

# National support function for responsible internationalisation

Final report on a Government assignment



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# Foreword

The Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Research Council, and the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (Vinnova) have worked together on a Government assignment to promote responsible internationalisation in education, research, and innovation collaborations. In April 2024, the three public agencies reported on the first part of the assignment, relating to proposals for national guidelines for responsible internationalisation. This report, with proposals for a national support function to provide support and contribute to increasing the ability of higher education institutions, public agencies, and other actors to act responsibly on issues relating to internationalisation, concludes the assignment.

The role of higher education institutions, and ultimately individual researchers, is central to the work on responsible internationalisation. A support function shall enable sharing of experiences between higher education institutions, public agencies and other relevant actors in the innovation ecosystem, so that, in the current security policy situation, better national ability can be developed to handle the difficult deliberations that can arise in international collaborations.

The starting point for the work has been that internationalisation in education, research, and innovation constitutes a necessary precondition for developing new knowledge and new technologies. Internationalisation is therefore an indispensable value that needs to be safeguarded and cared for. At the same time, higher education institutions and the business sector are working in an ever more complex and splintered world, with increasing geopolitical tensions that create new challenges for them. This entails an increased requirement to protect national interests, knowledge, and technology by acting responsibly when internationalising.

The work with responsible internationalisation is a joint responsibility for higher education institutions, funding bodies, and the Government. The proposal for a national support function, together with the previous proposal for national guidelines, provide the Government with background documentation for how the work on responsible internationalisation should be organised.

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# Summary

In June 2023, the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR), the Swedish Research Council, and Vinnova were tasked by the Government to produce a proposal for how to promote responsible internationalisation in higher education, research, and innovation carried out at higher education institutions (HEIs), governmental research funding bodies and other public agencies.

For a small country such as Sweden, which is highly dependent on collaborations with the rest of the world for development and prosperity, internationalisation is a necessity. The support for responsible internationalisation that the three agencies propose shall be seen as support for conducting international activities as openly as possibly, and as securely as necessary.

In April, the three agencies submitted an interim report proposing a system for responsible internationalisation based on an overarching strategic focus and national guidelines. Based on the national guidelines, it is proposed that individual HEIs, funding bodies, and others draw up guidelines that are adapted to their own operations. The guidelines are divided up into five dimensions: the Swedish context, circumstances relating to the own operation, the foreign context, knowledge about the collaboration partner, and the design of the collaboration.

The design of the guidelines was done primarily with HEIs in mind, but with the ambition that they shall be relevant also for research funding bodies and other actors.

The assignment from the Government also includes proposing forms of support for responsible internationalisation for HEIs, governmental research funding bodies, and other public agencies and organisations involved. This report, which is the three agencies' final report, proposes a number of different support forms within the framework for a unified support function.

The proposals are based on the information gathering that begun in the work on the interim report, which has been supplemented with information gathered through further dialogue meetings with HEIs, security services, and other relevant actors. An international outlook has also been conducted, to understand how other countries support their higher education sectors on issues relating to responsible internationalisation and research security.

The three agencies propose that a support function for responsible internationalisation is established. It is proposed that this will:

**Constitute a national node for responsible internationalisation.**

This entails coordinating and interacting with target groups and actors in the area. Furthermore, to act as a contact point for the Government Offices, the EU, and internationally.

**Provide support on how to build up capacity and culture.** Facilitate for HEIs and other target groups to work with responsible internationalisation by providing unified information, for example via a websites, seminars, and training courses. The information consists of, among other things, the national guidelines and up-to-date information about relevant laws and ordinances.

**Contribute to monitoring the current environment.** Through contacts and collaboration with other actors (national and international) monitor and inform about developments in the current environment and to provide analysis and data collection.

**Update and develop the national guidelines**

**Provide tools.** This relates to developing templates and checklists, for example for applications for funding of collaborations.

**Provide meeting places.** The support function should provide and facilitate physical and digital meeting places, where HEIs and other actors can share experiences.

**Handle questions.** This relates to general questions about responsible internationalisation, but also questions of a security nature that may need to be dealt with in collaboration with the relevant security agencies.

For the support function to have the best preconditions to fulfil its function, interaction is important. The support function should therefore largely be designed in close collaboration with the primary target groups, which are higher education institutions, research funding bodies, and other public agencies. Other target groups are actors within the innovation ecosystem. It is proposed that the security agencies should also have a role in shaping the activities of the support function, by contributing their competences and perspectives. The support function will also give them the opportunity to reach out to higher education institutions, which they have expressed a need for.

The three agencies propose that several public agencies are tasked with establishing an office that offers a national contact point for responsible internationalisation and is responsible for coordination and for ensuring the operational parts of the support function's activities are carried out. One of the agencies will be tasked with leading the work of the office and serving as its organisational seat. A strategic council consisting of

representatives from the primary target groups should be established, to set the strategic focus for the support function.

Furthermore, it is proposed that relevant public agencies with knowledge and mandates within civil defence, sanctions, security, and defence issues are tasked to assist the support function on issues of a security nature.

The support function should receive initial funding of seven million krona (SEK) annually. The funding shall also enable the funding of activities, targeted at the whole or parts of the sector, to be carried out by higher education institutions or other actors.

Given that both circumstances and needs change, there should be preparedness to flexibly adjust the scope of the support function. The activities of the support function should be followed up continuously, and a more comprehensive follow-up is proposed to be conducted after three years.

The work on responsible internationalisation is complex and dependent on a long-term approach, where experience and competence need to be built up jointly over time. To handle difficult considerations, knowledge and experience exchange between different areas is necessary. To do this, higher education institutions and public agencies need to interact to achieve a better national coherence.

The activities of the proposed support function shall, in accordance with the government's mandate, contribute to achieving better national collected knowledge and ability to handle risks in international collaborations, and contribute to the implementation of the previously proposed guidelines.



# Introduction and background

## The assignment

In June 2023, the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR), the Swedish Research Council, and Vinnova were tasked by the Government to produce a proposal for how to promote responsible internationalisation in higher education, research, and innovation carried out at higher education institutions (HEIs), governmental research funding bodies, and other public agencies. See Appendix 1 for the assignment in its entirety.

The assignment covers two parts, to:

1. develop national guidelines. Interim report on 31 March 2024.
2. propose how further forms of support for sharing knowledge and experiences between HEIs, governmental research funding bodies, and other public agencies and organisations involved can be developed and designed. Final report on 15 December 2024.

## The three agencies' interim report

On 2 April 2024, an interim report was submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research in which the three agencies proposed a system for responsible internationalisation based on a division of responsibility on three levels.

- Policy – An overarching strategic focus for responsible internationalisation decided on by the Government or the Riksdag.
- National guidelines that in greater detail describe assessments and positions that need to be taken into account in the work on responsible internationalisation.
- Guidelines that are adapted to the individual operation. Based on the national guidelines, it is proposed that individual HEIs, funding bodies, and others draw up guidelines that are adapted to their own operations.

The interim report includes proposals for how a policy could be designed and for national guidelines.

In the interim report, the agencies propose an overarching strategic focus for responsible internationalisation decided on by the Government or the Riksdag. This is designated in the interim report as a

*national policy*. An overarching strategic focus in the form of a policy, separated from the national guidelines, gives the Government the opportunity for political control of the work. By dividing up the policy and the guidelines, the higher education sector and its actors are given the opportunity to change and develop the national guidelines as needed. The proposed policy describes:

- the importance of internationalisation for Sweden
- responsible internationalisation via a definition
- that the policy applies to actors in higher education, research, and innovation
- that actors shall start with the national guidelines, and develop adapted guidelines
- that actors shall establish an organisation and process for responsible internationalisation.

The national guidelines are divided up into five dimensions:

**1. The Swedish context** is about the importance of understanding and navigating the national preconditions for international collaboration, for example with consideration for legal and political factors, such as international sanctions and science diplomacy, and sector-specific collaborations.

**2. Circumstances relating to the own activities** are about identifying and protecting confidential information and protected assets within the own HEI and the research activities; identifying threats, risks and vulnerabilities with focus on specific antagonistic threats; assessing the limitations or opportunities the funding provides.

**3. The foreign context** is about aspects that can influence the room for manoeuvre in international collaborations, such as the collaboration country's legislation, democracy, rule of law, and human rights, academic freedom, and general threats.

**4. Knowledge of the collaboration partner** includes an assessment based on open data about the actor's status, and the degree of autonomy of the collaboration partner.

**5. Design of the collaboration** includes the undertakings made via the collaboration, and the dependency relationships that may be created during the collaboration, and how these are managed. It relates to issues such as good research practice, research integrity and ethics, open science, and also sustainability and gender equality.

The interim report describes the opportunities of internationalisation, but also the challenges that exist, in the context of increased geopolitical tensions. The geopolitical situation means that public agencies and HEIs need to pay even more attention to balancing the opportunities of

internationalisation against the challenges that exist. This places demands on exercising discerning responsibility in international collaborations. It is a joint responsibility for the Government, public agencies, and HEIs to ensure that internationalisation in higher education and research is conducted responsibly.

See the three agencies' interim report "Responsible internationalisation – Interim report on a Government assignment"<sup>1</sup> for additional descriptions of how the agencies have reasoned about responsible internationalisation and the opportunities and challenges of internationalisation.

### **Consultation responses to the three agencies' interim report**

The Ministry of Education and Research circulated the interim report for consultation to 62 bodies, of which 55 responded. The responses have been taken into account in the work of producing proposals for further forms of support for areas such as knowledge and experience sharing between the target groups.

The consultation responses indicate a need for development and clarification of the contents of the proposed guidelines, which has to be one of the first tasks carried out by the future support function in collaboration with the sector.

A summary of the consultation responses can be found in Appendix 3.

### **The work was carried out by a joint agency team**

The work on the assignment was carried out by a joint agency team consisting of representatives from the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Research Council, and Vinnova, and all three agencies subscribe to the proposal. The work was led by the Swedish Council for Higher Education.

#### **The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR):**

Anders Ahlstrand, Analyst  
Maria Högemark, Analyst  
Sara Rågwall, Head of Unit (up until the end of June 2024)

Help with the work has also been provided by:

Christofer Carlsson, Programme Officer (as from February 2024)  
Sanna Mels, Analyst (as from September 2024)

#### **The Swedish Research Council:**

Anne Carnwall, Senior Research Officer (as from August 2024)

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<sup>1</sup> Responsible internationalisation – Interim report on a Government assignment, UHR 2024, pp 20-34.

