

INSTRUCTIONS TO CALL FOR SPACE EXPLORATION PROJECTS, 2026-E

Open call to researchers in Sweden to apply for funding for Space Exploration Research

SCHEDULE

Release: Prisma is planned to open no later than March 20, 2026.

Deadline: Applications must be submitted no later than **May 13, 2026, at 14:00**.

Decision: Grant decisions are expected before the end of the year 2026.

Period: Grant duration can be up to four years.

PURPOSE OF THE CALL

The Swedish National Space Agency (SNSA, *Rymdstyrelsen*) intends to support space exploration projects within life and physical sciences. Examples of eligible disciplines are. space physiology, biology, physical and material sciences that utilise space environment or relevant analogues.

Research projects should concern, in a concrete way, scientific analysis of measurements from experiments, selected by ESA or other space agency, implemented or to be implemented by means of the following platforms:

- International Space Station
- suborbital microgravity rockets
- ground-based and airborne platforms, e.g., bedrest, drop tower, parabolic flights or ground analogues

Project proposals may also concern participation to space exploration experiments in the disciplines mentioned above, selected by other major space agencies as well as scientific studies addressing needs of future space exploration within life and physical sciences. For projects, currently not dealing with an analysis of space data (or data from e.g. ESA suborbital or ground-based platforms), a clear plan of future utilisation of space data, suborbital or ground-based analogues should be presented as well as justification of the value of the proposed project for future space exploration.

Please note that in the selection process for this call, priority will be given to highly ranked proposals that involve selected space experiments.

Sweden is an ESA member state and participating state to the ESA Exploration Envelope Programme Terrae Novae. Various announcements of opportunity are regularly issued within this programme and participation to ESA calls is strongly encouraged. Being selected in an ESA Call, in competition, will be seen as an important boundary condition when evaluating proposals submitted to this call.

To be considered for funding, the application must align with the objectives described above. It must therefore explicitly specify the data sets to be used, their sources, availability (including timeframe), and authorised access.

Educational activities are not covered by the current call. Furthermore, we refer to Call 2026-N for projects focused on hardware and software contributions and operation of international research missions within space exploration. Please note that this call does not cover technology development for space exploration.

The call is limited to projects that will give meaningful scientific results within a research grant of maximum four years.

Applicants who are uncertain if their projects fit the purpose and rules of this call are advised to contact SNSA staff.

Funding level

There is no strict limit on the maximum amount of support that can be applied for in this call. You can therefore apply for the necessary funding for your project, on condition that your budget is carefully justified. The budget for previously awarded grants, available on the SNSA website, can provide guidance on what level of funding is considered reasonable and affordable.

ENCLOSURES

An enclosure with the project description must be uploaded to the Prisma system (in PDF format). You may optionally also include an enclosure with letters of information. The minimum font size for bulk text in the enclosures is **12 p**. You will find the maximum number of pages and pdf sizes of each enclosure in Prisma. Further instructions are described in the following two sections.

Project Description

(mandatory enclosure)

It is mandatory to use the appropriate template from the home page of the call. See <https://www.rymdstyrelsen.se/forskning/utlysningar/aktiva-utlysningar/2026-E/>.

Make sure that you include clear answers to all questions in the section “Criteria for Evaluation” (see below).

Letters of Information

You may only include the following types of letters:

- Letter(s) confirming selection in an ESA Call or other relevant call – this letter is **mandatory** if the application deals with a project selected by ESA or other space agency
- Letters informing about resources and allocations made available to the project. Examples: Laboratory resources at your university and data availability from an international space mission.
- Letters of commitment from international collaborators, confirming their participation in the project, should it be awarded funding (for important international collaborators who do not have a Prisma account)

Note that it is not allowed to include any appraisal of the applicants or of the proposed project in the letters.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Scientific Assessment

The following questions are provided to expert reviewers and the advisory committee for their assessments:

