



*Research that
shapes the future*



BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research, SSF, is an independent research funding body whose purpose is to support research in the natural sciences, engineering, and medicine. The Foundation promotes the development of strong research settings of significance for the development of Sweden's long-term competitiveness. This is done primarily by means of focused efforts, such as funding of a research project over a number of years, and large contributions to leading researchers, with an emphasis on the younger ones.

The Foundation was founded in 1994 by the government. The founding capital was SEK 6 billion. Thanks to good asset management and favorable stock market performance, the Foundation has been able to distribute approximately SEK 13 billion to Swedish research since the start while increasing its capital to almost SEK 11 billion (December 2016).

SSF has decided to give priority to the following main areas during the period up to 2021:

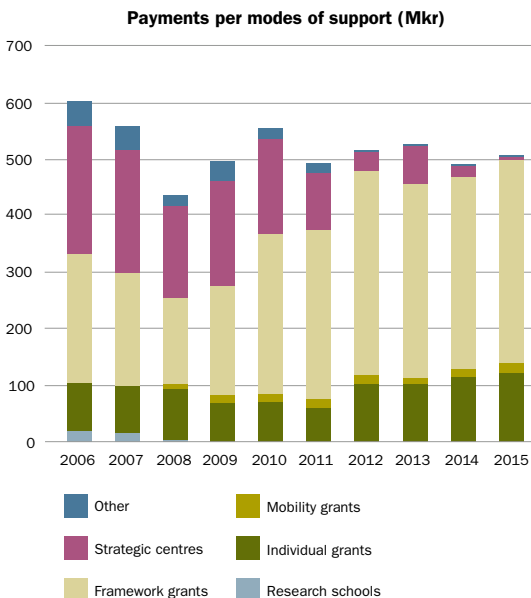
- Information, Communication, and Systems Technologies (ICT)
- Life Sciences with a focus on technologies and Bioengineering
- Material Research with a focus on new and enhanced functionality and production

The Foundation funds about 250 research projects in the form of large targeted grants, known as framework grants, or individual grants to leading researchers.

The Governing Board consists of ten members, two of whom are appointed by the Government and one by the outgoing Board. The others are appointed after nomination by the state research councils, universities and academies (the Royal Academy of Sciences, KVA, and the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences, IVA).

STRATEGY

The research activities may range from basic research to applied research and areas in between. The Foundation



has defined strategic research as research that can be of practical benefit to Swedish industry and society. International cooperation, interdisciplinary, and transboundary approaches and establishment of networks between academia and industry are to be encouraged. Areas that are supported are ones where Sweden plays a prominent role today and ones where Sweden is judged to have the potential to be a leader. Benefit can be assessed from several aspects, such as:

- research whose results can serve as a basis for the development of existing or new companies
- more well-educated graduates who are attractive for employment primarily in industry and society, but also at universities and research institutes
- the ability of research settings of high international standard to attract uniquely qualified researchers and foreign investments to Sweden
- research that serves as a basis for international cooperation, whereby knowledge of interest to Swedish industry can be acquired.

It is assumed that the funded research might yield additional knowledge and expertise that could ultimately be applicable within knowledge-intensive and high-tech companies or other social sectors in Sweden. In this way the Foundation's initiatives can contribute to greater national competence, more jobs, and a sustainable society.

DIALOGUE

The Foundation has an active dialogue with universities and research institutes as well as individual researchers and clients in the private and public sectors. SSF also wishes to promote the dialogue in research-related matters between different sectors of society, academia and industry.

SSF is clarifying its role as a research funding body in a transparent and open process – from planning and calls for proposals via the selection and decision process to evaluation and accounting.

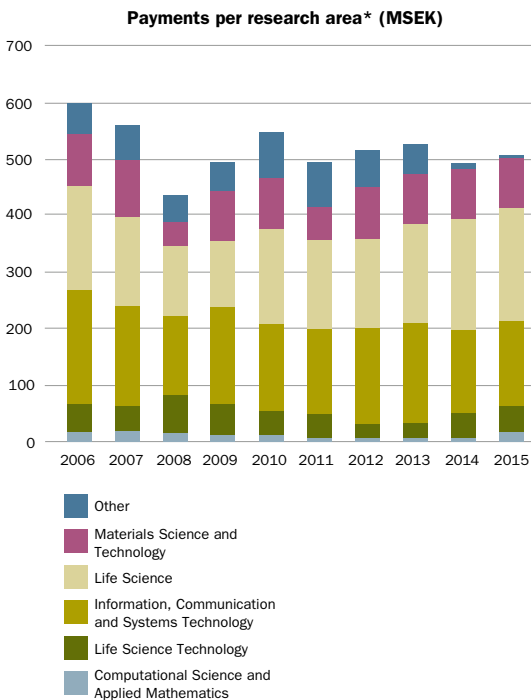
The focus is on disseminating research results that can give rise to innovations or be further developed within related research areas and/or interdisciplinary. The Foundation further expects those who work in the supported activity to disseminate the results of their research on their own initiative.

