



LUNDS
UNIVERSITET

2025-09-20

SRA Collegium

Call for proposals: Seed funding for emerging research topics.

Lund University supports the SRA Collegium's initiative to announce a call for seed funding aimed at supporting emerging and innovative interdisciplinary research topics for the university's Strategic Research Areas (SRAs). A total of 6 MSEK has been allocated for this call, which also aims to foster novel collaborations among the SRAs.

We now invite applications for seed funding for projects starting in 2026. Target group for this call is Principal Investigators (PIs) from the SRAs at Lund University.

The first submission deadline is on 24 November 2025 to the leadership of the main applicant's primary SRA, which is tasked to rank and select the proposals within the specific SRA. The final deadline for submission (done by the SRA leadership) is on 12 January 2026 to the SRA Collegium office represented by Pernille Andersson, Section for Research, Collaboration and Innovation, Research Services (see below for more information).

Aim and targeted outcomes

The aim of this call is to stimulate and accelerate collaborative inter-SRA projects that may lead to new multidisciplinary and strategic directions. The projects should address questions of strategic importance and be enabled by new collaborations between SRAs, for example by leveraging capabilities developed in one SRA to address breakthrough problems identified by another. A desired outcome is the creation of new collaborations with the potential to lead to major, joint projects, for example by developing preliminary results for major proposals. Projects with the aim of developing cooperation with partners outside of Lund university (including industry) can also be proposed for seed funding. It is possible to apply for money for new or existing research infrastructure (including support for staff) within a collaboration.

Ranking criteria

The projects applying for seed funding must always be of high scientific quality and novelty. In the evaluation the following criteria will be considered:

1. Novelty of the collaborative plan (new collaborations are to be prioritised).
2. Strategic importance of the proposal and adherence to the call: How the project addresses new important questions of strategic importance that need to be tackled by utilising resources and competences developed within different SRAs.
3. Quality and feasibility of the research plan: The proposal includes a clear timeline with milestones, including a timeline for possible recruitment, and contingency plans for work requiring development or implementation of technical approaches that are new to the applicants.
4. Likelihood of a future development: How the results of the project will be used to create new directions (e.g., a major proposal).
5. Commitment to the project: (i) The level of the PIs' commitment to the project, (ii) How the SRAs will strategically support the targeted new research direction (to be described in support letters; see below Outline of the proposal).

General conditions

- The call invites teams of at least 2 PIs (max 3-4) from at least two different SRAs to submit proposals. One of the PIs will serve as the main applicant.
- Projects will be awarded up to 2 MSEK each, to be spent over a period of two years.
- The projects should start between April 1 and August 31, 2026.
- If a project is planned to run for longer than two years, the SRAs need to budget accordingly and guarantee funding for the remaining project period.
- The main applicant is awarded funds when the project has been approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Sustainability and Campus development and decided by the Vice-Chancellor.
- The main applicant is responsible for the management of the approved funds and the final reporting of the project to be sent to SRA Collegium by 30 September 2028.
- The funds are to be shared among the main applicants and co-applicants in accordance with the project's budget.
- The funds must cover both direct and indirect costs (overhead and rent).
- The funds cannot be used to cover indirect costs for other projects.

Outline of the proposal

Applications are to be written in English and should include four mandatory documents listed as I-IV. Please follow the instructions - applications that do not comply with the instructions may be subjected to administrative rejection.

Please note:

- The main applicant should be a PI within an SRA at the university.
- In case the main applicant is affiliated to more than one SRA she/he needs to indicate a **primary SRA** for the project. The primary SRA should be the one with which the project best aligns in terms of scientific contents and expected strategic developments.
- Each primary SRA can submit 3 proposals per seed funding call. For more information on this please see the section below regarding the evaluation process.

I: Cover page (1 page).