- Please judge the scientific quality, novelty and rationale, and the importance of the project for space exploration research and society at large, including both pure science and applied science aspects. How does the project relate to similar, on-going, or planned research internationally?
- Please assess the goals, project plan, implementation method, and work packages. Do you find deficiencies? Is the proposed methodology good and the schedule realistic?
- Please judge the suitability of the proposing team to carry out the described work. How is the experience of the team and its scientific and technical capacity? How is the quality of the publication record from past projects? Are laboratory resources adequate? Is there potential of the project to promote women in research?
- Please assess feasibility of the project with respect to access to space data. Does the project involve a space experiment, selected by ESA or another space agency? Does the proposing team/principal applicant possess a central role in the selected experiment?
- If the project is not yet selected by ESA or another space agency, is there a clear and realistic plan for utilization of space data and/or justification of value and relevance of the proposed research for future space exploration projects, including experiments on suborbital and ground-based platforms?
- Please judge how well cost estimates and the financial planning are described and if they are realistic and well-justified. Are there hidden costs? Is the extent of the project in years justified?
- If support of a PhD student position is applied for, please assess the suitability of the proposed work for a PhD student. Please also assess the credibility of the planning and the quality of the supervisor(s).
- To what degree is the proposed project built on previous project or investment by the applying team and/or SNSA in a space exploration mission, including ISS, suborbital

and ground-based platforms? Such investments may include, for example, contributions to the definition, design, or manufacturing of a scientific instrument, software development for data simulation or data acquisition, consortium management, method development.

Programmatic Assessment

The final research programme of SNSA will mainly be based on the above criteria, combined with the following:

- Budgetary constraints.
- Potential of the project to increase the number of women active in space-research.
- Strategic and policy considerations.
- Consideration of Sweden's foreign, security and defence policy interests.
- Consideration of project connections to countries identified as security threats by the Military Intelligence and Security Service (MUST) or the Swedish Security Service (SÄPO).
- Consideration of handling or development of dual-use products.
- Extent to which the applicants have delivered mandatory reporting of previous projects funded by SNSA. Moreover, the lack of high-quality publication of results from grants previously funded by SNSA is not in favour of a new grant.
- Urgency of the proposed work.

PRISMA

The Prisma system (<https://prisma.research.se/>) is mandatory for the submission of applications, feedback, and grant administration. An active personal Prisma-account is therefore required. More information is provided in Appendix G.

It is crucial to register your application well in advance as the Prisma system will automatically prevent registration of your application after the submission deadline. Prisma will provide you with early feedback on missing information required for registration. The system also allows you to unregister, edit and re-register an application before the deadline. For more information, see: <https://prismasupport.research.se/user-manual/researcher/apply-for-a-grant/register-application.html>

QUESTIONS AND CONTACT PERSONS

For questions on this specific call, please contact:

- Kristine Dannenberg, 08 40 90 77 98, kristine.dannenberg@snsa.se
- Vilgot Claesson, 08 409 077 75, vilgot.claesson@snsa.se

See Appendix G for technical questions on Prisma and general questions on SNSA calls.

APPENDICES

- **G** – General instructions

Appendix G

General Instructions

This appendix contains general rules and information concerning some calls within the Research Programme of the Swedish National Space Agency (SNSA, *Rymdstyrelsen*). It is appended to the specific instructions for calls to which it applies. In cases of conflicts between the rules, the specific rules of the call have precedence over the general rules of this document.

APPLICATION PORTAL PRISMA

Please note that the organization where you are employed (or intends to be employed) must have an **organization account** in Prisma and be accepted by SNSA. If this is not the case, please make sure your employer submits an application to SNSA at least two weeks before the deadline (this is also done via the web site above).

Applicants must have a **personal account** within the system Prisma. For more information, see: <https://prisma.research.se/>.