Stefan Törnqvist, Office Manager, International Secretariat (up until the end of April 2024)

**The Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (Vinnova):**

Ann-Mari Fineman, Chief Analyst

Karl Hallding, Chief Analyst (as from April 2024)

### **Starting points for the work**

The Government justifies the assignment to the agencies by reference to the security policy situation setting new challenges for HEIs and public agencies. The national guidelines and other support shall therefore contribute to international collaborations being possible to conduct in a “long-term secure and sustainable way”.<sup>2</sup>

The three agencies interpreted that the assignment applies to all international activities at HEIs, and that the guidelines shall also be aimed at public agencies and other funding bodies. In their work, the agencies have also taken into account how the support can be made accessible to other actors, such as actors within the innovation ecosystem.<sup>3</sup>

The assignment includes developing and designing forms of support for responsible internationalisation for HEIs, governmental research funding bodies, and other public agencies and organisations involved. The assignment also includes proposing how support for knowledge and experience sharing can be designed, and for how the national guidelines can be followed up and developed. This report therefore proposes a number of different support forms within the framework for a unified support function.

The support proposed shall contribute to increasing the awareness, knowledge, and ability of the target groups themselves to act responsibly on issues relating to internationalisation.

The design of the guidelines is based on the following starting points:

- safeguarding the importance of international collaboration
- safeguarding the individual responsibilities of HEIs and public agencies
- safeguarding academic freedom and HEIs’ institutional autonomy
- the security policy situation places new demands on international collaborations

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<sup>2</sup> Assignment to promote responsible internationalisation in education, research, and innovation collaborations, U2023/02127

<sup>3</sup> See a description of the target groups in the chapter Target groups and co-creators.

- the work on responsible internationalisation cannot be managed alone, either by individual HEIs, security and defence agencies, or other public agencies
- building on what has already been initiated at HEIs and other public agencies, and interacting with other ongoing assignments and initiatives
- there is a need for a national contact point in international contexts, in particular linked to the EU
- not everything can be defined from the start.

## **Implementation and knowledge gathering**

For the interim report, the agencies based a large part of the knowledge gathering on publications from public agencies and the EU, studies of other countries' guidelines, and a large number of dialogue meetings with public agencies and HEIs. The work on the final report uses this knowledge gathering as the starting point but is in addition based on further dialogue meetings with representatives from public agencies, HEIs and organisations (Appendix 2). At the dialogue meetings, the three agencies involved in the assignment were able to learn about their competences and experiences, and to capture many valuable viewpoints. The dialogue meetings have also contributed to securing support for and creating wider understanding of the need for support.

The agencies have placed particular emphasis on dialogues with HEIs – for example via the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) – the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Security Services (SÄPO), the National Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP), the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT), and the Platform for Internationalisation (PLINT), which are all indicated in the Government assignment.

Other countries' support organisations for responsible internationalisation have provided inspiration for the proposals in this report. The agencies have obtained international outlooks through dialogue meetings with foreign actors, to learn of their experiences. The outlooks have shown that there is a great deal of variation in how support for HEIs and other actors is organised. They have provided insights that have contributed to the agencies' proposal and its emphasis on collaboration. A brief description of the support offered by some countries is reported in Appendix 5.

The need for support to other actors within the research and innovation system, such as start-ups, incubators, and others, is based largely on a

previous mapping of needs<sup>4</sup> that Vinnova had carried out, and conclusions drawn within the Government assignments CMIP<sup>5</sup> and DIANA.<sup>6</sup> The final report from the Committee for Technological Innovation and Ethics (KOMET)<sup>7</sup> has also been taken into account.

To deepen the understanding of responsible internationalisation in a Swedish context, the agencies have collaborated with the researchers Sylvia Schwaag Serger, Professor of Research Policy, and Tommy Shih, Associate Professor of Business Administration. This was done through a research project, published in the report “Finding effective and acceptable approaches to managing international collaborations in a geopolitically turbulent world”.<sup>8</sup> The project was partly funded within the frame for the Government assignment. The collaboration has provided knowledge and insights that have contributed to the design of the proposals in this report.

## Use of some concepts

The definition of “**responsible internationalisation**” used in the interim report has been a guiding light also in the work on developing proposals for support:

“Responsible internationalisation covers the aspects that a national actor in higher education, research, and innovation needs to consider to be able to set up, keep up, and follow up a relationship with one or several actors in other countries in a responsible way.”<sup>9</sup>

While well aware that most HEIs are public agencies, the concept of “**public agencies**” is used in this report for agencies other than HEIs, unless otherwise is made clear from the context. Universities and other higher education institutions are variously and synonymously referred to as “HEIs”.

Consultation has also occurred with a large number of public agencies responsible for issues relating to civil defence, information security, sanctions, security, and defence. These are: The Swedish Defence

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<sup>4</sup> Support for risk management regarding international research and innovation activities: a feasibility study, Sylvia Schwaag Serger and Jerker Hellström, 2022, Vinnova’s Reg. No 2021-04406.

<sup>5</sup> Assignment to the Swedish Armed Forces and the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems to initiate and implement an innovation programme for civil-military synergies, Fö2024/00021.

<sup>6</sup> Assignment to the Swedish Armed Forces and the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems relating to Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) Fö2023/01286.

<sup>7</sup> SOU 2022:68 *Förnya taktiken i takt med tekniken – förslag för en ansvarsfull, innovativ och samverkande förvaltning, Slutbetänkande av Kommittén för teknologisk innovation och etik (KOMET)*, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Schwaag Serger, S & Shih, T. (2024). Finding effective and acceptable approaches to managing international collaborations in a geopolitically turbulent world.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 4 in the interim report on responsible internationalisation for further developed reasonings about the definition.

Materiel Administration (FMV), the Swedish Armed Forces, the National Inspectorate of Strategic Products' (ISP), the Swedish Migration Agency, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), the Swedish Security Service (SÄPO), and the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI). These agencies were consulted as a group and individually. Where the entire group is referred to in the report, they are given the collective noun “**security agencies**”, corresponding to the use in the agencies' interim report. The designation is not fair on all the agencies but is used to promote readability.

In addition to these security agencies, there are other agencies with responsibilities for security and supervision that have not been included in the consultation group above. To the extent these are referenced, this is done by name.

In reasonings about the target groups for the support system, the concept of the “**innovation ecosystem**” refers to actors with activities focused on innovation, such as incubators, science parks, start-ups, and small and medium-sized companies.

# Target groups and co-creators

The Government's assignment to the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Research Council, and Vinnova defines the target groups that the agencies have to consider in the assignment. It states that the agencies shall "propose how the work on responsible internationalisation in higher education, research, and innovation conducted at higher education institutions, at governmental research funding bodies, and other public agencies can be promoted." It also states that the agencies shall "propose how further forms of support for knowledge and experience sharing between HEIs, governmental research funding bodies, and other public agencies and organisations involved can be developed and designed". The agencies shall also "identify the need for and opportunities to make accessible the proposed support to actors other than public agencies and higher education institutions".

The agencies consider that the target groups also need to be co-creators of the development of the proposed support. All the target groups indicated have competences and experiences that should be of benefit to others, and they can therefore be co-creators by contributing to the content and focus.

The description of the target groups shall be understood in the sense that they include both individual employees and the organisation they represent.

## Higher education institutions

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are indicated in the assignment as a primary target group. The issues relating to responsible internationalisation are focused greatly on the HEIs, and the work on these have been continuously reinforced, which also makes HEIs important co-creators.

Competence has been and is being built up at the HEIs. A lot of work is already being done within the area of responsible internationalisation. This is true, both for individual HEIs and within the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF), CASI<sup>10</sup>, and other HEI

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<sup>10</sup> CASI is a project for joint analysis of preconditions for international academic collaboration in a geopolitically changeable world. More information on Lund University's website: <https://www.medarbetarwebben.lu.se/forska-och-utbilda/globalt-engagemang-och-internationella-fragor/globalt-ansvarsfullt-engagemang/casi-projektet>



collaborations. A “Campus Total Defence” (*Campus totalförsvaret*)<sup>11</sup> has also been formed, which is planning activities that adjoin the Government assignment.

## **Research funding bodies and other public agencies**

Research funding bodies are also indicated in the assignment as a primary target group.

Funding bodies have a need to build up knowledge, processes, and procedures for responsible internationalisation within their organisations. This relates, for example, to how to handle calls for funding of collaborations relating to countries that the Swedish Security Services have indicated as a threat to Sweden’s security. It may also relate to how calls within certain research fields are to be managed. In a way corresponding to that of the HEIs, funding bodies therefore need access to information and knowledge that public agencies with responsibility for security and defence issues have.

Research funding bodies are also important co-creators. As shown in the interim report, funding bodies also have considerable opportunities to influence the work on responsible internationalisation. The report also describes different routes that this work can take.<sup>12</sup> Research funding bodies have the opportunity to focus on these issues in calls, and in this way contribute to building up a culture for responsible internationalisation. How terms and conditions are worded in calls for funding of collaborations can contribute to raising the level of awareness among researchers and employees of HEIs, as well as other actors.

The Government assignment also states “other public agencies”. This is a broad concept that the agencies involved in the assignment have chosen to interpret as other public agencies with mandates within education, research and innovation, for example the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Higher Education Authority, and others.

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<sup>11</sup> Campus Total Defence is a collaboration between Swedish HEIs, aimed at strengthening Sweden’s total defence through targeted education and research, established by the Swedish Defence University, Örebro University, and Luleå University of Technology. More information on Örebro University’s website: <https://www.oru.se/samverkan/campus-totalforsvar/>

<sup>12</sup> Responsible internationalisation – Interim report on a Government assignment, UHR 2024, p 69 ff.

### **Other actors within the innovation ecosystem identified as a target group**

The assignment to the agencies also includes identifying the need for and opportunities to make the proposed support accessible to actors other than public agencies and higher education institutions.

The wording of the assignment shows that the Government wants to create good preconditions for utilising research results in a secure way in both the public sector and the business sector, and to contribute to Swedish competitiveness and resilience. To achieve this, the entire value chain from research and innovation to commercialisation needs to have the awareness, competence, and capacity to protect national interests, knowledge, and technology.

The national guidelines, as well as additional support, should therefore be made accessible to enable the needs of all actors in the research and innovation ecosystem to be addressed. This therefore includes entities such as research institutes, start-ups, small and medium-sized companies, and science parks. These actors also have important competences, insights, and experiences of internationalisation that should be shared by the other target groups. Coordination benefits therefore exist in making the support accessible also to them.

### **Security agencies are primarily co-creators, but also a target group**

The security agencies<sup>13</sup> are not indicated in the Government assignment as a target group, but as a source of knowledge and dialogue partners. They are central co-creators in several respects. They have knowledge about issues relating to the country's security that HEIs and funding bodies do not have access to.

In the dialogues with the security agencies, it has also emerged that they need support to reach out to HEIs in a unified way. In this respect, the security agencies are therefore also a target group for national support.

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<sup>13</sup> See the explanation of the designation "security agency" on p 15.

# Identified needs

## **Different needs and interests**

In the assignment, the Government indicates a number of dialogue partners. In addition to HEIs and research funding bodies, they also include the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Security Service (SÄPO), and the National Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP). This means that the agencies involved in the assignment have had to consider interests and needs that differ widely and that are sometimes difficult to unite. This illustrates the complexity of the issue.

