

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS CALL 2018-N

Open call to researchers in Sweden to apply for long-term funding and SNSB commitments for participation in international Space Science and Earth Observation space missions

These instructions should be read carefully by all applicants.

2018-N

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Deadlines¹

Digital version: 2018 March 27, 17:00²

Paper version: 2018 March 27, 17:00³

¹Two submissions are mandatory, both a digital submission and a paper version with original signatures. See Technical Guidelines for details.

²Maximum size of attached PDF document: 5 megabyte

³Swedish postal stamp of the preceding working day is sufficient.

1. NEWS

This call is essentially identical in scope to last year's call (2017-N). Some clarifications and minor changes has been made to these instructions, and the rules for Enclosure 4 have changed slightly regarding the ten publications (see the relevant cover sheet).

2. TYPES OF SUPPORT AND COMMITMENTS

In this call SNSB invites proposals for support to international research projects that include or plan for measurements in space. Proposals must be related to long-term SNSB commitments in one of the following ways:

1. New proposals for Swedish involvement in an international space project, where an SNSB long-term (more than three years) commitment is required to make the endeavour meaningful or in order to meet requirements from international partners.
2. Proposals for increased ambitions for an existing SNSB commitment to an international space research project.
3. Specification of extra costs for an existing SNSB commitment to an international space research project.

Note that for research projects which do not correspond to the above descriptions, we refer to other open calls. In particular, projects devoted to science exploitation of data from space missions belong to the annual open R-calls of SNSB. Applicants who are uncertain where a project proposal belongs, are advised to contact SNSB staff.

Funding can be sought for participation in project definition, theoretical preparations, instrument design, instrument development, method and software development, instrument operations, data handling, and exploitation of scientific data. SNSB finds it important to address all these aspects of a space research project and will – when budgetary constraints so require – take this strategic “project position” into account when allocating funding. However, it must be understood that any application which does not explicitly address data exploitation must contain a plan for how the data will eventually be used for scientific analysis.

Research disciplines

The call is open to all research disciplines.

Examples

The following types of long-term support has been funded by SNSB in the past:

- Ground-based calibration or validation of measurements by instruments on a satellite, which are essential to the goals of the instruments.
- Development of software, algorithms, data handling procedures, or instrument simulations required for a specified international space mission.
- Design and construction by research groups of scientific instruments, or parts thereof, for flight on a specified international space mission.
- Industrial work which contributes to a specified international space mission, and which supplements work by researchers in Sweden on the international project.

3. SNSB AS A RESEARCH FUNDING AGENCY

The task of the Swedish National Space Board (SNSB) as research funding agency is to provide means for high quality, internationally competitive space research (incl. Earth Observation and Technology for Space Applications) in Sweden. The projects supported by SNSB may concern observations and experiments in space, analysis of data obtained from space missions, the development of instruments and analytical tools for scientific use in space, participation in the scientific and technical operations of projects in space and preparation of such projects. SNSB has special responsibility to support research projects taking advantage of the possibilities that derive from Sweden's national and international space ventures.

Open Access to optimize impact of research

SNSB adheres to the basic principle that results and data stemming from publically funded research must be made available on line to other researchers and the general public free of charge without unnecessary time delay. Objectives are to ensure that other scientists will be able to use data in future for other projects and more scientific value of investments as an evident part of the knowledge society.

Publication of results

Researchers supported, partly or fully, from research grants from SNSB shall make all reasonable efforts to make sure the results are published in esteemed international journals. The publications must acknowledge support from the Swedish National Space Board (SNSB). Results of original research must be made freely available on line for reading and downloading within 6 months from original publication. A copy of publications with associated metadata standards must be placed in a repository within 6 months from original publication.

Data Policy

A data management plan is required for projects where new raw data collection constitutes a major component. See the cover sheet for Enclosure 1 for details.

4. WHO CAN APPLY?

The principal applicant is required to be, or be eligible to become, affiliated to a Swedish University or research establishment in Sweden where the project work is to be carried out. The principal applicant must have a PhD degree.

Applying research groups must have established relations with international partners (e.g. another space agency or an international consortium for the space mission in question).

A research grant is normally contracted to a research leader who is younger than 67 years. If the principal applicant will reach this age during the proposed project duration, then the application should contain a plan for the future transfer of leadership of the project to a younger person. If a university department or institute wishes to receive funding for research leaders above the above limits, then the case must be clearly stated, e.g. in a letter from the head of department.

By signing a research application, the principal applicant certifies that all co-applicants stand behind the application.

Collaboration between research groups

For projects involving close collaboration with other research groups, it is possible to include in the application co-applicants with a different affiliation than the principal applicant, including affiliations outside Sweden. However, the sought funding must normally concern activities and costs in Sweden. If funding is sought for work and activities outside Sweden or if support is sought for persons affiliated outside Sweden, this must be clearly specified and justified in Enclosure 2 of the application.

If the proposed work is to be conducted in collaboration between research groups at two or three departments/institutes in Sweden, it is possible to include the total research programme as a single research application. The forms are prepared for up to three modules, which can be carried out at different places. In this case, the principal applicant submits a full digital and paper proposal. For each secondary place the local project leader (co-applicant) submits a paper version of Forms A and B of the same proposal with original signatures of the local project leader and local head of department/institute.

5. FUNDING STRUCTURE

Modules

A single application may include up to three modules (see Forms B and F1-F4). The previous section mentioned one usage of this subdivision (research at multiple sites). A research project to be carried out at a single site may also be divided into two or three modules, if it naturally divides into semi-independent blocks. These may correspond to different levels of ambition, different phases of a programme, or activities of different types. Such modules must be presented in Enclosure 1 as components of a single structured scientific project.

