

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of stylized human figures. Each figure is composed of simple geometric shapes and is arranged in a grid. The figures are light purple and set against a darker purple background. The overall effect is a dense, textured pattern.

**FORTE**

Swedish Research Council for  
Health, Working Life and Welfare

# STRATEGIC AGENDA 2015–2018



# Vision and strategies for Forte's activities in health, working life and welfare 2015–2018

FORTE WORKS ON behalf of the government as one of six research councils. The tasks of the agency are to fund and promote research of the highest scientific quality in health, working life and welfare, and to meet society's need for research in these areas. Forte's mandate is also to identify knowledge gaps and evaluate research. Collaboration with the research community, other agencies and relevant stakeholders in the community is another key task.

Forte's focus areas overlap and feed into each other. The research issues covered by the agency's mandate are often multi- and cross-disciplinary and tend to concern several sectors of society. The research consequently has to be subject-specific, multi- and cross-disciplinary and cross-sectorial.

The government's Research and Innovation Bill 2012/13:30 identified the following social challenges:

- Changes in the population structure
- Legitimacy in welfare systems, including health care
- New increasing expectations – increased costs
- Inequality – low level of inclusion

An international perspective is to be taken when tackling these challenges. Research funded by Forte is expected to result in long-term, knowledge-based advances for individuals and society as a whole. Greater integration of gender equality will be sought at every level.

Major social challenges over the coming period will require both increased knowledge and a realignment of research. This relates in particular to:

- Growing gaps between social groups, working conditions, unemployment, and issues of migration and integration
- Living habits and lifestyle patterns
- Equality in health; mental illness and high levels of sick leave
- A sustainable working life and an inclusive labour market, against the backdrop of globalisation and an ageing population
- Organisation and management within welfare systems and increasing people's participation in society

The board of Forte has decided on a Strategic Agenda for 2015–2018. This strategy covers the agency's activities within:

- Research and development
- Collaboration and communication of research and its results
- Efficient and transparent processes and systems

It is our hope that the Strategic Agenda will be of interest to everyone who, in one way or another, is affected by Forte's research and its results.

Stockholm, March 2015



*Martin Ingvar*  
Chairman of the Board



*Ewa Stålldal*  
Director General

## Forte's mandate

The Swedish parliament and government decide on the direction that Forte takes. This is governed by ordinances, bills and appropriation directives. The agency is also assigned specific commissions by the government. Forte is a government agency under the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, with responsibilities in the areas of health, working life and welfare. In 2013 the mandate was expanded to also include research within care sciences. The Research and Innovation Bill 2012/13:30 also stresses that Forte shall support innovative, applied research and contribute to greater knowledge of the mechanisms for successful implementation, which means long-term research into the way research results can be put to use and translated into concrete practices.

### **Forte's operations are governed by:**

- Instructions for Forte – Ordinances SFS 2007:1431, SFS 2013:422
- Forte's appropriation directive
- Government assignments – Commissions decided by the government, in addition to the appropriation directive
- Research and Innovation Bills
- The Budget Bill

## Forte's vision

Through research of the highest scientific quality, we contribute to increased knowledge that paves the way for sustainable social development, with a view to achieving:

- Good and equal health
- Inclusive and sustainable working life
- High and constantly improving welfare

### **Forte has the following strategies for achieving this vision:**

1. Funding basic and needs-driven research of the highest scientific quality.
2. Stimulating multi- and cross-disciplinary research that meets core social challenges.
3. Developing collaboration and participation in research.
4. Supporting international research collaborations.
5. Evaluating research and its effects, and identifying areas of research.
6. Developing forms for more effective use of research results through active communication and collaboration.
7. Running an operation that has quality, transparency, equality and efficiency as its defining features.
8. Being an expert authority on research in the fields of health, working life and welfare.

# 1

## STRATEGY 1: FUNDING BASIC AND NEEDS-DRIVEN RESEARCH OF THE HIGHEST SCIENTIFIC QUALITY

Forte shall provide research funding for projects, programmes and research environments through both basic and needs-driven research of high international quality.

### Priority initiatives

- Promote and support the development of knowledge by funding basic and needs-driven research of high international quality, with the available funding being sought in competition.
- Develop operational plans that provide a good balance between open and targeted calls for proposals.
- Strengthen Forte's national coordinating role in several research areas.
- Push for an equality and gender perspective to make inroads in research.
- Ensure that a high proportion of the peer reviewing is conducted by experts from other countries.