The description of the needs and proposal for support in the following chapter reflects an assessment of the needs that the agencies consider to be urgent to collaborate on nationally in order to manage these differing interests.

## **Focus on complex issues that relate to several actors' areas of responsibility**

In the interim report, the agencies described that responsible internationalisation is a broad concept. The proposal for national guidelines discusses 21 different aspects. Some of these also include several subsidiary aspects. Despite this, they do not cover all the different angles of responsible internationalisation, a fact that is also mentioned in several of the consultation responses.

All aspects included in the proposal for the national guidelines must be able to be supported. The needs inventory and the subsequent proposal in this report do, however, reflect one of the starting points in particular described above. That is, the work on responsible internationalisation cannot be managed alone, either by individual HEIs, the security and defence agencies, or other public agencies

The emphasis in the report is therefore on complex issues where the responsibilities of several agencies intersect, and where the need for new or developed forms of interaction have been identified. To a large extent, this relates to security issues in conjunction with international collaborations. The need for support in 'grey areas' on security issues, such as research security, security when establishing new collaborations, in recruitment, and in export control have been identified. They have emerged from dialogue meetings and the consultation responses from several HEIs and the security agencies. There is a mutual interest in working on these issues.

The grey areas also include the difficult balances to be struck between opportunities and challenges described in the agencies' interim report.

Individual researchers or HEIs cannot themselves assess what constitutes national security, and individual security agencies cannot determine what is important research. Several consultation responses from HEIs also comment that they cannot take over expert tasks relating to security issues.

**Not just security issues**

Even though the emphasis in this report is to some extent on security issues, other aspects of responsible internationalisation are also included in the support that the agencies propose. The target groups should be invited to influence the direction and initiate dialogues about the aspects that they consider important. Several of the aspects in the guidelines proposed in the interim report are to some extent already managed at HEIs and at agencies today. These are activities that are important to interact with in a national support function.

### ***Examples of issues raised in the dialogue meetings***

#### ***Examples from HEIs***

How to manage when different national interest conflict with each other? There is considerable collaboration with China. At the same time, the Swedish Security Service is flagging China as a threat to Sweden's economic security.

What type of mandate and competence does an HEI have to check other than academic competence when recruiting?

How do the collaboration countries' rules, laws, and policies affect the collaboration, for example laws relating to data handling in USA?

What are the extra protected areas, and how can we assess what research will become an extra protected area in future?

How can we collaborate with researchers/persons in authoritarian countries without exposing them to risk?

I have been invited to give a lecture on critical technologies in India. What should I say?

#### ***Examples from research funding bodies***

Are the technologies that an applicant is planning to collaborate on covered by restrictions that impact on the opportunities for collaboration with the country in question?

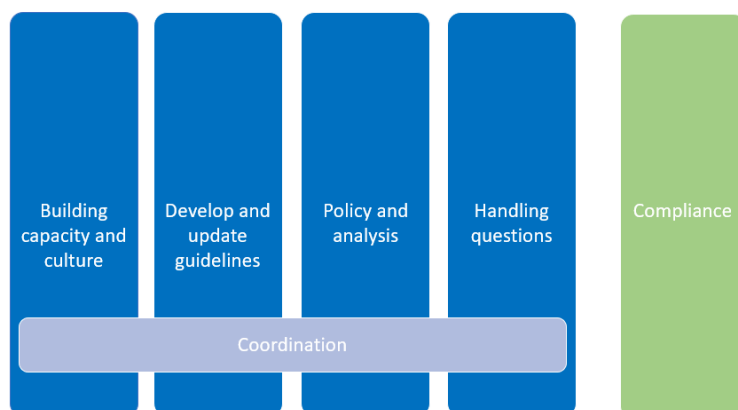
What possible requirements need to be set for the collaboration partner/s the applicant will be working with?

Are there requirements that need to be set for applicants in a bilateral call?

### **Five overarching needs are identified**

The agencies involved in the assignment have identified a number of tasks that a national support function needs to handle, and differing needs of the target groups relating to support.

Figure 1. Identified needs and tasks



The compliance that is included in the figure above is not proposed to be part of the support function. In the figure above, it is therefore shown in a contrasting colour. A discussion of its relationship to the support function is included in the section Compliance below.

## Coordination

The target groups express a need for HEIs and agencies to interact, both within each group and between groups. To relate to the different aspects included in the proposed national guidelines, knowledge and information within widely disparate areas are needed. Expert knowledge from several agencies and from the target groups needs to be taken into account. To do so, interaction is needed. There are also closely related agency mandates at several public agencies that could be coordinated to a greater degree to achieve better national unity in issues relating to responsible internationalisation. The need for interaction and co-creation is also emphasised by Schwaag Serger and Shih.<sup>14</sup>

A national support function can be realised and organised in various ways, but measures need to be taken at three levels: by individual actors, jointly by sector, and nationally. Interaction is needed between these levels in order to achieve a national ability and preparedness. It is also a precondition for being able to act on policy issues.

The needs for support that the agencies have identified are very much linked together. Development in one area affects the others. The issues are also complex, and span from national security to open science.

Coordination and collaboration with and between different groups of actors is needed to gather competence and reach a national ability to handle issues relating to responsible internationalisation.

<sup>14</sup> Schwaag Serger, S & Shih, T. (2024). Finding effective and acceptable approaches to managing international collaborations in a geopolitically turbulent world, p 43 f.

### **Deepened interaction between certain groups of actors**

HEIs are already interacting on issues relating to responsible internationalisation. This is done through bodies such as the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) within the expert group on internationalisation and the expert group for property and security issues, and other joint HEI groupings, such as the Coordinated Assessment for Strategic Internationalisation (CASI). In the agencies' contacts with HEIs, the value of further sharing of experiences has been highlighted as an important factor. The need for HEIs that have reached further in their work to share and support others has been emphasised. Some have expressed that HEIs between themselves should find a joint approach to different problems and balances to be struck.

To avoid repeating work and too large a superstructure, the national support function should take into account and complement existing forms of interaction as far as possible.

Correspondingly, there is a need for the security agencies to share information between themselves about the situation at HEIs, or about threats linked to them, which could advantageously be done using the existing forms of interaction. A need for better access to the security agencies' expert knowledge was flagged by the HEIs.

There is also a need for interaction between research funding bodies for the coordination of questions relating to responsible internationalisation, in the first instance to facilitate applications for research and innovation funding. There is a network for collaboration between the six major governmental research funding bodies – the Swedish Research Council, Vinnova, the Swedish Energy Agency, Formas, Forte, and the Swedish National Space Agency – and the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR). Within this network, issues are discussed and experiences shared with the aim of creating a consensus, joint guidelines, and to use similar approaches and processes towards applicants, as well as in the internal work.

### **Building up ability and culture**

The most important needs for support that the agencies have identified relate to ability and culture. They concern the need to proactively support the target groups in building up knowledge, competences, abilities, and preparedness to manage difficult issues in internationalisation. The motivation to want to initiate, implement, and manage international education, research, and innovation collaboration should be supported. The purpose is, above all, to support a well-developed ability among the target groups to make their own balanced assessments of risk and opportunities in international collaborations.

The needs that have been identified can be addressed with proactive activities. They may relate to offering different formats for disseminating knowledge and information for the target group to absorb/use as needed.

What HEIs have expressed particular difficulties in relating to are issues concerning security. Security issues relating to the recruitment of personnel or collaborations with actors in certain countries are a challenge. The same applies to issues relating to setting limits in individual cases for what constitutes extra protected research data, and what is limited by export controls or dual-use products. A recently published report from the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills based on in-depth interviews give a similar picture of challenges that researchers face.<sup>15</sup>

The HEIs have stated a need to share the security agencies' expert knowledge and to make it easier to find relevant and updated information about laws, regulations, and other relevant information. They have also expressed a need to share in the experiences of other HEIs of working with responsible internationalisation.

Needs for the following proactive initiatives have been identified:

- Collected information
- Educational initiatives
- Support tools
- Meeting places and networks for sharing experiences
- News and information dissemination
- Special, targeted outreach initiatives

### **Implementation support**

The agencies' interim report proposes an overarching policy stipulating that the target groups involved establish an organisation and process for responsible internationalisation. Some HEIs have expressed worry about the costs required to build up their own competence and organisation for this purpose.

In their work on the assignment, the agencies have funded five pilot projects at HEIs, aimed at implementing measures for responsible internationalisation.<sup>16</sup> The pilots are still in progress, but contacts with the project principals indicate that the projects have stimulated the internal work, and that there is potential in this type of measures. Similar support has also been offered to HEIs in Canada to build up

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<sup>15</sup> *Geopolitisk spenning og internasjonalt kunnskapssamarbeid - En kvalitativ studie av erfaringer i norske fagmiljø, rapport nr. 12/2024, Hk-dir.*

<sup>16</sup> University of Gothenburg, Karolinska Institutet, Luleå University of Technology, Malmö University, and Jönköping University. A description of the projects can be found in Appendix 4.



capacity, with preliminary good results.<sup>17</sup> To facilitate the initial implementation of procedures and working practices at HEIs, there may be a need for implementation support.

### ***Examples of education courses in security and responsible internationalisation***

The **Swedish Defence University (FHS)** offers courses in security protection and risk management for international relationships, focusing on strengthening competence at public agencies and companies that handle sensitive information.<sup>18</sup> The **Swedish Security & Defence Industry Association (SOFF)** arranges courses in areas such as security-protected procurement and anti-corruption, where participants get practical and legal guidance in managing requirements in security-critical sectors.<sup>19</sup> The **Swedish Export Control Society** offers the certification course Certified Export Control Manager (CECM), which covers everything from the basics of export control to in-depth studies of Swedish and US legislation.<sup>20</sup> The **Sweden Secure Tech Hub**, in collaboration with **Linköping Science Park**, provides support for small and medium-sized companies and start-ups through courses and expert help in cyber security, such as free-of-charge introductory courses in cyber security.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to this, responsible internationalisation is included as part of the **Swedish Association of Higher Education Institution's Higher Leadership Programme, HeLP**.<sup>22</sup> **Young Academy of Sweden (SUA)** has organised science salons relating to research security and dual-use research, where researchers discuss ethical and practical issues linked to responsible research.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Progress Report on the Implementation of Canada's National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships and Supporting Research Security Efforts, pp 18-19. Statement about good experiences by Shawn McGuirk (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada) at a research seminar arranged by Tommy Shih on 16 September 2024.