Funding period

Fill in Forms F1-F4 for the number of years (maximum 4 years) for which reasonable detailed cost specifications can be made. Justify these costs and estimate the costs for all phases of the project in Enclosure 2 (normally much longer than 4 years for new projects).

6. CONTENTS OF A RESEARCH APPLICATION

The applications can be written in **Swedish** or **English**. However, many members of the SNSB Science Advisory Committee (SAC) do not understand Swedish and most external expert reviewers are drawn from the international research community. Thus, SNSB may need to have proposals received in Swedish translated to English. Applicants are advised to carefully consider using English in the application in order to make sure that their intents are conveyed without a translational interface.

Application forms

A proposal must contain the following set of forms:

- Form A (with signatures on paper version)
- Form B (Administrative information)
- Form C (Abstracts)
- Form D (Other sources of funding)
- Form E (Staff overview)
- Form F1-F4 (Sought amounts)

Enclosures

A set of PDF Cover Sheet is provided for each type of enclosure that can be appended to the proposal:

1. Description of the proposed contribution to an international space project (mandatory)
2. Specification of Costs (mandatory)
3. Progress Report (not required for new projects)
4. Curricula Vitae (mandatory)

The cover sheet must be the first page of each enclosed enclosure. These sheets specify rules for the contents of each enclosure.

Submission details

Instructions on how to prepare and submit an application to SNSB are provided in a separate document, entitled “Technical Guideline for Research Applications”.

7. DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON INFORMATION REQUESTED ON FORMS

Abstract

Each project is to have an abstract of 100-250 words giving a brief and clear description of the proposal. The abstract must be included on Form C, but may also be repeated as part of Enclosure 1, if appropriate.

Other funding sources

It is mandatory to include on Form D information on all grants awarded to the applicant and his/her research group, as well as all funding requests submitted by the applicant/research group to other funding agencies (informative titles of projects required). It is also mandatory to specify in the application forms the degree and the manner in which the activities of the applicant will be supported by the home institution and/or other funding agencies.

Additional support required

If there are foreseen additional costs of the project in addition to the sought amounts, this fact must be clearly specified in Enclosure 2. Describe all additional support required to accomplish the proposed project, e.g. management support, industrial work, and cost items that cannot be estimated at this point in time.

8. SUPPORT TO SALARIES

A significant portion of the research funding that SNSB allocates is used for salaries. SNSB is in no case an employer or responsible for the staff of the research projects. Instead, SNSB grants can be used by the administration entity (“bidragsförvaltande organ”), e.g. a university, for salaries and associated social fees for its staff. The employment rules of the administration entity apply to the involved staff. SNSB grants may also be used to hire external consultants with appropriate expertise for the research project.

The salary costs in the application shall reflect the expected salary situation for the person/position in question throughout the period the application concerns (often a yearly percentage increase to be specified at the bottom of Form E). Also specify the social fees (“arbetsgivar- och premieavgift”) prescribed at the administration entity (input on Form E), so that the sought direct costs include social fees. Indirect costs are specified separately (percentages on Form B, with automatic consequences in kkr on Forms F1-F4).

External consultants

You may seek funding for hiring consultants, if required for the proposed project. The reasons for this and the role of the consultant must be clearly specified in Enclosure 2. On Forms F1-F4, you can enter the associated costs either on the last row under “Staff costs” or further down under services, depending on the local rules for indirect costs.

General staff costs

In order to seek funding of staff costs from SNSB, the minimum requirements are to:

1. Fill in the upper part of the table in Form E. If employment of a new unspecified person is intended, then put “NN” as name and skip unknown items.
2. On Forms F1-F4, fill in the number of months and the fraction of time to be spent on the research project for each person.
3. In Enclosure 2, specify clearly the role and responsibility of each person proposed to work on the project. It is important to justify the need for the proposed staff.
4. Enclose CV’s to the extent required by the cover sheet of Enclosure 4.

You may include any type of staff in this way, as long as their contributions are essential to the proposed project. Thus, it may include research engineers, programmers, senior staff (e.g. secondment/”friköp”), Research Fellows, PostDocs, PhD students, etc.

Gender aspects

The number of female researchers using space-based platforms is still rather small in Sweden. SNSB therefore encourages the scientific community to contribute towards more women becoming willing and able to commit themselves to successful research projects. Without waiving quality requirements, SNSB will consider gender as one of several boundary conditions when evaluating applications.

9. SNSB HANDLING OF SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS

Applications written in accordance with these instructions will be assessed by the SNSB Science Advisory Committee (SAC).

Criteria for evaluation

The following criteria are considered by SNSB in the evaluation process (in no particular order):

- Benefits to Swedish research (both among applicants and from a broader national perspective) of the proposed participation in the international project.
- Strong research environment, competitiveness and international standing of the applying researchers.
- Roles and responsibilities of the applicants within the international project.
- Credibility of the implementation plan, including costs, schedule, work packages and risk assessment.
- The novelty of the project and its potential to renew, develop and promote future national and international research efforts.
- The potential of the project – whilst maintaining high scientific quality – to increase the number of women active in research.
- The extent to which the proposed project fits within the budgetary constraints of SNSB.

Additionally, for proposals of increased ambitions or extra costs of an existing SNSB commitment, the situation of the running project will also be considered.

Decisions and contracts

The advisory structure is planned to make its recommendations and rankings of received proposals in May/June. The time-line for SNSB decisions and long-term commitments is flexible and dependent on the economic situation. However, applicants can expect a response to their proposals no later than December of the year of application.

Routines for reporting

Yearly Statements, Final Report and Economic Accounts are to be delivered in accordance with specifications in contracts.