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Call for **Strategic Research Grants 2024** funded by the Faculty of Medicine (for the years 2025-2027) B1 VR criteria

The¹ Faculty of Medicine announces up to² ten³ 3-year research grants of 800 000 SEK/year including funds for overhead (*gemensamma kostnader*). The call is open for all research areas within the Faculty of Medicine and aims to strengthen the competitiveness of researchers to attract external grants received in competition. The grant may be used for salaries (doctoral students, postdocs or other employees), infrastructures or for covering running costs.

Researchers who receive funds from the faculty's calls are expected to contribute to peer review within the faculty.

The target group for the call is teaching staff with competitive research projects that are yet to be financed by regional grants from the university/ALF/TUA or Norra sjukvårdsregionen (Region Västerbotten/Region Jämtland Härjedalen/Region Västernorrland/Region Norrbotten). This includes individuals who are *not* among the faculty's top researchers with regard to ongoing, significant external grants (as defined in this call).

General information

The long-term goal is to annually announce up to ten 3-year grants of 800 000 SEK/year (that is, thirty ongoing grants, three years in length.) The distribution of the grants with respect to different research areas is evaluated annually. Future evaluations shall establish if the grants have resulted in increased competitiveness in attracting external grants.

The application should be written in English (since the reviewers may be English speaking); must be signed by the applicant and the head of department. The head of department must attest that the application has undergone an internal peer review process at the department and describe the internal peer review process.

The applicant shall select if the application should be reviewed by Review panel 1, which will review the application using the criteria for scientific quality of The Swedish Research Council (VR), or by Review panel 2, which will review the application using the criteria for scientific quality, and societal relevance as used by FORTE/FORMAS. Only one application per applicant can be submitted; consequently, the applicant must choose whether the application should be reviewed by Review panel 1 or 2. *The applicant is fully responsible for sending the application to the correct review panel: **B1**, FS 2.1.6-74-24 (B1), or **B2**, FS 2.1.6-75-24 (B2).*

Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria for both *Strategic research grants 2024* and *Strategic research grants for scientifically young researchers 2024*, may apply for a research grant from both calls. However, it's important to note that only one research grant will be awarded. If both review panels recommend granting a research award to an

¹ This document has been translated into English. In case of divergence of meaning between the English and Swedish wording of this document, the Swedish wording shall prevail.

² The Faculty has budgeted for and awarded 10 grants per year in recent years. However, for 2025, the number of grants that can be awarded will also depend on the financial framework, in addition to the quality of applications.

³ Refers to the total number of three-year grants from *Strategic research grants* (B1 and B2)



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applicant, the individual will have the opportunity to choose from which call the research grant will be allocated.

Eligible to apply

The call is open for teaching staff at the Faculty of Medicine holding a PhD, that are at least 50% tenured⁴ during the entire grant period 2025-01-01 to 2027-12-31⁵, see additional criteria below:

- A) The applicant must include an attestation regarding ongoing research funding from a governmental funding body (VR, FORTE, FORMAS, VINNOVA), or regarding a filed application for such funding (as main applicant); this is required to be eligible to apply for a strategic research grant. The project plan submitted to a governmental research council for a grant application does not have to match the one presented for the faculty's Strategic Research Grants call. There's no requirement to disclose any association with the application to a governmental research council in the faculty grants application.
- B) *The applicant may not, as of 30/4 2024, have obtained/been granted financial support of 500 000 SEK or more for 2024 from the faculty/UmU and/or from Region Västerbotten/Region Jämtland Härjedalen/Region Västernorrland/Region Norrbotten (including ALF/TUA).* This excludes travel grants, funding for infrastructure, funding for interdisciplinary and innovative research, faculty-funded time (FFT), and basenhets-ALF.

Example of support can be funding from the faculty/UmU or Region Västerbotten/Region Jämtland Härjedalen/Region Västernorrland/Region Norrbotten, this includes all co-funding and support for salaries, resources and/or indirect support, for example support for KAW Fellows/Projects/Scholars and WCMM fellows. Other examples of financial support are co-funding of doctoral students, start-up grants, funding linked to promotion or recruitment, basic science biotechnology grants (*bioteknikmedel*) and the following grants from *Region Västerbotten/Region Jämtland Härjedalen/Region Västernorrland/Region Norrbotten*: Centrala ALF-medel, TUA-medel, spjutspetsmedel and funding granted for research when employed as professor. This does not include funding for infrastructure.

For strategic research grants (3-year grant) and grants for basic-science oriented biotechnology research (2-year grant), there must be a one-year gap before you can obtain new funding from this call. So, if a teacher who has received the last payment of funds from either of these two calls during 2023, they can now apply for funds for the years 2025-2027 (even if the disposition period of the previous grant extends up to and including 2024).

