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Call

VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification

A Marie Curie acting funding programme for
VINNMER Fellows (female doctoral
researchers)

Co-funded by Marie Curie Actions

1. Invitation

VINNOVA hereby invites research groups/Centres of Excellence in research and innovation to submit project financing proposals under the call, **VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification** in the VINNMER programme – researcher qualification for VINNMER Fellows (female doctoral researchers).

VINNOVA's goal is to contribute to sustainable growth in Sweden. This will take place through a development of the country's innovation system. Using analyses which identify obstacles and opportunities in systems, programmes and calls will be designed in fields with growth potential. These can apply to needs-driven research as well as different types of player interaction. All VINNOVA's calls have short and long-term impacts as to what should be achieved and how projects that are financed should contribute to sustainable growth. These goals are continuously evaluated. This call, under the VINNMER programme, is expected to be open from 2007-2011. Assessment of submitted proposals will take place twice a year (spring and autumn).

The purpose of the call, **VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification** is to strengthen qualification opportunities through increased mobility opportunities for VINNMER Fellows (female doctoral researchers) within the framework of international collaboration between Centres of Excellence in research and innovation. This focus has been chosen by VINNOVA in order to impact the systemic weakness of a low proportion of qualifying women. The call relates to **planning grant proposals** as well as **complete proposals**.

The subject fields at which the call is aimed are all those fields of needs-driven research which fall within VINNOVA's field of activity.

There is no specifically earmarked budget for this call; rather, decisions on planning grants and complete proposals within the programme are to be accommodated within the programme's overall budget. The programme budget is SEK 350 million for the period 2007-2014.

Information about this call plus terms and conditions of participation appears in the following call text. This text also appears on the call website: www.VINNOVA.se/VINNMER. These pages also contain up-to-date information on times for submitting the proposal and a link to the electronic application function.

N.b. VINNOVA reserves the right to adjust this call text at any time whatsoever during the call period and without specific notification. However, no changes will be made during the final four weeks before each deadline. The organisation of the call may also be changed between assessments. All potential applicants are therefore recommended to download the current version of the call text from the call website before each deadline.

Stockholm, February 2009.

Lena Gustafsson, Acting Director General

Erik Litborn, Programme Manager

2. Purpose of the call

The purpose of the call is to strengthen the qualification opportunities initially for female doctoral researchers who have after completion of their doctorate gained additionally at least 1-2 years experience, such as work within industry, research institutes, post-doc etc. The call is therefore not addressed to those seeking traditional post-doc financing in direct connection with completion of their doctorate.

It should be possible for the researcher qualification to be completed within the framework of international collaboration between Centres of Excellence in research and innovation in Sweden and overseas. The VINNMER Fellow (project leader, female doctoral researcher) should be responsible for establishing and maintaining the collaboration linked to the qualification and personally resides in the foreign milieu for 1½ - 2 years. This means that an individual project covers both incoming and outgoing mobility of international experienced researchers. Different periods of time may be permitted, if there are specific reasons and clear justification for doing so.

In this call text, “project” means the new or enhanced activities within the collaboration that is planned for the VINNMER Fellow’s qualification. This can and should also include activities to maintain the international collaborations within the timetable and budgetary framework of the project, without detracting from the additional costs for which the individual researcher needs backing.

3. Background and reasoning

See programme description in a separate document.

4. Aims of the call

The long-term objective of the VINNMER programme is to contribute, in the coming generational changes in Swedish research, to the presence of significantly more research-qualified individuals who can become future leaders of universities and colleges at universities/colleges, centre groupings, research institutes and companies. There are currently imbalances in many of the fields within which VINNOVA operates, with women comprising the underrepresented gender. Aiming to impact the systemic weakness of a low proportion of qualifying women and equalise the current underrepresentation in higher positions, VINNOVA has chosen to angle the VINNMER programme towards women. This is being effected by bolstering opportunities for researcher qualification through increased mobility for women in fields of strategic importance to Sweden. The call is initially aimed at women who have passed their doctorates **and** after the completion of their doctorate has gained additional at least 1-2 years experience. Thus, the programme is not aimed at those who are seeking traditional post-doc financing in direct connection with completion of their doctorate.

The programme permits a high degree of flexibility in regard to varying conditions within and between the different subject fields. Individual proposals for qualification opportunities are therefore encouraged provided they are in keeping with the aims of the programme and fall within VINNOVA’s field of responsibility.

