like).

The period as visiting researcher may be spent abroad and it is even possible to bring in a foreign visiting researcher from another sector if a clear explanation is given of how this contributes to the development of Swedish competitiveness.

The duration of the project shall be equivalent to four to twelve months working full-time. The exchange may be divided into different periods, and the grant holder may also work part-time during his/her stay, but not more than for a period of two years. Visiting researchers with part-time appointments of 25% or less (e.g. one day a week) will be accorded lower priority than those who devote more time to the exchange (e.g. half-time for a period of one year or full-time for six months).

The application shall include a project description defining what work will be done during the exchange, which key persons the grant holder will cooperate with and what other funding, if any, is available. At the time of application there shall also be a declaration of intent from both the academic party (department head or equivalent) and the industry party (research director or equivalent). Both of these parties shall confirm the need for the exchange and ensure that the necessary practical arrangements are made for the execution of the project. The application shall also state the conditions of employment for the visiting researcher during the exchange, i.e. whether he/she is on a sabbatical from his/her current post and employed for a fixed term by the host organization, or whether another solution is envisioned.

This has a bearing on which party is to administer the grant. The parties and the visiting researcher are together responsible for framing agreements on how IPR matters and the like are to be handled between them.

The visiting researcher can apply for funding for all of his/her salary during the stay and a small amount for other expenses such as travel, dual residences, etc. The maximum possible single grant amounts to SEK 1.5 million including overheads, of which no more than SEK 100,000 for other costs. Indirect costs (overheads) are only permitted when the host organization is a Swedish higher education institution, regardless of which organization administers the grant (and thereby pays salary). If the host organization is a company, all costs must be specified. By "host organization" is meant the organization where the visiting researcher will carry out the project.

Funds may not be used for purchasing equipment and the like. In the case of university researchers who will do exchange service in industry, part of the grant can be used for repatriation upon their return to academia. The repatriation grant may only be applied by university researchers who intend to do an exchange program in industry for at least 12 consecutive months at least 80 percent of full-time. A repatriation grant may be applied for including overheads, but no more than SEK 500,000.

Evaluation criteria

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

- The visiting researcher's and his/her current research group's qualifications and the visiting research's potential for disseminating and exploiting knowledge between different sectors (e.g. in the form of other persons who participate in and around the project)
- The host environment's potential for meeting the needs of the visiting researcher
- Mutuality (regarding needs and engagement) in the declarations of intent from both parties
- The strategic relevance of the proposed exchange service for Sweden, the project's contribution to the innovation process
- The quality of the proposed project during the visiting researcher's stay
- That there are not financial or personal dependencies between the industrial party and the visiting researcher or between the industrial party and the academic party

Instructions

The applicant is the visiting researcher who wishes to carry out the exchange. The entire application, including appendices, is filled out electronically at <http://apply.strateresearch.se> and shall include a complete application form consisting of (in addition to what is stated in the portal):

- Description of the academic party environment, how it will be strengthened and which key persons and other persons the visiting researcher will be working with or otherwise be involved with
- Description of the industrial party environment, how it will be strengthened and which key persons and other persons the visiting researcher will be working with or otherwise be involved with. Describe the industrial party with specifics such as corporate ID number, number of employees, net turnover and business activities. Description of any dependencies (current or former) between the industrial party and the visiting researcher and between the industrial party and the academic party
- Personal reason for applying to the exchange, and description of the applicant's professional development plan
- Declaration of intent from the academic party and the industrial party describing the need for the applied-for exchange service (written by the department head or equivalent at the university and the research director or equivalent in the company)
- Applicant's CV
- Budget
- Project description

The deadline for applications is 2:00 pm CET on 10 September, 2014.

The earliest project start is 1 January 2015.

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 jeopardise patenting.

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