

# **Forte Centres of Excellence**

## **Final Evaluation**

**October 2018**

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# 1. Centres of Excellence as a form of research funding

## Centres of Excellence in Sweden and beyond<sup>1</sup>

Across Europe, a number of governments have implemented a series of excellence initiatives geared towards the establishment of “world class” research environments at selected university locations. For instance, in 2005, the German Federal and State governments jointly launched a high-profile platform centred on three key elements: a) Graduate schools; b) Clusters of Excellence; and c) Institutional Strategies. Between 2006 and 2011, a total of Euro 1.9 Billion was allocated to this. In 2012, a new 5-year scheme - worth Euro 2.4 Billion and targeting the creation of 45 graduate schools, 43 clusters of excellence and 11 institutional strategies to promote top-level research at 39 universities – was launched. The scheme was controversial not only because it challenged a national tradition of egalitarianism, but also because it re-enforced the differences between weaker (“have not”) and stronger (“haves”) research environments across the country (Kehm and Pasternack 2009). A recent assessment by the OECD (2014) identified government-driven Research Excellence Initiatives (REIs) as a prevalent feature of the European higher education policy landscape in the last decade.

At the Nordic level, the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) has devised an excellence programme targeting high level research communities throughout the five Nordic countries – Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland. According to the NCM, a “Nordic Centre of Excellence [NCE] is an outstanding, creative and efficient multi-site or single-site environment with a joint research agenda, joint management, coordinated researcher training, common communication activities, and collaboration on research infrastructure.” (NCM 2013: 1). The programme’s main aim is to increase and facilitate cooperation between excellent researchers, researcher groups or institutions in the Nordic countries. NCEs are funded (for a five-year period) under thematic programmes, prioritised by the Nordic countries. Funding decisions are based on calls, with an open competition and in-depth peer review performed by external and international experts.

The excellence idea in Swedish research policy can be traced back to a government bill from the turn of the millennium (Swedish Government 2000). Strong research environments were to be established through funding from the then newly created National Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet). The policy logic is summarized in the following sentence: ‘In order to sustain the position as a leading research nation a mobilization is needed in Swedish research’ (Swedish Government 2000, p. 12; own translation). From its foundation, the Research Council has funded ‘basic research of highest quality,’ initially primarily by funding individuals or small teams of researchers.

Critical input to the policy process concerning Centres of Excellence (CoE) was provided in a 2004 white paper, ‘Funding of strong research environments – an international outlook’ (Andersson 2004). Based on an overview of international initiatives (benchmarking), the idea of a ‘triple ten rule’ was launched: 10 percent of the total national research expenditure, 10 million SEK yearly support over 10 years. Most of the CoE schemes launched by the funding bodies followed this recipe, albeit with slight variations. In Sweden, the government played a crucial role in the translation and policy formulation of the excellence agenda. The implementation of CoE schemes was largely delegated to the funding bodies, that is, the research councils and the innovation agency Vinnova. There was strong support for the idea of allocating money to excellent research groups rather than distributing it equally to all researchers. Implementing a research bill

<sup>1</sup> This text builds upon Geschwind, L. and Pinheiro, R. 2017. Raising the summit or flattening the agora? The Elitist Turn in Science Policy in Northern Europe. *Journal of Baltic Studies*. Published online: 13 Apr 2017.

(Swedish Government 2005), a number of excellence schemes were established from 2005 onwards, each with a particular strategic focus: The Forte Centres (scientific excellence and social challenges/strategic objectives); the Berzelii Centres (scientific excellence and economic rationales/innovation); and the Strategic Research Centres (social challenges/strategic objectives and economic rationales/innovation). The latter were funded by a private foundation.

