



Knowledge Foundation

Industrial Graduate Schools

Program manager Lena Strålsjö

ABOUT US

Who is the Knowledge Foundation?

- › Mission to strengthen Sweden's competitiveness
- › Funds research and education at the second and third cycle level
- › Promotes collaboration between academia and industry
- › 22 target universities – Sweden's university colleges and newer universities





The Knowledge Foundation by numbers

3 659 projects
have been funded since
1994

12,9 billion SEK
has been disbursed as
project funding

472 million SEK
was granted to projects
across Sweden in 2025

323 projects
were active in 2025 with
funding from the Knowledge
Foundation

60 new projects
were granted funding in
2025

185 companies
are co-financing the projects
funded in 2025



Our programmes

RESEARCH

RESEARCH PROFILES

RESEARCH PROJECTS

SYNERGY PROJECTS

EDUCATION

EDUCATION FOR WORKING PROFESSIONALS

INDUSTRIAL GRADUATE SCHOOLS

SECOND CYCLE EDUCATION

CAREER SUPPORT & CAPACITY BUILDING

ASSOCIATE SENIOR LECTURESHIPS

CAPACITY BUILDING

EARLY ACADEMIC CAREER

Annual
calls open in
September

Industrial Graduate Schools

- › An effective way to build long-term relationships with industry
- › The PhD students solve real-world problems while contributing to new research
- › Builds strong and profiled academic environments
- › Strengthen research capacity in strategic subject areas both for the research and education environment and for the participating business partners.

”

“You get highly educated employees with a different perspective on problem-solving.”

Emma Björkenstam, Area manager at Byggdialog

360 PhD students
have been granted by the
KK Foundation since 2010

700 MSEK
have been allocated to
graduate schools since
2010

14 ongoing Industrial Graduate Schools

Total of 200
PhD
students

EXACT

m3c

SigsCyberSec

Karlstads universitet

Smart industri

Högskolan i Skövde

Elektrifiering ett hållbart energisystem

Högskolan Väst

HälsInnovation

Högskolan i Halmstad

ComBine

Malmö universitet

FPC/FPC+

Högskolan i Gävle

Array/Array++

Mälardalen University

IndTech/IndTech+

Reliant

Reedeam

CoAIRob

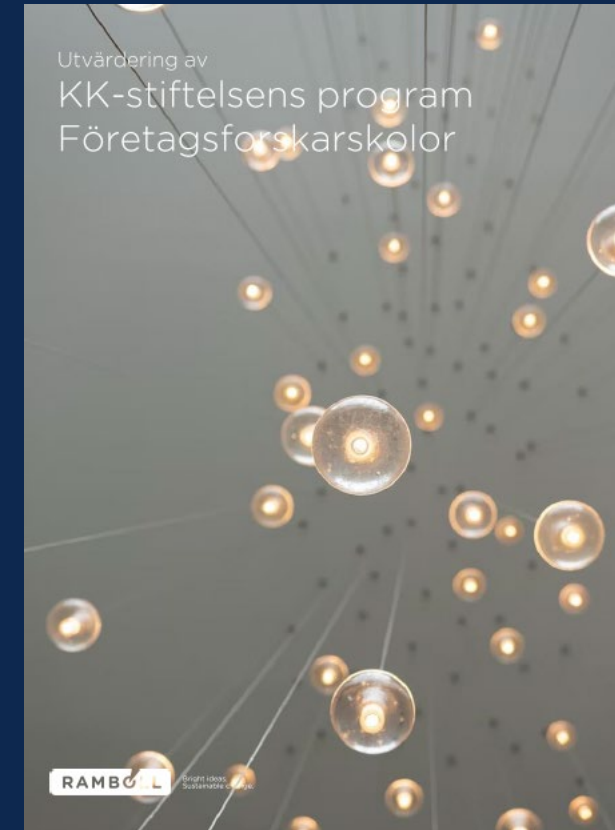
Örebro universitet

DIA/DIA+

Linnéuniversitetet

KKS Programme Industrial Graduate Schools Evaluation report 2024

- **9 Industrial Graduate Schools 2011-2019**
- 8 Industrial Graduate Schools + 2013-2022**



[Foretagsforskarskolor-utvardering-2024.pdf](#)