<sup>18</sup> More information on the Swedish Defence University's website: <https://www.fhs.se/utbildningar/sakerhetsskydd---grundkurs.html> and [www.fhs.se/utbildningar/hot-och-riskhantering.html](http://www.fhs.se/utbildningar/hot-och-riskhantering.html)

<sup>19</sup> More information on the Swedish Security & Defence Industry Association's website: [soff.se/event/kurs-i-sakerhetsskyddad-upphandling-i/](http://soff.se/event/kurs-i-sakerhetsskyddad-upphandling-i/)

<sup>20</sup> More information on the Swedish Export Control Society's website: [exportkontrollforeningen.se/cecm-utbildning-del-i-grunder-sverigeusa-pda-km-2/](http://exportkontrollforeningen.se/cecm-utbildning-del-i-grunder-sverigeusa-pda-km-2/)

<sup>21</sup> More information on Linköping Science Park's website: [linkopingsciencepark.se/sakra-din-plats-pa-kostnadsfri-utbildning-i-cybersakerhet-vid-liu/](http://linkopingsciencepark.se/sakra-din-plats-pa-kostnadsfri-utbildning-i-cybersakerhet-vid-liu/)

<sup>22</sup> More information on SUHF's website: <https://suhf.se/arbetsgrupper/suhfs-program-for-ledare-i-akademin/>

<sup>23</sup> More information on Young Academy of Sweden's website: [sverigesungaakademi.se/forskningspolitik/sua-arrangerade-vetenskaplig-salong-om-dual-use-forskning/](http://sverigesungaakademi.se/forskningspolitik/sua-arrangerade-vetenskaplig-salong-om-dual-use-forskning/)

## **Develop and update guidelines**

The interim report on the Government assignment proposes national guidelines. The guidelines shall provide guidance and support when assessing the opportunities and risks of international collaboration, and thereby contribute to actors' ability to independently act responsibly in internationalisation.

The national guidelines need to reflect the prevailing geopolitical situation and take into account any changes to laws and regulations. This also includes being in line with the guidelines, frameworks, and recommendations developed at EU level.

## **Policy and analysis**

There are several different needs relating to policy and analysis. One need is to be a support for the Government Offices' work on responsible internationalisation for the purpose of providing a unified Swedish approach to responsible internationalisation within the EU and other international bodies. This entails a form of educational, research, and innovation policy advice, and is based on an existing ability to conduct contemporary environment monitoring and analysis, as well as an ability to interpret and integrate the analyses of others.

In addition, a unified way of looking at issues relating to responsible internationalisation is needed, which can constitute a basis both for the review of the national guidelines and the design of the support to the target groups.

Another need is to contribute to increased understanding of national interests, policies, and regulations, and to concretise and clarify what these mean in practice for the higher education sector and other actors involved.

Collaboration with HEIs and other relevant actors is important in order to obtain background documentation for the analyses, and other documentation needed to develop practical work and policies relating to responsible internationalisation. In addition, there may be a need for a channel for hearing and taking into account the views of HEIs and other target groups on policy issues that can be used in the work on policy documentation for the Government Offices, and also in international contexts.

There is also a need to monitor the contemporary environment. The geopolitical context is in constant flux, and the work on responsible internationalisation needs to be based on insights about the current situation. It is important that can be made accessible to all target groups.

Furthermore, there is a need for research in the area of responsible internationalisation and closely related subjects. Nationally, there are for example the research networks that are in the process of being established with the help of funding from STINT, at the universities of Lund and Gothenburg. There is a need to support the use of this research, as well as helping to convert new knowledge into policies or activities that may be of value to HEIs and other actors.

### **International contact point**

A lot of work is in progress within the EU linked to policies relating to responsible internationalisation, and to economic and research security. The Council recommendation on increased research security<sup>24</sup> that was adopted by the EU's research ministers in May 2024 proposes the creation of a support function in each member state: "...create a new or reinforce an existing support structure or service, to help actors in the research and innovation sector to deal with risks related to international cooperation in research and innovation." There is therefore a need for a contact point for a possible EU node for research and economic security, and for other international actors where there is a joint interest in international link-up relating to responsible internationalisation.

### **Handling questions**

From the dialogue with HEIs, different opinions have emerged about the need to be able to ask questions to some form of national support function. Some have expressed that they do not foresee that need, while others have expressed a need to get help on issues relating to areas such as security and export controls. Questions relating to limit-setting problems are particularly difficult.

HEIs, public agencies, and other organisations need to have their own capacity to handle both simple and complex questions relating to responsible internationalisation. But if the organisation, following internal handling, has a need for supplementary information and analysis to form a sufficient basis for its own decision, then the opportunity to ask questions should be there.

Questions can come from HEIs, public agencies, or other actors in the innovation ecosystem. Questions that arise can, for example, relate to specific questions ahead of a collaboration, or to challenges relating to an entire project. A common feature of them is that the question-setter needs further information to enable them to make a decision. It is difficult at present to have an idea of the types of questions, and how many, that may be received, and this will probably change over time.

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<sup>24</sup> EU. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on enhancing research security, 2024/0012.

This means that it is crucial to follow up these questions to ensure the right competence and capacity. This is also important from a learning perspective, as new types of questions can form the basis for case studies and provide indications of areas or themes where there is a need for further initiatives to reinforce the actors' competences.

***Example of how KTH Royal Institute of Technology works with responsible internationalisation***

At KTH, an advisory group for responsible internationalisation (RAI) has been established to assist the operation in the work on responsible internationalisation. As necessary, this group can escalate issues to a steering group for responsible internationalisation (SAI), which is responsible for issues relating to international collaborations that are of a strategic character and can impact on KTH's brand. The formal decisions are then taken according to the applicable order of delegation. Those authorised to send questions to RAI for advice and support are in the first instance the department heads within the academic operation and department managers within the operational support operation. These functions are responsible for coordinating cases that may be sent to RAI for handling. During 2024, RAI has handled around 25 cases of varying scope, of which 3–4 have been escalated to SAI.

The guidelines for responsible internationalisation produced by STINT in collaboration with KTH, Lund University, and Karolinska Institutet are used to assist the work.

## **Compliance**

The support function should not check compliance. Follow-up and supervision of HEIs and public agencies should be done within the framework for the existing regulations that govern the activities of public agencies and HEIs.

This issue is, however, of relevance as what is reported back on the target groups' compliance within the mandates of other public agencies can provide an indication of the areas that the support function should focus on. There is therefore a need for procedures to take into account relevant results from follow-up and supervision in the development of the support.

The interim report on the Government assignment proposes that follow-up shall constitute part of the content of a national focus, to be decided by the Government or the Riksdag. How this follow-up should be conducted is assessed as being outside the assignment. No proposal for how this should be done is therefore provided. The follow-up is

dependent on the type of decision the Government or the Riksdag makes. Irrespective of their format, the results are interesting for enabling the focus of the support to be further developed.

**Example of a digital meeting place**

One example of a digital meeting place is the website of the project *Högskolepedagogiskt lyft*<sup>25</sup> (“Enhancement of Higher Education Teaching”), which was set up within the two Government assignments *Högskolepedagogiskt lyft* and *Kvalitet i distansutbildning* (“Quality in Remote Learning”). To reach the goals of the assignments, a digital infrastructure for long-term collegial learning and knowledge dissemination between HEIs, national networks, and organisations was developed. To disseminate knowledge, a website was developed for which digital events in the form of conferences, webinars, workshops, thematic cafés, and podcasts were produced. In addition, a resource bank was created, consisting of material such as articles and reports, and also a discussion forum via Sunet Forum. The focus and content-related work was run via reference groups consisting of persons from HEIs, networks, and organisations within higher education teaching, while UHR was responsible for project management and production.

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<sup>25</sup> The Government assignment and the project *Högskolepedagogiskt lyft* were reported on 28 February 2024, and the website [hpu.uhr.se](http://hpu.uhr.se) was accessible for the rest of the year. Parts of the website, as well as the resource bank, have been transferred to [uhr.se](http://uhr.se).

# Proposal based on identified needs

## Establish a national support function

A national support function for responsible internationalisation shall be established, starting in 2025.

The overall assessment is that increased interaction is needed to achieve a unified way of looking at issues, build up trust, and achieve improved abilities of actors to act responsibly and securely in international collaborations.

In the interim report, “Responsible internationalisation – Interim report on a Government assignment” the agencies describe the importance of internationalisation of higher education, research and innovation. The national guidelines for responsible internationalisation proposed in the interim report and the proposal for a support function in this report aim to clarify the responsibility and provide support in the work on internationalisation, to ensure that international collaboration continues, even in a new and more complex geopolitical context.

### **The aim of the support function**

The overarching goal of the support function is to provide support and contribute to increasing the knowledge, awareness, and ability of the target groups to act responsibly by themselves on issues relating to internationalisation. It also aims to be a national, needs-adapted support and a collective node for issues relating to responsible internationalisation for HEIs, research funding bodies, and other agencies involved. It shall also be possible to make the support function accessible to other actors.

### ***Support and stimulate interaction***

As described in the agencies’ interim report, responsible internationalisation includes a large number of aspects that are part of the areas of responsibility of several public agencies and actors. The support function shall achieve improved national ability to act responsibly by coordinating interaction between public agencies, HEIs, and other actors.

### ***Support what is in progress and interact***

The support function shall support and stimulate the work that is in progress at HEIs, public agencies, and other actors. It shall utilise the

work that is already being done and the competence that already exists. In this way, it can constitute an arena for national collaboration on the issues, and thereby contribute to sharing experiences, accumulating knowledge, and promoting a unified way of looking at problems and goals.

***Support on issues that relate to security, and promote a unified way of looking at problems***

The support function shall support the target groups in acting on issues relating to national security by facilitating information dissemination and sharing experiences with the security agencies. Limit-setting issues relating to security are difficult for the target groups to deal with. This is because the issues are complex, and because they are part of the areas of responsibility of several agencies. A need to interact on these issues therefore exists.

It is also at the interface between the security aspects and the institutional autonomy of the HEIs that potential conflicts of interest can arise. Here, knowledge sharing and perspectives are needed to reach a unified way of looking at the problem. Furthermore, the security agencies have expressed a need to reach out to the higher education sector. The support function should constitute a channel for supporting this aspiration.

***Provide relevant support to all target groups***

Different actors have different preconditions for building up their own capacity and competence on issues relating to responsible internationalisation. Large HEIs have greater opportunities to build up their own specialised competence and organisation for the issues than small ones do. At the same time, large HEIs offering a large range of subjects face different challenges than single-faculty HEIs do. Public agencies and other actors in the innovation ecosystem face different challenges and have different preconditions.

The goal of the proposed support function is that it shall be able to provide support that is relevant for all the target groups. However, all the support will not be relevant to all, as their needs differ.

***Provide an arena for knowledge and experience sharing***

By offering unified information, training courses, and meeting places between HEIs, and between HEIs and other actors, the support function can contribute to knowledge transfer and increased ability among the target groups to act on these issues. The influence of the target groups on the focus and content is therefore central.

***The support function cannot take over the responsibility of HEIs or agencies***

HEIs and public agencies are responsible for issues relating to responsible internationalisation and security in their own operations. A national support function cannot take over this responsibility. It shall provide support to HEIs, public agencies, and other actors to conduct international collaborations as openly as possible and as securely as necessary. It cannot and should not take over any agency's own exercise of authority.

