

Funding of Swedish participants in Eureka-cluster projects

Eureka-clusters fund international industrial cooperation



Contents

1	The offer in short	3
2	What is the aim of our funding?	6
2.1	Eureka-clusters	7
2.2	Sustainability and gender equality	7
3	Who is the call aimed at?	8
4	What do we finance?	8
4.1	Activities eligible for funding	8
4.2	What type of costs we finance	8
5	How large are our grants?	9
6	Conditions for assessing proposal	10
7	Assessment of applications received	10
7.1	What do we assess?	10
7.2	How do we assess?	12
8	Decisions and conditions	14
8.1	About our decision	14
8.2	Terms and conditions for approved grants	14
9	How to apply	16
10	Who can read the proposal?	16

Revision history

Date	Change

1 The offer in short

To promote international collaboration for research, development and innovation, actors can seek funding for market-oriented cluster projects¹. The focus of cluster projects is international collaboration between large and small companies, institutes and academies to strengthen European competitiveness. Eureka-clusters² are long-term strategic and thematic initiatives initiated by European industry. There are Eureka-clusters that target different industries.

Vinnova can offer Swedish participants who received a Eureka-label, that is, an approved project proposal within one of Eureka's clusters, to submit a joint proposal on funding. Project funded within the call for proposal will contribute to societal benefit and sustainable development in Sweden and contribute to increased competitiveness for Swedish business and industry.

The calls are usually made by Eureka's various clusters, but sometimes so-called cluster-wide calls are made on various cross-border themes. The procedure for these calls may differ from that described in this document. It is important that you find out exactly how the individual call is made regarding, for example, what different steps the application process consists of, when the projects receive a Eureka-label, and when the national proposal is to be submitted. In other respects, Vinnova applies the same rules as described in this document, regarding, among other things, grant levels, what costs we can finance and how we assess the projects.

For granted Eureka-cluster projects, there is an annual grant budget of approximately MSEK 100 at Vinnova, to finance both ongoing and new projects. Vinnova co-finances a project between SEK 5 million and SEK 15 million. The projects always include small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and usually run over three years.

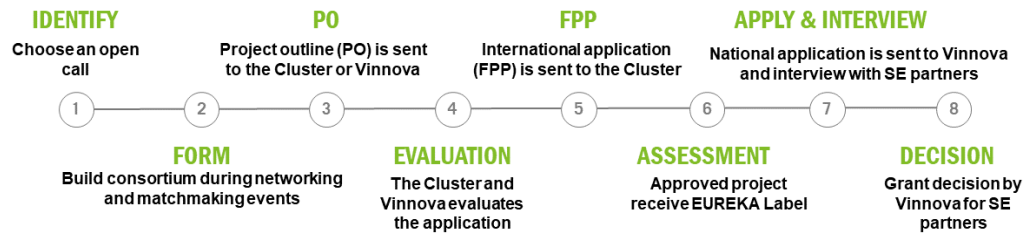
- Small and medium-sized enterprises engaged in economic activities and covered by the EU's definition of an SME can be granted a grant with up to 50% of their eligible costs.
- Large enterprises and other organizations engaged in economic activities and not covered by the EU definition of an SME, can be granted grant with up to 30 percent of their eligible costs.
- Universities³ and research institutes may be granted grant of up to 100 percent of their eligible costs.

Vinnova's co-financing can amount to a maximum of 50 percent of the entire Swedish consortium's eligible costs.

¹ www.vinnova.se/m/eureka/kluster/

² www.network.org/countries/sweden/Clusters/

If the Swedish consortium consists of a number of organizations, it must have a good representation of SMEs and the work effort in time from the participating companies must be at least 60 percent of the Swedish consortium's total work effort.



Proposal for Eureka-cluster projects take place in several steps

The application process does usually look like below. However, it can differ between different calls, so it is important that you find out how each call specifically goes.

- First you send an outline, a so-called *project outline* (PO), to the selected cluster.
- The cluster and Vinnova assess the proposal and if it is of sufficient quality you are offered to submit a *full project proposal* (FPP).
- The full project proposal from the international consortium is assessed and the applications that are approved receive the so-called Eureka-label. This means that the national consortia are given the opportunity to submit applications to each country's funding public authority. It is at this stage that the Swedish consortium is invited to submit a proposal to Vinnova
- Based on the international (FPP) and the national (Vinnova) applications, and a project interview, Vinnova makes a definitive assessment whether you receive funding or not. Note that the proposal for Swedish funding can be rejected even though the cluster project has a Eureka-label and has been invited to interview at Vinnova

The following date applies to the call for proposals:

The various Eureka-clusters have their own calls with specific opening and closing dates for project outline (PO) and full project proposal (FPP).

