



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Campus
Development and Sustainability

Management rules for notification of interest for profile areas at Lund University

Background to the profile areas

The background to the opportunity to notify interest in profile areas at Lund University is the government's proposed new model for quality-based resource allocation and profiling in the Research Bill (2020/21:60). The government's goal for the new model is to promote high quality in research. The government also wants to promote strategic profiling and prioritisation of research with the best conditions for research of the highest international quality. According to the government, the profile areas are to be strategic research initiatives of high quality defined by the higher education institutions themselves.

On 1 June 2021, the Swedish Research Council and other research councils presented a proposal for how the new model for quality-based resource allocation could be organised and implemented. A profile area is to cover research, engagement with wider society and education in a cohesive knowledge environment of high quality. The profile areas can have different levels of maturity – from established to under development with potential to achieve very high quality, but the common denominator is a very clear development perspective. The councils' proposal entails the assessment of applications on the basis of three qualitative criteria: strategic profile and conditions for quality development, research quality, and quality in external engagement.

According to the budget proposal, the government intends to continue to entrust the research councils with pursuing the development of the model in consultation with higher education institutions, to enable its introduction as of 2024.¹ This means that the model may be adjusted before the calls for applications for profile areas are published. A link to the research bill is available [here](#) and a link to the research councils' proposal for a new model is to be found [here](#).

Lund University has long worked with profiling, renewal and quality enhancement. Lund University recently implemented the RQ20 quality evaluation ([here](#)) and in 2020 the University adopted the "Strategy for Lund University's strategic research areas 2020-2030" ([here](#)). Lund University therefore has good prerequisites for working on these issues. The vice-chancellor has decided that Lund University will begin work on profiling and guidelines for the work (STYR 2021/2396, dated 2021-11-18). In these management rules, the process is specified according to the guidelines decided by the vice-chancellor.

¹ Government budget proposal, Prop. 2021/22:1 Expenditure area 16, pp. 155-156.

Open notification of interest for potential profile areas

It is possible to submit a notification of interest for potential profile areas at Lund University. The process of notifying interest is open to all researchers. Open, thematic procedures will also be organised, among others around themes for profile areas identified as promising by the vice-chancellor's management council.

However, these themes are not granted precedence in the assessment of notifications of interest, as all the proposed profile areas will be assessed according to the same criteria.

The University as an organisation is the entity that applies for funding for the profile areas in a collective application. Currently, Lund University is planning to submit an application for profile areas based on five such areas. Besides the individual quality of these profile areas, importance will be attached to **the collective whole formed by all the profile areas and how they together relate to Lund University's research**. If no cohesive, appropriate whole is achieved through the notifications of interest received, further proposals may be mobilised during the process.

Criteria for Lund University's profile areas

A central starting point for the profile areas at Lund University is the three quality aspects included in the research councils' proposed models: strategic profile and prerequisites for quality enhancement, research quality, and quality in external engagement and associated assessment criteria. These are replicated in table 2.

Table 2. Quality aspects and specified assessment criteria

Quality aspect	Assessment criteria
<i>Strategic profile and prerequisites for quality enhancement</i>	The University's strategic work on profiling, renewal and quality enhancement
	The added value of the profile area/s for the University's research profile and research quality, range of study programmes and external engagement with wider society
	The University's prerequisites for developing the profile area/s, e.g. in terms of funding, staff, gender equality and access to relevant research infrastructure
	The profile areas' contribution to creating knowledge environments of high quality that include research, education and external engagement
<i>Research quality</i>	The University's work on maintaining, renewing and developing the research quality within the profile area in an international perspective
	Existing level and potential for research in the profile area to move the research frontier forwards
<i>Quality in external engagement</i>	The University's work to maintain and develop the quality within the profile area in external engagement with wider society in relation to the nature and conditions of the area
	Existing level and potential for research in the profile area to contribute to generating better understanding of and solutions to societal challenges

Formas, Forte, the Swedish Research Council and Vinnova (2021), *Quality-based resource allocation. Proposal for a new model*. Pages 14-15.

Lund University is to utilise its strengths in the best possible way to create profile areas that will be successful in the application, as well as contributing to moving the University's research, education and external engagement forwards. The following criteria (table 3) will be used to assess the notifications of interest and

will constitute a basis for the University's decision on the profile areas at Lund University.