The total number of Centres of Excellence funded by the schemes now amounts to 88, of which 21 are hosted by Lund University. In a 2008 bill (Swedish Government 2008), further concentration of resources and prioritization was on the agenda. In line with the previous bills, the government criticized earlier allocation models, which were based on historical criteria (head counts) instead of excellence. Rather than allocating direct state funding in the form of block grants, the government now wanted more distinct institutional profiles. The policy solution was called Strategic Research Areas (SRAs) and encompassed targeted long-term funding for designated areas. The government used three criteria in prioritizing the SRAs that would be funded in these SRAs:

- Research that, in the long term, has the prerequisites to be of the highest international quality;
- Research that can contribute toward fulfilling major needs and solving important problems in society;
- Research in areas that has a connection with the Swedish business sector.

The Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet), the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning (Formas), the Swedish Energy Agency (Energimyndigheten), and the Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (VINNOVA) were commissioned to organize the application process and to review and recommend the allocation of funds to Swedish universities in these SRAs. Finally, the most recent Research and Innovation Bill emphasizes the quality agenda, stressing the role of direct state funding as a precondition for breakthrough research (Swedish Government 2012).

To sum up, the Swedish Government's investment in Centres of Excellence was a response to an international trend to promote highest possible research quality. In the Swedish case, this also represented a research policy shift, away from sector expansion to concentration of resources at the very best research environments. By implementing larger research environments higher quality, more visibility and interdisciplinary encounters were expected to be created.

## **Forte Centres of Excellence**

In the Research Bill *Research for a better life* (2004/05:80) the Swedish Government introduced the concept of Strong Research Environments. The aim was to give the most successful researchers possibilities to conduct long time research in attractive research environments to increase international visibility and competitiveness of Swedish research. Such environments were perceived as being of central importance in making Sweden a strong research nation. In the Bill strong research environments were defined as:

- High class research both with regard to quality and quantity
- Well-developed collaboration with other national and international research environments
- High national and international visibility and appeal
- Combination of innovative power and solid base in related research areas

- Often combines different lines of research or disciplines which are cross-fertilizing
- Often contains an influential researcher as source of inspiration or as coordinator
- Researchers have high and common objectives for the research

The Government invested 300 million SEK in Centres of Excellence. The research councils and the Swedish Innovation Agency (Vinnova) were commissioned to organize the application process and was given extra funding for this:

- Formas: 20 million SEK
- Forte: 10 million SEK
- Vetenskapsrådet: 210 million SEK
- Vinnova: 60 million SEK

Forte got additional funding for research on elderly, and with this funding together with funding for strong research environments, as well as funding from Forte's regular budget, made the total budget for the Centre of Excellence call to 533 million SEK for ten years.

In 2006 Forte announced a call for Centre of Excellence. In the call Forte added two more criteria:

- Research within the core parts of Fortes' area of responsibility
- A strategy for the communication of research results

The applications were submitted by Swedish universities or university colleges and not by individual researchers or research groups. It was stated in the call that the universities of Stockholm, Gothenburg, Lund and Karolinska Institute could submit three applications each, the universities of Umeå, Linköping and Uppsala could submit two applications and the remaining HEI's could submit one application. It was also stated that centres which had received Linnaeus or Berzelius grants were not eligible for Forte centre grants. These were the centres of excellence funded by Formas, Vinnova and VR.

In the call, an important prerequisite for getting a Forte centre grant was the contribution by the applying university/university college to the funding of the centre. The centre should be a part of the strategic planning of the university, which should contribute at least 50 percent of the amount applied for over the entire time-period. The co-financing could consist of support in the form of space, working time of researchers and other staff as well as economic contributions to research or infrastructure. It was also said in the call that the applying university/university college was expected to take over the responsibility for future funding of the centre, at the termination of the Forte funding period.

Out of twenty-nine applications ten centres were granted. They covered core parts of Fortes' area of responsibility such as: alcohol, elderly, inequality, international migration and ethnic relations (IMER), public health and work environment. Four of the centres were already funded by Forte since 2001. These centres were taken over by Forte when it was established in 2001, from Socialvetenskapliga forskningsrådet, a predecessor to Forte.