⁴ Researchers with a Ph.D. and a permanent employment at the Faculty of Medicine on a teacher/researcher position according to the *Appointments Procedure for Teachers at Umeå University*, valid as of 2022-02-18 (FS 1.1-129-22), including persons with permanent positions as assistant professors (biträdande universitetslektorer) or research fellows (forskare).

⁵ The human resources coordinator at the department can assist in the event of uncertainty about eligibility linked to employment.



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- C) The applicant must *not* belong to the faculty's top researchers – a top researcher is in this call defined as a teacher who, *no later than 30 April 2024* obtains/is granted a total annual revenue for research equivalent to *4 MSEK or more for 2024* (including external funding as well as local grants according to B above), excluding travel grants or funding for infrastructure (refers to funds that have been advertised for this very purpose).

If the said funding/grants are shared, the applicant need only to account for the sum that has been granted/requisitioned to him/her.

For questions on eligibility to apply, the financial officer of the department may contact the Faculty Office: Controller Carina Wallmark, carina.wallmark@umu.se, or the research coordinators via research.med@umu.se.

Review panel and grant decisions

The applications will be evaluated by Review panel 1 or 2 respectively; the review panels will be appointed by the Strategic Board for Research (FON). The chair and the vice chair of each review panel will be recruited internally and shall have experience from review panels at national research councils. The panel members will mainly be recruited among external researchers with experience from work in review panels in national and international research councils. The goal is to appoint panel members who have the required competence to assess applications from all research areas at the faculty. If the review panel finds that it needs to be supplemented by members in order to evaluate all applications, the panel then will be complemented accordingly. For each review panel, one member from the Strategic Board for Research (FON) and/or one member from the Faculty Board (FN) will be appointed as observers.

Review panel 1 will evaluate the applications according to a combination of the assessment criteria as used by The Swedish Research Council (**VR**) and include:

- The scientific quality of the project (1-7)
- Novelty and originality (1-7)
- The research competence of the applicant (1-7)
- Feasibility (1-3)
- An overall assessment, reflecting the scientific quality of the application (1-7)

Scoring according to these criteria aims at facilitating the assessment of single components of the application. There will also be an overall assessment regarding the scientific quality of the application. Based on the assessment, all members of the review panel will rank the reviewed applications. The individual rankings of each reviewer will be combined to give a preliminary ranking for further discussion at the review panel meeting. When two or more applications are assessed as equal, based on their total score, the score for scientific quality will be ranked most important. The chair of the review panel will present the final ranking at a meeting with the Strategic Board for Research (FON), which in turn will forward a recommendation for decision to the Faculty Board (FN); FN will make the final decision. The number of research grants granted in each group (B1 and B2) is dependent on the number of applications in each group.



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The application must include the following appendices and be sent in via the Faculty's application portal Researchweb (see further instructions in the application portal)

CV, publications, local funding and external research grants

To ensure your profile is updated in Researchweb, follow these steps:

1. **CV and Publications:** Make sure your CV is updated in your profile in Researchweb. You also need to have updated the publication list, i.e. synchronized it with SwePub.
2. **Local funding** (see section B on page 2): Update your profile with a list of obtained and/or granted local funding during 2020-01-01 - 2024-04-30; please specify the amount and year for each grant.
3. **External research grants:** Update your profile with a list of obtained (requisitioned) and/or granted external research grants during 2020-01-01 - 2024-04-30; please specify the amount and year for each grant.
This also includes research grants received as a co-applicant.

Please note that the information requested in 2 and 3 above must be produced in consultation with the department's financial officer and head of department.

Note that excerpt from Raintance is no longer required. Individuals selected to receive funding, as well as those placed in reserve, shall undergo an eligibility check.

Appendix A Selection of publications

Select up to ten most important publications to the application. You should state, for each of the selected publication, your contributions to the publication and in which context the publication contributes to the intended project. (This must not exceed four lines per publication).

Mark your name in the list of authors in bold. Include number of citations for the publication, and the Impact Factor for the journal during the year of the intended publication.

Appendix B Research plan for applications to Review panel 1 – to be reviewed according to criteria of the Swedish Research Council (VR)

The Research plan in its entirety must encompass no more than 10 A4 pages, (font Arial 11, or larger, single spaced) and must be prospective (*framåtblickande*) and structured according to that of a research plan in a VR application, i.e.:

- **Project title**
- **Purpose and aims:** State the overall purpose and specific goals of the research project. If you have specified that sex and gender perspectives are relevant to the application, describe in what way they will be applied in relation to purpose, aim and questions of the research project.
- **State-of-the-art:** Briefly summarize the current research frontier within the field/area. Indicate key references.
- **Significance and scientific novelty:** Briefly describe how the project relates to previous research within the area, and its importance in the short and long term. Describe also how the project moves forward and innovates the current research frontier. Please include sex and gender perspectives when relevant.



