Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

**SLU Forest Damage Centre**

**Call information** SLU.sfak.2022.1.1.1-304

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# SLU Forest Damage Centre Research School - Second Call for applications for support to PhD positions

## About the SLU Forest Damage Centre (FDC) Research School

The SLU Forest Damage Centre Research School is organized in cooperation with public authorities, non-governmental organisations, research institutes and private companies. The research school will cover a wide range of subject areas, including both natural and social science aspects of biotic and abiotic damage across forest ecosystems relevant for Sweden. It will address both basic and applied research questions to better understand ecological and economical risks of forest damage, as well as their management and mitigation. Doctoral projects within the research school should consider climate change, sustainability, and biodiversity.

So far, The SLU Forest Damage Centre Research School has had one call for doctoral projects, and it was decided that nine PhD student projects would be supported (decision 1 June 2022; SLU ID: SLU.sfak.2022.1.1.1-72). Now the SLU Forest Damage Centre opens a second call to enable a new group of PhD student to start during the first half of 2023. To clarify the application process, which is divided by two different financial models (internal and external), this call provides two separate application templates. As before, doctoral students can be either co-financed by external partners or supported internally by e.g. research grants.

With this second call, the SLU Forest Damage Centre Research School also wants to emphasize interest in engaging a wider range of external organisations. Researchers that have contacts outside SLU are therefore strongly encouraged to create joint PhD student project proposals with these and in the application include a letter of intent that state the intention to co-finance the project. The SLU Forest Damage Centre can help to identifying potential partners on request.

## Financial support for Ph.D. students

The SLU Forest Damage Centre Research School has two types of financial support for doctoral projects, with a cost-sharing model between external partners and SLU as well as between the SLU Forest Damage Centre and departments at SLU.

1. **Doctoral projects in collaboration with external partners (“external Ph.D. student projects”)**: the external partner contributes annually with 600 tkr, the SLU Forest Damage Centre contributes annually with 300 tkr, and the

department at SLU contributes annually with 300 tkr. This results in a 50:25:25 (External: SLU FDC: SLU department) financial model.

2. **Doctoral projects with internal funding (e.g. governmental funding or funding from research grants to a department) ("internal Ph.D. student projects")**: the SLU Forest Damage Centre contributes annually with 600 tkr, and the department contributes annually with 600 tkr, resulting in a 50:50 (SLU FDC: SLU department) financial model.

In this second call, the SLU Forest Damage Centre has 3 million SEK annually to support PhD students, which corresponds to for example 3 internal (3 x 600 KSEK) and 4 external (4 x 300 KSEK) PhD students.

The project applicant, who will be the main supervisor of the project, needs to be employed at SLU. Each proposed project must be approved by the head of the respective department.

**Deadline for applications is 2023-01-15.**

## Topics

The SLU Forest Damage Centre Research School welcomes applications connected to any of the SLU Forest Damage Centre's areas of interests. In this second call, we especially like to see applications in the fields that are not covered in the research school so far. We therefore encourage researchers to send in applications considering entomology, abiotic damage, socioeconomic aspects of forest damage as well as remote sensing and modelling of forest damage.

## Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated according to below criteria for assessment (see below).

## Criteria for assessment

*Scientific quality*

- Research questions – relevance and clarity
- Knowledge gaps – will the research fill identified knowledge gaps?
- Hypotheses

*Research methods*

- Possibility to reach relevant results
- Feasibility and suitability of methods
- Well-defined and realistic work plan
- Ethical considerations when relevant

- Budget congruent with project goals

*Competence*

- Ability to carry out and coordinate the project
- Competence of the research group
- Complementation and cross-disciplinarity of the research group

*Societal relevance and communication*

- Communication skills (dissemination of results to stakeholders/end users)
- Connection to social/sectoral issues
- Short- and/or long-term outcome
- Relevance to stakeholder/end user needs
- Concrete and realistic plan for communication and other output