Applied welfare research 2021

Information about the call

Within this call for proposals you may apply for four types of grants: projects grant, programme grant and grant for international postdoc - incoming and outgoing postdocs.

In total, around SEK 160 million is reserved for the period 2021-2026.

The deadline for applications is 9 February 2020 at 14:00.

Focus area

Forte is responsible for a national research programme for applied welfare research. The research programme aims to promote client and practice-oriented research in the field of applied social services. Client and practice-oriented research is based on issues that are relevant in regard to the needs of social services and clients and which can lead to benefits and usability for clients, social services activities and society as a whole. This can include research about how social services operate, results, and effects from a client and user perspective that can provide a basis for the development of social services. The initiative aims at strengthening collaborations between research and practice and increasing the participation of users and those close to users. (Read more under "Co-production between research and practice".

The research that is funded shall fulfil the requirements of high quality and preferably encompass several different disciplines and scientific competencies. Forte welcomes various forms of scientific approaches, both qualitative and quantitative (mixed-method studies are welcomed, for example combining qualitative methods as a complement to controlled randomised studies).

The focus of the call is based on eight priority areas. They are presented in more detail in the programme's strategic agenda. We also refer to the analysis conducted by Forte and SBU regarding social services-related research needs from the perspective of users and practitioners. Applications within this call are to focus on one or more of the following priority research topics (please note that these areas overlap, so one application may focus on several areas).

1. **Effects of interventions**. There is a need for more intervention research that evaluates the effects of the interventions used in social services based on individual-oriented outcomes. Research is needed on both existing interventions and the development and evaluation of new initiatives. The social aspects of interventions need to be highlighted, such as methods for interpersonal communication, creating relationships and approaches. There is also a need for additional research regarding the cost-effectiveness of different interventions.

2. **Methods for needs assessment for individuals.** Research on methods for investigating, assessing and describing individuals' problems, situation and need for

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interventions. There is a need for both quantitative research and research with a qualitative approach that investigates interpersonal communication, interactions and the creation of relationships, and how this impacts the assessment.

3. **Early/preventive measures of the social services.** More knowledge is needed on the effects of the preventive, early and outreach measures of the social services. In addition to the individual and group perspectives, the research area also includes community-based social services. There is a need for research on the effects and benefits of social services' involvement in community planning to help prevent social problems and contribute to a good social environment.

4. **Implementation and change management.** Research is needed on methods for translating new knowledge into practice as well as knowledge on how the organisation can be arranged to create a working culture centred on learning and quality improvement. There is also a need for research on methods for systematic follow-up, such as development and research on planning and follow-up tools, both for the social services' core activities and for treatment activities.

5. **Coherent service provision initiatives.** Research on coordination in the interface between the social services and, for example, healthcare services, schools, different authorities and civil society. The research needs to evaluate the effects that coordination will have for the users. There is also a need for research on cooperation between municipalities and within local social services along with socio-economic aspects relating to coordination.

6. **User participation.** It is important to develop and evaluate methods based on the users' needs and to organise the work and working methods in the social services based on a user perspective. Research on methods for creating participation and influence, as well as the effects and consequences of user involvement. The user perspective is also an important aspect in research within the other priority research topics.

7. **Digitalisation and welfare technology.** Research on welfare technology to develop working methods, processes, organisation and interventions in the social services. The area covers research on ethical and legal aspects of welfare technology as well as health economics research on the effects on digitisation and welfare technology.

8. **Non-profit and entrepreneurial providers of social services.** Research on how changes to the social services and the division of responsibility in the form of privatisation affect the users, the quality and content of the services and the cost trend. The conditions for society's governance and control of this field are important research issues, as is the question of how the information to users and relatives should be organised and provided.

Co-production between research and practice

Research that has been financed by the programme is to be planned and conducted in collaboration with relevant target groups, for example: professions, user and interest organisations and/or users and clients. This requires a more explorative approach, as the project is developed in collaboration with several stakeholders. The application must contain a description of the process and how co-production will be achieved in the various parts of the research process:

- The design of the study (or intervention)
- Data collection
- Data analysis[1]
- Interpreting[1]
- Dissemination of results
- Implementation

The more parts of the research process that stakeholders are involved in, the higher the level of co-production. It is important to note that co-production results in increasing the quality and relevance of the research project. Co-production may, for example, take place if the parties are involved in an advisory group/reference group tied to the project. Read more about the principles of co- production in research here.

In order to meet the requirements for practice and client-oriented research and co-production, applicants need to demonstrate the following:

- the research question is a priority for these groups
- the outcomes are important for clients and users
- clients and users will be involved in the research process, and
- the costs this will entail have been calculated and included in the project's budget.

