Stiftelsen Lantbruksforskning

Handbook 2026

Introduction

The Swedish Farmers' Foundation for Agricultural Research allocates research funds collected from the agricultural sector, supplemented with co-financing from government funds. The Foundation finances research that leads to concrete benefits, increased competitiveness, and profitability for Sweden's farmers – primarily applied research.

The aim is to achieve greater engagement, shorten the path from research to communication and, when possible, commercialization, as well as ensure that the sector and farmers are more frequently involved in shaping and participating in research projects. The implementation of research should therefore, as far as possible, be closely connected to its financing.

Also read about how to prepare a strong application for our annual open call here and about how the assessment of applications is carried out.

Our calls for proposals

The annual Open Call has two areas of focus: Food, and Climate & Environment. Applicants choose which area their proposal belongs to.

Other calls (targeted and special calls) are announcements made within specific areas and/or with a specific thematic focus. The direction and scope of each call is described in the call text: https://www.lantbruksforskning.se/utlysningar/alla-utlysningar.

The Food focus area primarily covers the production of animal and plant raw materials and products within the agricultural sector, either for direct human consumption or for further processing within the food chain. Primary food production should be sustainable and aligned with national and global goals, as presented in Agenda 2030—ensuring a secure food supply and reduced climate and environmental impact.

The Climate & Environment area evaluates research on robust, dynamic, energy-efficient, and climate-adapted production systems. The area also includes resource efficiency, circular adaptation, and reduced climate and environmental impact in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, water, livestock systems, nutrients, plant protection, and land management for the preservation of landscapes and biodiversity. Furthermore, it includes research on sustainable energy and biomass production within agriculture.

Limitations and requirements

Collecting organizations and industry collaboration

The Foundation requires that an industry representative must be affiliated with the project as a co-applicant. This individual must come from the agricultural sector who as relevant knowledge and competence related to the industry, the sector, and the collecting organizations. Examples include agricultural entrepreneurs, advisors, or representatives from one of the organizations that contribute funding.

If a project participant comes from a sector included among the Foundation's funding sources, the individual must belong to one of the collecting organizations [link].

In exceptional cases, two faculties may be considered two separate organizations. This applies in cases of applied research where such a constellation is considered the only feasible option. Any absence of an industry partner must be justified in the application.

Co-financing

There is no requirement for co-financing in the annual Open Call. Other calls may require co-financing, and any such requirements are specified in the text for each call.

Forestry-related limitations

For research concerning energy crops grown on arable land, funding covers crops where restoration of the arable land after cultivation is possible using machinery normally available on a farm. Research on crops on arable land cultivated for fuel or timber purposes that are more appropriate for forestry is referred to other funders.

Ethical guidelines

All applications and projects must comply with Swedish legislation and EU regulations, including research ethics and professional ethical rules such as animal welfare regulations, plant protection rules, rules for disease control, and regulations for genetically modified organisms.

Information provided by researchers through applications or similar channels may not be used to benefit one's own research or to generate scientific advantages for oneself or close colleagues at the expense of others.

Projects that include elements requiring approval by an ethical review board must certify that an ethical permit will be in place once funding is approved and before any relevant activities begin. If ethical approval is already obtained when writing the application, this should be attached to the full scale application according to application system instructions.

Technology Readiness Level (TRL)

The Swedish Farmers' Foundation for Agricultural Research primarily finances projects involving needs-driven research, conceptualization, or concept verification, or a combination of these within TRL levels 3, 4, and 5 (see Figure 1 below).