The Cover page must include:

- Name of the primary SRA
- Project title (if the title exceeds 4 words, please add an acronym)
- Main applicant: name, title, all SRA affiliations, e-mail, telephone number, link to applicant profile at Lund University Research Portal (<https://portal.research.lu.se/>)
- Co-applicant 1,2,3 (please use a heading for each co-applicant): name, title, all SRA affiliations, e-mail, telephone number, link to applicant profile at Lund University Research Portal (<https://portal.research.lu.se/>)
- Possible external partners: Name, title, e-mail, and telephone number, link to the external partner's company or laboratory.
- Popular science abstract based on the project description (max 250 words)
- Up to 6 key words which will assist in defining the relevant subject area for the selection of the external reviewers.

II: Project description (max 3 pages including Figures but excluding references).

The project description must take the departure in the 5 ranking criteria listed above and include:

- Overall goal and specific aims
- Background (briefly summarise the state of the art on the topic)
- A statement about the novelty concerning emerging research topics, multidisciplinary collaboration, and strategic directions.
- An outline of expected outcomes and future opportunities, for example how the project can lead to a major proposal and novel or extended cooperation with university external organisations.
- A work plan including a timeline of milestones (with start and end date). Please specify the time of new possible recruitment(s) if applicable, and please also insert contingency plans where appropriate.

- List of references (max 2 pages).

III: Budget and financial plan

A budget and a financial plan for the project must be presented in line with the project requirements, including support from involved SRAs and possible contributions from the PIs, and motivation for the different cost items.

- Please use the budget template provided below. at p. 5.

IV: Support letter from the coordinator, or vice-coordinator, of the primary SRA of the proposal

The support letter must certify that the project aligns well with the SRA strategic plan. The letter must also describe how the SRAs will strategically support the targeted new research direction. In the letter, the SRA coordinator, or deputy coordinator, if the coordinator is an applicant, must also describe how the proposal meets the aims of the call and certify that the project fulfils the criteria, in particular:

- This is a new collaboration between the indicated SRAs
- The realisation of this project is critically dependent on the capabilities of the mentioned SRAs.

Deadlines and submission

First deadline November 24, 2025: You send your application to your primary SRA.

Final deadline January 12, 2026: The primary SRAs submit their proposals to the SRA Collegium office via e-mail to Pernille Andersson pernille.andersson@fs.lu.se.

- Please merge parts I-IV into a single PDF file before the final submission.

Evaluation process in short:

- The chair of the SRA Collegium is responsible for the call and assessment process.
- Each primary SRA can submit 3 proposals per seed funding call.
 - Proposals are first evaluated and selected by the leadership of the primary SRA.
 - Proposals are to be selected not only based on the own SRA's strategic considerations, but also (and foremost) based on the aim of this call.
 - A support letter (see above) attesting the eligibility of each selected proposal will be written by the primary SRA.

- If the number of applications exceeds 12, the submitted proposals are reviewed, graded and ranked by appointed representatives from the SRA Collegium to select a shortlist of proposals.
- The proposals or the short-listed proposals are sent out for external review by an independent assessment group of experts from Lund University appointed by the SRA Collegium.
- The final choice of projects to be funded is made by the SRA collegium based on the reviews by the independent assessment group. If it is considered necessary, applicants may be requested to present a pitch about their project to the SRA Collegium.
- Approval on projects for suggested funding is given by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Sustainability and Campus development based on the recommendations by the SRA Collegium.
- The Vice-Chancellor decides on the allocation of funds to the main applicants for the proposed projects suggested for funding.

Budget template (document III)

Budget posts	Amount (kSEK)
Salaries, incl. social security charges and holiday pay (LKP in Swedish)	
Travel expenses	
Other direct costs	
Equipment	
Consulting services	
Sum of direct costs	
Indirect costs	
Total cost	

Funding	Amount (kSEK)
Amount applied for	
Possible other funding (not required)	
Total funding	

Followed by

- **Short budget justification (half a page). Please see above for more information.**