



LUND
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Vice-Chancellor
Pro Vice-Chancellor

It is time for Lund University's profile areas to take shape

Lund University is now beginning the process of identifying profile areas. The aim is to find five very strong areas that include research, education and external engagement. The University Management sees opportunities for Lund University to obtain a considerable share of the government's planned investment in profile areas totalling SEK 500 million. The University has previous experience of creating strong research environments and we can also apply insights learned from the RQ20 research evaluation. The University's potential, breadth and collaborations will be illuminated in the plan that we present, and we also see great opportunities for the profile areas to attract external funding. The deadline for notification of interest to become a profile area is 15 March 2022. We look forward to the forthcoming process in the lead-up to the application.

You are welcome to take part in the first information meeting on 12 November 12:00-13:00. You register for the information meeting [here](#).

Best regards

Erik Renström, vice-chancellor

Per Mickwitz, pro vice-chancellor for research, campus development and sustainability

Appendix. FAQs about the profile areas answered by the Lund University Management

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Why is the University working on profiling now?

As of 2024, the Swedish government is planning to allocate part of the basic direct grant for research to what are called profile areas. The Swedish Research Council and the other major research funding bodies have put forward a proposal for how this can be done. The proposal is based on each university submitting an application that is then assessed according to specified criteria.

Internally, we also consider that there is good reason to see how we can even better utilise the University's breadth and strengths. Both the quality evaluation of research (RQ20) and the Research Council's recently published 2021 Swedish Research Barometer show that Lund University could be even better at utilising the unique breadth and the strengths at our disposal. In the forthcoming work on developing profile areas, we also see good opportunities to find new collaborations that we can benefit from in the long term.

However, the University Management is not entirely positive about the government's plans for the profile areas. We consider that some profiling can certainly increase the quality and impact of research, but the biggest problem is that the government wants to steer profiling via resource allocation. Despite scepticism regarding this principle, at Lund University we believe that in practice there can be a good outcome from the proposed allocation. We also believe that several synergy effects can arise in and during the work on profiling. There is thus every reason for the university to devote a lot of effort to an application for profile areas.

What is the University's aim concerning profiling?

As we begin the work on profiling, what we want to see most is how the University's research can be strengthened by utilising the University's potential and breadth even more effectively. The starting point for the profile areas is research, but the aim is for complete profile areas to be formed during the coming process. They are to be intertwined knowledge environments involving research, education and external engagement.

With the plan that we have established and the process that is now starting, we can be well prepared when it is time to submit an application concerning profiling. According to current information, this may take place in October 2022. Based on the proposal submitted by the research funding bodies, we are proceeding on the basis that we will submit a collective application that covers five profile areas. The application will be submitted in the University's name.

What is the timetable?

Lund University is now commencing work on profiling. The aim is for the university to be ready to submit an application in October 2022. The University's formal decision on the process and criteria will be made in mid-November. Prior to this, there will be an information meeting on 12 November and the views and thoughts from it will be taken into account before the vice-chancellor's decision, so we would like to see a big turnout for this meeting.

According to the plan, the deadline for notification of interest is 15 March 2022. The decision on the profile areas that will be included in Lund University's application will be made by the vice-chancellor on 5 May 2022. A more detailed

timetable will be established in specific management rules (to be distributed later in November). The timetable may change when there is more information about the national timetable.

What type of profile area are we striving for?

The profile areas at Lund University are to fulfil the aims and criteria proposed by the research funding bodies and utilise the University's strengths. The ambitions of the areas are to align with those of the faculties and the University as a whole.

The areas are to be complete knowledge environments involving research, education and external engagement. They are to be based on strong research and involve several strong researchers. The profile areas are to be dynamic and innovative and are not only to continue working on what is already being done.

A key aspect is doing something different and being able to state the conditions and ambitions for this. In addition, the profile areas are to be able to demonstrate external engagement and the intended effects of such engagement (societal impact). It is also important to show how research is intertwined with education. We expect innovative proposals for external engagement and new thinking on the intertwining of research and education.

What would a conceivable profile area consist of?

About 20 Principal Investigators who could obtain around SEK 10 million in profiling grants per year plus an equal amount through co-funding. With these new resources, the profile area should be able to attract significant external grants. Calculated using average figures for the University, these external grants could amount to SEK 30-40 million. For a conceivable profile area this would provide a total annual budget of between SEK 50 and 60 million. The new funding could be used for new recruitment among other things.

What will the process at Lund University's look like?

The process for identifying profile areas will be open and transparent. All those wishing to send in a notification of interest may do so, but we urge everyone to think carefully about the aims, conditions and criteria for profile areas before submitting a notification of interest. An information meeting (in English) to be held on 12 November will be open to everyone at Lund University. A video recording of the meeting will be published afterwards. Information about the process will then be published on the Research Board's home page (here [in Swedish](#) and [here in English](#)), including a FAQ, which will be updated as new questions are added.

Several open and thematic discussion forums led by consultants from KIA, the University's internal consultancy group, will be held to stimulate the work on registrations of interest. In addition, discussion forums will be organised by AI Lund and the Sustainability Forum among others. However, the registrations of interest that may stem from these forums will not be given precedence later on in the process.

Once the notifications of interest have been received, they will be discussed by the University Management and the deans. Promising profile areas will be interviewed by a panel with both internal and external members. Finally, the five profile areas that are deemed to be the most promising complete environments and fulfil the existing criteria and aims will be those which are included in the University's collective application.

The aim of the University's process is greater than just identifying five profile areas. The intention is for the process to increase knowledge about activities between the faculties and highlight strengths in the organisation to help stimulate discussion about new, ground-breaking research.