Application Language:

Swedish or English

Contacts

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Current information on the call for proposal can be found at
www.vinnova.se/m/eureka/kluster/.

2 What is the aim of our funding?

Cluster projects within Eureka are international collaboration projects that focus on the needs of the industry and have a strong industry commitment. They are strategically important for Sweden's business community and form an important part of Vinnova's effort at internationalization.

Collaboration between committed innovative large and small companies and strong active universities and research institutes is an important key to successful cluster projects. Project funded within the call for proposal will contribute to increased competitiveness for the Swedish business community. In the long term, the projects will contribute to demonstrating or developing sustainable solutions to societal challenges.

Another aspect that Vinnova follows up and assesses is whether both women and men take part of the grant in an equal manner, participate in and have influence over the projects.

Gender equality is found in Agenda 2030, as a goal in itself, but also as a perspective that must permeate the work with all goals as it is a prerequisite for sustainable development.

With this call for proposals, we want to

- create or improve the conditions for companies to strengthen their competitiveness in the long and short term, both nationally and internationally, through projects that are distinctly different from ordinary development of the company's existing products, services or processes.
- create or improve the conditions for companies to invest in the development of sustainable innovations, i.e. new products, services and processes that contribute to meeting some or several of the global goals for sustainable development in Agenda 2030.
- provide Swedish organizations an opportunity for strategic partnerships with leading international actors and offer an arena for networking.
- provide Swedish organizations an opportunity to develop new knowledge and develop other unique assets and the opportunity to influence international standards.
- promote a diversified and equal business and social development that makes Sweden an international example.⁴

Expected results of a project are, for example, prototypes and demonstrators (e.g. models, platforms, open source projects) that can be shown to potential customers, as well as grant to international standards.

⁴ Read more about our work for equal innovation and how it relates to your application:
<https://www.vinnova.se/m/jamstalld-innovation/>

Expected effects of implemented project results are, for example, new products, new business opportunities, skills building and standardization that are relevant to the competitiveness and competence of the Swedish business community.

2.1 Eureka-clusters

Eureka-clusters are European networks with public-private partnerships with broad industrial participation, aimed at promoting research or standardization processes. The networks are strategic and thematic initiatives initiated by European industry. There are Eureka-clusters that target different industries.

In Eureka-cluster projects at least two independent organizations from at least two countries collaborate to develop new technologies, services, or standards of great importance for European competitiveness.

2.2 Sustainability and gender equality

Vinnova's mission is to promote sustainable growth through innovation. Improved conditions for innovation strengthen the capacity to achieve the global goals of sustainable development described in Agenda 2030. Through our efforts, we contribute to the global commitment to achieve these goals.

Read more about Vinnova's work to achieve the global goals:

<https://www.vinnova.se/agenda2030>

See examples of how companies contribute to the global goals:

<https://www.globalamalen.se/for-foretag/inspiration/>

Collaboration, power gathering, and innovation will be crucial to achieving the goals of Agenda 2030 and creating system-level solutions. With this call for proposals, we want to get more people to work together to develop their innovative capacity and create new solutions that contribute to the goals, within the framework of the call priorities.

Gender equality is a prerequisite for sustainable growth and is found in Agenda 2030, as an objective in itself but also as a perspective that should permeate the work on all objectives. The call for proposal should therefore contribute to an equal development of society linked to two main aspects.

One aspect is that both women and men share the grant, participate in, and have influence over the project in an equal way. Another important aspect is to analyse and determine whether there are gender equality aspects that are relevant within the problem area and utilization of the solution.

3 Who is the call aimed at?

The Swedish consortium that has received a Eureka-label for their Eureka-cluster application are invited to submit a joint proposal on national co-financing.

4 What do we finance?

4.1 Activities eligible for funding

Vinnova's grant will primarily fund activities in research, development and innovation within industry-driven flexible international collaboration projects at companies, universities, or research institutes. It can also be used for international and national project management of Eureka-cluster projects.

See section 8.1 for information on support levels for each category.