# 2

## STRATEGY 2: STIMULATING MULTI- AND CROSS-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH THAT MEETS CORE SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Forte shall support multi- and cross-disciplinary research that could affect policy and practices, in order to meet core social challenges.

### Priority initiatives

- Initiate and fund multi- and cross-disciplinary research that could affect policy and practices in key social areas.
- Continuously develop criteria for assessing social relevance.
- Develop the forms of funding to strengthen applied research.

# 3

## STRATEGY 3: DEVELOPING COLLABORATION AND PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Strengthen and further develop methods that promote collaboration and participation in the research funding process.

### Priority initiatives

- Stimulate the involvement of professionals, users and other social stakeholders in calls for proposals.
- Engage experts from relevant areas of society in the review processes.
- Develop criteria for assessing collaboration in the preparation and evaluation work.
- Strengthen the collaboration with other research councils.



# 4

## STRATEGY 4: SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

Research funded by Forte shall help to create added value and benefit with regard to global social development, and to increase Sweden's competitiveness.

### Priority initiatives

- Enable more researchers to increase their involvement in international collaborations and networks.
- Draw on and develop the research collaborations already established between universities and research teams in different countries.
- Increase Forte's activities and collaborations on research funding in the international arena, primarily within the EU, but also with countries with which Sweden has bilateral partnership agreements.



## **STRATEGY 5: EVALUATING RESEARCH AND ITS EFFECTS, AND IDENTIFYING AREAS OF RESEARCH**

Evaluations and knowledge overviews shall provide an expert assessment of the situation in Forte's particular fields. In collaboration with researchers and other stakeholders, Forte shall maintain a dialogue on the need for research.

### **Priority initiatives**

- Draw up annual plans for the monitoring and evaluation of research funded by Forte.
- Develop forms for monitoring and analysing the effects of research funded by Forte.
- Develop systematic and ongoing dialogue with social stakeholders in order to actively identify new research needs.



## **STRATEGY 6: DEVELOPING FORMS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS THROUGH ACTIVE COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION**

Forte shall be a forum for dialogue and collaboration, providing a bridge between research and practice. Through collaboration and communication, Forte shall actively contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and to long-term knowledge building.

### **Priority initiatives**

- Develop new forms and arenas for interactive communication, dialogue and collaboration concerning research results.
- Stimulate continuous work on improving practices by ensuring that new knowledge is disseminated, mediated and put to use more quickly and in new ways.
- Compile research results in an easily accessible way.
- Initiate research programmes to increase knowledge of the mechanisms for successful implementation.
- Be an active collaborative partner in national knowledge development.
- Contribute to increased contact between researchers and social stakeholders.



# 7

## STRATEGY 7: RUNNING AN OPERATION THAT HAS QUALITY, TRANSPARENCY, EQUALITY AND EFFICIENCY AS ITS DEFINING FEATURES

Forte shall be an agency that is efficient and that develops transparent administrative systems. Forte shall, furthermore, promote integration of equality into all its activities, with the aim of achieving the equality policy objectives.

### Priority initiatives

- Develop efficient, transparent and compliant review processes for research funding.
- Ensure that the peer reviewing is transparent and based on clear quality criteria.
- Ensure that the administrative systems and operational processes support Forte's goal of contributing to research of highest scientific quality.
- Ensure a high degree of expertise on gender perspectives throughout the process of research funding.
- Develop Forte's structures and processes for equality, equal treatment and diversity within all the agency's operations.
- Develop clear sustainability objectives.
- Lead the way on employees' work environment, development and well-being.



# 8

## STRATEGY 8: BEING AN EXPERT AUTHORITY ON RESEARCH IN THE FIELDS OF HEALTH, WORKING LIFE AND WELFARE

With a high degree of credibility and integrity, Forte shall provide the government and other relevant stakeholders with current and quality-assured knowledge.

### Priority initiatives

- Develop an ongoing and active dialogue with the government on research-related issues.
- Improve procedures for environmental scanning of Forte's research areas.
- Create a network of experts that Forte can use in its dialogue with the government and other stakeholders.
- Strengthen Forte's analysis work.

FORTE, the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare, funds and initiates research that promotes people's health, working life and welfare.

Forte allocates SEK 570 million in research funding each year. Other key activities include analysis and evaluation, work on increasing national and international exchanges, and communication. Forte is a government agency under the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.



[www.forte.se](http://www.forte.se)