

## Starting grants 2023

### Information about the call

This call for proposals shall contribute to increasing the knowledge in Forte's areas health, working life, and welfare. In total, around SEK 90 million is reserved for the period 2024–2026.

The deadline for applications is 21 March 2023 at 14:00 CET.

Call texts, application forms and instruction texts are translated into English, but in case of ambiguity in the translation, the Swedish versions take precedence.

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## Focus area

The call for starting grants is open to applications within Forte's areas [health, working life and welfare](#). The research that receives funding shall be of high scientific quality and have good potential to benefit society in the short or long term. For more detailed descriptions of the research areas that we support and do not support, see the page [Main and sub areas for the annual open call for project grants](#).

## Grant type

One type of grant is available within this call: starting grants.

By giving junior researchers the opportunity to lead their own flexible project, the starting grant will contribute to promoting establishment and independence in research. The projects are granted either for two or three years.

If you are a researcher at the beginning of your career you can apply for a starting grant to carry out your own research project for up to three years. Unlike the postdoc grant, which referred to a flat-rate amount for a full-time position, you can adjust both the budget and your level of activity in the project when you apply for a starting grant. You can apply for a maximum of SEK 1.25 million per year, and your activity level in the project must be at least 50% of full time.

The flexible grant form allows you to combine your grant with participation in other projects, with teaching or other work. However, the funding applied for may only be used to finance the project sought.

You apply alone, without participating researchers, but a smaller part of the budget can also be used to pay for the work of support staff in the project, such as a doctoral student or, for example, a statistician.

The project can be carried out at a Swedish organisation or university, or at an organisation in another country. Please note, however, that you must be linked to an administrating organisation in Sweden that is approved by Forte.

## Grant limit

Maximum SEK 3,75 million for three-year projects and SEK 2,5 million for two-year projects. Please note that the grant limit includes indirect costs (OH).

Applications exceeding the specified grant limit will be rejected.

## Main applicant and other project participants

As main applicant, you are the project leader and scientifically responsible for the project. The time you set aside for the project (your activity level, i.e., percentage of full-time employment) must be adapted to the task and project realisation throughout the grant period.

Any other participants in the project and their roles are described in more detail in the application. They can be salaried from the project but cannot be included as participating

researchers in the application with their own accounts in Prisma. For these other participants in the project, there is no requirement for a doctoral degree.

## Eligibility requirements

As applicant you are required to hold a doctoral degree at the time of application, issued no later than the closing date of the call. You can apply for a starting grant up to three years after receiving your doctoral degree, counted from the closing date of the call for proposals. In some cases, it is possible to apply for an exception from this requirement, for example if you have been on parental leave or sick leave. [Read more about deductible time »](#)

The main applicant does not have to be employed by the administrating organisation at the time of application but must be employed by the administrating organisation when the project period begins and throughout the duration of the project, unless otherwise agreed upon by Forte and the administrating organisation.

The project leader in the application for a starting grant must have an activity level in the project of at least 50% of full time.

Applications where the activity level is below 50% will be rejected.

## Restrictions

You may only submit one application as the main applicant.

Please note that it is not possible to change the project leader for a granted starting grant.

## The application process

All applications are to be submitted via the [Prisma application and review system](#). The application can be written in Swedish or English.

Before writing your application, make sure the following conditions are met:

- You have created a personal account in Prisma
- You have stored personal data, CV and publications on your account
- Your administrating organisation has an organisational account in Prisma and has been approved as an administrating organisation by Forte. [Read more about Forte's criteria for administrating organisations »](#)

In order for your application to be considered, the final reporting for any previously approved projects must have been submitted. This only applies to grants where the deadline for final reporting has passed. Any previously granted extensions of project duration, and consequently of reporting deadlines, will be taken into account.

For more information on how to fill out the application, see instructions on the [call's website](#).

## The review process

Once you have submitted your application, it is handed over to Forte's review panels for assessment. The review panels are composed of Nordic researchers and Swedish society representatives. Based on their assessment, Forte's board makes the final decisions on which applications will be granted.

To be eligible for funding from Forte, applications must be of high scientific quality, societal relevance and feasibility. Applications are assessed against our general assessment criteria and general requirements. The assessment is an overall assessment that weighs up all the criteria and requirements and relates them to the call and its objectives. Key to the assessment is how the applicant has justified the various choices made in the application (of the research question(s), theory, method, etc.).