Table 3. Lund University's criteria for the profile areas

Existing research vs new ideas	<u>Starting point:</u> All profile areas shall build on research (research fields or teams) that is already very strong internationally. Certain bibliometric analyses, together with other background material, will be used to demonstrate this and to make selections.
	<u>Starting point:</u> It is desirable for the profile areas to utilise Lund University's breadth, but at the same time it is important not to make the profile areas too broad; not everyone needs to be included.
	<u>Starting point:</u> A profile area can also include teams with high scientific potential that are not yet world-leading in their field, but they can only make up a small minority.
	<u>Starting point:</u> All profile areas shall be able to show why they are unique in relation to what is being done at other universities in Sweden and internationally. For example, bibliometrics and analyses of research grants can be used to demonstrate this.
	<u>Ambition:</u> All profile areas shall have innovative and inventive ambitions that go beyond what is already being done at Lund University or internationally. What we aspire to achieve rather than what we are already doing.
	<u>Ambition:</u> All groups must be well-integrated in a credible whole.
Researchers	<u>Starting point:</u> All profile areas need several researchers with strong CVs and a balance of experienced and early-career researchers.
	<u>Starting point/Ambition:</u> It is important that the profile areas clearly demonstrate regrowth, generational turnover and gender equality.
	<u>Ambition:</u> All profile areas will need to develop a plan for the expertise that will have to be provided through recruitment.
Research infrastructure	<u>Starting point:</u> It is important that at least one of the profile areas utilises the unique research infrastructure present in Lund (MAX IV, ESS)
	<u>Ambition:</u> For the profile area/s that utilise the unique research infrastructure, there should be ambitious, innovative plans in place for the research infrastructures that are well integrated with the other stated ambitions.
External engagement	<u>Starting point:</u> All profile areas must already be able to show examples of strong external engagement involving industry, the public sector or citizen organisations that has been described or can be described in impact stories*.
	<u>Ambition:</u> All profile areas shall have a network of agents who are known to want to engage actively in developing the profile area.
Education	<u>Starting point:</u> All profile areas shall have a clear intertwining of research and education, preferably at different stages (candidate, master, doctoral or lifelong learning). This intertwining must be describable through specific courses and teaching staff members.

	<u>Ambition:</u> All profile areas shall have clear plans to develop existing education and to create new study programmes based on the research that is being done.
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*An impact story means an account that can be backed up on how completed research has contributed to societal impact. The societal impact can be of many different kinds, including new innovations, practical applications in public healthcare or schools, new legislation or a new world view (although this is often hard to establish the role of research for this). Examples of impact stories can be found on the blog "[Identifying profile areas at Lund University](#)".

Discussion forums: thematic and open

As part of the development of potential profile areas, Lund University plans to organise two open discussion forums (with no pre-set theme) and three discussion forums on specific themes. Information on the discussion forums and invitations to participate will be sent out separately and will be posted on the blog "[Identifying profile areas at Lund University](#)".

Timetable for Lund University's processing

The timetable (table 4) states the steps in the University's processing of notifications of interest in becoming a profile area at Lund University.

Please note: The timetable may be changed if new information is received from the government or research councils which the University must take into account.

Once the notifications of interest have been submitted (15 March 2022, at 14:00) the process will be characterised by dialogue and interactivity. Some potential profile areas may be asked to complement their notifications of interest (not necessarily all of them).

Table 4. Timetable

Date	Person/unit responsible	Task
12 November 2021 from 12:00 to 13:00	Vice-chancellor and pro vice-chancellor for research	Open information meeting about profiling for all those interested at Lund University was arranged. The vice-chancellor and pro vice-chancellor for research informed and responded to questions.
18 November 2021	Vice-chancellor	The vice-chancellor took the decision on the profiling process at Lund University.
22 November 2021	Pro vice-chancellor for research	Decision on management rules.
22 November 2021	Research Services	Notification of interest for profiling opens. The management rules are sent out and published on the blog " Identifying Profile Areas at Lund University ".
3 December from 12.15 to 13.15	Pro vice-chancellor for research	Open on-line meeting for all employees with the opportunity to ask questions about the notification of interest in profiling. Registration for the zoom online meeting here . (Remember to check your trash for the confirmation-email if you do not receive it in your email inbox)

22 November 2021 – 15 March 2022	KIA consultant, offices of the vice- chancellor	Development of notifications of interest for profile areas through organised discussion forums. Invitations to discussion forums to be sent out separately and published on the blog “ Identifying Profile Areas at Lund University ”.
15 February 2022	Contact person	Pre-notification with preliminary title on the proposed profile area and contact person’s contact details. Send to Research Services by email at ansokan@forskningservice.lu.se .
15 March 2022 at 14:00	Contact person	Deadline for notifying interest in becoming a profile area at Lund University. Send to Research Services by email at ansokan@forskningservice.lu.se .
15 March – 4 May 2022	Contact person	Those who have developed notifications of interest must be prepared to complement them if additional information should be requested.
17 March 2022	Vice-chancellor’s management council	Discussion on notifications of interest received.
25 March 2022	Pro vice-chancellor	Decision on which proposed profile areas are to go forward to deeper assessment through interview, based on discussion in the vice-chancellor’s management council.
6-7-8 April 2022	Panel	A panel consisting of representatives from the vice-chancellor’s management council, student representatives and external assessors, known as “critical friends,” interview representatives of a selection of potential profile areas.
22 April 2022	Deans concerned	The faculties submit statements assuring their support for potential profile areas, including certification of funding for new positions per profile area for the 2024-2030 period based on how the principles for co-funding are decided.
28 April 2022	Vice-chancellor’s management council	Discussion of proposals for selected profile areas and the whole that they form collectively, and in relation to Lund University’s research.
5 May 2022	Vice-chancellor	Decision on which profile areas Lund University is to base its collective application on after a proposal from the pro vice-chancellor.
5 May – September 2022	Pro vice-chancellor for research (Contact persons for the profile areas)	Application writing. Pro vice-chancellor Per Mickwitz, supported by Research Services, writes the application, with documentation and comments from the representatives of the selected profile areas.
5 May – September 2022	Vice-chancellor and pro vice-chancellor	Dialogue with other higher education institutes on cooperation, synergies and complementarity.