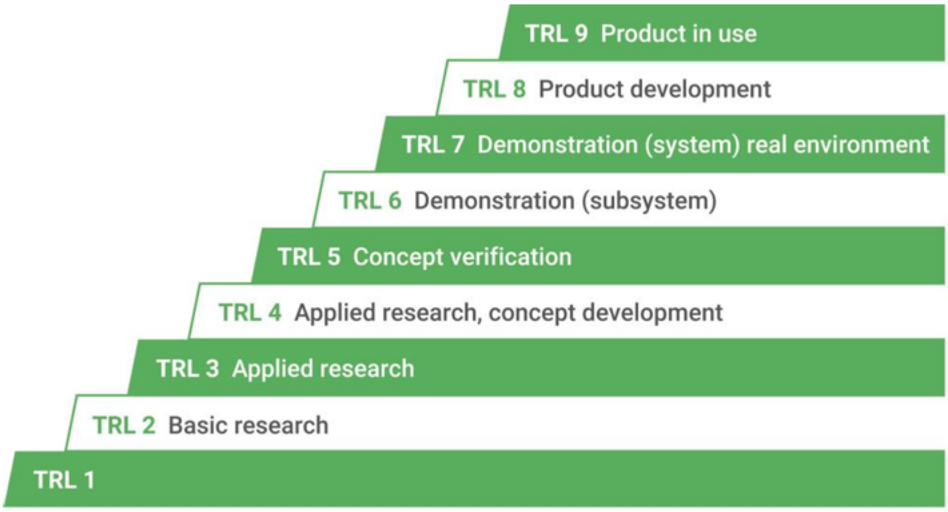

Figure 1. Illustration of the Technology Readiness Level scale.

Applying for research funding

Research funding can be applied for in two ways: As a two-stage process with first an idea sketch (Stage 1), followed by a full application (Stage 2). Or as a one-stage process including only a full application.

The annual Open Call follows the two-stage process, while all other calls use a one-stage process. Call texts are published on the Foundation's website when each call opens. If the call text differs from the handbook, the call text is superior to the handbook.

Once an application is submitted, it undergoes an assessment process (link to section below), and the final funding decision is made by the Foundation's Board.
Incomplete applications are rejected without undergoing assessment.

Please note that all co-applicants must create an account in the application system and enter salary details and their activity level in the project. It is advisable to prepare all project participants in advance to ensure there is sufficient time before the call closes.

The main applicant and department head must sign the application before it can be submitted, using BankID or scanned signature.

Reading tips before you begin your application

- Read the call text
- Read about how your application will be evaluated in the chapter on assessment
- Read about our focus areas and thematic orientations
- Review the Foundation's requirements, limitations, and instructions for applying for funding below.

Limitations and requirements

General rules for applicants

- The main applicant submits the application and must hold a doctoral degree or equivalent, well-documented research competence.
- The main applicant must not have any outstanding reports to the Foundation at the time of application.
- The main applicant is responsible for the implementation of the project and for all reporting to the Foundation, as well as ensuring that all financial reports in the application system are correct.
- None of the applicants may hold a mandate in the Foundation's review panels for the same call as the application will be evaluated.
- All applicants (main and co-applicants) have an individual responsibility to assess and declare any potential conflicts of interest. A high level of personal integrity is expected.
- All main and co-applicants must create a login account in the application system (link), accept an invitation to participate in the application, and enter their salary costs for their involvement in the project. All of this must be completed before the application is submitted.
- All applicants (main and co-applicants) in a project must have a salary. This can be provided in kind or paid with project funds. Participants in the reference group are not considered co-applicants.
- Applicants must come from at least two different organizations, and the project must involve collaboration between the agricultural sector and academia. The project should lie within an area relevant to the Foundation's funding sectors. An industry representative must be connected to the project as a co-applicant and be a person from the sector with important knowledge and expertise valuable to the agricultural sector, industry, and the collecting organizations—for example, a farmer, advisor, or a representative of one of the collecting organizations. Project participants from sectors that contribute funds must belong to one of the collecting organizations.
- You may apply for overhead costs with a maximum 25% surcharge on salaries and material costs; the stated costs must not exceed actual costs.
- All budget amounts are stated in Swedish kronor. Indicate the total project cost for each budget post, how much is covered with own funding or granted from others. Based on given numbers the system will calculate amount applied from the foundation, this can be the same as the total cost, part of it, or 0.
- If you have applied—but have not yet received a decision—from another funder for the same project and for the same costs as those requested from the Foundation, this must be stated in a separate section.
- Main applicant and the head of department or equivalent must sign the full-scale application with BankID or scanned signature before the application is submitted.

Project finances

Salaries and consultancy services

All applicants (main and co-applicants) in a project must have a salary. This may be in kind or paid with funds from the project. Reference group participants are not considered co-applicants.

