

## SME program for TECoSA – Call for proposals

### **SUMMARY: The SME-program, who is eligible and why it is funded**

It is a Vinnova program closely linked to Vinnova competence centers, dedicated to *Swedish SME partners of the centers*. All Swedish SME partners part of TECoSA are thus eligible to apply for this additional funding. The goal of the SME-program is to provide financial support to SMEs partners to engage further into the collaborative research of the centers. Vinnova aims to make up to 1 Mkr in total available annually from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and on for all Vinnova's competence centers, i.e. from 2021 for TECoSA. The actual budget may vary depending on the grants allocated to Vinnova.

In TECoSA we invite all our Swedish SME partners to provide proposals. Even though the SME program as such provides limited funding – and may thus not be able to support all proposals, we believe that proposal efforts would be useful since they put ideas forward that can lead to various types of initiatives and projects, e.g. projects with other funding sources, MSc thesis projects, etc.

This document describes the process, criteria, call topics and how to apply. This document is complemented by the following appendices:

1. The Vinnova call text (Dnr. 2021-01084)
2. Vinnova template for proposals for the SME program (PROJEKTBEKRIVNING)
3. Call topics for the first SME call
4. Vinnovas guides och riktlinjer:  
<https://www.vinnova.se/sok-finansiering/regler-for-finansiering/allmanna-villkor/>  
Guide till stödberättigade kostnader: <https://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/huvudsajt/sok-finansiering/regler-och-villkor/dokument/20201201-anvisning-till-villkor-om-stodberattigande-kostnader-guide.docx-pdf>

### **Process for establishing and running SME projects**

Vinnova and TECoSA have worked out the following process:

- SME partners submit proposals to the TECoSA board using the Vinnova provided template; see headings in the appendix and the document with more guidelines on KTH box under “Vinnova reporting, information and templates/SME program/ “
- The evaluation of submitted proposals is as follows: A pre-screening with respect to eligibility constraints will be made by the TECoSA director and co-director and submitted to the board. The board will then review the proposals and decide on projects to approve.
  - The board makes a selection according to the established criteria (see next section) and provides feedback including an “ok”, “not ok”, and if relevant, a “conditional ok” (the latter could lead to a later resubmission). The “ok” will be manifested by a board support letter to the SME partner.
  - Attention will be paid to any conflicts of interests; board members with a direct connection to a proposal, for example as a company partner, will not take part of the corresponding decisions. SME members on the board will also not be part of the decision making. Further, to avoid conflicts of interests, the directors will only provide a pre-screening and not an evaluation.
  - The board decision regarding each submitted proposal will be documented in the board meeting protocol.
- SME partners with “ok’ed” proposals go on and submit their proposal to Vinnova together with the support letter from the board. Vinnova then makes the formal decision. Vinnova will normally approve “ok’ed” proposals, assuming that proposing partners meet stipulated constraints (e.g. that they are indeed an SME). The requirements are described in the Vinnova call text (see appendix 1).

- Vinnova approved proposals will result in a separate project between the SME partner and Vinnova. Such separate SME program projects have reporting separated from TECoSA where the SME partner individually reports to Vinnova according to a reporting plan.
- Running projects are evaluated by the TECoSA board and at the project end by Vinnova.

### **Criteria for selecting proposals (that will be assessed by the TECoSA board)**

1. *Relevance* for TECoSA including,
  - (i) *relevance of the problem addressed* in connection to TECoSA research topics – its motivation, and alignment / complementarity with TECoSA efforts, and
  - (ii) *impact potential*, in terms of product/service innovation (industrial take-up), and/or testbed capabilities, and/or in terms of visibility/demonstrations.
2. *Feasibility* in terms of plan, resources and budget
3. *Actors* – collaborations. Vinnova and TECoSA would like to see collaborations whenever relevant. For equally ranked projects, referring to the Relevance and Feasibility criteria, projects with stronger collaboration will be ranked higher. Collaborations can refer to any of other SMEs, KTH PIs in TECoSA and the large industrial partners of TECoSA.

### **Call topics**

Proposals should address topics that are seen to provide synergies with TECoSA including topics relating to the research projects, testbeds or beyond (e.g. providing an investigation that could be provide the basis for formulating a new project). *Please find some further suggestions in appendix 2.*

### **Intended project time frame and funding sizes in this call**

- *Funding limits*: Funding proposals are recommended to request up to 600 Kkr, but also proposals with a larger budget will be considered. The total budget for all projects for 2021 is up to 1 Mkr and we expect the same amount for 2022 through 2024.
- *Duration*: It is possible to apply for projects with a duration longer than one year, and thus across calendar years. such that they end within the year of the proposal (e.g. a proposal starting 2021 should end by the end of 2021). Proposals may also describe potential continuations as possible follow-up projects/efforts.
- *Funding models*: Vinnova provides two funding models for SMEs with approved projects:
  - Standard model: Funding with 50% of the effort of the proposing SME.
  - “De minimis”: 70% funding can be offered in the case when an SME has received less than 2 MSEK in public support the last 3 years, the so called “de minimis” principle. If “de minimis” support is applied for, then a statement has to be filled in and provided together with the proposal<sup>1</sup>.