1 October 2022	Vice-chancellor	The vice-chancellor approves the University's collective application and the application is submitted.
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Notify interest

Notifications of interest in becoming a profile area are made according to the structure specified in Appendix 1. The notification of interest is to be written in English and not to exceed 5 pages (Times New Roman, font size 11).

The deadline for notifying interest in becoming a profile area at Lund University is **15 March 2022 at 14:00** via email to ansokan@forskningservice.lu.se. State "Notification of interest profile area" in the subject field of the email. Put together the notification of interest and the attachments in a single PDF file, labelled with the contact person's surname.

Please note: The timetable may be changed if new information is received from the government or research councils which the University must take into account.

Any questions?

Any questions should be addressed to Research Funding Advisor Tina Trollås, Research Services (tina.trollas@fs.lu.se, extension 27745).

You can also visit the blog "[Identifying Profile Areas at Lund University](#)", where the Frequently Asked Questions will be updated continuously.

Appendix 1. Structure for the notification of interest to become a profile area at Lund University

Please note: The notification of interest is not to exceed 5 pages, of which Part A maximum 3 pages and Part B maximum 2 pages (Times New Roman, font size 11).

Contact person for the profile area: state name of contact person and email address, telephone number and organisational unit at Lund University.

Part A. Description of the profile area for which the notification of interest is being submitted

Part A maximum 3 pages.

A1. Aim of the profile area

A1.1. What is the title of the profile area?

A1.2. What issue (societal and/or research) does the profile area intend to address? A question that the profile area wants to gather around, and which shows the profile area's relevance.

A2. Existing research basis and new ideas

A2.1. What current research teams is the profile area based on?

A2.2. What are the scientific strengths of the current teams?

A2.3. What can the profile area achieve together that is unique and not already being done today?

A2.4. What is the contribution of the current teams to the profile area? (Why are they involved?)

A3. Central researchers

A3.1. Which strong researchers are to be included in the profile area (at least 3 per current team)?

A3.2. What is the breadth (experienced – early-career researchers)?

A3.3. What is required to guarantee regeneration and generational turnover?

A3.4. What is the gender equality among the researchers?

A3.5. What 10 new recruitments during 2024-2030 could most reinforce the profile area?

A4. Research infrastructure

A4.1. What research infrastructure does the profile area plan to use?

A4.2. What added value does the research infrastructure give the profile area?

A4.3. What are the future ambitions for use of research infrastructure?

A5. External engagement

A5.1. What, relevant for the profile area, engagement with wider society (non-academic partners such as industry, the public sector or citizen organisations) do the research teams have performed?

A5.2. How have external engagement resulted in societal impact?

A5.3. Which are the most important external engagement partners (non-academic partners) be for the profile area?

A6. Education

A6.1. What does the intertwining between research and education look like today, is there education today that is based on research from the profile area?

A6.2. In what way will intertwining be guaranteed in the future? Describe the possibilities to develop new education within the profile area.

Part B. Justification for why the profile area can be assessed as maintaining very high international research quality and why the profile area can be deemed to have very high quality in external engagement with wider society and the potential to contribute to create better understanding of or solutions to societal challenges*

Part B maximum 2 pages.

B.1. Strategic profile and prerequisites for quality enhancement

B1.1. The prerequisites to develop the profile area, e.g. in terms of funding, staff, gender equality and access to relevant research infrastructure.

B1.2. The profile area's contribution to creating a cohesive knowledge environment of high quality that includes research, education and external engagement.

B2. Research quality

B2.1. Work to maintain, renew and develop the research quality within the profile area in an international perspective.

B2.2. Existing level and potential for research in the profile area to move the research frontier forwards.

B3. Quality in external engagement

B3.1. Work to maintain and develop quality in the profile area in external engagement with wider society in relation to the nature and conditions of the area.

B3.2. Existing level and potential for the research in the profile area to contribute to generating better understanding for or solutions to societal challenges.

* The choice of words in section B. is based on the proposal of the Swedish Research Council and other research councils. If the proposal is further developed, these headings will also be changed accordingly.