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SWEDISH FOUNDATION *for*
STRATEGIC RESEARCH

The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research announces Industry Doctoral Student 2020

The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research (SSF) is allocating SEK 30 million for a program for Industrial Doctoral Students during 2020. Each grant in the program provides funding for one industry doctoral student's research and postgraduate studies, in collaboration between industry and academia. The grant runs for four to five years and shall result in a doctorate exam, PhD. SSF expects to fund 12 projects at SEK 2.5 million each (including indirect costs) in this call for proposals.

Introduction

Collaboration between industry and academia is important for the dissemination of knowledge and technology in society. According to its statutes, SSF shall foster the development of strong research environments with high strategic relevance, promote postdoctoral studies and collaboration between academia and industry, and encourage mobility. One instrument to achieve this is to support doctoral studies in collaboration between academia and industry.

The purpose of the program is to contribute to needs driven excellent research within SSF's areas of activity and to foster cross-fertilization between academia and industry. This can also lead to greater knowledge of the different conditions under which people work in academia and industry.

How the program works

The program is aimed at persons who have not yet been admitted to a doctoral studies program. The company employee, embarking on PhD-training shall have at least 80% position at the company for the entire period of the grant. Two persons shall serve as supervisors for the doctoral student during the period of the grant – one at the higher education institution (HEI) and one at the company. The supervisors shall be well established within their respective line organizations. The supervisor at the HEI is the applicant (sends in the application and ensures that it meets the requirements) and assumes the role of project leader (responsible for reporting to SSF and to the company) if the project is granted funding. The HEI where the project leader is employed administers the grant. There shall be a mandatory designated steering group consisting of at least the two supervisors for the project.

The application shall include a project description defining what work will be done. The research project must be formulated jointly by the company and the HEI. The project description shall also describe planned activities to foster an exchange of knowledge between the company and the HEI – everything from the fact that the doctoral student works in both environments to joint seminars, etc. At the time of application there shall also be declarations of intent from both the HEI (department head or equivalent) and the company (research director or equivalent). Both of these parties shall confirm the need

for the exchange and new knowledge accumulation, and ensure that the necessary practical arrangements are made for the execution of the project. The parties shall furthermore attest to the fact that the supervisors have a mandate and time allocated for this purpose.

The industry doctoral (person) does not need to be identified when the application is sent to SSF, but must be admitted to the doctoral program and be employed at the company before the project begins. The doctoral student shall devote the equivalent of four years of full-time work to the project, and is expected to share her or his time between the university and the company. Beyond that, up to 20% of the doctoral student's working hours can be devoted to other activities such as departmental service, if this work is funded by the HEI. During the period of the grant, the industry doctoral student shall pursue research and have own postgraduate studies in science, engineering or medicine.

The HEI must be Swedish. The company must be well commercially established (economic and sustainable) and possess sufficient competence to both contribute to and benefit from the knowledge gained in short and long term. The company shall normally be registered in Sweden, or so close to Sweden that the exchange can work practically and be justified strategically for Sweden. Furthermore, there must be no questionable Personal ownership relationship between academia and business. Instead of a company, the industrial party may also be a hospital if the project involves clinical research. Industrial research institutes or similar organizations may not represent either the academic or the industrial party in this call for proposals and may thereby not partake of SSF's grants for industrial doctoral students, although they may participate in the project in other ways.

The parties are jointly responsible for framing agreements on how IPR matters and the like are to be handled between them.

The Foundation's grant is SEK 2.5 million, which is expected to cover about half of what a doctoral project normally costs. The company is expected to provide whatever additional funds are required for a successful project. The grant may not be used for supervisors' salaries, but solely for costs directly related to the student's project. Representatives of the parties shall attest at the time of application that they are agreed on the total cost of the project and how the costs are to be shared between them. Indirect costs (overheads) are only permitted for that portion of SSF's grant that is spent at the HEI, equivalent to a surcharge of 35% on the direct costs. The grant does not cover any bench fees or other unwarranted costs.

The grant shall result in a PhD degree. 25% of the SSF-grant (i.e. 625 KSEK) will be withheld until a final report has been submitted, including a copy of the Ph.D certificate, and approved by SSF. If a doctorate degree has not been obtained in conjunction with a final report to SSF, this part of the grant will be withdrawn by SSF (with reservation for extensions on account of parental leave or illness).

Judgement criteria

The applications will be judged by a specially composed selection committee consisting of external experts. The following criteria will be taken into account in the selection process:

- Scientific quality of the research project
- Relevance and expected industrial/societal impact
- Mutuality (regarding needs and engagement) in the declarations of intent from both parties
- The qualifications of the steering group/supervisors
- Relations, e.g. that there are no financial or personal dependencies between the company, the doctoral student, the HEI and the supervisors.

For a participating company applying in several applications or already have SSF-grant(s) within the Industrial PhD-program, amplified requirements of the relevance criteria will apply. This will be of particular importance in the assessment. SSF will at maximum approve two projects per company per call for proposal.

One person can only apply in one application (supervisors and the student). One project idea may only be presented in one application. A main applicant with ongoing ID-project is not eligible to apply for a new ID-grant.

SSF always consider equal opportunity in calls for proposals. We encourage the applicant to consider equal opportunity.

Instructions

The applicant is a supervisor at an HEI. The entire application, including appendices, is filled out electronically at <http://apply.strategiska.se> and shall include a complete application form consisting mainly of (in addition to what is stated in the portal):

- Research plan, including scientific state of the art
- CV and list of publications for both supervisors – one from company (co-applicant) and one from HEI (main-applicant)
- Declarations of intent from the academic party and the industrial party describing the need for the applied-for project (written by the department head or equivalent at the university and the research director or equivalent in the company)
- Brief description and required qualifications of prospective doctoral student (education and experience)
- Relevance and expected societal impact
- Description of how intellectual property rights contractually will be handled in the project
- Budget, including specifications of overhead costs and other unspecified costs
- Description of the company with specifics such as corporate ID number, number of employees, net/gross turnover, business activities and a link to webpage
- Description of any dependencies (current or former) between the company, the doctoral/licentiate student, the HEI and the supervisors.

The application is written in English.

SSF recommends the applicants to read the FAQ at www.strategiska.se, Industrial Doctoral Student 2020.

The deadline for applications is 2:00 pm on 2 June, 2020. The earliest project start is 1 December 2020 but not later than 2021-06-30.

Note that all Foundation records are open to the public (offentlighetsprincipen). For this reason, do not send material that may not be made public at the present time, for example because it might jeopardize patenting.

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