In 2007 Forte announced a call for Research Schools. They were aimed at the centres and since the centres had already been granted it was decided that there was no need for a peer-review assessment of the applications. Budget and organization of the schools was assessed inhouse and all seven applications for research schools were granted, of which six were connected to the centres. In 2012 there was another call for Research Schools aimed at the centres (see Appendix for a list of the centres and their research schools).

## Evaluation of the Forte Centres of Excellence

According to the Research Bill the centres should have regular follow-ups, and during the ten-year period evaluations after certain intervals. The research councils were free to decide when to do these evaluations. In a joint decision between the research councils it was decided that evaluations should be conducted after two years, five years and after the funding period ended. It was also agreed upon what these evaluations should focus on.

After two years the focus was on recruitment, organization and leadership of the centres, as well as the commitment by the HEI to co-finance the centre. The second evaluation (mid-term evaluation) focused mainly on the scientific output from the centre and the added value. The final evaluation, after the funding period had ended, the Government said should focus on the effects of the grant on the research funding system.

The first evaluation showed that the Forte centres had recruited relevant personnel, and that organization and leadership was in place. The second evaluation (mid-term evaluation) showed that most centres had high quality scientific output.

After the mid-term evaluation the board of Forte decided to shut down one of the centres, due to problems with organization and leadership. At the organizational level, several obstacles were obvious, most importantly limitations of common infrastructure and research facilities, work in distant buildings, and lack of a joint 'vision' and related strategy represented by the steering committee. Another centre got its grant reduced by 20 percent while another centre got an increase of the grant by 20 percent.

## 2. Evaluation method

For the final evaluation the same evaluation panel who did the mid-term evaluation was asked to conduct the evaluation. Out of the previous six members of the panel four were recruited, with three more members added on making a panel of seven evaluators. The purpose of having the same evaluation panel was to get a longitudinal perspective on the development of the centres. Since the main focus of the evaluation is on the grant as such and its effects, a Swedish researcher on research policy was added to the evaluation panel.

A questionnaire in two parts were developed, where one part was directed to the Vice-chancellor of the Higher Education Institution (HEI) where the Centre of Excellence is located, and one part was directed to the senior researcher of each Centre. The panel was then provided with the following information:

- A self-assessment by each Centre of Excellence about their research, publications, general programme of work as well as reflections on the added value of the Centre of Excellence grant.
- A self-assessment by each Vice-chancellor about the relevant Centres, their integration into the university profile, what happens with them after the grant period and reflections on the added value of Centre of Excellence grant.
- Background information about the work of each Centre, including copies of the original applications, the previous assessments of the Centres and related materials.

In addition, the Review Panel held hearings from 10th to 12th of September 2018. This provided opportunity to explore key questions with the Vice-chancellor of each HEI that hosted a Centre, and with key researchers from each of the Centres.

### 3. Forte Centres of Excellence

#### Introduction

The Forte Centres of Excellence has conducted research within core parts of Fortes' area of responsibility, such as aging, alcohol, inequality, international migration and ethnic relations, public health, and work environment. Over the ten-year grant period, 2007-2016, the centres have received in total 533 million SEK from Forte. The co-funding from the universities have been nearly the same, 525 million SEK.

The centres have also received external funding from Forte, in the form of three-year project grants and six-year program grants. They have also received external grants from The Swedish Research Council (VR), The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning (Formas), Sweden's innovation agency (Vinnova) and The European Research Council (ERC), amounting to nearly 1 billion SEK.

The centres show a remarkable resilience over time. As a basic requirement, they were, or indeed had the potential to become, excellent already at the time of the funding decision. However, most centres have continuously throughout the ten-year period produced research and researchers of high quality. Together with other external funding sources the total amount of funding of the centres is nearly 2,9 billion SEK. The Forte funding then amounts to 19 percent of the total funding. Together with the co-funding from the universities it amounts to 37 percent of the total funding. This means that the centres have been very successful in attracting external funding which in turn has made them less vulnerable and at the same time more attractive for additional investments, e.g. from the host HEI.

