

Call for funding of postdoc fellowships to foster new scientific interactions between researchers at KBC departments.

The Kempe Foundations have approved an application from KBC to finance postdoc fellowships intended to stimulate research interactions between different departments and research groups within KBC. Applications are invited for four (4) postdoc stipends of 350 kSEK/year for a period of two years plus a grant of 150 kSEK/postdoc/year for running costs.

Eligible to apply

The applications should involve at least two principal investigators (PIs), where both are employed at **separate** departments or centres which both are members of KBC. These departments/centres are: Medical Biochemistry and Biophysics (UmU), Molecular Biology (UmU), Umeå Centre for Molecular Medicine (UmU), Chemistry (UmU), Ecology and Environmental Science (UmU), Plant Physiology (UmU), Applied Physics and Electronics (TEC-lab) (UmU), Physics (UmU), Forest Genetics and Plant Physiology (SLU), Forest Biomaterials and Technology (SLU) and Forest Ecology and Management (SLU). Note that each researcher can expect only ONE grant from this call and that PIs with an ongoing postdoc grant from KBC are not eligible to apply.

The selected projects need to start within one year from when the decision was made by the Kempe Foundations. Therefore, the name of the postdoc who will receive the stipend must be reported to the Kempe Foundations no later than November 21st, 2024.

Application process

The selection of projects and postdoctoral candidates will be made in a multistep process. After selection of projects and decision about eligible PIs are done (step 1 and 2), **it is mandatory that all participating PIs will be actively involved in the evaluation and interview procedures (step 3) for selection of postdoctoral candidates.**

First step: Call for projects

The application must be submitted as a single pdf-file to info.kbc@umu.se no later than 15th of February, 2024, at 2 pm (kl. 14.00) and should include the following documents submitted as one pdf-file:

1. Research program

- a. Project title.
- b. A short summary of max 2 sentences describing **the scientific question and project idea** that a postdoc candidate should be developing. The summary should also be suitable for a joint advertisement of the positions.
- c. Abstract of the project (max 2000 characters including blank spaces) that is describing in brief the following:
 - The scientific question and background of the project
 - Purpose and aims
 - A description on how the research will be carried out: project organisation and scientific Methods.
- d. A statement (max 2000 characters including blank spaces) describing the PI activities within the KBC research environment and how their expertise complements with each other in the proposed new collaborative project and its novelty.
- e. A statement (max 2000 characters including blank spaces) about how the new project idea is different from the ongoing projects and project applications in the PIs' laboratories.
- f. A description (max 2000 characters including blank spaces) of how the project will make use of research infrastructures and technical platforms within KBC.

2. CV

One CV of max 2 A4-pages for each PI, including information about past and current supervision of postdoctoral research fellows.

3. Appendix B: Publications

-Each PI should submit a list of 5 selected peer-reviewed original articles from the last 5 years (2019-2023). For each publication, the applicants should include information about her/his particular contribution to the published research as well as an opinion about what is the main research impact of the publication. Please include only articles or equivalent that have been published or accepted for publication at the time of the application. The order of authors in the publication list must be identical to that of the published work. Mark the name of the applying PIs in the list of authors in bold style.

4. Budget and financial resources

A budget plan for each applicant PI should be enclosed, specifying the source(s) of research funding and budget for the current financial year as well as for the forthcoming financial year.

Second step: Selection of projects

- An evaluation committee selected by the KBC-group evaluates the eligibility of the PIs and projects.
- Eligibility as a KBC Postdoc Fellowship project in accordance with the intention of the call will be assessed on the basis of the information provided under First step points 1-4.
- The final list of projects and contact information for participating PIs are published as a coordinated international advertisement.

Third step: Selection of postdoctoral candidates

More detailed information will follow later about the procedure and timeline. The following is a short summary:

- The selected PIs scrutinize applications for their own project idea and nominate 1-2 promising candidates to further evaluation.
- The KBC evaluation committee decides about a short list of candidates to be invited to the final interview. The candidates will be asked to write and submit also a project plan before the interview. The candidates should design their own research project plan based on the project idea they selected and should NOT be a copy of the PI's research proposal.
- Evaluation and selection:
Interview: The interview panel should carefully examine the application material of all candidates before the interview. Before the interview, the panel members should declare any conflict of interest.
Interviews will be conducted via Zoom and the candidates are asked to prepare a short oral/power point presentation about (i) the previous research experience and (ii) the research project plan based on the project idea selected.
The candidates are interviewed by the panel members who have no conflict of interest. Each candidate is assigned two main examiners from the interview panel. The main examiners will ask major questions in the interview. Other panel members who have no conflict of interest could also ask questions in the interview.
- Rating and ranking: Each panel member without a conflict of interest assesses the quality of the candidate and research proposal using a scale 1-7 (7 is the highest) and based on four basic criteria (Scientific quality of the proposed research, Novelty and originality, Merits of the applicant, Feasibility) as in the assessment used by The Swedish Research Council. The interview panel meets in a closed session without the presence of panel members who have a conflict of interest to discuss the strength and weakness of each candidate. The interview panel decide the ranking of the candidates. The best candidates are selected. Candidates who are not initially selected to the programme could be in the waiting list. The four top ranked candidates are offered fellowships. The candidates in the waiting list could be considered if the offered candidates do not accept the offer.

For questions regarding the application, please contact: Stefan Björklund (stefan.bjorklund@umu.se)