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- **Preliminary and previous results:** Briefly describe your previous research and pilot studies within the research area that make it probable that the project will be feasible. State also if no preliminary results exist.
- **Project description:** Describe the project, including the following items:
 - *Theory and methods:* Describe the underlying theory and the methods to be applied in order to reach the project goals. When applicable, describe how sex and gender perspectives relate to the choice of design, questions, method and materials, population/study participants and data processing and analysis, for example statistics and presentation of results divided by sex.
 - *Time plan and implementation.* Describe summarily the time plan for the project during the grant period, and how the project will be implemented.
 - *Project organization.* Clarify the contributions of yourself and any participating researchers to the implementation of the project. Describe and explain the competences and roles of the participating researchers in the project, and any other researchers or corresponding who are important for the implementation of the project.
 - *Ethical considerations.* You must specify whether there are specific ethical concerns in your project. If so, you must describe the relevant ethical considerations and how they will be managed. Examples include research that uses personal data, or experiments on humans or animals. If you are researching people, human tissue, or sensitive personal data, you must submit an application for ethical approval to the Swedish Ethical Review Authority (*Etikprövningsmyndigheten*) and have it approved. In the case of animal testing, you must also have approval from an ethical committee for animal testing (*djurförsöksetisk nämnd*). You can apply for this via the Swedish Board of Agriculture's e-service (*Jordbruksverkets e-tjänst*).

You must state in your application if you have an existing ethical approval or not. If you do not have it, and your application is granted funding, you must have ethical approval before the described studies commence. The department where the research is to be conducted is responsible for ensuring that ethical approval has been obtained before the work begins.

If your project is not expected to involve research that requires ethical approval, state this in your application, and justify how and why.

- *Sex and gender perspective.* State whether sex and gender perspectives are applicable in your planned research and justify your decision. Please note that we are not asking for information about the composition of the research team (men/women).

The following applies:

- If you answer 'Yes': Justify your answer and describe also how you take sex and gender perspectives into account in the research plan (see further instructions under "Research plan"). If you have stated that sex and gender perspectives are applicable, but still choose not to include them in your research plan, you will need to justify this here.



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- If you answer 'No': Please justify your answer.

- **International and national collaboration:** Describe your and the team's collaboration with foreign and Swedish researchers and research teams and its role in the project. State whether you contribute to or refer to international collaboration in your research.

Also, please provide the following information. If a heading is not relevant to your application, please leave blank.

- **Data analysis and statistics:** Modern methods often generate complex data. Describe how you plan to analyze data collected in the project, and the statistical methods used. If the project covers clinical studies, please include a power analysis.
- **Equipment:** Describe the basic equipment you and your team have at your disposal for the project.
- **Need for infrastructure:** Specify the project's need for international and national infrastructure. Also specify the need for local infrastructure, if depreciation costs for this are included in the application.
- **Independent line of research:** If you are working or will be working in a larger group, please clarify how your project relates to the other projects in the group. If you are continuing a project that was wholly or partly started during your doctoral or postdoctoral studies, you must also describe the relationship between your project and the research of your former supervisor.
- **Clinical significance:** Explain if and, if so, how the results of the project may be transferred into clinical use within the area medicine and health.

Appendix C Abstract

The description may cover a maximum of 1 A4 page (font Arial 11, or larger, single spaced).

- The abstract must provide a summary guide to the purpose and implementation of the research and be written in such a way that persons with a different scientific background can understand the information.

Appendix D Popular science description

The description may cover a maximum of 1 A4 page (font Arial 11, or larger, single spaced),

Describe the project in such a way that a person who is not familiar with the subject can understand it. Describe what is to be done and why, and explain why the new knowledge may be important.

Appendix E Budget and financial resources

- Briefly list personnel costs, other costs, and any other funding of the project for Year 1 – Year 3.
- Briefly justify each cost in the budget stated. The description may cover a maximum of 2 A4 pages (font Arial 11, or larger, single spaced).



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- Other funding. Please state any funding for the project (whole or part) received by you or another researcher, in excess of the amount in this application. Please state rounded amounts in SEK.

Appendix F Attestation regarding funding/filed application to a governmental research council (*statligt forskningsråd*)

Attach a copy as proof of an obtained research grant from a governmental funding body (VR, FORTE, FORMAS, VINNOVA) or a confirmation of the submitted application during the last year (as main applicant).

Appendix G Certificate from the head of department

Attach a document from the head of department certifying that the application is supported and ***in what way*** it has undergone an internal peer review at the department.

The application must be submitted via the Faculty's application portal in Researchweb, www.researchweb.org/is/umu **no later than 30 May, 2024 14.00CET**.

Please note that applications that are not submitted via Researchweb or that are incomplete are *not* valid and will therefore not be assessed.