Over 600 persons have been involved in the Centre's activities, including lecturers, professors, docents, technicians and administrative personnel, of which 62 percent are women. Nearly 17 percent of the personnel are professors of which 59 percent are men, and nearly 17 percent of the personnel are docents of which 61 percent are women. There is a significant variety regarding the organization and leadership of the centres which reflects both the institutional environments and disciplinary traditions. There are many ways to be a Centre of Excellence.

Six of the centres were granted research schools by Forte, with a total number of 557 PhD students. The total number of PhD students attached to the centres, either by participating in research schools and doctoral courses are 657. The total number of doctoral exams during the period is 228, of which 144 were women.

The number of scientific peer-reviewed publications in refereed journals during the time-period is over 6 500, many of them published in high ranking journals. Peer-reviewed conference publications, books and book chapters comprise almost 1 400 and other types of publications, such as reports, and popular scientific publications, reach almost 1 000. The data from the self-evaluation reports shows different publication traditions for different centres. Centres with many scientific peer-reviewed publications in refereed journals tends to publish less books and book chapters in edited volumes, while other centres focus more on publications in books and edited volumes.

## Linköping University

### **Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society – REMESO**

REMESO is a research institute focused on questions about migration, ethnicity and society. It has received funding from Forte from 2007 to 2016 under the Centres of Excellence programme and it has also received funding from Forte for the Graduate School. It has also been able to secure institutional support from Linköping University and external research funding from within Sweden and European sources. It is well networked with similar groupings of researchers on migration and ethnicity across Europe.

#### **Scientific quality and quantity**

REMESO has become a leading centre for research on migration and ethnicity, with a growing reputation for the quality of its research both in the Nordic context, and more broadly in Europe and internationally. It has focused on research in three broad areas: Migration, integration and ethnic discrimination; EU migration and governance; Citizenship, ethnicity and racialization. It has also developed research on global migration processes and on historical and cultural consequences of colonialism. There is strong evidence that REMESO produces research that is of high quality in the fields of migration and ethnicity. It has developed a reputation for the ways it utilises an interdisciplinary approach to research. It has a strong record of publishing in both international and Nordic journals, and there is also a strong record of publishing research monographs and prestigious edited collections.

#### **Research environment**

REMESO has been well supported by the university and housed in a building that allows the researchers and research students to work together and develop collaboration. The support of the university and Forte has allowed REMESO to develop a good research infrastructure for staff and it welcomes international visitors on a regular basis in order to take part in seminars and lectures.

#### **Research school**

The Research School has been a success over the period from 2007 to 2016 and there is a clear commitment by the university to continue its work beyond 2018. There is strong evidence that both Swedish and international students have successfully completed their doctoral studies at REMESO, and there is also a strong programme of teaching at master's level.

#### **Internationalization/International visibility**

REMESO has been successful in raising the international profile of Swedish research on migration and ethnic relations. The work of REMESO staff has been disseminated in many of the top international journals in the fields of migration and ethnicity and there is strong evidence that they have been invited to give plenary sessions at international conferences, research seminars and workshops. Much of the work of REMESO brings in collaborations with scholars who work in other national environments and this has also helped to further enhance the international profile of its work.



**Societal impact**

REMESO is active in seeking to explore the social impact of its research. Researchers have been active in discussing issues about migration, discrimination and integration in both the media and in policy circles. The university expressed the view that it sees REMESO as playing a key role in the university's commitment to address issues that are of social importance in the contemporary conjuncture.

**Strategic planning for the future**

The University and REMESO have been actively discussing ways to develop a strategic plan for the future. The commitment to a vision for REMESO post-2018 is outlined in the submitted documentation. In the discussion with both the university and the researchers there was a clear commitment to develop a vision for carrying the work of REMESO forward through efforts to link teaching with research and to attract external sources of research funding.