This call relates to the section of the *VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification*

***VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification
– researcher qualification under international collaboration between Centres of Excellence
in research and innovation***

The framework of *VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification* comprises support for qualification, for example:

- Mobility to a foreign milieu – contributing to financing of a VINNMER Fellow in Sweden residing for 1½ - 2 years at a prominent milieu in another country. After the foreign residence, the VINNMER Fellow should return to a Swedish R&I milieu (the applicant) and contribute to the Swedish milieu being able to maintain/further develop collaboration with the foreign milieu.
- Mobility from a foreign milieu to a Swedish Centre of Excellence in research and innovation – contributing to a Swedish milieu recruiting a Swedish VINNMER Fellow who will shortly have completed, say, post-doc in a foreign R&I milieu and who can be the uniting link in a long-term collaboration between the foreign research milieu and the Swedish one (the applicant).
- Recruitment from a foreign milieu to a Swedish Centre of Excellence in research and innovation – contributing to the financing of one or more years' residence in Sweden for a foreign VINNMER Fellow, provided the intention is for the residence to result in establishment of a long-term collaboration between the VINNMER Fellow's original milieu (which is a prominent milieu abroad) and the Swedish Centre of Excellence in research and innovation (the applicant).

For *VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification* the initial recommendation is to apply for a planning grant but it is possible to send in a complete proposal straight away. The planning grant should be used to travel to the foreign R&I milieu and formalise the collaboration. When applying for a planning grant (see page 11), this is done with the intention of submitting the complete proposal at one of the two next calls. Proposal for a planning grant can be submitted at any time without submission deadlines.

5. Impacts

VINNOVA regards the financing of needs-driven R&D as an investment which, in the long run, will promote sustainable growth in Sweden. The impacts of the call match those of the programme and state what VINNOVA expects supported projects to contribute.

The impacts of the VINNMER programme are as follows:

Short term (during the programme)

- Corroborated need for the programme, total approx. 500 applicants
- Interview/questionnaire shows the value of the programme to the individual's qualification and for the involved organisations/Centres of Excellence in research and innovation

Medium term (five years after the programme's conclusion)

- During the programme, at least 50 projects have resulted in lasting international collaboration after conclusion of the “qualification” (relates to this call)
- During the programme, at least 30 projects have resulted in lasting national collaboration after conclusion of the “qualification” (relates to the *VINNMER - national qualification* call)
- 80% of the VINNMER Fellows have got new, higher posts

Long term (10 years after the programme's conclusion)

- At least 22 VINNMER Fellows within the programme have been appointed professor
- At least 15 VINNMER Fellows within the programme are in leading positions in industry/research institutes/the public sector.

6. Project and applicant requirements

To be able to prepare a complete proposal for *VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification*, we recommend the option of applying for a planning grant. This includes a travelling allowance for travel to the foreign R&I milieu to formalise the collaboration. When applying for a planning grant, this is done with the intention of submitting the complete proposal at one of the two next calls. Proposal for a planning grant can be submitted at any time without submission dead lines.

The following requirements should be met in order for a planning grant or complete proposal to be considered by VINNOVA:

- The project should be consistent with the direction of the call/programme and clearly contribute to the fulfilment of its goals
- In terms of subject, the project should be within one of the needs-driven research fields which fall within VINNOVA's field of activity, also see www.vinnova.se/In-English/Activities
- Applicants should be research groups/Centres of Excellence in research and innovation at universities/colleges, industry or research institutes. Milieus which may be considered are both those which have received VINNOVA financing and those which have received financing from other backers. Examples of such milieus include VINN Excellence Center, Berzelii Centres, Strategic Centres, Institute Excellence Centres, R&I milieus under VINNVÄXT investment and also company departments with activities that offers good qualification possibilities etc.
- The VINNMER Fellow for whom the research qualification is intended should lead the project and drive the preparation of the proposal
- The project should contribute to the establishment and/or further development of a long-term collaboration between a Swedish Centre of Excellence in research and innovation and an internationally prominent milieu abroad
- The foreign milieu should be internationally prominent in its field and/or have important complementary qualities in relation to the (applicant) Swedish research milieu. This international milieu can be located at university, research institute as well as at a company.
- The project should be initiated no later than 12 months after the assessment of the proposal.

- The project should be implemented during 24-36 months (relates to applications for complete proposals)
- The project should be implemented before the next or the second next assessment (relates to applications for planning grants)

At least 50% of the total cost of salaries for the project should be financed by R&I milieus, universities/colleges, research institutes or companies/the public sector. Other VINNOVA grants can not be used for financing the remaining salary.