4.2 What type of costs we finance

Our funding is through grant. Grant to organizations engaged in economic activities subject to the rules on state support. ⁵ The rules govern, among other things, which types of costs and what percentage of them may be covered by a grant. If the grant has been wrongly approved or granted with an excessive amount, the recipient can become liable to repay. More information on eligible costs can be found in Vinnova's general terms and conditions.

Within the scope of this offer, the following costs are eligible:

- Personnel costs
- Depreciation costs for instruments, equipment and buildings to the extent that they are used for project implementation
- Costs for consulting services and licenses to the extent that they arise during the project period and as a direct consequence of the project's implementation. Vinnova must be informed of and approve costs for consulting services in advance.
- Other direct costs, such as consumables and input materials, fees to the Eureka-cluster secretariat and travel expenses
- Indirect costs (overhead) to the extent that the company has such for the project. Allowances for indirect costs must correspond to the actual costs incurred by the company and may amount to a maximum of 30 percent of the eligible staff costs.

⁵ Read more about state support on our website: <https://www.vinnova.se/sok-finansiering/regler-for-finansiering/statligt-stod/>. You will also find our general terms and conditions of the grant, and a guide to the terms of eligible costs: <https://www.vinnova.se/sok-finansiering/regler-for-finansiering/allmanna-villkor/>

In order for an expense to be eligible, it must:

- Be real and auditable
- Worn by applicant companies
- Have emerged during the project period
- Be established in accordance with the company's usual accounting principles and generally accepted accounting principles

Accounting for project costs must be distinguishable from the company's other transactions. In the document "Guide till Vinnovas villkor om stödberättigande kostnader"⁶ you can see in more depth what costs are considered eligible and the principles for how these costs are calculated.

5 How large are our grants?

For granted Eureka-cluster projects, there is an annual grant budget of approximately MSEK 100 at Vinnova, to finance both ongoing and new projects. Usually, Vinnova co-finances the projects with a total of between MSEK 5 and 15 and the project time is usually about 3 years.

- Small and medium-sized enterprises engaged in economic activities and covered by the EU's definition of a SME can be granted a grant with up to 50% of their eligible costs.
- Large enterprises and other organizations engaged in economic activities and not covered by the EU definition of an SME, can be granted grant with up to 30 percent of their eligible costs.
- Universities⁷ and research institutes may be granted grant of up to 100 percent of their eligible costs.

	Maximum number of employees	Maximum turnover	Vinnova's maximum co-financing share
Small and medium sized enterprises	Maximum 249 employees	Maximum 50 Million euro	50 %
Large enterprises	> 249 employees	-	30 %
Universities	-	-	100 %
Research Institutes	-	-	100 %
The Swedish consortium's eligible costs	-	-	50 %

⁶ <https://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/dokument/guide-till-vinnovas-villkor-om-stodberattigande-kostnader.pdf>

⁷ Can also apply to research in hospitals.

Please refer to the EU Commission Document "User Guide on SME Definition"^{8 9} to determine if your business is classified as an SME or a large company. Note, for example, that consideration is given to whether the company is part of a national or international group.

Vinnova's co-financing can amount to a maximum of 50 percent of the entire Swedish consortium's eligible costs.

Universities and research institutes may consider applying for a lower grant level than 100 percent. This is to enable participating Swedish companies to seek a sufficiently high level of contribution for their costs.

6 Conditions for assessing proposal

We will only evaluate applications that meet the following formal eligibility requirements:

- Proposal should have a Eureka-label.
- The Swedish consortium should include at least one small and medium-sized enterprise (SMEs).
- The project must not have started before the proposal is submitted.

For SMEs, the individual company must show that the following eligibility requirements are met when the Swedish proposal is submitted to Vinnova:

- The company must have at least SEK 1.0 million in net sales according to the latest annual report. Net sales do not include public grant from, for example, Vinnova or the EU.
- The company must have a number of employees that corresponds to at least three full-time equivalents.

The above eligibility requirements also apply to applicants that want to participate as fully self-financed parties.

7 Assessment of applications received

7.1 What do we assess?

Assessment of Eureka-cluster applications takes place in several steps, see sections 7.2 and 9.

In the international evaluation that is done to get the project a Eureka-label, both the Swedish part of the international proposal (steps 3 and 5 in Figure 1) and the proposal submitted to Vinnova (step 7) are assessed using the following criteria.

⁸ <https://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/dokument/eu-definition-smf.pdf>

⁹ [EU SME self-assessment questionnaire](#)

The Swedish proposal complements the international in terms of the basis for assessment of criteria marked with *.