Each applicant must state the estimated working time per year in the project, together with information on their monthly salary. If an applicant's salary in the project is entirely in kind, the full work contribution must be listed as a cost covered by own funds, with 0 SEK requested from the Foundation. Co-applicants must actively contribute to the project and be compensated within the project (either through applied funds or own funds). Salaries may also be listed for individuals contributing to the project without being co-applicants.

Salaries for purchased external services (i.e., not the main applicant, co-applicants, or other project-funded staff) must be entered under "Other costs," together with the title of the service and the name of the consultant. A consultancy service should not be so extensive that it would be more appropriately categorized as a salaried project role.

Overhead (OH), equipment purchases, travel, and other costs

Overhead costs (OH) may amount to a maximum of 25% of requested salary costs and requested costs for consumables for the application to be submitted. OH includes faculty, department, and university charges as well as facility costs. The OH rate must not exceed actual OH costs.

Equipment purchases and depreciation may amount to a maximum of 20% or 500,000 SEK of the total amount requested from the Foundation (over the entire project period).

Be specific and clear when stating materials, travel, and other costs. Items such as "miscellaneous materials" or "various other costs" are not accepted.

Idea sketch in Stage 1 of the Open call

The application and framework budget in Stage 1 that may not differ from a possible Stage 2 budget, are assessed based on the criteria for Benefit to the Sector. The application must include a project description with an idea sketch written in Swedish, containing a maximum of 14,000 characters, including summaries and references.

Summaries must be written in both Swedish and English and may include a maximum of 1,000 characters, including spaces, in Stage 1.

The idea sketch must include the following sections, with expected content specified in the application system:

- Background and relevance
- The project's purpose, method, and expected results, including justification of the project's placement within the TRL scale
- Expected results and their direct benefit to the sector, including recipients of the results and a clear plan for scientific and popular-scientific communication

- Justification of the project team composition, including justification of the indicative budget
- Reference list with key references

Full application in Stage 2 of the Open call and in other calls

For applications in the annual Open Call Stage 2 and in all other calls, you must submit a project description, and a combined PDF attachment containing the CVs of all applicants. The application and budget in Stage 2, that may not differ from the Stage 1 budget, are assessed according to both the criteria for Benefit to the Sector and Scientific Quality.
The application must be written in English and may contain a maximum of 35,000 characters, including summaries and references.

Summaries must be written in both Swedish and English and will be published in the Foundation's project database if the project is approved. The summaries may include a maximum of 1,500 characters, including spaces, in Stage 2.

The project description for Stage 2 must include the following sections, with expected content as described in the application system:

- Background and relevance
- Study design, including hypothesis, number of study subjects per work package, etc.
- Expected results and their direct benefit to the sector, including recipients of the results and a clear plan for scientific and popular-scientific communication
- Justification of the project group composition, including confirmation of the reference group with names and roles, and justification of the indicative budget
- Reference list

Rules for attached CVs

A combined PDF must be attached to the application, containing the CVs of all applicants. Include only information relevant to the project. State any previous experience of collaboration with the agricultural sector. CVs must be written in English. Each applicant's CV may be a maximum of two pages. The document must contain a short description of the applicant's qualifications as well as a publication list.

Ethical approval

If the project involves studies on animals, you must state whether an ethical permit is required. If the permit is already in place at the time of application, it must be attached according to application system instructions.

When an application is ready to be submitted

Before an application can be submitted, both the main applicant and the department head must sign the application with BankID or scanned signature. The foundation currently has no prohibiting on the use of AI as support in writing the application, or any requirement to inform if AI has been used in writing the application. But it is important to remember that the applicant is always responsible for the correctness of all content of an application. You testify this when you register your application. You as applicant should also follow the principals of good research ethics, meaning that plagiarism, falsification or fabrication of content in an application cannot be practiced.

Process for the granted projects

Contracts and payments for approved projects

The main applicant receives an electronic contract specifying the obligations of the main applicant and the fund-administering organization. The contract also contains terms and conditions, as well as the plan for project reporting and payment schedules.

