

## Children's and young people's mental health 2022

### Information about the call

This call for proposals shall contribute to increasing knowledge about children's and young people's mental health. There is one type of grant available within this call, so-called "project grants." In total, SEK 70 million is reserved for the period 2022-2025.

*The deadline for applications is 5 April at 14:00 CEST.*

### Focus area

Forte has been commissioned by the Swedish Government to conduct a ten-year national research programme on mental health. Among other things, the programme will focus on research regarding the mental health of children and young people, preventive and early interventions for mental health problems, suicide prevention, and coordinated interventions for person with severe psychiatric problems. The programme's research is expected to increase understanding of why mental problems are on the rise in society and to develop methods, interventions and treatments to promote mental health, prevent and reduce the extent of mental problems and various psychiatric disorders and alleviate the consequences for those who still suffer from these afflictions.

The programme's first call focuses on children's and young people's mental health, (young adults are also included). The mental health of children and young people has received attention in recent years and is now seen as one of the great societal challenges of our time. There is a general perception that mental problems among children and young people has increased in recent years, but there are difficulties in making comparisons over time and between different groups. More knowledge is needed about the prevalence and causes of children's and young people's mental problems and various psychiatric disorders. More knowledge is also needed about interventions that promote children's and young people's mental health and about how treatments for children and young people with psychiatric disorders can be improved.

The funded research must meet high quality requirements, address identified research needs, and preferably include several different disciplines and scientific competencies. Furthermore, the research must be based on a child and youth perspective and a gender equality perspective. The research should take into account Sweden's commitments regarding human rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the implementation of Agenda 2030 and Sweden's public health policy goals. The call is intended to contribute to increased knowledge about children's and young people's mental health, and applications within this call should focus on one or more of the areas described below.

### **Prevalence and distribution regarding wellbeing, mental problems and psychiatric disorders among children and young people**

In this focus area, research is desired that can contribute to in-depth knowledge of the prevalence of wellbeing, mental problems and psychiatric disorders among children and young people, both in general as well as in different groups. We also welcome studies of the underlying explanatory factors and driving forces. There is also an opportunity to apply for funding for the establishment or further development of longitudinal studies.

### **Interventions to promote the mental wellbeing of children and young people**

The first years of a child's life are important for their future mental health. Inequalities in health already exist among younger children, due to socio-economic factors in the family. Important arenas for promotional interventions include preschool/kindergarten, school, leisure and the home, where children spend most of their time. The promotion of mental wellbeing entails giving children and young people an increased opportunity to experience wellbeing in their lives and overcome life's difficulties by enabling them to balance their emotions, have good social relationships, and develop their inner potential. Promotional and preventive interventions can refer to interventions at the group and population level, for example in school and preschool/kindergarten and interventions aimed at parents or at defined target groups, such as newly arrived immigrants.

### **Prevention and early interventions for children and young people's mental problems**

Interventions and methods for preventing mental problems in children and young people can refer to interventions at the group and population level, e.g., in school, but can also refer to individual-oriented interventions such as early interventions in primary care, social services or school, e.g., with young people in contact with student health services. Examples of mental problems may include depression, restlessness, anxiety, angst, and sleep disorders.

### **Interventions for treatment regarding children and young people with psychiatric disorders**

In this context, "children and young people with psychiatric disorders" refers to children and young people who meet the criteria for a psychiatric diagnosis, e.g., those with a neuropsychiatric disability, depression or psychotic illness. Interventions can be conducted at both the individual and group level and include curative and palliative treatments and interventions carried out within the context of child and adolescent psychiatric services, social services and primary care. Coordinated interventions conducted jointly by, e.g., schools, social services and child and adolescent psychiatric services are also desired.

### **Collaboration/Co-production between research and practice**

Research that is being funded in this call must when it is relevant be planned and conducted in collaboration with relevant target groups, for example: professions, user and interest organisations and/or users and clients. If collaboration / co-production is not relevant for the planned research project, this must be justified in the application. The

application should when it is relevant contain a description of the process and how collaboration/co-production will be achieved in the various parts of the research process:

- The design of the study
- Data collection
- Data analysis
- Dissemination of results
- Implementation

The more parts of the research process that stakeholders are involved in, the higher the level of collaboration/co-production. It is important to note that collaboration/co-production results in increasing the quality and relevance of the research project.

Collaboration/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.

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

- the research question is a priority for these groups
- the outcomes are important for users and practitioners
- clients and users will be involved in the research process, and reasonable 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 decision-makers, or other relevant stakeholders.

Forte recognises that it can be difficult to specifying precise methods and approaches for collaboration/co-production when the application is written as these should be developed in dialogue with those who are to be involved in the project. However, the applicant should be able to describe the range of approaches under consideration and the process by which users, practitioners, and children and young people will be involved in agreeing the final methods and approaches for collaboration/co-production. [Read more in the NIHR guidance on co-producing a research project »](#)

## **Grant types**

Project grants are available within this call. The terms and conditions, grant limits, and eligibility requirements can be found below.

Only one application per main applicant is allowed

Please note that all grant limits are including indirect costs (OH). Applications exceeding the specified grant limit will be rejected.

## **Project grant**

Project grants are grants for individual research projects. Research projects must be based on the questions and needs of the profession, users and children and young people. The research projects must when it is relevant therefore be conducted in collaboration with professions, user and have a child and youth perspective. Applications may be

submitted for a fourth year for complex and comprehensive research projects such as intervention studies, longitudinal 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:** This call welcomes applications for project funding for two, three, or four years. 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:** To apply for a project grant you must have completed a doctoral degree no later than the date of the call closing. If you are already a project leader for a Forte-funded project, this presents no obstacle to apply in this call, but the connection between the project for which you are applying for a grant and other projects must be described in the application.

## 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. [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 the 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
- 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*

- 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?
- 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? 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?
- Are there sex and gender perspectives in the content of the research, if this is applicable?

### *Feasibility*

- Is the project's timetable, planning and budget realistic and appropriate, and the design and choice of approach adequate for the project's conduction 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 applicant have sufficient experience, expertise, independence and scientific networks to carry out the project?

#### *Relevance*

- Has it been made sure that the research questions are relevant to Forte's field of research and the focus of the call?
- Is the project relevant to policy and/or practice, and in what way have the applicants demonstrated this (beyond the fact that more knowledge may be important)?
- Is there a clear plan describing how the research results are to be communicated and utilised, both in policy and/or in practice and academia?

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

- How has the project been established and anchored with professions, users and with other relevant stakeholders? If this is not relevant to the project, is there a reasonable justification?
- If collaboration/co-production is relevant, are there documents to support collaboration/co-production (for example in the form of a letter of intent)?
- If relevant 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? Is the choice of collaborative partners justified? Are there clear roles and mandates for possible collaboration/co-production with relevant stakeholders?
- Have all the important perspectives/stakeholders relevant to the research project been included? What are the various perspectives intended to contribute? Is the choice of perspective explained?
- What are the various perspectives/stakeholders intended to contribute, and what mandates/roles/responsibilities do they have? Are the roles and mandates clear?
- Does the project budget include reasonable costs for collaboration/coproduction, such as costs and fees to clients and users?

#### **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. The expected results must also be relevant to and possible to utilise in Swedish conditions.

- 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.

### **Plan S and open access**

Results from research funded by Forte shall be published with open access. [Read more about Forte's guidelines for publication with 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 opens:** 16 February 2022 at 10:00 CET

**The call closes:** 5 April 2022 at 14:00 CEST

**Forte's board decides on funding:** October 2022

**Decisions are published:** October 2022

**Project start:** 1 November 2022