**Sustainability of the centre**

After the end of core funding from Forte there was some concern about the future of REMESO. But the University and the REMESO researchers have emphasized that there is a strong commitment by all sides to see the Institute remain a key centre for research post-2018. The plan is to seek further sources of external research funding from within Sweden and Europe more generally. It is also planned that the sustainability of the Institute will be strengthened by developing teaching at undergraduate, MA and PhD levels. REMESO has appointed two senior visiting professors to help address issues of gender balance. They have also advertised a position for a Professor to help sustain the research profile in the future.

**Summary evaluation and recommendations**

Overall the investment by Forte in REMESO can be considered a success. The funding was used to enable REMESO to further develop the quality and international profile of its interdisciplinary approach to migration, race and ethnicity research. In order to sustain this reputation REMESO will need to gain new sources of research funding and maintain the international networks it has been able to develop over the period it received Forte funding.

## 1. The Forte centres of excellence – general observations

Across all centres, it is obvious that the centres have had a major impact on the research environments funded as Forte centres of excellence. In the questionnaire as well as during the hearings this particular form of funding was discussed, as “pros and cons”. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the positive aspects dominate the picture.

In a majority of the nine centres of excellence receiving the Forte grant we observe successful developments in terms of impressive scientific achievements, of recruiting young researchers nationally and internationally, and of strengthening innovative trans-disciplinary research. Therefore, the aim of increasing international visibility and competitiveness of Swedish research in these scientific fields has clearly been met. Moreover, several centres were successful in establishing stable institutional arrangements and infrastructures, and in attracting substantial external funding, thus continuing and expanding the research and training activities initiated by the Forte grant.

These successes are largely due to the particular strengths of this Forte funding format. They include (1) the provision of a longer-term perspective of research planning and development, (2) the support of innovative research initiatives across disciplinary boundaries, including opportunities of scientific risk taking, (3) the creation of a ‘critical mass’ of research teams dealing with agreed-upon topics, (4) the combination of high quality research with new training programs (in particular Research Schools), and (5) a substantial increase of international collaboration and exchange. The boundary-crossing has been one of the most important aspects of the centres, in creating new collaborations across disciplines, sometimes also across faculties (or equivalent) and even universities. The grant has enabled very strong research environments to invest time and effort in collaborating with partners that may not have been approached otherwise.

In addition, the timeframe of Forte funding allowed centres to develop crucial infrastructures to secure the collection, storage and analysis of cohort data, often a unique Swedish treasure in a worldwide perspective. The emphasis on communication strategies and dissemination of research results have also had an impact.

In some areas, not yet matured as scientific fields, the grant has contributed simply by shedding light on these areas and making them recognized internally at the university and externally. The concept critical mass seems to be important in this respect, albeit differently defined depending on scientific area and centre. Increased national and international visibility has also been frequently mentioned as one of the cons with this form of funding. The centres contribute to the branding of their universities in a significant way. The centres have also been very active in applying for external grants; many of them have been very successful as well. Some even described the Centre of Excellence grant as a platform enabling a sustainable grant writing platform.

One of the most often mentioned advantages with the Forte grant was in the words of one of the interviewed university representatives: “The importance of the centre is that in that way the horizontal (interdepartmental/ interdisciplinary) organisation gets more impulse over the vertical departments”. Almost all university representatives mentioned this as a great advantage of centre grants. The context of this is also the fact that in most, if not all cases, social and humanity faculties have far less research capacity to bring in into cross-/multidisciplinary research themes than medical or technical faculties.