The contract applies to the project as described in the submitted application. If deviations or changes occur, the applicant must immediately contact the Foundation's office.

The Foundation's office sends out the electronic contract to the main applicant within one month after the funding decision. Only PlusGiro or BankGiro numbers can be used for payment transactions. The project number will be used as the payment reference. The administrating organization must provide a PlusGiro or BankGiro number in the contract for payment of project funds if the project is approved. Make sure to enter the correct PlusGiro or BankGiro number.

In some cases, the Foundation may require complementary information before the first payment can be made. These requirements will be clearly stated in the contract, and the main applicant must submit the requested material no later than the specified deadline. The payment schedule applies only once all conditions have been fulfilled.

For the Open call, payments are made annually in May, starting from the project's first year. The project must begin at some point during the calendar year following the call year (the Board decides in December).

For other calls, where Board decisions may occur at other times of the year, the first payment is made shortly after the contract is finalized. Subsequent payments are made in May each year.

For all projects, the final payment—after submission of the final report—is made continuously throughout the year, depending on the project's reporting deadline.

Communicating approved projects

When communicating or publishing results from a project funded by the Foundation, the Foundation must be clearly acknowledged as the funder, together with the project number. This applies to all publications and contact with the media. The Foundation's logo can be downloaded from the "About us" and "Visual identity" section on lantbruksforskning.se.

If the project results in a doctoral thesis, the Foundation must be informed of the dissertation date, and a copy of the thesis must be sent to the office.

Reporting during the project, Final report, and Follow-up report

The main applicant is responsible. The main applicant is responsible for ensuring that reports submitted to the Foundation are correct and submitted on time. These reports guarantee that funding from the agricultural sector and government research funds is used appropriately and that the research maintains a high standard.

Annual status report. During the project period, the main applicant must submit one status report per year, including a brief description of the project's progress and a summary of funds used during the year

Final report. When the project is completed, the main applicant has six months to submit the final report.

Follow-up. Three years after the project's end date, the Foundation requests a follow-up report, which provides an additional overview of scientific publications, publications directed toward the agricultural sector and other communication efforts made after the final report

The reporting plan for all reports can be viewed throughout the project's duration in the application system.

All reports are approved by the research officer in consultation with the chief research officer.

Status report

The status report must include an overview of achieved results, any deviations from the original plan, and a financial summary of expenditures during the reporting period. The main applicant must contact the Foundation's office for all major deviations or changes in the project. It is not sufficient to only state deviations in the status report. If you do not receive a request for clarification or additional information, you may assume that the status report has been approved.

Final report

Final reports may be used for dissemination of results to the agricultural sector, and an approved final report will be published in the Foundation's project database.
Once a final report has been approved, the main applicant receives an email from the Foundation with confirmation and information about any adjustments to the final payment.

If a final report is not submitted on time, the main applicant receives a reminder.
If the final report is still not submitted after the reminder the project will be cancelled, and any remaining funds must be repaid to the Foundation. Cancelled projects are not published in the project database.

The final report consists of a detailed financial report, a short summary in Swedish and English (max 1,000 characters each), a popular science summary in Swedish, a results report in Swedish or English (max 35,000 characters), following the instructions in the application system. Furter, documentation of scientific and popular-scientific communication and publications, including links should be provided.

Once approved, the final report is published in the Foundation’s project bank together with contact details for the main applicant. A delay in publication may be requested if immediate publication would hinder the publication of a scientific article or patent application.

The main applicant must ensure that all research results are available through Open Access within six months of publication. The Foundation’s office can answer questions about this process.

Financial reporting

The financial report must list all costs charged to the project. This report must be in accordance with the budget stated in the original application. All individual items must be specified, not reported as a lump sum. Overhead expenses should be recognised in the appropriate place and not under “Other”. Keep in mind that the system only accepts numbers, and no other characters.

