



## **Strategic Research Area Stem cells and Regenerative medicine Call for applications May–2 October 2026**

### **Tandem research grants**

The SFO Stem cells and Regenerative medicine announces up to three tandem research grants for clinically relevant translational research within the area of stem cells, regenerative medicine and cellular therapies.

The grants aim is to strengthen and support high-quality translational health research at an international level with the goal of fostering the transition from fundamental/pre-clinical research to clinical translation and vice versa.

A basic/pre-clinical scientist and a clinical scientist must jointly apply for a project that is clinically relevant, cross-disciplinary, and translational in nature. The project should aim to advance patient treatment or diagnosis or enhance the understanding of underlying disease mechanisms. Both applicants are expected to contribute substantially to the project.

Only applications where a basic/pre-clinical researcher and a clinical researcher establish a cross-disciplinary collaboration will be considered for funding, with both applicants expected to contribute substantially to the project. Both, the basic researcher and the clinical researcher serve as main applicants. The clinical researcher must have active clinical duties and cannot hold a full-time research position.

Both applicants will receive a specified portion of the grant budget, which should be clearly outlined in the application. Additionally, the application must demonstrate how the collaboration will be carried out and how the work will be divided between the applicants.

Applicants should be affiliated 100% at KI and/or the Stockholm County Council (Region Stockholm) at the time of starting the project. Funded projects will be supported with a total of 1,5 MSEK/year for 2027. Grants can be used to cover salaries, running costs, equipment and administrative costs.

Starting date for grants is February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2027. However, within an active recruitment process of an external candidate, the starting date could be delayed to December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2027 at the latest. A researcher is limited to submit only one application for a research grant *or* a Tandem grant, i.e. not

both.

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked by external international experts within the field. Final decisions will be taken by the SFO Steering committee.

**Note**, if the government and university decide to allocate funding for 2028 to the SFOs, the 2027 grant may be followed by a second-year grant in 2028 based on the application granted in 2027, without new evaluation.

### **Eligible to apply**

Applicants should have a PhD and a position as principal investigator or clinician and be affiliated 100% to Region Stockholm and/or KI on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2027. Applicants in the process of being recruited to Region Stockholm / KI and who will be employed at the latest December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2027 are also eligible, but will require a detailed letter of support by the chairs of the receiving institution and clinical department. A final decision about support will require that the applicant has started his or her employment at KI/Region Stockholm. Grants will be transferred to the respective KI department. The proposed research program should have relevance for the field of stem cells and regenerative medicine.

Applications from PhD students and Postdocs that carry out research under supervision, and applications where PhD students or Postdocs are named as co-applicants will not be considered.

**Applicants who received project funding from this SFO with a disposition right including 2027 (last funding round and granted extensions) are not eligible to apply.**

### **Relevance**

Funding is given to basic and translational research projects within the areas of stem cells and regenerative medicine.

This includes research on the generation of cells, tissues, and organs, as well as on mechanisms that are important for regeneration including understanding of development, homeostasis, or pathological processes. Advancing knowledge of these processes is critical within regenerative medicine and tissue engineering, which aim to develop strategies for regrowing, repairing, or replacing damaged cells, tissues, organs, or body parts.

## **Evaluation criteria and weights**

*Evaluation of quality and feasibility of the project 20%*

5 = Outstanding

4 = Excellent

3 = Very good

2 = Good

1 = Insufficient

*Evaluation of the originality of the project 20%*

5 = Outstanding

4 = Excellent

3 = Very good

2 = Good

1 = Insufficient

*Evaluation of the quality and merits of the scientist 20%. For junior applicants' evaluation of the applicant's potential to start an independent and successful line of clinical / translational research.*

5 = Outstanding

4 = Excellent

3 = Very good

2 = Good

1 = Insufficient

*Synergy of tandem partners 20%*

5 = Outstanding

3 = Very good

0 = Insufficient

*Evaluation of the project's scientific relevance within stem cells, regenerative medicine 20%*

5 = Relevant

3 = Partially relevant

0 = Insufficient – Does not adequately fit the program goals

## **Application**

Each application must be supported by a letter from the head of department, who will thereby ascertain that the applicant is a Principal Investigator and holds or will hold a 100% position at KI/Region Stockholm. If several departments are involved, each head of department should support the application.

- Project description (maximal 5 pages excluding references, Times New Roman, 12 points, single space, 2 cm margin), covering: Summary (limit 200 words), Objectives, Introduction, Preliminary results, Experimental plan, Significance for the field. References should be linked.
- CV, max 2 pages. Indicate if within 12 years from PhD.
- List of publications (with link), highlighting the 10 most relevant publications of the main applicant, shared authorships must be indicated, and author order should be listed as published
- Budget description for 2 years, INDI should be specified according to departmental specifications.

The application should be submitted as a single pdf to Daniel Holl, Karolinska Institutet ([daniel.holl@ki.se](mailto:daniel.holl@ki.se)).

**Application deadline: 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2026**

**Decisions** will be announced before February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2027