



FAQ - Research for a competitive and sustainable battery value chain

Question: Can we only apply for funding within the four specifically requested areas, and must the projects include cross-cutting analyses that address technology and business maturity? Is there a priority order between the specifically requested areas?

Answer: The call is open for applications across the full scope of the programme. The call highlights certain specific research areas, but it is not limited to these. There is no priority order among the specifically requested areas.

Regardless of whether the project proposal addresses a specifically requested area or not, applicants are encouraged to include cross-cutting analyses that address business and technology maturity in the project plan, either integrated into other work packages or as separate ones. These are described in detail in the call text.

The Swedish Energy Agency will award funding following a competitive selection process, based on an overall, consolidated assessment of the project's quality against the call's evaluation criteria and aims. In cases where the overall assessment is otherwise equal, priority will be given to projects that align with the research areas, cross-cutting analyses and collaborations that are specially welcomed in this call.

Question: What is the difference between the Swedish Energy Agency's call and Vinnova's call "Uppskalning för en hållbar batterivärdekedja 2026"?

Answer: This call is part of the Swedish Energy Agency's thematic research program The Sustainable Battery Value Chain, which, building on a long history of funding battery research & development, aims to boost Sweden's competitiveness, strengthen its security of supply, and advance ecological and social sustainability. Both this call, and the program at large, seek to attain the intended outcomes by focusing on promoting research excellence, knowledge and capacity building in a long-term perspective. The emphasis is on strengthening the academic knowledge base in concert with the industry and thereby contributing to new knowledge and innovation within a value chain context.

Vinnova's call, on the other hand, can be seen as complementing the aims of this call, by targeting technologies that have advanced further in their development, and by focusing on scaling, demonstration, and further development of solutions that are ready to be tested in a real-world environment and take the step toward industrial implementation and commercialisation.

Question: Which TRL levels are covered within the call?

Answer: The focus is on technologies at relatively early stage of technology readiness, at TRL levels roughly between 2 and 6.

Question: How much funding can one apply for per project, does a maximum amount exist?

Answer: Each project can apply for a maximum of 10 million SEK. The total budget for the call is approximately 70 million SEK.

Question: Can international actors apply for project funding within the call?

Answer: International actors may apply for project funding. The total requested funding for all international project partners within a project may not exceed 15% of the project's total requested funding. For example: if the total requested funding for the project is 10,000,000 SEK, a maximum of 1,500,000 SEK may be requested for international actors.

For international project partners, the current state aid regulations still apply, and the following three criteria must be fulfilled:

- 1. It can be demonstrated that the entities with no operations in Sweden possess unique expertise that is not available among entities based in Sweden.*
- 2. The project is essential for achieving the objectives of the program.*
- 3. A clear transfer of knowledge to entities based in Sweden can be achieved.*

The Swedish Energy Agency may deny the award of funding to entities within operations in Sweden even if all the above criteria are deemed to be fulfilled.

Question: What should I consider when designing a project involving international collaboration?

Answer: If you are planning a joint project or application with one or more international actors, include the international project partners' costs and funding for their participation in the project budget. For example, if the international partner has national funding from their own country for participating in the project, include this in the application budget. Also describe the type of funding



in the application, whether there are any special conditions or if their funding is conditional, as well as any potential consequences for the project's feasibility and goal fulfilment if the funding were to be withdrawn and the international project partner found themselves unable to fund their participation in the project.

The Following requirements apply only if one or more international project partners are seeking funding within the project:

- a. The total sum of funding for all the international partners combined in any single project is limited to 15 % of the total requested funding.**
- b. An international research exchange is undertaken within the project, with a minimum duration of six months, and with priority given to employees of the Swedish project partners that are active within the project.**

Regarding costs and in-kind financing: The general principle for Swedish funding is that costs must arise within the project partner's own organisation and must be actual and auditable. In-kind financing primarily refers to contributions other than money, through the partner's own participation in the project, for example, by providing knowledge and expertise, or equipment and costs associated with it. In-kind financing from one project partner cannot be counted as financing for another project partner's participation.

Question: What mandatory requirements are included in the call?

Answer:

1. The project leader for the project must either be a researcher who has not yet secured a permanent senior role within academia – such as an assistant professor, postdoctoral researcher or doctoral student – or, where the project coordinator is a company, an employee of that company.
2. The project must contribute to the fulfillment of one or more of the program goals
3. If the project includes one or more international partners that are applying for funding, the following conditions must be met:
 - a. The total amount of funding requested for all the international partners combined must not exceed 15 % of the total requested funding.



- b. An international research exchange is undertaken within the project, with a minimum duration of six months, and with priority given to employees of the Swedish project partners that are active within the project.

Question: What does the mandatory requirement regarding who can be the project leader mean?

Answer: The mandatory requirement concerning who can be a project leader has been implemented specifically for this call with the aim of promoting the meriting of less senior researchers, ensuring long-term competence supply, increasing gender equality in leadership positions, maintaining expertise, facilitating new collaborations, and enhancing the attractiveness of the field. Future calls will once again include qualification opportunities for more senior researchers.

The call text provides examples of academic positions that may be held by researchers who have not yet reached a *permanent senior role* within academia, and who therefore meet the mandatory requirement for being eligible as project leaders. Other academic positions not mentioned in the call text, but which also cannot be regarded as permanent senior role - such as project manager, research assistant, and various types of temporary appointments - may also meet the requirement.

For this call, a *permanent senior role* refers to the following roles: Professor, Associate Professor, and Senior Lecturer.

Project leaders employed by companies, including research institutes operating in corporate form, should similarly be selected with consideration of the call's purpose regarding the qualification of less senior researchers, long-term competence supply, increased gender equality in leadership positions, maintaining expertise, facilitating new collaborations, and enhancing the area's attractiveness.

Question: What should I read before submitting my application?

Answer: We recommend that you start by reading the full call version carefully. After that, please go through the Swedish Energy Agency's General Terms and Conditions for funding (included as an appendix in the full Swedish language call text), particularly if you are applying for the first time and/or unfamiliar with conditions on funding research & development set down in the state-aid rules.

Question: When will I be notified of the decision?

Answer: Our aim is to communicate the decision to you by the end of September. However, the timeline may change depending on circumstances, such as if we receive a very large number of applications. Feel free to get in touch if you have not heard from us by the end of September.