Success Factors for a Industrial Graduate School



Prioritize joint activities with both academia and industry



Avoid making the PhD student a mere intermediary



Aim to address cross-sectoral issues



Continuously discuss different expectations between academia and industry



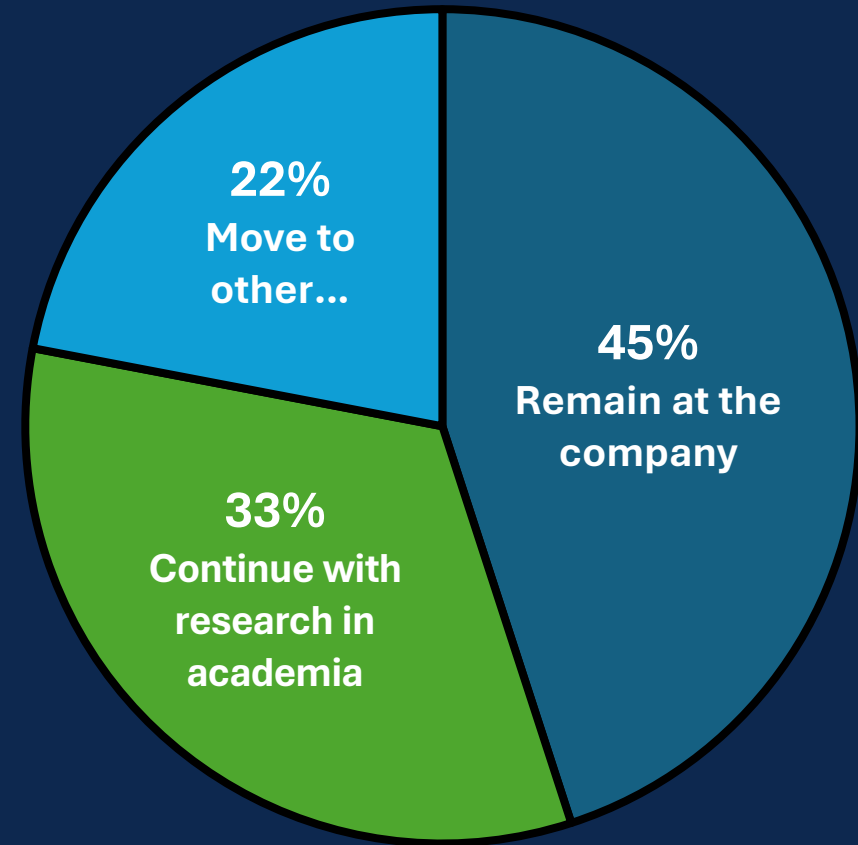
Protect the PhD student's research time and create a career plan



Company engagement is crucial for the student's performance

What happens after graduation?

- More PhD-trained individuals in companies, contributing to new roles
- Networks and deeper relationships between academia and industry
- Spin-off research projects
- Research results directly benefiting companies
- Developed research and education environments



Career paths for PhD graduates from industrial graduate schools

Special Initiative: Co-funding for MSCA COFUND doctoral programmes



- Supporting training and career development for early-stage researchers while strengthening research ecosystems across Europe – **Best practice!**
- The funding requires a substantial investment from the host organization
- Increase participation of the Foundation’s target universities in Horizon Europe and especially Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.
- The Knowledge Foundation use the EU’s evaluation of scientific quality and relevance
- Two candidates 2026

Formal requirements

- The Knowledge Foundation relies on the scientific evaluation carried out within MSCA COFUND.
- Funding requested from the Knowledge Foundation must not exceed 50 per cent of the total co-funding in the MSCA COFUND application.
- Co-funding from the Knowledge Foundation may amount to max of SEK 1 million per doctoral degree
- The project must demonstrate collaboration with industry and describe the benefits for industry.

- Next call Knowledge Foundation Autumn 2026,
Deadline EU April 2027

Programmes & calls

[Start](#) / [Our Funding](#) / [Doctoral student exchange to the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability](#)



Content

[Important dates](#) ↓

[The setup of the special initiative](#) ↓

[About the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability](#) ↓

[Terms and conditions](#) ↓

[Contribution to strong research and education environments](#) ↓

Doctoral student exchange to the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability

Through this special initiative, doctoral students are offered the opportunity to participate in an exchange programme at the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, USA. Successful candidates will spend 6–12 months at Stanford, embedded in a host research group and the wider academic community.

The setup of the special initiative

Selected candidates within this special initiative will be part of an exchange programme to the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability where they will conduct research connected to their ongoing doctoral project at a hosting faculty. A fundamental requirement in the selection process is therefore that a suitable matching host faculty is identified by the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability and willing to host the doctoral student.

IMPORTANT DATES

Application period: 15 April 2026 – 23 June 2026

Funding decisions: September 2026

Project start: Between January and April 2027



Knowledge Foundation

Thank you!