For open calls, you find the applications forms on the above web portal under “APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS / Calls for proposals”. For invited calls, you receive a link to the call in the invitation from SNSA. Most calls require the uploading of bulk information in the PDF format into the application.

Please make sure to register the application in good time before the deadline applicable to the call.

For support and information on Prisma, see: <https://primasupport.research.se/>

LANGUAGE

The applications can be written in Swedish or English. However, most members of the SNSA Science Advisory Committee and review panels do not understand Swedish and most external expert reviewers are drawn from the international research community. Thus, SNSA need to engage a translation service for applications received in Swedish. Applicants are advised to use **English** in the application to make sure that their intents are conveyed without such a translational interface.

However, please note that many calls require a project title in both languages and that a popular science summary in Swedish is required.

SPREAD OF INFORMATION

For successful applicants who are granted funding, SNSA plans to make information on the grant available on the web (SNSA web site and/or other web pages, such as SweCRIS), including the following information:

- Funding organisation
- Project leader
- Affiliation
- Abstract (English) and popular summary (Swedish)
- Project duration
- Yearly funding level

WHO CAN APPLY?

The applicant must either hold an existing affiliation or be eligible for affiliation with a Swedish university or research institution. This host organization must be where the project is primarily conducted. Formal employment at the host organization is not required at the time of application, but the host organization must formally sign and endorse the proposal promptly following the submission deadline.

Research grants are issued only to researchers who have a doctoral degree. Applicants who do not have such a degree, but expect to receive it shortly, may nevertheless submit a research proposal. In this case, a copy of the doctoral certificate should reach SNSA by December 1 in the year of submission of the application.

SNSA can reject submitted proposals based purely on outstanding reports from previous grants to the applicant.

Other participants (*medverkande*)

Additional staff (maximum six) standing behind the application and intending to work on the proposed project at a Swedish research establishment may also sign the application. These persons must also have a personal account in Prisma and CV information from their personal profile in Prisma will be included in the application. Please note that lack of a personal account, CV or inaction from an intended participant can prevent registration of the application in Prisma. Thus, plan in good time with signing participants.

In addition to the above, note that you may have any number of additional persons in your project team, without having them sign the application. Collaborators working abroad may be part of the team, without signing the proposal.

Funding to other research establishments

In case part of the requested funding is intended to be used by team members at another research establishment in Sweden, then at least one researcher from that organization must sign the proposal in Prisma. The two involved research establishments must be prepared to arrange the transfer of such funding between them.

Gender aspects

The fraction of female researchers using space-based platforms is still rather small in Sweden. SNSA therefore encourages the scientific community to contribute towards more women getting involved. Without waiving quality requirements, SNSA will consider gender as one of several boundary conditions when evaluating applications within open calls.

Information in the CV

Specific rules for what information can be included in the applicant's CV are imbedded in the Prisma system for each individual call.

BUDGET

Under this heading in the Prisma forms you need to summarize the costs sought for the project from SNSA. The costs should be given in Swedish kronor. Please distribute the costs among the table headings as follows:

- **Salaries** (see special section below for more details)
 - Salaries
 - Social fees (*lönekostnadspåslag*)
- **Running Costs**
 - Instruments and equipment
 - Expendables
 - Computer costs, computing costs
 - Publication costs
 - External consultancy
 - Depreciation costs
 - Premises
- **Expenses - Travel**
 - Transportation of equipment and travel to project meetings
 - Conference travel to present results
- **Total Budget**
 - All the costs previously indicated are added automatically

- Manually add indirect costs (see special section below for more details)
- “Other costs”, not to be financed by SNSA (optional information in most calls)

All costs must be specified and justified in the project description, in the chapter "Cost specification".

Indirect costs

Indirect costs must be computed using standard procedures of the administrating organisation (and the partner organisation, if applicable, without employing double overheads on the same direct costs). Please note that in the budget forms, only sought indirect costs should be included, not total indirect costs. If an organisation has a mandatory tabulation for computation of indirect costs (“full kostnadstäckning”), then please include it in the “Cost specification” chapter of the project description. However, those tables don’t free the applicants from the responsibility of specifying indirect costs in a correct way in the Prisma budget tables.