***Influence of the target groups***

Interaction with the target groups is a precondition for enabling the support function to fulfil its function. The support function should therefore largely be designed in close collaboration with these. As the primary target group, HEIs' opportunities to exert influence is particularly important. Various forms of target group influence are proposed.

***A strategic council shall be established to set the strategic focus***

It is proposed that the support function has a strategic council, to provide overarching focus decisions for the office, which is responsible for the operational activities. The organisation of the office is described below. The strategic council shall consist of representatives from the primary target groups, that is, HEIs, research funding bodies, and other public agencies, and be led by the agency that will be responsible for the office.

***The security agencies are included in a specific council for security issues***

The security agencies play an important role in the support function. The question of whether a representative of the security agencies should be included in the strategic council has been considered. However, to enable the diversity of perspectives that exist within the group of security agencies, we propose that a specific interaction council for security issues is established. This should include the security agencies that the three agencies have been in contact with during their assignment. Representatives from other, relevant agencies should be considered. The security agencies use their expert knowledge to assist the work of the office, but should also be able to propose focuses and participate in the support function's activities. The security agencies play a central role in parts of the support function's operational activities.

***Several reference groups for broader target group influence***

In addition to the overarching strategic focus provided by the strategic council, further interaction is needed with the target groups.



To enable a broad dialogue with the defined target groups, target group-specific reference groups should be established. They can assist with background documentation and perspectives, and should also be able to participate actively in the support function's operational activities.

Reference groups for HEIs, research funding bodies, and representatives of the innovation ecosystem should be established. Decisions on who should be included in these, and any decision on any further reference groups should be made by the support function.

### **Tasks for the support function**

Against the background of the identified needs, it is proposed that the support function is given the following tasks.

- **Constitute a national node for responsible internationalisation** This entails coordinating and interacting with target groups and actors in the area, and to act as the contact point to the Government Offices, the EU, and internationally. As described, the EU Council recommendation relating to research security recommends that each member state should establish a national support function.
- **Provide support for how to build up capacity and culture** by providing unified information on a website, through seminars and training courses, and in other ways. The information consists of the national guidelines, up-to-date information about relevant laws and ordinances, and so on. Implementation support to facilitate the implementation of procedures and working practices should be possible to provide. Several public agencies need to participate in activities and assist with information. The security agencies play a special role in this work. To avoid duplication and to coordinate resources, interaction should also take place with other actors, such as SUHF, Campus Total Defence, STINT, and others.
- **Contribute to monitoring the current environment** through contacts and collaboration with other actors (national and international) to monitor and inform about developments in the current environment and to provide analysis and data collection. Pass on information about changes to rules, sanctions, and other legal frameworks, as well as national and international policies. The information can also be about seminars and conferences, and so on. The support function should in the first instance provide and enable the work of others rather than carry out its own analyses. This can be done on assignment or through procurement. The aim is to gather information and make it available on a website. The work that is already being done at individual HEIs, within SUHF, by STINT and the Swedish

Security Service and others shall be utilised. The two research groups in responsible internationalisation that STINT has awarded funding to can be a further resource.

- **Update and develop the national guidelines** The guidelines should be reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually), and updated as necessary. The work shall be based on contemporary environment monitoring and carried out in interaction with the target groups and other relevant actors.
- **Provide tools.** This relates to developing templates and checklists, for example, for applications for funding of educational, research, and innovation collaborations. It can also entail providing self-evaluation tools, or tools for background checks.
- **Provide meeting places.** The support function should provide and facilitate physical and digital meeting places for sharing experiences. This relates both to facilitating for different actors, such as HEIs and agencies with responsibilities for security and defence issues, to meet, and also to making room for HEIs – individually or jointly – and other actors to reach out and share experiences with others.
- **Handle questions.** This relates to general questions about responsible internationalisation, by either responding to or passing on/referring to a relevant actor. This also covers questions of a security nature that may need to be dealt with by special means. There may, for example, be grey zone questions that do not clearly fall within the remit of an individual security agency. These questions should be handled by the support function in collaboration with the relevant security agencies.

#### ***Contact/accessibility***

The support function should be possible to contact by several different means: by telephone, email, physical letters, and also through physical or digital meetings. It should also be considered whether the support function should have a chat function.

#### ***Documentation***

We propose that questions and cases received by the support function are documented in some form. The documentation can provide a basis for learning and follow-up of the support function's work.

Questions received by the support function, particularly those with a high degree of complexity, can be used as (anonymised) case studies for others to partake of for learning purposes. Questions and cases can also, in a suitable form, become part of an FAQ section, for example, on the support function's website.

Questions received should be documented in some form for collecting statistics for the number and types of cases. This information can be used to identify needs, to make targeted initiatives, and to develop and improve the support function.

### **Initial focus**

The agencies have based their work on two overarching support needs – a need for proactive work to build up ability and culture through information and experience sharing, and also a need to be able to answer questions. In the dialogue meetings with the target groups, it has been made clear that the primary need lies within the proactive work. The agencies therefore consider that the main focus should be on proactive initiatives through information and experience sharing.

In its work, the support function must be able to handle all aspects included in the proposal for the national guidelines. The Government's assignment to the agencies does, however, emphasise the new challenges that the security policy situation is giving rise to, and the need to protect national interests. To respond to the need described in the Government's assignment, and to contribute to the accumulation of the new competences and agency collaborations that this requires, the focus during the initial period needs to be on issues relating to security.

The support function's initial focus should also be on the issues that are complex and that require collaboration and coordination to be solved. These are, among others, issues that relate to the areas of responsibility of several agencies. Examples are limit-setting problems relating to issues with research security, export controls, dual-use products, information security, foreign direct investments, and so on.

### **Closely related proposals and initiatives**

There are several ongoing or proposed initiatives that a support function needs to relate to.

The need for a support function has also been recognised by the Swedish National Audit Office, which recommends that the Government should task HEIs to interact to establish a joint support function for information security.<sup>26</sup>

The memorandum *Ökad kompetens i säkerhetsfrågor vid universitet och högskolor* ("Increased competence in security issues at universities and university colleges") also proposes that the Government "should order an investigation into how a support function for security issues can be established for higher education institutions. The purpose of such a

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<sup>26</sup> Riksrevisionen. *Informationssäkerhet vid universitet och högskolor – hanteringen av skyddsvärda forskningsdata*, RiR 2023:20, 2023.

support function should be to assist higher education institutions, but also individual researchers, with support on issues relating to security aspects of international collaborations.”<sup>27</sup> The investigation also proposes that the Government “should task the Swedish Defence University, in collaboration with relevant agencies, to develop and implement competence-enhancing initiatives for higher education institutions for security issues.”<sup>28</sup>

The Swedish Defence University, together with Örebro University and Luleå University of Technology, are also the founders of Campus Total Defence. This operation is being built up, but several of the activities that Campus Total Defence plans to implement border on responsible internationalisation.<sup>29</sup> There is therefore good reason for a support function for responsible internationalisation to interact closely with Campus Total Defence to avoid duplication and achieve cost effectiveness.

Moreover, in the background documentation for Sweden’s strategy for quantum technology for 2025–2030, submitted to the Government in October 2024, the Swedish Research Council raised the issue of the need for a support function for issues relating to quantum technology “to ensure that all actors have easy access to the most up-to-date knowledge. Uniform and correct information relating to security, responsible internationalisation, export controls, standardisation, and so on, as well as clarity regarding where new information should be communicated to, is crucial. The support function shall also coordinate international collaborations, to protect Swedish interests.”<sup>30</sup>

Within PLINT, the platform for internationalisation, which was established by an assignment from the Government in 2022, there is an established collaboration between five public agencies. Within PLINT, there was also a work area coordinated by Vinnova, that dealt with issues of responsible internationalisation. This was paused when this Government assignment on responsible internationalisation was issued. The foundation that was built up in the work area has played a role in the work on the Government assignment. Responsibility for coordinating PLINT was included in UHR’s instruction<sup>31</sup>, but not in the governing documents of any other agency. The work area of responsible internationalisation within PLINT included representatives from the PLINT agencies, namely Formas, STINT, and HEIs. On the other hand, no security agencies were involved.

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<sup>27</sup> U2024/00153, *Ökad kompetens i säkerhetsfrågor vid universitet och högskolor*, p 46.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p 43

<sup>29</sup> More information on Örebro University’s website: <https://www.oru.se/samverkan/campus-totalforsvar/>

<sup>30</sup> *Vetenskapsrådet. Underlag till Sveriges strategi för kvantteknologi*, p 27, Dnr 3.1-2024-06047

<sup>31</sup> *Förordning (2012:811) med instruktion för Universitets- och högskolerådet*.

## Task public agencies with coordination

The support function shall be organised according to an interacting model, with several agencies that are jointly tasked with establishing and running the support function. One of the agencies will be tasked with leading the work of the support function's office and being its registered organisational office.

In the work on the assignment, the agencies have considered alternative organisation forms for how the coordination at national level can be handled.

### Preconditions for an office

The organisation of a national office and its organisational location can be designed in different ways. The support function's office needs to fulfil the following basic preconditions, irrespective of its location or organisation form.

- Openness and transparency
- Scalability
- Knowledge about and trust from the target groups
- Opportunities for coordination and interaction with the target groups
- Have closely related national and international assignments to enable synergies
- Able to award project grants and make procurements
- Able to handle security-classed information
- Able to employ security-classed personnel

In addition to these basic preconditions, it is desirable that the office also fulfils the following preconditions.

- Able to represent Sweden internationally, in particular in EU contexts.
- Participation by funding body/bodies of research or innovation collaborations.
- If the support is also to be targeted at other actors in the research and innovation ecosystem, then active participation by agencies with assignments aimed at the target group is central.

### Competences

It is assessed that the support function needs to have, or have access to, competences within the aspects included in the interim report's proposal for national guidelines. For the support function to be the node in networks for HEIs and public agencies, it needs to have at its disposal expert knowledge from HEIs, expert agencies, or other actors in the

research and innovation ecosystem. The need for specific competences will shift over time, but includes areas such as: knowledge about higher education and research, contemporary environment knowledge (foreign affairs and security policy), in particular knowledge about certain risk regions, human rights, ethics, export controls, security issues, education, languages, analysis and monitoring of the contemporary environment, and others.

Some existing assignments that border on responsible internationalisation that are central for achieving synergies are: funding of education, research, and innovation collaborations, national responsibility for the EU's framework programme for research and innovation, national responsibility for Erasmus+, research ethics, open science, issues relating to the European Research Area (ERA), and assessment of foreign educational programmes. The link to assignments within research issues and research funding is crucial. The link to existing assignments within educational issues exists, but is less prominent.

#### **Organisation models for an office**

Two main models have been considered – an interacting model, and an integrated model. A third model would also be to establish a committee, or alternatively to give an assignment to a coordinator through a committee directive.