The centres also provide long-term planning and development opportunities. The Centres were generally speaking very positive towards long-term open funding options. The timeframe is important and many lauds a longer funding period. Given the time it takes for

research environments to be built, not least when it comes to the actual recruitment, the usual three-year grant can be challenging for researchers. Having said that, very few centres have identified any weak aspects of this kind of grant, except one – termination. Also mentioned was the balance between individual researcher’s freedom to develop their research and the need to keep the objectives of the original research plan alive over a long period of time as well as a reasonable level of output. This requires an active dialogue and a proactive leadership. During the evaluation the succession issue was also addressed. Some centres have experienced a generation shift and others need to prepare for a transition as regards research leadership.

Leadership is also important at the institutional level since co-funding and explicit support was a formal requirement for the funding. Some of the centres were selected in tough competition internally. Ten years is a long commitment also for the university in question and typically, the vice-chancellor has been replaced during that term and the post Forte lives for centres appear very different. Some have been consolidated as centres, others have become more network like and others have reached a more permanent status as departments depending on institutional profile and approach to scientific organization. Following from this, for some environments the ending of the Forte centre has been more dramatic than for others. Most if not all centres seem to have secured continuous funding from external sources before, during and after the centre term. The internal support, from the university management, varies significantly.

At the same time the Forte Centre of excellence initiative has some weaknesses that need to be avoided in any future research policy planning. With a 10 years funding period substantial financial resources are fixed, thus preventing shorter-term re-allocation of money, e.g. in case of rapid emergence of unanticipated new methods and research hypotheses. Furthermore, a centre’s performance may not meet the initial expectations of excellence or may not be able to develop a unique centre-specific profile, distinct from its previous work. In consequence, both the initial evaluation and the midterm evaluation need to be very critical, with an increased probability of turning down centres at midterm. However, the emphasis on creating a unique centre profile and the branding/communication aspects of the centre needs some further discussion. This was also the main focus in the first evaluation. Nevertheless, the centres have been very successful attracting other big grants from numerous funding bodies, each with their own expectation on branding and visibility (as shown in the typical acronym). The balance between the expected novelty of the centre and alignment with existing structures needs to be discussed. As this evaluation shows, centres as well as excellence can appear in many shapes.

The Forte initiative was not successful in imposing binding commitments to the Universities concerning the amount of internal centre funding and concerning the post-funding period of the centres’ continuation. The continued commitment from the HEI differs significantly and should have been discussed well in advance of the termination of the grant. Moreover, research policy plans should have been put in place some two or three years before the end of the Forte grant. However, the responses to the continuous co-funding demand from HEIs need to be assessed as being in line with the profile of the university and its strategies. There also needs to be flexibility in terms of how centres are perceived at the university. For some HEIs, centres are a normal and permanent organization form should they be successful raising the necessary funds. In some HEI contexts, the centres are by definition temporary organizations that could be replaced by a department as a “next step”. In yet other cases, centres become networks coordinating and promoting international, national or internal (interdisciplinary) collaboration.

In the interviews with senior (and junior) researchers of the centres themselves the uncertainty about the future and the (potential) loss of good researchers of the centre were strongly brought forward as a major problem. It has become commonplace to describe researchers on temporary contracts and the potential “loss” of them as a problem. The centres are in a way a double-edged sword in this respect. On the one hand they provide opportunities for researchers, postdocs and PhD students, on the other hand these people are there only because of success in grant applications. The heavy dependence on external funding (which comprises more than 50 percent of the total funding in Sweden) makes the system a bit shaky. Centre of Excellence are in this respect somewhere in between direct state funding and the typical three-year grant.

In conclusion, the Forte Centre of excellence funding format has been a successful initiative that has largely met its initial goals. It should therefore be maintained, but applied under more restrictive conditions, with still a higher degree of scientific competitiveness and more rigorous midterm evaluation procedures. In many, but not all of the funded centres the scientific achievements have been outstanding or excellent. Future funding decisions should be based on even more challenging standards of scientific quality, thus restricted to grant applications that demonstrate a high probability of meeting these standards. In consequence, the overall proportion of funding devoted to centres of excellence might be reduced in favor of increased project funding.