In cases where two or more applications are judged to be equivalent in the overall assessment, the review panel may give priority to applications from applicants of the under-represented gender. By under-represented gender, Forte refers to the gender that has a lower success rate in relation to the number of applicants. In the second instance, the review panel may give priority to applications that contribute to a greater variety of research questions and themes among the funded projects.

[Read more about Forte's processes for assessment and final decision »](#)

## Review panels

In the application process, you will be asked to choose appropriate panels for your application. However, we reserve the right to allocate the application to another panel.

The following panels are available:

- Health
- Working life
- Welfare

## Application requirements

All applications must meet the following requirements in order to receive funding. The extent to which these requirements are met is part of the overall assessment by the review panel.

- The research must be relevant to Forte's areas.
- The application must address and justify if a gender perspective is applicable or not to the research and how this is taken into account in the research.
- The research must be conducted ethically, and the application must address the ethical aspects of the research and how any ethical issues will be handled.
- The applicant's doctoral degree must not be older than three years vis-à-vis the closing date of the call, unless there is deductible time.

## Assessment criteria

The various criteria are given equal weighting in the assessment. The extent to which these criteria are met is part of the overall assessment by the review panel.

### *Scientific quality*

- Purpose, research questions, theoretical framework and background  
How well and coherently the purpose, research questions, theoretical framework and background of the research are described, justified and grounded in previous research.
- Study design, empirical material and methods for data collection and analysis  
How well and coherent the research design, methods and empirical material are described and justified, as well as the appropriateness of these in relation to the purpose of the research, research questions, and the potential for relevant results.
- Originality  
The originality of the research and its potential to develop new knowledge (including novel methods, theories and/or data).
- Multidisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary approach, where applicable  
The relevance of a multidisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary approach, and how this is considered and justified in the application.

### *Societal relevance and utilisation*

- Relevance to the wider community  
The societal challenges to which the research relates, how the research intends to help address these challenges, and how well the need for the research is described and justified to the research stakeholders, the general public and/or the wider community.
- Benefit for the wider community  
How the research is expected to lead to short or long-term benefit for the research stakeholders, the general public and/or the wider community, and how this benefit is intended to be promoted.
- Collaboration with the wider community, where applicable  
How inclusion in the research process of actors affected by the research (such as users, patients, practitioners, professions, policymakers) has been considered and justified in the application, and, where applicable, how well this has been formulated.
- Communication of research results  
Whether dissemination of research results is planned for all relevant audiences, as well as the soundness of planned communication (such as in academic and/or popular science articles, books, seminars, workshops, training materials).

### *Feasibility*

- Quality of the work plan  
The clarity and reasonableness of the work plan (including the schedule) in relation to the needs for conducting the research.
- Competence of the project leader

Competence and skills of the project leader (based on previous experience and achievements) in relation to the needs for conducting the research.

- Staffing and budgets  
Reasonableness of budgeted costs and planned activity level for conducting the research.

#### *Special criteria for this grant type*

- Choice of host department: Is the host department relevant and established within the applicant's research area? For example, areas of expertise, strong environments, access to infrastructure, valuable collaboration partners etc.
- The potential of the grant period to contribute to the applicant's competence development regarding research or other activities within Forte's areas of responsibility.
- Expected benefits of the grant period for the development of the research area.

#### **Guiding questions**

These guiding questions are based on Forte's general assessment criteria. The purpose of the questions is to provide support for applicants in preparing their applications and to assist Forte's reviewers in the assessment process.

#### *General requirements*

- Is the research within Forte's fields and the focus of the call? [Read more about Forte's fields of research »](#)
- Can a sex and gender perspective add anything important to the research, and if so, has this been appropriately included?
- Is the research described in accordance with the principles of research ethics and good research practice and have any ethical issues been appropriately addressed? [Read more in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity \(vr.se\) »](#)

#### *Scientific quality*

- Is the need for the research well justified and grounded in existing research?
- Are the research questions well formulated and well substantiated?
- Are central theoretical perspectives and concepts well described and well justified?
- Are the research methods clearly described and are they best suited to answer the research questions posed?
- Have potential problems with the research methods (such as systematic errors) been taken into account as well as measures for dealing with these?
- Does the research have the potential to generate important findings and significantly advance existing knowledge in the field of research? Are theories, data, methods, etc. used in a novel way to answer the research questions?
- Would the quality of the research benefit from a multidisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary approach, and if so, is such an approach used effectively?