##### ***Interacting model***

This model is based on the support function's office being located within an existing host organisation, which has overarching responsibility for the support function. The office consists of employees at several different agencies and organisations, which together with the host organisation have been tasked to interact on coordination. The model provides a strong link to each interacting organisation, which facilitates acceptance and synergies with the organisation's existing assignment.

##### ***Integrated model***

This model is based on the support function's office being located within an existing host organisation, which is given the responsibility to run the support function. The host organisation is responsible for staffing the office. The model provides a strong link to the host organisation's assignment, but the office lacks direct connection to the existing assignments of other organisations.

Advantages of locating the office in an already existing organisation, as in the two models above, is that the start-up is quick, and that administrative resources within the organisation give the support function greater capacity initially.

The disadvantages of locating the office in an existing organisation vary depending on the organisation, but a common factor is that none of these organisations can be perceived as being entirely independent, and that the handling of issues may be affected by the organisation that the office is located in.

***The committee model, or alternatively giving an assignment to a coordinator through a committee directive***

Advantages of a committee/coordinator through a committee directive are that the support function would have a higher degree of autonomy, be more neutral, and be given great flexibility to adapt to the task.<sup>32</sup>

A committee/coordinator via a committee directive can also be tasked to investigate and propose a long-term solution when HEIs and other agencies have developed a clearer idea of their needs, and found sustainable collaboration formats.

Disadvantages are that the support function will not have an immediate long-term solution, and that it may take some time to start the operation. It also lacks any direct link to any organisation's existing assignment. A support function organised as a committee also needs a support organisation however, with a registry, personnel management, and so on, but will otherwise retain its independence.

**Organisational location**

The agencies have considered various organisations that could participate in or be responsible for a national support function, and be the location of the office.

***HEIs as responsible***

In its consultation response to the interim report and in dialogue meetings, SUHF has proposed that the support should, as far as possible, be organised by the HEIs themselves. The HEI network CASI and Campus Total Defence have been put forward by various actors as a possible common node for responsible internationalisation. There are advantages of placing the responsibility for a support function on the HEIs, for example when it comes to proximity to the issues. This would emphasise the resourcefulness and responsibility of the HEIs on issues relating to education and research. Furthermore, it could be based on already existing collaborations between HEIs on these issues.

***Public agencies as responsible***

There are several reasons for the support function to be located at one or several public agencies. Responsible internationalisation is linked to several assignments that are currently being carried out by public

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<sup>32</sup> *Nationella samordnare som statligt styrmedel, RiR 2016:5.*

agencies, which contributes to synergy. The link to existing assignments is central.

Furthermore, it is probable that the support function will be subjected to a certain amount of political focus, in the sense that national interests are defined and balanced.

The issues require coordination between several agencies reporting to different ministries under the Government Offices, and close collaboration with the security agencies.

Other reasons are the policy development in progress within the EU, for example as a result of the Council recommendation on increased research security and its encouragement to member states to establish national support functions for research security. Increased EU collaboration and coordination on the issues is probable.

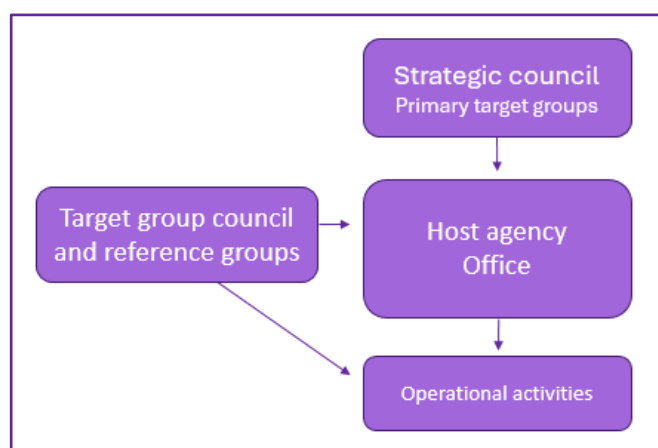
Moreover, the support function needs to provide support to actors other than HEIs. The support function should provide support to public agencies, research funding bodies, and also to other actors within the innovation ecosystem, among others.

The reasons given above contribute to the view that responsibility for coordinating a national support function in an office should rest with governmental funding bodies of education, research, and innovation collaborations.

### Organisation and role of the office

The agencies that constitute the office (virtual or physical) should have broad assignments related to issues concerning responsible internationalisation, and be regarded as trustworthy within the sector and the innovation ecosystem.

Figure 2. Organisation of the support function





### ***The role of the office***

The office is a national contact point, and ensures that the tasks of the support function are made operational. The office is responsible for interaction between public agencies and target groups. The purpose is to create a common arena for responsible internationalisation, and for ensuring the initiatives meld together as one whole.

The office carries out the daily work within the support function according to the support function's tasks and the strategic focus adopted by the strategic council. The work is led by the public agency given the task of being the organisational location of the support function.

### **The operational work of the support function**

To plan and carry out the operational work, various operational groupings will be needed. As described in the section on the target groups, the target groups are also important co-creators of the activities of the support function, and they should therefore be involved in the operational activities. They and other actors should also be possible to task with carrying out part of the support function's activities.

### ***Operational work in project teams***

Temporary and permanent project teams should be established, with clear tasks coordinated by the office. These teams should be led and staffed by representatives relevant for the task. Initially, there is a need for project teams to develop information/a website, to update and develop the guidelines, to coordinate funding bodies, to interact with the security agencies, and to carry out the practical planning and facilitating of meeting places, seminars, and so on.

### ***Operational work carried out by the target groups or other actors***

Parts of the support function's operational work can be carried out by the target groups themselves, or by other actors. These can consist of HEI actors, such as Campus Total Defence, individual HEIs, STINT, or other actors. The support function should be able to fund major or minor initiatives through procurement or by issuing assignments.

### **Agencies should receive assignments via appropriations directives or official instruction documents**

The assignment should be expressed in appropriations directives or official instruction documents for the agencies expected to form the support function's office. To clarify the Government's intention of a more long-term solution, we recommend that the assignment is in the form of official instruction documents. The scope of the work within the support function's office is assessed as being sufficiently great that they may constitute a resource problem for these agencies. Furthermore, part of the work on responsible internationalisation can be assessed as being outside the agencies' current core assignments. If the agencies

tasked with forming the support function's office operate within different ministries under the Government Office, the need for clarity in the assignment is reinforced.

The assignments can have the same wording for the agencies given the assignment, or be specified for each agency. A reference should, however, be made to a joint assignment.

## Handling issues of a security nature

Relevant public agencies with knowledge and mandates within civil defence, sanctions, security, and defence issues should be tasked to assist the support function on issues of a security nature that are not clearly part of any of the individual agencies' own remit.

Joint and individual meetings with the security agencies have been held. These public agencies are very interested in contributing to the work on responsible internationalisation. The security agencies see a need to reach out to HEIs in a national context. They have therefore stated that it is particularly valuable to take part in the support function's proactive parts, which are about knowledge and ability-enhancing initiatives. The security agencies will play an important role in the proactive work.

### Handling questions received

A need to be able to answer questions of a security nature from HEIs and other actors has been identified. The scope of this need is unclear, however. Considering the need that has already been expressed, there needs to be an option for HEIs, public agencies, and other actors to ask questions relating to security issues that they do not have sufficient documentation or competence to handle themselves.

A function for asking questions of a security nature to the support function should therefore be established. The question function should be a complement to the proactive initiatives. It shall be used for questions the target group consider cannot be solved with the help of proactive initiatives offered by the support function.

The agencies propose that a group of security agencies should assist the support function in handling these issues as necessary. Use of any existing grouping should be considered. The group of security agencies needs to consist of agencies with differing responsibilities within civil defence, sanctions, security, and defence issues. The group should meet with some regularity, and there needs to be preparedness to gather at relatively short notice to deal with questions received. Parts of or all persons included in the office for the support function should also be security-classed at appropriate levels, to enable them to participate in meetings with the group.

In the event it is established that a question belongs to one of the security agencies, it will be dealt with according to the procedures of the agency in question. In the event the question relates to a problem that several of the security agencies need to have input into, then a statement may be issued. The statements cannot be a decision or a recommendation, but only a basis for the question-poser to make their own independent decision. The exact form or status of the statements needs to be discussed further, and developed over time.

The proposal does not mean that the support function shall take on questions that the security agencies are responsible for handling within their own remits. These shall be handled according to normal procedures. The questions that shall be possible to put to a question function are therefore those where those asking are unsure about which agency to contact, or other grey-zone questions.

A procedure needs to be developed for how questions should be reported to the question function, and how experiences gathered through the question handling shall be shared with other parts of the support function.

Questions received by the question function will also be important in the proactive work with information and knowledge-enhancing initiatives. The questions received will give an indication of which ones are difficult to handle and could be included in the proactive work. They can also constitute case studies, to be gathered together on a website.

**Questions shall be put to the support function only after they have been processed internally**

Before a question of a security nature is asked via the support function, the question should first have been dealt with within the framework for the organisation's internal procedures for handling responsible internationalisation. The reason for this is that it is important for HEIs and other actors to build up their own institutional experience and knowledge of the issues. This can only be done if questions are handled using internal procedures.

If questions also go through an internal procedure, they can in many cases also be solved without having to ask questions to the support function. In most cases, HEIs have personnel with responsibility for both security and export control issues, who have knowledge about the relevant regulations and public agencies' areas of responsibility.

For contacts with the support function with questions covered by security to function in a secure and reliable way, HEIs and other actors should have a designated function to serve as a contact point with the support function and security agencies on these issues.

***The support function needs to be able to handle secrecy, but not protective security classified information***

A function for questions of a security nature within the support function needs to follow relevant legislation, regulations, and internal rules.

Depending on the question received, several different pieces of legislation, regulations, and internal rules may be applicable.<sup>33</sup>

Whether questions received by the question function may include protective classified information according to Swedish security protection legislation<sup>34</sup> needs to be taken into account. If so, this would mean that extensive security protection work needs to be carried out. There is currently not sufficient background documentation to determine whether this will be the case.

The Swedish Security Service's assessment is that questions that could be received by a question function will not be of a nature that needs to be classified as security protected. On the other hand, questions could include information that is covered by secrecy. The answers, in the Security Service's view, will not include information that is classified as security protected either.

A procedure should therefore be in place for how questions that include information covered by secrecy or is otherwise sensitive are dealt with in accordance with legislation governing access to public documents and secrecy (*Offentlighets- och sekretesslagen, SFS 2009:400*).<sup>35</sup> There are established working practices within public administration that are applicable for the context of the question function.

On the other hand, there is no reason to make preparations at the initial stage to enable handling of protective security classified information. Experiences during the initial stage of the support function must determine whether further measures need to be taken to handle this type of information.