The chapter "Cost specification" must specify how the indirect costs are computed, usually in the form of percentages for different types of expenditures (salaries, travel, etc.).

Salaries and social fees

SNSA grants can be used by the administrating and participating organisations in Sweden for salaries and associated social fees for staff working on the project. The employment rules of the organisation apply. SNSA grants may also be used to hire external consultants with appropriate expertise for the research project.

In the budget of your application, you may include any type of staff costs essential to the needs of the proposed project, including secondment/”friköp”), Research Fellows, PostDocs, PhD students, Research Engineers, etc.

Clearly motivate each staff cost.

OTHER FUNDING

Under the heading "Other funding" on the forms, if available, it is mandatory to include information on all awarded grants and submitted applications that overlap with or complement the current application.

For career applications and specifications to extend a career grant, it is also mandatory to include information on all awarded grants and submitted applications that include funding of the applicant.

AFTER SUBMISSION

Applications are assessed by the SNSA Science Advisory Committee or a review panel, sometimes supplemented by external expert reviews and programmatic constraints by SNSA.

Additional information

In case relevant information becomes available after the application deadline, applicants may inform SNSA (in English) to allow this new information to be taken into account. For example, information on new schedules for space missions or allocation of telescope time (please include proof) should be conveyed in this way. Please note that applicants are not allowed to use this avenue to improve their applications with information that should reasonably have been available at the submission deadline. Failure to inform SNSA with data of relevance to the assessment of the feasibility of the project may result in rejection of the proposal.

Decisions and feedback

Most SNSA grant decisions are made in December. Grant tables are usually posted at <https://www.rymdstyrelsen.se/forskning/beviljade-bidrag/>. In order to receive timely information on grant decisions, please subscribe to the SNSA Newsletter for Researchers (see <https://www.rymdstyrelsen.se/om-rymdstyrelsen/nyhetsbrev/>). Information on the grant decision will also be distributed within the Prisma system, but usually somewhat later.

The principal applicants can expect feed-back on their applications through the Prisma system after the grant decision.

Receivers of grants must approve the terms and conditions (“godkännande av villkor”) in Prisma on time, in order to receive funding.

GRANTS

Type and extent of support

The research grants provide traditional research support, with funding at the disposal of a university entity or research institute (*medelsförvaltare*), in accordance with standard terms (*generella villkor*) of SNSA. The funding for a calendar year is normally provided as monthly

instalments. Individual grants are normally limited to a maximum of 3-4 years, but SNSA can make longer-term commitments when appropriate.

Reporting

Grant holders must report in Prisma in accordance with terms of the grant, which usually involves the following as a minimum:

- Financial Report (ekonomisk återrapportering), both yearly and at the end of the project.
- Scientific report (*Vetenskaplig återrapportering*) at the end of the project (grants related to agreed deliverables may require yearly reporting).

CONTACTS

In case of questions, please get in touch as follows:

- For technical questions about the **Prisma** application system, use contact in the menu at:
 - English: <https://primasupport.research.se/user-manual.html>
 - Swedish: <https://primasupport.research.se/>
- General questions about **SNSA research calls** for research:
 - Vilgot.Claesson@snsa.se
 - [Kristine Dannenberg@snsa.se](mailto:Kristine.Dannenberg@snsa.se)
 - [Per Magnusson@snsa.se](mailto:Per.Magnusson@snsa.se)
 - Kristell.Perot@snsa.se
- Questions on the **individual call**: See specific instructions for the call.

STAY INFORMED

In order to receive timely information from SNSA on future calls and other relevant information, please register for our Newsletter for Researchers at:

<https://www.rymdstyrelsen.se/om-rymdstyrelsen/nyhetsbrev/>