FORMS OF SUPPORT

We work with several different forms of support, with an emphasis on framework grants and individual grants to progressive researchers. The period of the grant is normally three to six years. The Foundation also has a mobility programme to stimulate mobility between the university world and the business world, as well as an international researcher exchange programme.

Framework grants

These are grants where one or more researchers from one or more research groups collaborate to solve an important research problem within a given area, which is specified in the call for proposals. One of the researchers is the chief applicant. A programme committee consisting of experts from both academia and industry follow and support the projects within the programme.



The Future Research Leaders programme

The purpose of the programme is to identify and support young, promising researchers with leadership potential and give them the funding they need to put together their own internationally competitive research groups. The programme also includes an extensive leadership training.

The Ingvar Carlsson Award

This is a programme aimed at giving homecoming post-docs an opportunity to launch their own independent and creative research careers in Sweden. This programme includes a special leadership training.

Strategic Mobility

The program encourages mobility and covers a person's salary for service in the other sector for a limited period. The exchange can be in both directions, i.e. from and to academia - industry.

Industry Doctoral Student and Research Institute Doctoral Student

Each grant in respective programme covers funds for research and PhD-education for industrial /research institute doctoral, in collaboration between industry / clinic and academia.

Graduate school - Neutron Scattering

ESS, European Spallation Source, based in Sweden is one of the largest research infrastructure projects staged in Sweden. In order to strengthen high class Swedish research throughout the scientific field of neutron scattering SSF finances a graduate school.

Industrial Research Center

A promotion of competence research centers where industry formulate and prioritize the research mission together with research groups in academia. The projects should be system-changing, if not disruptive, beyond develop existing technology.

Research Infrastructure Fellows

Research Infrastructure Fellows is a programme aimed at individuals with unique skills as research engineer. The aim is to develop methods, tools, software, databases, etc., and make them available to a wider audience.

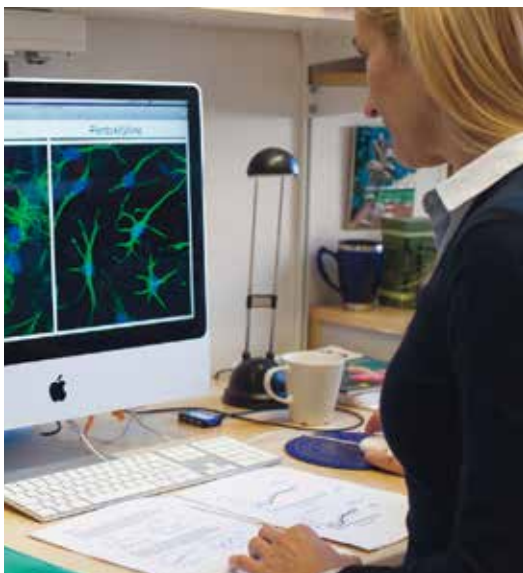
International cooperation

International cooperation is of great importance for maintaining and raising the scientific quality of the research. The Foundation therefore considers it important to promote cooperation between leading Swedish and foreign research groups, as exemplified by a present cooperation agreement with South Korea and Japan.

ORGANISATION AND WORK FORMS

Executive management, secretariat and evaluation committee

The Foundation is presided over by an Chief Executive Director (CEO) answering to the Governing Board. The CEO is assisted by a secretariat of roughly 14 persons



and a number of working groups with Swedish and foreign researchers, as well as representatives from industry and society.

Financial management

The foundation's capital is managed with a reasonable level of risk in a conservative, balanced fashion to ensure a satisfactory return. According to the statutes the Foundation may consume its capital and also be recapitalized.

QUALITY AND RELEVANCE

The Foundation works with strategic action areas and a competitive application procedure in open calls. Review of applications and evaluation of completed research are vital for guaranteeing both scientific quality and strategic relevance. These tasks are performed by internationally leading scientific and industrial experts, whereby the experience is fed back into the strategic planning. The research programmes are evaluated periodically by the academies KVA and IVA.

THE SWEDISH FOUNDATION FOR STRATEGIC RESEARCH

- Supports research and postgraduate studies in science, engineering, and medicine for the purpose of strengthening Sweden's future competitiveness.
- Creates bridges between basic research and exploitation of research results.
- Funds several hundred research projects at higher education institutions – many in collaboration with industry and research institutes.
- Awards grants to progressive research leaders, with an emphasis on the talented young.
- Launches targeted initiatives aimed at such areas as information and communication technology, bioengineering, and materials development.
- Encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, exploitation of research results, use of research infrastructure, mobility between academia and industry as well as between different countries.
- Currently has an annual disbursement volume of about SEK 600 million, moving steadily upward to SEK 1 billion.



SWEDISH FOUNDATION *for*
STRATEGIC RESEARCH