Summary in Swedish and English

- Must be written in both Swedish and English
- Max 1,000 characters each
- Must focus on the project’s purpose, key results, and conclusions

Popular scientific summary

This summary is intended for farmers, journalists, advisors, and others interested in the topic who do not have expert knowledge. It is an essential part of communicating the project’s results. The summary must:

- Use clear and accessible language
- Explain technical terms
- Present the purpose and benefit of the research
- Highlight the most important results in an easy-to-understand way
- Describe practical implications for Swedish farm management
- Summarize the methods used
- Present the key conclusions

Follow-up after project completion

The Foundation will request a follow-up report of the project 3–5 years after the project’s end date. This report should be of a simpler nature and focuses on how well the research results have had an impact in the target group, as well as additional published reports and other communication efforts after the project ends. The follow up report is written according to instructions in the application system.

Rereferral of reporting

If the main applicant is unable to submit a project report according to the original schedule, they must apply for a deferral. The main applicant should send the application to the Foundation’s research officer before the final report is due. Applications for deferral are assessed on a case-by case basis and granted in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances can include illness, parental leave, unforeseen delays, or unexpected restructuring of the project team. Note that the deferral application does not replace the description of deviations in the status report. The deferral application must:

- Clearly explain the reason for the delay
- Include a new schedule
- Be signed by the main applicant and immediate superior or head of department.

If the deferral application is granted, the main applicant must submit the report according to the updated schedule in order to apply for new project funding from the Foundation. The Foundation grants a maximum of one year's deferral at a time. To view the current reporting schedule for a project, applicants can always log in to the application system.

Change of project participants

Replacing a co-applicant

To replace a co-applicant in a project, the main applicant must submit a request to the Foundation. The request must include the CV of the new co-applicant.

Changing the main applicant

If the main applicant is to be changed, the request must include the CV of the new main applicant and signatures from the current main applicant, the new main applicant, and the department head (prefekt). A change of main applicant means an administrative cost of 1500 SEK, which will be charged to the project.

Review of research applications

Welcome as a reviewer of research applications!

You have been engaged based on your expertise and will work according to our criteria and scoring system. The review work consists of individual assessments in the review system. You must provide a score for each assessment criteria per application, a summarized score, and written evaluations in free text. After completing your individual assessments, you will participate in a review group meeting to discuss all applications together with the other reviewers.

There are three different roles within the review process:

1. Main reviewer

As the main reviewer, you assess the application according to the criteria, score scale, and rating system, including free text comments, present the application during the review meeting, and write the final comment in the review system after the review meeting,

Your presentation should be brief and typically include:

- a very short summary of the project

- a summary of the group's assessments
- points where the reviewers' scores differ significantly

2. Co-reviewer

As a co-reviewer, you assess the application according to the criteria, provide a score per criteria, and write free text comments per assessment score and as summarized comment.

3. Reader

As a reader, you read the application in order to be able to participate in the discussion at the review meeting, but do not score the application.

Basic rules for reviewers

- You are mandated to review applications based on your professional competence, and you do so on behalf of the Swedish agricultural sector.
- If you are employed by a company within the agricultural sector, you do not represent the company during the review.
- Applications must be assessed solely based on their content.
  You must not make assumptions or evaluate based on personal preferences or interests.
- You must conduct your review professionally, objectively, and fairly.
- Applications submitted to the Foundation are not public documents. They must be treated confidentially. You must not disclose any information from the review process.
- You may not use any type of open AI solution in the review work.
- If you have a reviewer mandate, you cannot simultaneously be a co-applicant in applications submitted to the same call.
- Recommendations for funding made by the review group are joint decisions, but you may reserve your opinion.

Conflict of interest

You, as a reviewer, have a personal responsibility to report conflict of interest.
The Foundation strives to work in a way that ensures trust from both funders and recipients of research funding.

Before the review period begins, all reviewers must check for potential conflicts of interest and mark them in the review system. You will be invited by the Foundation's office for this. If you discover a conflict of interest before reviewing you must not review the application. If discovering during review you report it immediately in the system. If you discover it during the meeting you declare it immediately and leave the discussion for that application. You may not participate in the discussion for an application where a conflict of interest exists.