The added value of the Forte centres of excellence seems to have been considerable. The long-term funding provides a stable platform for risk-taking, e.g. in relation to higher publication ambitions and interdisciplinarity. The main challenge for centres is to prepare for the time after the grant period and this evaluation has shed light on a number of post funding strategies: continuation as centre, further development as network (sometimes with broader scientific scope) or department (with stronger links to education).

## 2. Recommendations

### The Swedish Government

- Based on this evaluation, Centres of Excellence should be considered a successful form of funding and deserves its place in future research policy investments.

### Forte

- Important to follow more closely the development of the Centres and in particular to provide an evaluation a couple of years before the program ends. This would better help the Centres prepare for the end of financing.
- Facilitate collaboration between Centres, since lessons learned in individual Centres will not necessarily bring cumulative know-how.
- Ensure an ongoing dialogue between Forte and the Centres based on light touch reporting and enhancement focus.
- Ensure future centre funding tails off and there is a sustainability plan in place
- Recognize the importance of capacity building and supporting early career researchers and PhD students in the funding options going forward.
- Remain open to a variety of organizational structures and leadership styles of centres. Some centres may develop a unique brand primarily based on the specific grant whereas others may change organization less dramatically but still be able to deliver research of the utmost quality.

### **3. Appendix**

## List of applying and granted Higher Education Institutions

HEI	Applications	Granted
Karlstad University	1	0
Karolinska Institute	4	2
Linköping University	3	1
Lund University	4	2
Malmö University College	1	0
Royal Institute of Technology (KTH)	1	0
Stockholm School of Economics	1	0
Stockholm University	3	3
Umeå University	3	1
University of Gothenburg	4	1
Uppsala University	2	0
Växjö University	1	0
Örebro University	1	0

## List of Forte centres and research schools

### Gothenburg university

**Forte-centre:** Centre for Epidemiologic Studies on Mental and Physical Health Interacting over the Lifecourse (EpiLife)

### Linköping university

**Forte-centre:** Centre for Research on Migration, Ethnicity, and Society (REMESO)

**Research school:** REMESO Graduate School in Migration, Ethnicity and Society (2008-2012)

**Research school:** REMESO Graduate School in Migration, Ethnicity and Society (2013-2015)

### Lund university

**Forte-centre:** Centre For Medicine and Technology for Working Life and Society at Lund University (Metalund)

**Research school:** Man, work, environment and health (2008-2012)

**Research school:** Man, work, environment and health. Graduate school at Lund University (2012-2014)

**Forte-centre:** Centre for Ageing and Supportive Environments (CASE)

**Research school:** CASE National Graduate School for Ageing Research (2008-2012)

**Research school:** CASE Graduate School and a National Platform for Graduate Studies in Ageing Research (2013–2015)

### Karolinska institute

**Forte-centre:** Aging Research Centre (ARC)

**Research school:** ARC National Graduate School for Aging Research (2008-2012)

**Research school:** Graduate School for Aging Research at ARC (2013-2015)

### Stockholm university

**Forte-centre:** Social Change and Inequality across the Life Course: Sweden in Comparative Perspective (at SOFI)

**Forte-centre:** Human Society as a Life Long Determinant of Human Health (at CHES)

**Research school:** Human Society as a Life Long Determinant of Health (2008-2012)

**Research school:** Social and individual determinants of health across the life-course (2013-2015)

**Forte-centre:** Exclusion and Inclusion in the Late Welfare State: The Case of Alcohol and Drugs, ExIn (at SoRAD)

### Umeå university

**Forte-centre:** Centre for Global Health Research (CGH)

**Research school:** The Swedish Research School for Global Health (2012–2015)



# Questionnaire

## PART 1

### Questions to the Vice-chancellor of the University

- 1) In the grant proposal, it was the HEI that applied. How were the applications selected?
- 2) Has the grant influenced the strategic priorities of the university? If so, in what way?
- 3) Has the university taken new initiatives in co-financing programs, positions or projects at the Centre?
- 4) Has the university any long-term plans for the centre, after the grant period?
- 5) Reflect on the pros and cons of Centre of Excellence grant. How do you perceive Centre of Excellence grant? Is it a good way to finance research? If so, what is good with this type of grant?