*Societal relevance and utilisation*

- Are the research questions, outcome measures and central perspectives relevant to actors affected by the research (such as users, patients, practitioners, professions, policymakers)? Is this relevance well described and justified?
- Is there a well-described plan for how the research will be of use in the wider community and for the actors affected by the research?
- Will actors affected by the research be involved in conducting it? Is there a well-described plan for how and in which parts of the research process collaboration will take place? Does the project budget include costs for this collaboration?
- Is there a well-described plan for how the research will be communicated, both within academia as well as to the wider community and relevant stakeholders?

*Feasibility*

- Is the work plan realistic and suitable for conducting the research and reaching the set goals?
- Is it clear from the application that the project leader has the competence needed to conduct the research and reach set goals?
- Are the budget and the planned activity levels realistic and suitable for conducting the research and reaching set goals?
- Have potential problems or risks associated with conducting the research been described well, and is there any plan for dealing with them?

*Guiding questions regarding the special criteria for this type of grant*

- How does the planned project and the chosen host institution contribute to the implementation of the application, the individual's establishment and career development?

**Collaboration between research and society**

Forte is commissioned by the government to increase collaboration between research and society. The aim of collaboration is to contribute to higher quality and relevance in research. Forte assesses how collaboration will be implemented with relevant stakeholders in all calls. However, collaboration may not be applicable in all research and is therefore not an explicit requirement in Forte's annual open call for starting grants.

Collaboration can be part of one or more parts of the research process. The more parts of the research process that relevant stakeholders are involved in, the higher the level of collaboration. Collaboration may, for example, take place if the stakeholders are involved in an advisory group/reference group tied to the project or as members of the project team. However, there is no fixed model or set of tools and techniques for collaboration but is rather driven by principled positions and values.

Collaboration can be divided into different levels depending on the degree of involvement in the project. Only involving stakeholders as study object and contributing with data does not meet the requirements for collaboration in research.

In the research projects where collaboration is included, the application should contain a description of the different approaches that are being considered and the process for involving stakeholders in the research project.

### **International research collaboration**

Forte is positive towards international research collaborations. Forte's area of responsibility covers complex societal challenges in which international research collaborations can provide important contributions. The starting grant can be used for research at Swedish organisations, but also has a clear internationalization perspective where both shorter exchanges and longer stays at international research providers are encouraged. [Read more about how Forte assesses applications where parts of the research are to be conducted abroad »](#)

### **Additional cost supplement for accompanying family members**

When staying abroad, Forte will grant additional cost supplement for accompanying partners, as well as for children under the age of 19 for whom you have an obligation to provide. If your application is granted funding and you qualify for the additional cost supplement it is calculated according to principles set up by the Swedish Agency for Government Employers and it is thereby attributed to the cost situation in the specific country. [Read more about the Swedish Agency for Government Employers guidelines about additional cost supplement »](#)

You shall not include the additional cost supplement in your stated budget. Forte will contact you if necessary, after a decision if further information is needed. Decisions on additional cost supplements will be made in autumn 2023. The additional cost supplement is tax-free and should not generate indirect costs (OH).

### **Open Access**

By accepting grants from Forte, you as a project leader also accepts Forte's guidelines for publication with Open Access. [Read more about Forte's guidelines for publishing with open access »](#)

Forte does not cover costs for Open Access publication within the framework of individual research grants. Therefore, costs for such publications should not be applied for. In the Swedish context there are several agreements for publication which mean that no direct costs for the project should arise, if the organisation to which the article author belongs to is covered by the agreement. Such publications are prepaid by the organisations through the agreements. The universities' libraries normally provide support regarding these issues. In cases where costs for Open Access publishing are included in the application, these will be deducted from the budget.

### **SweCRIS**

Forte transfers information of issued grants to SweCRIS, a national database on grant-funded research set up at the request of the government. [Read more about SweCRIS »](#)



## **Schedule**

**The call opens:** 24 January 2023, 10.00 CET

**The call closes:** 21 March 2023, 14.00 CET

**Forte's board decides on funding:** 16 June 2023

**Decisions are published:** 19 June 2023

**Project start:** 1 January 2024

## **Contact information**

If you have any questions about the call or how to fill in the application form, please contact [etableringsutlysning@forte.se](mailto:etableringsutlysning@forte.se).

Forte has compiled the most frequently asked questions and answers regarding the application process. [Read more about Questions and answers about applying for grants from Forte »](#)