Potential (weight 40%)

- Degree of utilization / exploitation of project results by Swedish companies according to clear measurable indicators (KPIs)
- The project's potential to lead to increased competitiveness and growth in participating Swedish companies
- The project's relevance and potential to promote Swedish competitiveness and growth from a broader perspective, for example through effects from the creation of standards, platforms, leading competence and more
- The value of the exchange that comes from international cooperation
- Potential to contribute to societal benefits and sustainable development in accordance with Agenda 2030

Actors (weight 20%)

- The Swedish consortium's credibility to carry out major international projects (Swedish international project- or work package management is considered positive)
- How well balanced the international consortium is (No country's total costs should account for more than 60 percent of the project budget)
- How well positioned the Swedish consortium members are in the value chain to ensure that the results will be utilized either commercially or through funding for interoperability and standards
- The project must be industry-driven and have an active participation and commitment from Swedish companies (The work effort in time from the participating companies must be at least 60 percent of the Swedish consortium's total work effort)
- The project constellation's access to relevant sustainability skills

Feasibility (weight 30%)

- Realism, credibility and effectiveness of the project plan and budget
- Approach, organization and involvement of project partners and relevant actors including users / customers / requirements makers
- Relevance and credibility in the risk assessment
- Credible and realistic plan for national and international cooperation
- Clear description of how the project results will be disseminated to other actors.
- To what extent relevant aspects of sustainability have been integrated into the project plan

*** Equality (weight 10%)**

- How well the team (key people) are composed regarding gender distribution, as well as the distribution of power and influence between women and men
- How well gender issues were integrated into the project plan
- The project results' potential to contribute to increased equality

7.2 How do we assess?

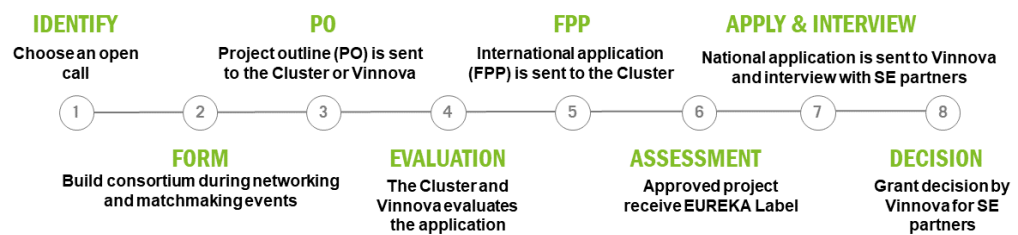


Figure 1. The proposal for Eureka-cluster projects takes place in several steps.

A proposal for a Eureka-cluster takes place in several steps, see Figure 1. Within the clusters, project calls are organized, usually in two steps, and these are published at the cluster's respective websites. Sometimes so-called cluster-wide calls are made, and then the application and assessment process may look different.

International assessment (steps 3-6)

Vinnova participates in assessments of international cluster applications at the respective Eureka-clusters (ITEA4 CELTIC NEXT, Xecs or SMART). These are assessed according to the criteria of each cluster, where the focus is on industry-driven research and innovation projects.

First, a project outline, a project outline (PO) is assessed by the cluster's industry representatives and the respective country's funding public authority, including Vinnova. If the outcome of this assessment becomes positive, the project may proceed in the process and submit a full international project application, a full project proposal (FPP).

FPP is assessed in the same way as PO, i.e. by both industry representatives and funding authorities.

In this assessment Vinnova makes use of appointed independent reviewers. If both the industry representatives and the funding authorities are positive about the project, the project will receive a Eureka-label. After that, the project is approved

to proceed and submit national applications to the respective country's funding public authority.

National assessment (steps 7-8):

Vinnova can invite the Swedish consortium to submit a joint application for funding for projects that have received their Eureka-label. The schedule is communicated by Vinnova.

The Swedish proposal submitted by Vinnova is assessed by independent reviewers and by employees at Vinnova. For recommended applications, the Swedish participants are also invited to an interview at Vinnova. The entire Swedish consortium is expected to participate in the interview. After the interview, Vinnova makes an overall assessment that underlies our final decision.

The applications are assessed according to the assessment criteria in section 7.1 and through clarifying questions during the interview. The assessment takes place in competition between applications received.

Note that the proposal for Swedish funding can be rejected even though the cluster project has a Eureka-label and has been invited to interview at Vinnova.

Vinnova has the ambition to make a decision within three months after the project received a Eureka-label.