Similar principles are to be applied if the research will primarily be conducted with practitioners or decision-makers, or other relevant stakeholders.

Grant types

Four types of grants are available within this call. The terms and conditions, grant limits, and eligibility requirements for each type of grant can be found under the respective headings below.

Only one application per grant type and main applicant is allowed. However, applications for different grant types cannot refer to the same project.

! *Note that the maximum amounts below include indirect costs. Applications exceeding the specified maximum amount will not be considered. This is not applicable for project grants with no specified maximum amount.*

Programme grant

Programme grants aim to strengthen applied welfare research on a long-term basis and enable the development of research environments within the topics stated above. This effort will enable research groups to address new issues and process them for a longer period. Forte particularly welcomes applications from programmes that aim to strengthen intervention research and build up methodological competence and method development within intervention research for social interventions. Research programme must be based on the questions and needs of the profession and users/clients. The research projects must therefore be conducted in collaboration with social services, e.g. through regional

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[1] Co-production on data analysis and interpretation can for example include discussing the results and conclusions with the participating stakeholders to receive their reactions and opinions. Researchers can then use this information in their continued work – i.e., as a form of quality assurance.

support and collaboration structures, local R&D units, managers and staff. The programmes should be interdisciplinary in nature and in the application the international connectivity of the research group shall be outlined as well as the composition of the group in terms of both established and more junior researchers. The programme plan shall include a clear description of how the research results are intended to be utilised within the social services.

- **Grant amount:** 4 million per year for six years.
- **Eligibility:** To apply, you must have obtained a doctoral degree no later than the date of the call closing.
- **Grant-specific requirements:** The applications should relate to interdisciplinary collaboration between at least two research groups with complementary focus, and it should be clear how the programme's interdisciplinary collaboration creates added value.

Project grant

Project grants are grants for individual research projects. Research projects must be based on the questions and needs of the profession and users/clients. The research projects must therefore be conducted in collaboration with social services, e.g. through regional support and collaboration structures, local R&D units, managers and staff. Applications may be submitted for a fourth year for complex and comprehensive research projects such as intervention studies, as well as for implementation and follow-up. An explanation justifying the need for a fourth year must be included in the application.

- **Grant limit for project grant**: This call welcomes applications for project funding for two, three, or four years. Forte has allocated a total of about SEK 54 million over a four-year period for project funding. 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.

International postdoc

International postdoc aims to increase international researcher mobility and cross-border research collaboration. It also provides an opportunity for junior researchers to further develop their competence and research careers. International postdoc is intended to enable researchers in Sweden to spend their postdoc period at a research institute abroad, and to enable researchers in other countries to do their postdoc at a research institute in Sweden. The research project must be based on the agenda's priority areas.

Please consider the environment! Minimise planned travels, consider attending meetings via digital options and, if possible, use means of transportation other than flying. Also, be sure to follow the authorities' recommendations and guidelines for reducing the spread of covid-19.

Incoming postdoc grants

Incoming postdoc grants are intended for researchers abroad who wants to spend their postdoc period in Sweden. For this grant, you apply alone and cannot invite participating researchers. The grant covers two years. At least two thirds of the project time must be spent in Sweden.

- **Eligibility for international postdoc – Incoming.** To apply for an incoming postdoc grant, you must have obtained a doctoral degree between 9 February 2019 and 9 February 2021. If you obtained your doctoral degree before 9 February 2019, you can deduct time for e.g. parental leave or illness. Instructions regarding this can be found below in this document. You are not eligible for this grant if you have carried out a majority of your main occupation (work, studies, etc) in Sweden for more than a total of 12 months during the last three-year period. Shorter periods, such as holidays, do not count.
- **Grant amount for international postdoc – Incoming.** The grant has a fixed amount of SEK 2 300 000 (1 150 000/year). In addition, you may apply for a grant for any accompanying family members of SEK 50 000 per person and year. Eligible accompanying family members are partners and minor children.

International Postdoc – Outgoing

Outgoing postdoc grants are meant for researchers in Sweden who wish to spend their postdoc period abroad. The grant is administered by a Swedish administrating organisation. For this grant, you apply alone and cannot invite participating researchers. The grant covers two years. At least two thirds of the project time must be spent in the country chosen for the postdoc period. Look to constellations in international research environments that are relevant to the focus of the call.

