Implementation Research 2020

Information about the call

This call for proposals shall contribute to increasing the knowledge within the field of implementation research. In total, around SEK 75 million is reserved for the period 2020-2024.

The deadline for applications is 6 February 2020 at 14:00.

Focus area

It is of the utmost importance that social activities are characterised by the highest possible quality and efficiency: that people receive adequate care when they are ill, that work environments are properly designed and that the conditions for children's learning in school are as favourable as possible, to give a few examples. However, the shortcomings that exist today are so great that they entail a huge waste of resources and unnecessary human suffering.

One reason for these shortcomings is that research results are not put into practice to the extent that they should be. A common definition of implementation research addresses precisely this, that it is about *"the scientific study of methods to promote the systematic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice, and, hence, to improve the quality and effectiveness of…"* (Eccles and Mittman, 2006). The goal is that, if there is evidence of how something can be done better, this knowledge should be disseminated all the way to the activities where, for example, the individual teacher, nurse or social worker encounters citizens and their changing needs. It also demands that research takes its starting point in the complexity of operations, where many different and not infrequently contradictory values and goals must be considered.

This is related to another part of the implementation problem, namely that it is not a question of a simple transfer of knowledge from research to practice, but that one must consider the context and that it plays a role in *how* knowledge is generated. It is possible to remove some of the barriers to implementation by designing and conducting research projects in collaboration between researchers and different stakeholders, such as decision makers, professionals and users.

A third type of problem is that activities such as schools, healthcare and social care are complex and changing. Many problems are multifactorial and lack unambiguous evidence for specific initiatives. From this problem, another field of research has emerged, *improvement research*. It takes its point of departure in a problem and its present state and adopts a multidisciplinary approach. The aim is to achieve quality improvements, often at the system level.

Another type of implementation issue is generally studied as *policy implementation*, where the focus is on obstacles and requirements for the implementation of political and

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other management decisions, including the implementation of policies. This includes questions raised about whether organisations are appropriately structured in terms of governance and control, whether there are relevant resources and sufficient knowledge in the organisation, and how collaboration, for example between different professions, affects the conditions for successful implementation.

In summary, the knowledge base needs to be strengthened around several parts of the implementation problem. In this call for proposals, the ambition is to support research that, taken together, can tackle all parts of the complex problems described above, with the aim of enhancing the quality and efficiency of social activities. In this way, the use of society's resources can be improved while promoting the welfare of individuals. Here are some examples of relevant issues that have been identified:

- How can end-users and different stakeholders best be involved in the implementation process and how does this affect implementation outcomes?
- Which local and contextual factors impact implementation processes and their outcomes?
- How can the management's role in facilitating organisational change be highlighted?
- How should goal and value conflicts be managed in order to avoid implementation problems?
- What dimensions of power are there in implementation and what role do they play in successful implementation?
- What role does the existence of different interests and professional norms play, and can they facilitate or constitute obstacles in the implementation process?
- How can studies be designed that integrate knowledge from implementation science, improvement science and research on policy implementation?
- What types of outcomes are most relevant to capture during implementation and in what time frame should they be studied?

This call for proposals, which is Forte's first in this area of research, welcomes applications in all Forte's areas of responsibility, health, working life and welfare. We would like to see an interdisciplinary approach in the applications, as implementation research is being conducted in various disciplines and promoted by collaboration. In order to qualify for a grant, it is a requirement that the implementation problem is the primary object of study in the application.

Grant types

In this call, there is only one grant type, project grant. The terms and conditions, grant limits, and eligibility requirements can be found below.

Only one application per main applicant is allowed.

Project grant

Project grants are grants for individual research projects. The grants are approved for three or four years.

- **Grant limit for project grant:** There is no maximum limit for this type of funding, but the budget must be explained in the application. Forte grants an average of about SEK 1.3 million annually in project funding.
- **Eligibility requirements for project grant:** To apply for a project grant you must have completed a doctoral degree no later than the date of the call closing.

The application process

All applications are to be submitted via the [Prisma application and review system](). Before writing your application, make sure the following conditions are met:

- You have created a personal account in Prisma
- All participating researchers have created personal accounts in Prisma
- Each participating researcher has stored personal data, CV and publications on their accounts
- Your administrating organisation has an organisational account in Prisma and has been approved as an administrating organisation at Forte

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 till fill out the application, see instructions on the call's website.

The review process

The applications are assessed by a review panel composed of international researchers and Swedish society representatives. Funding decisions are made by Forte's board.

Since applications are reviewed by international experts, your application should be written in English (except for fields where Swedish is specifically requested). If the application is written in Swedish, the quality of the assessment may be compromised. Forte is not responsible for the quality of any translations.

Forte's assessment criteria

Scientific quality:
- Purpose, research questions, theoretical framework, background and originality
- Study design, methods for data collection and analysis
- Interdisciplinary and/or multidisciplinary approach
- Gender and diversity perspectives in the content of the research

Relevance:
- Relevance in relation to societal needs, Forte's areas of responsibility and the focus area of the call
- Engagement with end users
- Utilisation and communication of research results

Feasibility:
- Work plan quality
- Research competence of project leader and research group
- Account of any previous own research in the area
- Staffing and budget, assessed on reasonableness

Guidelines on how Forte handles applications where part of the research is to be carried out abroad

- 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.
- Forte's grants can be used to finance research where certain parts are carried out in other countries. However, the research shall be initiated and led from Sweden or be a clear part of the collaborative research.
- Applications involving international collaborations are assessed against the same criteria as other research applications and by the same review panels.
- In assessing research applications, the reviewers in Forte's review panels shall assess if any foreign section of a project brings added value to a project or is a prerequisite for a project with, for example, a global or comparative approach.
- It is the main applicant's responsibility to: find out how his or her administrating organisation stands on financing research where certain parts are carried out in other countries; and, find suitable collaboration procedures in each specific case.
- It is the grant's administrating organisation, i.e. the main applicant's home institution in Sweden, that determines and is responsible for, if necessary, appointing foreign personnel or paying for activities or services carried out in other countries.

Open access

Results from research funded by Forte shall be published with open access. Read more about Open Access.

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.

Time plan

Deadline for applications	**6 February 2020**
Forte's board decides on funding	**20 May 2020**
Project start	**1 July 2020**