7. Assessment criteria

The following criteria will determine VINNOVA's decision on financing of project proposals:

Relevance, i.e. how consistent the project is with the direction of the programme and whether it contributes to its impact

- assessment of the potential of the international collaboration and the mobility for which the project is aiming
- strategic importance of the field regarding future growth in Sweden
- assessment of the qualification value to the VINNMER Fellow
- assessment of the need for more women to qualify in the field being applied for

Quality, i.e. position of the participating R&I milieus within the research field, that the milieus are excellent and are conducting needs-driven research.

- assessment of the position of participating R&I milieus' (Swedish and foreign) in an international comparison
- assessment of the potential of synergies between participating milieus
- assessment of goal, strategy and content of the collaboration between the milieus
- researcher's activity in the host (applicant) milieu
- assessment of the VINNMER Fellow's CV
- assessment of preliminary career plan (the final plan shall be submitted after approved proposal)

Feasibility, i.e. capacity and credibility concerning implementation of proposed projects.

- assessment of the applicant R&I milieu's and qualificatory milieu's resolve and capacity to establish and in the long term maintain/develop the collaboration

Exploitability/utilisation, i.e. the resolve and capacity to convert the collaboration into social benefits and/or commercial exploitability.

- assessment of the benefit to the Swedish R&I milieu (and associated companies) of enhanced collaboration with prominent milieus abroad in the short and long term
- assessment of the VINNMER Fellow's opportunity for implementation of the new knowledge from the qualificatory milieu and the applicant milieu
- assessment of how the VINNMER Fellow's qualification affects the planning of their continued career.

These criteria will also recur in follow-up and future evaluations of the project.

8. Budget

The VINNMER programme budget totals SEK 350 million for the period 2007-2014 including contribution from the European Commission People FP7 - Marie Curie Actions - with €5 million.

In this call, financing of SEK 1 million/year is granted for a maximum of three years for each qualification project. In each assessment, it is estimated that around 20 complete projects for VINNMER Fellow qualification could be awarded for the three VINNMER parts.

For planning grants, it is estimated that approx. 25 appropriations every year will be granted finance of SEK 50,000 per planning grant.

9. Timetable

The following approximate times apply to the assessments of this call. Please note that there may be changes. For updated information on times, please see the call website: www.VINNOVA.se/VINNMER .

Date of assessment during spring:

Last application date for complete proposals: 1 April, 14.00

Last date for decisions on financing of complete proposals: 15 June (at the latest)

Date of assessment during autumn:

Last application date for complete proposals: 1 October, 14.00

Last date for decisions on financing of complete proposals: 15 December (at the latest)

Please note that application for planning grant is submitted to *VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification* together with a notification mail that shall be sent to Erik.Litborn@VINNOVA.se . Assessment of planning grant proposals followed by decision taken by VINNOVA is performed continuously. The decision is announced two months after submitting the proposal (at the latest).

10. Assessment process

Complete proposals are assessed by the joint programme board for the VINNMER and VINNPRO programmes (VINNOVA's programme for research schools).

VINNOVA then takes a decision on financing.

VINNOVA then notifies this decision to all applicants.

VINNOVA comes under the principle of public access. However, the authority is obliged by the Swedish Official Secrets Act to protect such things as company secrets.

11. How to apply

Proposals are electronic only, via the application service on the VINNOVA portal. This can be accessed through the call page of the VINNOVA website under “How to apply”.

To submit a proposal, you must first create a user account with VINNOVA. Use this to log into the application service. If you already have a user account with VINNOVA, you may use that.

The last date for proposal submissions is announced at www.VINNOVA.se/VINNMER. Please note that proposals should be in by 14.00 on this date.

In case of questions about the electronic application function, please contact VINNOVA’s IT Support, tel: +46 8 473 32 99, helpdesk@VINNOVA.se. IT Support is open weekdays, 08.00-16.30.

12. Proposal content

Observe that a proposal to VINNMER should be focused on the individual and that the VINNMER Fellow (project leader) should be in focus. The applicant should clearly describe when, where, for how long time the qualification is performed and what specifically in the project that offers qualification. As a consequence, pure and traditionally so called project proposals may not be assessed by the VINNMER programme board.

The applicant is strongly recommended to contact the personnel department at the applicant milieu already during the preparation phase of the proposal in order to clarify the budget section.