How to join ongoing cluster projects:

It is possible for new project parties to join an ongoing cluster project with a Eureka-label.

Swedish project parties who want funding from Vinnova shall contact the cluster manager and register an interest in joining an ongoing cluster project.

It is required that the project has started with at least two participating organizations from two different countries and that the project has had its official kick-off.

The International Project Coordinator then submits a change request to add more project parties to the international project to the cluster office. When the change request has been accepted, it is attached in an email to Vinnova from the international project coordinator for the proposed Swedish project consortium.

Swedish project participants then follow the process for national assessment (steps 7-8) and the assessment takes place in competition with new applications.

8 Decisions and conditions

8.1 About our decision

Our grants are granted with the support of section 9 of our regulation (2015: 208) on state support for research and development and innovation, that is, funding of research and development projects pursuant to Article 25 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014/10. The basis for the support is stated in the decision and also controls which costs are eligible.

For companies, the project's activities must fall into one of the following categories: Industrial research or Experimental Development.

The following applies to universities and research institutes: Non-state funding.

Our decision to approve or reject a proposal cannot be appealed.

8.2 Terms and conditions for approved grants

For approved grants, our general terms and conditions of the grant applies.¹¹ The terms include rules on project agreements, conditions for payment, follow-up, reporting and utilization of results.

The following special conditions apply to everyone who is approved a grant in this call for proposal:

- § 1.1 General terms and conditions apply only to Swedish Project Parties
- The condition regarding Project agreement in § 1.4, General terms and conditions, is considered fulfilled when a consortium agreement is signed by all parties in the international consortium. The Swedish Coordinator shall confirm to Vinnova that the agreement has been signed by all parties.
- For the first payment, in addition to § 6.2 p. 1, General terms and conditions, the following General terms and conditions apply. The Swedish coordinator has confirmed to Vinnova that the international project has started. This confirmation is done by stating the date when kick-off took place.
- In addition to the general terms and conditions, the following applies. The project will be represented at the seminars or program conferences that Vinnova will organize during the project period. Costs for participation in such a seminar / program conference are eligible costs. If necessary, the project will provide Vinnova with image and text material for project catalogues, annual reports and the like.

¹⁰ <https://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/huvudsajt/sok-finansiering/regler-och-villkor/dokument/stodnivaer-statligt-stod.pdf>

¹¹ You will find current terms on our website, together with help to understand and fulfill the terms: <https://www.vinnova.se/sok-finansiering/regler-for-finansiering/allmanna-villkor/>

Complementary special conditions can be decided for individual projects.

In addition to Vinnova's terms, the project partners should also follow the terms set by the respective clusters.

If you do not follow our term, you may become liable to repay. This also applies if you have been granted a grant incorrectly or with an excessive amount.

For projects that are granted funding, project presentations shall be sent to Vinnova.

9 How to apply

Proposal for a Eureka-cluster takes place in several steps, see Figure 1:

- First, you send an outline, a so-called *project outline*, to the selected cluster.
- The cluster and Vinnova assess the proposal and, if it is of sufficient quality, you are invited to submit a full proposal.
- The full proposal from the international consortium is assessed and the applications that are approved receive a so-called Eureka-label. This means that the national consortia are given the opportunity to submit applications to each country's funding public authority. At this stage, the Swedish consortium is invited to submit a proposal to Vinnova.
- Based on the applications and a project interview, Vinnova makes a final assessment whether you receive funding or not.

To submit a joint proposal for funding for Swedish participants in a Eureka-cluster project with Eureka-label, you shall fill out a web-based form in our application service (Vinnovas e-tjänster), which can be reached via a link in the invitation from Vinnova. There you also attach the following appendix 12:

- Project description according to the template for the Swedish part of the Eureka-cluster project with a clear focus on sustainable development and growth potential for Sweden (see paragraph 7.1)

Note that the international cluster application does not need to be attached.

Project title should be **Eureka-cluster name project name**

Example: EUREKA ITEA4 THING

Once the application deadline has expired, the proposal can only be completed on request from us.

Please note that you may not start the project before the proposal is submitted and has been approved. The project may start when at least two countries have been granted funding.

10 Who can read the proposal?

Applications submitted to us become public documents, but we do not disclose information about an individual's business or operating conditions, inventions and research results in case it can be assumed that an individual suffers damage if the information is disclosed.

¹² The template for the attachment can be found on our website:
<https://www.vinnova.se/m/eureka/kluster/>