## PART 2

### Questions 6-11 should be answered by the Coordinator of the Forte Centre

#### 6) Research performed

- a) Describe the most important results of the research performed at the Centre.
- b) Describe briefly the quality of the research in an international context (state of the art).
- c) Describe the role the centre has when researchers apply for different grants.
- d) Describe briefly how the research can be developed after the grant period. What is your strategy for maintaining a strong research environment after the grant period?
- e) Are there links to educational programs at the bachelor and master levels?
- f) Comment upon the previous evaluations of 2009 and 2011 and what has been done in accordance to the evaluators' suggestions.
- g) What university policies relevant to the gender profile of those involved in the Forte Centre exist - particularly those related to its leadership? How have these policies been implemented in the centre?
- h) Reflect on the pros and cons of Centre of Excellence grant. How do you perceive Centre of Excellence grant? Is it a good way to finance research? If so, what is good with this type of grant?
- i) List as *Appendix 4* a complete list of peer-reviewed publications by researchers at the centre during the grant period. Mark with an asterisk (\*) the publications that are results of new collaborations due to the grant.
- j) List as *Appendix 5* a complete list of peer-reviewed conference presentations by researchers at the centre during the grant period.
- k) List as *Appendix 6* other publications by researchers at the centre during the grant period.

#### 7) Collaboration

Describe the impact of different types of collaborations, such as internal and external, and with different stakeholders.

## 8) External communication/dissemination

- a) Describe your communication strategy.
- b) What efforts have been made to communicate/disseminate information about the activities and results from the research funded by the grant to different target groups? Please note that that this question does **not** seek to capture details of scientific presentations made to your peers in academia.
- c) Describe how the results have been communicated/disseminated to the public, policy makers, research agencies, etc.
- d) Please list impact through media e.g. newspapers, textbooks, popular science presentations, policies/standards, blogg, twitter and homepage.

## 9) Participating personnel

- a) List the persons actively participating in the Forte centre during the grant period. Please use the Excel file named *Appendix* for presenting the persons actively participating in the Forte centre, (*Appendix 1*).
- b) Describe strategies for recruitment of researchers and research groups. Have the strategies been successful?

## 10) Budget and financing of the Forte Centre

This information should be presented in *Appendix 3*, which can be found in the Excel file named *Appendix*.

## 11) Evaluation of Forte Research Schools

- a) Describe the organisation of the research school?
- b) What is the relation between the research school, the centre and the research done at the centre?
- c) Is there any connection between the research centre and other doctoral, undergraduate or postgraduate courses?
- d) What are the future plans for the research school?
- e) Syllabus and literature lists are to be enclosed (*appendix 8*)
- f) Use *appendix 2* to list doctoral students.

## Appendixes

For Appendix 1-3 use the Excel file called Appendix

*Appendix 1.* Table for presenting the persons (other than doctoral students) participating in the Forte centre, Both researchers and TA-personnel.

*Appendix 2.* Table of doctoral students participating in the Forte centre research school, or for those centres that has doctoral students but not a research school.

*Appendix 3.* Economic report and finance plan of the Forte centre

*Appendix 4.* Complete list of peer-reviewed publications in journals by researchers at the centre during the grant period. Mark with an asterisk (\*) the publications that are results of new collaborations due to the grant.

*Appendix 5.* List of peer-reviewed conference presentations by researchers at the centre during the grant period.

*Appendix 6.* List of other types of publications by researchers at the centre during the grant period.

*Appendix 7.* Organisation chart to illustrate how the Forte centre is organised.

*Appendix 8.* Syllabus and literature list for the research school

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