Observe that applicable financial support is maximum SEK 3 million for 3 years.

Complete proposal

The application service consists of a number of electronic form pages for completion by the applicant. Attached with the proposal should be a **project description**, three **supplementary appendices** (see below) and a **personnel appendix**. Only these appendices will be considered in a proposal.

The appendices should be in PDF format.

Supplementary appendices (3 x max. 2 pages A4 each with 12-point typeface. N.b. To be written in English by the respective parties and must be signed by the respective parties):

- the Swedish host milieu (the applicant) describes its view and supporting activities/resources of the qualification opportunities and associated international collaborations, description of the applicant R&I milieu’s resolve and capacity to establish and in the long-term develop/maintain the collaboration with the relevant milieu abroad

- the VINNMER Fellow (project leader, female doctoral researcher) gives their view of the particular researcher qualification, involvement, long-term networking etc.
- the foreign milieu evaluates the collaboration, description of the foreign host milieu's resolve and capacity to establish and in the long-term maintain a collaboration with the applicant Swedish milieu, additional support to the qualification of the VINNMER Fellow etc.

The personnel appendix should include a current CV for the VINNMER Fellow (project leader). The personnel appendix should be max. three (3) A4 pages with 12-point typeface.

The project description (i.e. a description of the activities included in the qualification opportunity) should be max. five (5) A4 pages with 12-point typeface. It should be written in English and comprise the following:

Main heading	Content
Title	Project title
Summary	Summary
Project relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the potential of the collaboration and international mobility for which the project is aiming • Strategic importance of the field for future growth in Sweden • Description of the need for more women to qualify in the field being applied for
Project quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the applicant Centre of Excellence in research and innovation and its international standing • Description of the foreign R&I milieu with which a collaboration is to be established; the milieu's international standing and excellence and areas of strength which complement the applicant Swedish milieu. Opportunities for synergies between the Swedish and foreign milieus in the short and longer term etc. • Ambitions, strategy and content of the planned (and any existing) collaboration between the Swedish and foreign milieus • In cases where the project is part of a larger initiative, a brief description of this too • Description of how the VINNMER Fellow is expected to develop their skills as a research director (preliminary <u>career/development plan</u> within the applicant milieu). The final career/development plan shall be submitted after decision of financial support.

Project feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project plan describing goals, strategy, activity plan and timetable with clear subsidiary goals. The plan should clearly state how the collaboration which directly includes the VINNMER Fellow should be run in the shorter and longer terms, what the VINNMER Fellow plans to work on in the host milieu, which activities should be carried out during the project time, plus who will be carrying these out and their scope (time and costs) • Budget incl the following posts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Salary incl lkp ○ Travel costs ○ Daily honorarium ○ Increased living costs ○ Costs for family e.g. school fee ○ Education and conference fee ○ Travel costs for own PhD students ○ Other (to be specified) ○ Overhead costs max 35% (applicable only for university) • Details on how the VINNMER Fellow's remaining salary is to be financed
Project exploitability and utilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan as to how the VINNMER Fellow's knowledge will be implemented in the applicant milieu • Description of how this qualification affects the VINNMER Fellow's future career
Risk analysis for the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of risk factors and a consequence and probability assessment for each risk factor • Any obstacles to publication of the results (in the case of qualification with companies)

Planning grant

The application service consists of a number of electronic form pages for completion by the applicant. Attached with the proposal should be a **project description** and a **personnel appendix**. Only these appendices will be considered in a proposal.

The appendices should be in PDF format.

The project description should be max. three (3) A4 pages with 12-point typeface. It should contain: a brief description of the internationally prominent R&I milieu(s) with which the applicant milieu wishes to discuss establishment of a collaboration; proposals as to what the collaboration should comprise and result in for the participating parties; the research direction of the applicant milieu; the VINNMER Fellow's (project leader) opportunities for research qualification and future career through the international collaboration; broad frameworks (including timetable) for the work of establishing contacts and drafting a complete proposal; and, a budget as to what the grant is intended to be used for.

The personnel appendix should include a current CV for the VINNMER Fellow (project leader). The personnel appendix should be max. three (3) A4 pages with 12-point typeface.

OBSERVE that application for planning grant is submitted to **VINNMER – Marie Curie international qualification** in the electronic application function together with a notification mail that shall be sent to Erik.Litborn@VINNOVA.se.

13. Contacts

Additional information about the programme, the call and proposals may be obtained from:

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