#### **The security agencies should receive assignments via appropriations directives or official instruction documents**

The Government should consider whether to clarify the assignment in appropriations directives or official instruction documents for the agencies expected to contribute to the proposed group of security agencies. According to Swedish public administration legislation (*Förvaltningslag SFS 2017:900*), public agencies are obliged to interact with other public agencies within their areas of operation<sup>36</sup>, but if the amount of interaction within the group becomes major, then it may cause resource problems for these agencies. Furthermore, active

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<sup>33</sup> Examples are the European Convention on Human Rights, the Swedish freedom of the press regulation (*Tryckfrihetsförordningen, SFS 1949:105*), Swedish security protection legislation (*Säkerhetsskyddslagen, SFS 018:585*), Swedish legislation governing access to public documents and secrecy (*Offentlighets- och sekretesslagen, SFS 2009:400*), Swedish security protection regulations (*Säkerhetsskyddsförordningen, SFS 2021:955*), and relevant regulations from bodies such as the Swedish Security Service, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, and the Swedish Armed Forces. This is not an exhaustive list – depending on the actors or areas involved other pieces of legislation may be relevant.

<sup>34</sup> *Säkerhetsskyddslag (2018:585)*, SFS 2018:585.

<sup>35</sup> *Offentlighets- och sekretesslag (SFS 2009:400)*.

<sup>36</sup> *Förvaltningslag (SFS 2017:900)*, Section 8

participation in the group could be deemed to lie outside the agencies' core assignments. The fact that the agencies proposed to be included in the group handling issues of a security nature are operating under differing ministries within the Government Offices reinforces the need for clarity in their assignments.

## Resource needs and funding of support

The support function should receive initial funding of 7 million SEK per year, to cover its establishment and operation.

The estimated initial annual resource requirement for establishing an effective support function is seven million SEK. This estimate is based on the overall inputs required from different public agencies, including those that are part of the office, and other agencies that contribute actively to the support function.

Given that this is a new operation that is being established and that the scope of the support function's work is difficult to foresee, there should be preparedness for scaling the operation either up or down, and to adjust it depending on the level of ambition. The operation needs to be able to reset to meet changed needs that may entail higher or lower costs.

Funding allocated to the support function should be possible to use for different purposes, for example to pay for personnel, procurements, activities, and grants. The support function should be given the opportunity to analyse and prioritise activities itself within the framework of the budget allocated.

### Costs of personnel resources

The number of annual full-time equivalents in the national support function is dependent on how much work it will be carrying out itself, and how much can be done by other actors. It also depends on the stage of establishment the support function is at. During the first year, more working hours will have to be spent on establishment than during subsequent years. The estimated number of annual full-time equivalents is initially between two and four.

### Costs of the operational work

This relates to funding of the support function's operational work, such as making information accessible, conferences and seminars, training courses, and enabling various meeting places, plus costs linked to meetings and so on.

Several of the functions can advantageously be implemented by other actors with funding from the support function. Funding can be provided through assignments, calls, or co-funding of activities.

Some of the initial costs are expected to be used to build up a functional website with relevant information and support. Furthermore, purchases of support tools/licences for support tools, such as for background checks, may become applicable.

**Support for implementation of procedures and organisation**

To facilitate the initial implementation of procedures and working practices, funding should be earmarked for implementation support. The funding, for which calls will be issued, shall be seen as a stimulus to HEIs to develop their own abilities and preparedness to work with the issues.

**Costs of current environment monitoring, analysis, and data collection**

The support function is assessed as being able to some extent to conduct its own current environment monitoring, analysis, and data collection, but there is primarily a need to obtain this knowledge from others. This can be done on assignment or through procurement.

**A zero budget alternative**

Provided that responsibility for the support function lies with one of the PLINT agencies, a limited part of the proposed tasks above can be carried out without further funding, by transferring funding set aside for the funding of PLINT. The funding allocated to PLINT can also be combined with the funding proposal.

PLINT has received funding of 3 million SEK annually, which has financed activities and parts of the personnel costs of the five agencies included.

Some work on joint meeting places and seminars could be done by re-allocating PLINT's budget. But the worthy goal of achieving a national approach and a joint enhancement of competence and ability would be more difficult to achieve.



## **Follow up the support function after three years**

A thorough follow-up of the support function's activities should be carried out after three years.

The preconditions for working on responsible internationalisation change over time, and the work on national support is untested. This means that the operation needs to be flexible, and able to change over time.

The work of the support function should therefore be followed up annually, for the purpose of adjusting the focus of the work, to ensure the support function is doing the right things, has the right competence, and has the right dimensions. Information on how the support function's funding is used, how the guidelines work, how processes are working, what types of cases are handled, and so on should be gathered and analysed.

In addition to continuous follow-up, a more thorough follow-up of the operation should be carried out after three years, to determine whether the support function fulfils the goals set.

# Implementation

## **Rapid start-up in several steps**

A rapid, phased start-up is recommended. All the actions needed, or their organisation cannot be described in detail, but instead need to be developed over time. The initial focus for the support function should be on proactive measures to achieve the overarching goal of the support function.

- Implement activities that contribute to HEIs, funding bodies, and security agencies have a common view of problems, and a common knowledge base.
- Gather information on responsible internationalisation. It must be easy to find information on issues relating to responsible internationalisation. Initially, the focus should be on the proposed guidelines for responsible internationalisation, and on gathering information about relevant legislation and regulations, and also about existing tools.
- Develop, update, and publish the national guidelines.
- Arrange seminars and workshops focusing on achieving a common view of problems and knowledge base.
- Provide physical meeting places and develop digital meeting places.
- Handle questions relating to responsible internationalisation and build up a collection of case studies.

## **Funding of research and innovation**

The existing group of funding bodies needs to continue the work begun on producing documentation for how funding bodies, as far as possible, can have a coordinated approach to how issues relating to responsible internationalisation are handled in calls. The documentation shall be agreed with and disseminated to other governmental and private funding bodies.

## **Handling questions of a security nature**

To design the practical conditions for a question function, further investigative work is needed, which should begin at an early stage.

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- Remiss av promemoria: Ökad kompetens i säkerhetsfrågor vid universitet och högskolor U2024/00153
- Universitetskanslersämbetets remissvar över Ansvarsfull internationalisering. Delrapportering av ett regeringsuppdrag (UHR Rapport 2024:1)
- Uppdrag att främja ansvarsfull internationalisering vid utbildnings-, forsknings- och innovationssamarbeten, U2023/02127
- Uppdrag till Försvarsmakten och Verket för innovationssystem att initiera och genomföra ett innovationsprogram för civil-militära synergier, Fö2024/00021
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- Ökad kompetens i säkerhetsfrågor vid universitet och högskolor U2024/00153

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### **Other references**

References to Appendix 5, “Other countries’ solutions to support functions”, can be found at the end of Appendix 5.

# Appendix 1: The Government assignment, U2023/02127

**An assignment to promote responsible internationalisation in education, research, and innovation collaborations.**

## **The Government's decision**

The Government tasks the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR), the Swedish Research Council, and the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (Vinnova) to propose how to work on responsible internationalisation in higher education, research and innovation at Swedish higher education institutions, governmental research funding bodies, and other public agencies can be promoted. The assignment includes proposing national guidelines, and also proposing how further forms of support for knowledge and experience sharing between higher education institutions, governmental research funding bodies and other public agencies and organisations can be developed and designed.

The agencies shall submit a joint written interim report of the part of the assignment that includes proposing national guidelines and a plan for the work of proposing further forms of support for responsible internationalisation to the Government Offices (Ministry of Education and Research) no later than 31 March 2024. A joint written final report on the assignment shall be submitted to the Government Offices (Ministry of Education and Research) no later than 15 December 2024. The final report shall include proposals for how the guidelines can be followed up and developed over time. The assignment and the reports shall be coordinated by the Swedish Council for Higher Education.

## **The assignment in more detail**

The national guidelines and the proposed support shall contribute to promoting responsible internationalisation, where international collaborations are conducted in as open a way as possible and as securely as necessary, and where openness and security are understood to be complementary and mutually reinforcing aspects. They shall also contribute to strengthening the protection of both fundamental academic values and of personnel, students, research results and other assets.

The guidelines shall provide guidance for the international collaborations of higher education institutions and the agencies involved, and be a help in making assessments of ongoing and potential international educational and research collaborations. The proposal made for forms of support shall be able to contribute to implementing the guidelines, including increased knowledge and awareness of risks in international collaboration and increased ability to assess and manage these risks.

The Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Research Council and Vinnova shall implement the assignment in close collaboration with governmental research funding bodies and higher education institutions. International collaborations in education, research, and innovation also involve many other actors, who are important for a well-functioning and secure research and innovation system. The agencies shall therefore, when implementing the assignment, maintain a dialogue with other public agencies, organisations, and actors that can contribute competence and experience, both nationally and internationally, in particular the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Security Service, and the National Inspectorate of Strategic Products. Consideration shall also be given to how the guidelines and the proposed support can contribute to, and affect, interactions between public and private actors in education, research, and innovation. The agencies should, for example, identify the need for and opportunities to make accessible the proposed support to other actors than public agencies and higher education institutions.

The work shall be coordinated with the agency collaboration that occurs via the Platform for Internationalisation (PLINT). The agencies shall also consider other national initiatives relating to responsible internationalisation, in particular the work done within the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions, and the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education.

#### Reasons for the Government's decision

International collaboration in higher education and research is in many cases crucial for excellent research and innovation. The Government wants to create good preconditions for utilising research results both in the public sector and in the business sector, and contribute to Swedish competitiveness and resilience in a secure way. In an ever more uncertain and polarised world, there are geopolitical challenges where openness and collaboration are at risk of being abused by foreign powers. Openness should form the basis for international collaboration, at the same time as there must be an awareness of the need to protect national interests, knowledge, and technology.

Higher education and research must be characterised by academic freedom, openness, and of researchers' opportunities to freely share results, for example with researchers in other countries. These values must be safeguarded and protected. Many other countries have already implemented measures for responsible internationalisation, for example in the form of national guidelines or support structures, focusing on strengthening security within research activities at the same time as international collaboration can continue to be stimulated. It is important that Sweden develops in step with the world around us in this respect.

Swedish higher education institutions, research funding bodies and other actors work actively on responsible internationalisation, and protective security work has intensified in recent years. The work with responsible internationalisation and protection of Swedish education, research, and innovation is a joint responsibility for higher education institutions, research funding bodies, and the Government. National guidelines and support for sharing knowledge and experiences can contribute to promoting and developing the work, so that international collaborations can be conducted in a long-term secure and sustainable way.

Against this background, the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Research Council, and Vinnova should be tasked to propose how the work with responsible internationalisation in higher education, research and innovation, carried out at higher education institutions, at governmental research funding bodies and other public agencies can be promoted.