According to Swedish administrative law (Förvaltningslagen §§11–12, 1986:23), a reviewer is disqualified if:

- The case concerns the reviewer or someone closely related, or if the outcome could bring significant benefit or harm to the reviewer or related persons.
- The reviewer or a related person represents or works at the same institution or company as the applicant, or another party that could significantly benefit or be harmed.
- The reviewer has an ongoing or recently completed close collaboration with the applicant.
- Other circumstances exist that could question the reviewer's impartiality (e.g., friendship, hostility, or economic dependency).

Reviewers must self-identify conflicts of interest and report s in conflict of interest themselves when necessary. If disqualified, the reviewer must abstain from handling and reviewing the application, and leave the meeting room during the discussion.

The assessment process

The call closes for applications.

(Summer) Stage 1 reviewers (a set number of applications per group) read and evaluate the short applications → meeting resulting in a proportion of applications advancing to Stage 2.

(Autumn) Stage 2 applications are evaluated by the Stage 2 review group; applications are discussed → a proportion is recommended for funding to the Board.

The Board makes the final decision in December.

Read more: *How assessments and preparations are carried out*

Criteria

Stage 1 — Benefit to the sector

In Stage 1, the project's benefit to the agricultural sector is evaluated.
The Stage 1 application consists of a summary, a short project description, and framework budget that cannot differ from a possible Stage 2 budget.

The idea sketch must include the following sections, according to instruction in the application system:

- Background and relevance
- The project's purpose, method, and expected outcome, including justification of the project's position in the TRL scale
- Expected results and their direct benefit to the agricultural sector, including recipients and a clear plan for scientific and popular-scientific communication
- Justification of the project team composition, including justification of the indicative budget

- Reference list with key references

Stage 2 and other calls — Benefit to the sector + Scientific quality

In Stage 2 and for all other calls, the evaluation is based on both Benefit to the sector, and Scientific quality. The Stage 2 application is a full proposal, with a project description of up to 35,000 characters, including summaries and references. The CVs of all applicants and a detailed budget must also be submitted which cannot differ from the stage 1 framework budget. If the project involves animal studies, the need for an ethical permit must be stated. If an ethical permit is already available at the time of application, it must be attached.

The project description must include:

- Background and relevance
- Study design, including hypothesis, number of study subjects per work package, etc.
- Expected results and their direct benefit to the sector, including recipients and a clear plan for dissemination
- Justification of the project team composition, including confirmation of the reference group (names and roles) and justification of the indicative budget
- Reference list
- Criteria for benefit to the sector

Potential. The project's long-term potential to contribute to profitability, competitiveness, and sustainable development—for example by strengthening or renewing a sector or creating conditions for new businesses. The project group's potential to deliver these outcomes, as well as the relevance and extent of collaboration with stakeholders and any co-funding.

Relevance and direct benefit. The relevance of the project in meeting the sector's needs. Assessment includes the project's ability to address real needs and practical challenges, and the novelty of the proposed contribution.

Communication and dissemination of results.The description of relevant stakeholders and end users. A concrete and realistic plan must exist for how the results will be communicated and taken forward after project completion.
This includes suggestions for who should take the next step once the project ends.

Criteria for scientific quality

Hypothesis and research question. The originality and novelty of the proposed research. The scientific importance of the stated aim and the potential for significant results.

Method and implementation (including budget). The appropriateness and feasibility of the scientific method. A concrete and realistic work plan linked to a reasonable and well-structured budget.

Competence, main applicant, and project team. The ability of the team to carry out the project as planned, including adequate project management experience. The strength and competitiveness of the project constellation, within both academia and the agricultural sector.

Scoring system

All criteria are scored according to the Foundation's scale:

6 points: Excellent — Addresses all aspects successfully. No weaknesses.

5 points: Very good — Meets the criteria very well with minor flaws.

4 points: Good — Meets the criteria well but with noticeable shortcomings.

3 points: Satisfactory — Meets most criteria but with several significant shortcomings.

2 points: Needs improvement — Insufficient or with substantial weaknesses.

1 point: Not approved — Fails to meet the criteria or cannot be assessed due to missing information.

Overall rating score

After scoring all criteria, you give a summary grade:

A = Excellent application (average score > 5)

B = Good application (average score 3.5–5)

C = Unsatisfactory application (average score 2.5–3.4)

D = Weak application (average score < 2.5)