### **Proposal template and size**

- Proposal size: We recommend a page limit of 3 pages using the enclosed Vinnova template.
- Proposal template (headings in appendix 2):  
[www.vinnova.se/globalassets/mikrosajter/kompetenscentrum/dokument/projektbeskrivning\\_small-kc-stod-till-smf.docx](http://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/mikrosajter/kompetenscentrum/dokument/projektbeskrivning_small-kc-stod-till-smf.docx)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/mikrosajter/kompetenscentrum/dokument/intyg-de-minimis.docx>

### **What would a typical project look like?**

A typical project might run for a duration of say 5-10 months, involving a close tie to a TECoSA research project or testbed, or providing an investigation that could be the seed for a new research project. The projects would typically be expected to involve some level of partner collaboration, e.g. with a TECoSA KTH PI and another company. Say that one TECoSA SME partner gets a 9 month project approved with an overall effort of 500 Kkr. Assuming the standard funding model, Vinnova would then support the SME partner with 250 Kkr, with the rest being provided by partner.

### **When to submit proposals:**

Proposals should first be submitted to the TECoSA board. The board will provide Support letters to approved proposals, ASAP after the board meeting. Such support letters are required for the SMEs as they submit their “recommended” proposal to Vinnova.

Vinnova will provide a dedicated link for submitting proposals the board has recommended. A proposal can be submitted to the TECoSA board at any time with the idea that they will be handled at the forthcoming board meeting (taking place quarterly) or – if need be – in a per capsulam (off-line) fashion. Vinnova continuously accepts proposals between February and September, and provides a decision within a month.

**The last decision point for Vinnova is in September for projects to start within the same year.**

### **Further information:**

- **Agreement and IP conditions:** We normally expect that SME projects will be governed by the TECoSA agreement.
- **Can an SME be engaged in more than one project/proposal?** An SME partner can lead one project and also be part of, but not lead, another SME project.

**Submission:** Email your proposal (max 3 pages according to the given template) to *tecosa-admin@kth.se*; *Martin Törngren <martint@kth.se>*; *James Gross <james.gross@ee.kth.se>*

### **Contact persons:**

- Vinnova: Adela Saavedra Granholm [adela.saavedragranholm@vinnova.se](mailto:adela.saavedragranholm@vinnova.se)
- All TECoSA Pis: <https://www.tecosa.center.kth.se/kth-researchers/>
- TECoSA directors: Martin Törngren ([martint@kth.se](mailto:martint@kth.se)), James Gross ([james.gross@ee.kth.se](mailto:james.gross@ee.kth.se))
- TECoSA board chair: Catrin Granbom ([catrin.granbom@ericsson.com](mailto:catrin.granbom@ericsson.com))

## APPENDICES

### 1. The Vinnova call text (in Swedish)

The Vinnova call text, “*Kompetenscentrum – stöd till SMF, Stöd till Små- och Medelstora Företag för forskningsinsatser i Vinnovas kompetenscentrum*”, (Dnr 2021-01084), complements the information. Specifically the call text provides further information on “what” Vinnova will fund through the program (Section 4), constraints and pre-requisites for the proposal (Sections 5-6), Vinnova decisions and conditions (Section 8), How to apply (Section 9) and Confidentiality (Section 10).

Please find the Vinnova call text here on KTH box:

<https://kth.box.com/s/znp8cxzpxolatdwkn21qrwxa7d1pcwke>

Additional information from Vinnova:

- <https://www.vinnova.se/sok-finansiering/regler-for-finansiering/allmanna-villkor/>
- Guide till stödberättigade kostnader: <https://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/huvudsajt/sok-finansiering/regler-och-villkor/dokument/20201201-anvisning-till-villkor-om-stodberattigande-kostnader-guide.docx-pdf>

### 2. Vinnova template for proposals for the SME program

See full template here:

[www.vinnova.se/globalassets/mikrosajter/kompetenscentrum/dokument/projektbeskrivningsmall-ke-stod-till-smf.docx](http://www.vinnova.se/globalassets/mikrosajter/kompetenscentrum/dokument/projektbeskrivningsmall-ke-stod-till-smf.docx)

1. KORT SAMMANFATTNING AV PROJEKTET  
(max 1500 tecken)
2. RELEVANS FÖR KOMPETENSCENTRUMET
  - Beskriv så tydligt som möjligt det behov eller problem som projektet adresserar.
3. GENOMFÖRBARHET
  - Beskriv hur ni planerar att genomföra projektet (projektplan)
4. AKTÖRER
  - Ange de personerna, i det egna företaget och hos eventuella konsulter/samarbetspartner, som har en viktig roll för projektets genomförande

Recommended 3 page limit

### 3. Call topics

The call is open for topics generally in the scope of TECoSA research. This may include topics which are also beyond the current research agenda but can be motivated in terms of industrial needs and a corresponding lack of state of the art methods/techniques to address these needs.

The following topics are meant to provide ideas, and the call is not limited to them:

- Methods for enabling secure data processing and storage at the edge
- Methods for the management and protection of identities in edge applications
- Testbed related proposals: Proposals providing software/hardware platforms that support experiments and testing of edge computing systems, in one or more relevant applications domains.
  - More detailed example: Contributions to an edge-based automated driving and intelligent transportation testbed on campus with an edge-based “ITS station” with wireless connectivity and environment sensors.
- Software platforms, either providing, or for evaluating trustworthiness aspects – for example referring to container-based software.
- Software services/framework useful for error and anomaly detection in edge based systems and various applications.
- Investigations of new safety and security standards resulting in guidance and/or comparisons that can be useful for TECoSA research and industrialization.