- **Eligibility for international postdoc – Outgoing.** To apply for an outgoing postdoc grant, you must have obtained a doctoral degree between 9 February 2019 and 9 February 2021. If you obtained your doctoral degree before 9 February 2019, you can deduct time for e.g. parental leave or illness. Instructions regarding this can be found below in this document.
- **Grant amount for international postdoc – Outgoing.** The grant has a fixed amount of SEK 2 300 000 (1 150 000/year). In addition, you may apply for a grant for any accompanying family members of SEK 50 000 per person and year. Eligible accompanying family members are partners and minor children.

Repatriation grant

Outgoing postdocs will have the option of applying for a repatriation grant (returning grant). The purpose of this grant is to provide researchers who return to Sweden with time and an organisational setting to apply for future research funding in Sweden, apply for jobs outside of academia or the possibility of following up on ideas, results or networks from the postdoc project. The repatriation grant can be applied for when approximately one year of the postdoc period has passed. More information regarding this will be posted in September 2021 at the earliest.

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. [Forte's criteria for approving 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 till fill out the application, see instructions for each grant form 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
- Sex and gender 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

Guiding questions

Applications will be assessed based on the respective evaluation criteria, which are in turn based on guiding questions. The guiding questions are presented below.

Scientific quality

<u>Research questions</u>

- Has the need for the research been explained? Is the scientific uncertainty described based on existing research? Are the project's research questions well described and well founded?
- Are the central concepts well defined and theoretically coherent?
- To what extent can the project increase knowledge about the functioning, results and effects of social services? To what extent can the project result in improving initiatives, support, measures or organisational aspects within social services that ultimately result in improvements for social services' target groups?
- Are there sex and gender perspectives in the content of the research, if this is applicable?

<u>Methodology</u>

- Is the methodological approach the best suited to answer the project's research questions based on given conditions?
- Is the project's methodology well described and well founded? Have potential problems/pitfalls been taken into account in the methodology or research process, and how they can be handled? Where relevant (e.g. intervention studies), is the handling of potential biases described during the research process and the processing of results?
- Does the project have the potential to significantly advance the research area? For example, are theories, data and methods used in an innovative way to approach the scientific issue?
- Does the project have an interdisciplinary and/or multidisciplinary approach, if this is relevant?

Relevance

- Has it been made sure that the research questions are relevant to social services and relevant target groups?
- Does the project have the potential to increase knowledge of the functioning, results and effects of social services?
- Does the project link in to one or more of the programme's priority research areas?
- Does the project have the potential to improve initiatives, support, measures or organisational aspects within social services that ultimately result in improvements for social services' target groups?

- Is there a clear plan describing how the research results are to be communicated, both in practice and academia, and utilised?

Collaboration/co-production with representatives of social services, professions, users and other stakeholders in the research process

- How has the project been established and accepted within social services and with other relevant stakeholders? Are there documents to support collaboration/co-production (for example in the form of a letter of intent)?
- How and in which parts of the research process (study design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, dissemination and implementation) does collaboration/co-production with practice and/or user/user organisations or other relevant stakeholders take place?
- Have all the important perspectives/stakeholders relevant to the research project been included? Is the choice of perspective explained?
- What are the different perspectives/stakeholders to contribute with and what mandate/role/responsibility do they have? Are the roles and mandates clear?

Feasibility

- Is the project's timetable, planning and budget realistic and appropriate, and the design and choice of approach adequate for the project's conduct and expected results?
- Are adequate resources available for the research project, including supervision and possible equipment?
- Are materials, methods, models, and, if applicable, patient and/or user cohorts sufficient and well adapted to the hypothesis or the scientific questions?
- How strong are the applicant's qualifications and competence in relation to the research area and previous research environment? Does the research group have previous experience and competence in conducting client- and practice-oriented research?
- Does the applicant have sufficient clinical and scientific experience, expertise, independence and scientific networks to carry out the project?

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.

Deductible time

If you are applying for a type of grant with special career length requirements, you may apply for an exemption due to deductible time. The deductible time should have occurred after the doctoral degree was completed.

Acceptable reasons for deductible time are parental leave, work as labour union or student union representative, military service or illness (personal illness or care for an ill relative). Note that we do not accept other employment, unemployment, or vacation as deductible time.

Confirm your deductible time by sending a certificate to forte@forte.se no later than 16 February 2021. Your e-mail should specify the reference number of your application (available in Prisma after the application deadline, meaning that your application should have a reference number on the morning of 10 February 2021). For parental leave, a certificate from Försäkringskassan must be submitted. In special cases where this is not possible, a certificate from the employer can be submitted instead. It is important that you check the box for deductible time in the application form, indicating that you are submitting certificates separately.

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

The call closes	9 February 2021
Forte's board decides on funding	May 2021
Project start	1 July 2021