On behalf of the Government

Mats Persson

Erik Kyhlberg



## Appendix 2: Dialogue meetings held

Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) The Expert Group on Archiving and Information Management, the Expert Group on Property and Security Issues, the Expert Group on Internationalisation, the Advisory Group on Global Issues
Campus Total Defence ( <i>Campus totalförsvaret</i> )
Center for International Academic Collaborations, KIWi/DAAD (DE)
Center for responsible internationalisation and research security
Coordinated Assessment for Strategic Internationalisation, CASI
Committee for Technological Innovation and Ethics (KOMET)
Dialogue meeting about the research project "Finding effective and acceptable approaches to managing international collaborations in a geopolitically turbulent world"
Dialogue meeting, Jönköping University
Dialogue meeting, Karolinska Institutet
Dialogue meeting, KTH Royal Institute of Technology
Dialogue meeting, Luleå University of Technology
Dialogue meeting, Malmö University
Dialogue meeting, University of Gothenburg
European Commission: DG Research and Innovation, RTD
Government Offices
Platform for Internationalisation
Security agencies: National Inspectorate of Strategic Products' (ISP), Swedish Armed Forces, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV), Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Swedish Security Service (SÄPO).
STINT (Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education)
STRIDER (US)
Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ)
U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)

### Participation in conferences/seminars/workshops

Academic Cooperation Association (ACA). Workshop series on the theme of responsible internationalisation and knowledge security.
Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions' top leadership programme (HeLP). Presentation of the Government assignment on responsible internationalisation and the interim report.
EURAXESS. Presentation of the Government assignment on responsible internationalisation and the interim report.

Government assignment on responsible internationalisation. Dialogue webinar for HEIs and public agencies involved.
KTH Royal Institute of Technology. Seminar on responsible internationalisation.
NORCORE. Panel discussion at the conference Advancing Responsible International Collaboration in Research, Innovation, and Higher Education.
Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange and UK Science & Innovation Network. Panel discussion at the 2nd Internationalisation Congress in Warsaw.
Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT), and the Government assignment on responsible internationalisation. Nordic workshop on responsible internationalisation.
Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT). Round table discussion on economic security, research, and innovation.
TAFTIE. Networking workshop on the theme of responsible internationalisation.

# Appendix 3: Summary of the consultation responses to the interim report

## **Structured and coordinated work is welcome ...**

The consultation responses<sup>37</sup> show wide-spread consensus on the central role played by internationalisation, and the importance of working in a structured and coordinated way with responsible internationalisation in research and education. This work needs to involve different actors. A majority supports the idea of a three-part structure, with an overarching national focus and local responsibility that enables interaction and operation-proximate guidance.

## **... and problematised based on freedom aspects and resource issues**

The allocation of responsibility is a complex issue that is mentioned throughout the consultation responses. The starting point that the institutional autonomy and academic freedom of HEIs must be protected is the one aspect that is underlined the most. Ensuring that the system does not become too bureaucratic and resource-demanding or has complicated follow-up mechanisms is put forward on a broad front. Overall, HEIs express slightly greater doubts about different parts of the proposed system than others do. A structured consequence and risk analysis is also requested.

## **Security is central, but should not overshadow broader perspectives**

Nobody questions that security aspects are central, but many consider that the security focus of the proposal needs to be supplemented. An overarching viewpoint is that the complexity of the concept of responsible internationalisation needs to be considered more.<sup>38</sup> Potential goal conflicts are also highlighted on a broad front. Both HEIs and research funding bodies mention that the gains and opportunities of internationalisation need to be considered more clearly, such as knowledge sharing, quality of education and research, science diplomacy and democracy aspects, as well as Swedish prosperity and competitiveness.

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<sup>37</sup> 55 consultation responses were received from 62 bodies. 52 organisations stated their opinions: 34 HEIs, 11 security and supervisory agencies, and 8 research funding bodies, as well as SFS.

<sup>38</sup> Other aspects mentioned are human rights, equality, diversity, ecological and social sustainability, and global development.

### **A long-term national policy provides clarity, but politicisation is a risk**

The national policy is welcomed as a whole, as contributing clarity and uniformity. In parallel with the importance of wide political support for stability and a long-term view, the risk of politicisation of the HEIs' international activities in research and education is mentioned simultaneously. The view that HEIs should be able to organise their work without express policy directives also exists.

### **Guidelines and support functions exist and need to be developed**

The proposal for national guidelines is widely welcomed by all actors as a principle, for a common structure, culture, and assessment of goal conflicts. A lot is already being done among the HEIs, not least through SUHF.<sup>39</sup> Some consider that smaller HEIs in particular may be helped by a further developed system. The consultation responses include various discussions of the design of the national guidelines. They can either be worded generally, to be relevant to both HEIs and research funding bodies, or separated out to be adapted for different activities. One risk mentioned is if the system becomes so extensive and burdensome that it puts people off from international collaborations. Both HEIs and funding bodies consider that ongoing dialogue between different actors is a precondition for good design.

Local guidelines are regarded as a necessary and self-evident part, irrespective of whether it is at the primary level of the guidelines, or a complement to guidelines at national level.

A support structure is also seen by all as crucial for the system, even though it is perceived as unclear in relation to organisation and tasks. Important functions mentioned are expert competence, advice, interaction, and knowledge sharing. The existing work and material (from SUHF, STINT, and others) should be utilised. One viewpoint is that a well-functioning support system requires good insight in many different operations. The option with differing expert nodes is also welcomed as a suitable part of the design, and is echoed by several expert organisations involved.

### **Differing perspectives on responsibility, design, and emphasis**

The different actors have differing focuses in their responses. Not least in relation to the design, responsibility, and authorities of the system, the picture is complex, with differing opinions on advantages and disadvantages:

- **The responsibility and resourcefulness of HEIs are emphasised.** They consider that they should themselves play a central role in the design of both their guidelines and the

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<sup>39</sup> Almost half of the HEIs expressed their support for SUHF's consultation response.

support structure. Many consider that they should continue to have the main responsibility, where SUHF has had and should have an important role. The arguments are not just about ensuring meaningful and effective contents, but also emphasise that responsibility, resourcefulness, and authorities need to accompany each other and be reinforced, and that the subsidiarity principle should be applied. In the same spirit, they advocate guidance and trust rather than binding guidelines, and ensuring a high level of relevance, the right level of detail, and that everyone is entitled to support. SUHF's consultation response, which almost half of the HEIs expressly back, emphasises these aspects. It considers that **if** there are to be common guidelines at national level, then they should be designed jointly.

- **The roles and responsibilities of the research funding bodies are commented on with differing, partly contradictory views.** On the one hand, it is recommended that certain security aspects should be included in the funding bodies' calls and assessment systems. One proposal is that call applications shall describe whether activities may include sensitive security aspects, with a brief justification. On the other hand, some recommend that HEIs should be responsible for the assessment based on their competence and responsibility. One research funding body emphasises the challenge of the assessments being made by researchers, whose primary competence is assessing research quality. SUHF does, however, emphasise that the funding bodies should play a central role, both in the dialogue with other agencies, and in how international collaborations should be assessed. It also proposes that their expert competences are utilised in the system, for example in an advisory expert node.
- **Security and supervisory agencies emphasise security aspects and regulatory frameworks as central to the system.** Factors such as personal security, information security, security protection, intellectual property, foreign direct investments, and export control are mentioned. The Swedish Armed Forces underline that the issue of responsibility is fundamental from a security perspective, and emphasise the importance of joint rather than divided responsibility. It recommends indicated responsibility roles between research funding bodies, HEIs, and individual researchers, and clear guidelines that must be followed. All the actors state that the security and supervisory agencies have important functions as advisors and responsible based on their expert areas. Several HEIs also comment that

they cannot or should not take on advanced expert tasks relating to security issues.

**Key factors for a successful system design**

- Institutional autonomy and academic freedom must be protected.
- Well-considered allocation of responsibility between actors is emphasised.
- Expert support, interaction, advice, and knowledge enhancement are necessary.
- Adaptability according to changed preconditions is important.
- The system must not become too burdensome and resource-demanding to administer.
- Open science and knowledge sharing must be protected as part of an open society.
- The system must not become so extensive that it puts people off from international collaborations.

**Aspects of the interim report to be dealt with going forward**

- The security focus of the interim report should be balanced against other responsibility aspects, as well as opportunities and gains from internationalisation.
- The emphasis on research should be balanced against aspects of education.
- The system needs to respect the HEIs' wide range of activities. Both to ensure the right support, and to avoid the system causing unnecessary obstacles.
- Related work within the EU and internationally should be included more.
- A structured consequence and risk analysis of the proposals is important.
- Some ambiguities and incorrect wordings were pointed out, and should be corrected.

# Appendix 4: Pilot project descriptions

## University of Gothenburg

Pilot project – Develop competence for responsible internationalisation  
Grant from Vinnova: 100 000 SEK  
Project period: August 2024 – March 2025

### Purpose and aims

The purpose of this pilot project is to develop a series of workshops/seminars on responsible internationalisation, targeted at researchers and department and faculty managements at the University of Gothenburg who decide on, and conduct, international collaborations. The aim is to contribute to increased interaction, quality assurance, competence enhancement, and sharing experiences relating to responsible internationalisation.

### Expected effects and results

1) quality assurance, competence enhancement, and sharing experiences relating to responsible internationalisation 2) increased interaction between different expert functions within the university. 3) inventory needs and explore forms for a functional internal process, organisation, and support for responsible internationalisation at the university. 4) concept for how large HEIs and organisations can work with competence-enhancing initiatives based on the national guidelines.

### Planned design and implementation

November 2024: Quality seminar on the theme of responsible internationalisation for the whole university. Quarter 1 2025: An in-depth workshop with the university's deans and department heads. The workshop will be based on the national guidelines and the final report on the Government assignment on responsible internationalisation, which was published in December 2024.

## Karolinska Institutet

Project proposal from KI to Vinnova – pilot project on responsible internationalisation  
Grant from Vinnova: 89 500 SEK  
Project period: August 2024 – February 2025

**Purpose and aims**

To test a support structure at KI for researchers and administrative personnel who need support in decisions relating to international collaboration projects. To establish a support group that will meet regularly and discuss topical international collaboration projects. To develop a working model with clear guidelines for how the group is to function, and what cases are to be discussed. To invite external expertise as a sounding board/source of knowledge. To arrange a study visit during autumn 2024 with the support group/part of the support group.

**Expected effects and results**

To have tested a support structure. To have discussed with relevant parts of the organisation how a support structure can function. To have increased competence in responsible internationalisation and awareness of the need for a support structure. To have established a work procedure for handling complex international collaboration projects.

**Planned design and implementation**

Phase 1: establish the support group. Phase 2: establish a working model. Phase 3: model testing including inviting external expertise and arranging with the support group a study trip to another university in Europe that has developed a well-functioning structure. Phase 4: evaluation and further development. February 2025: The project is concluded and reported back to Vinnova.

**Luleå University of Technology**

Responsible internationalisation at LTU - From theory to practice and from practice to theory

Grant from Vinnova: 98 500 SEK

Project period: August 2024 – March 2025

**Purpose and aims**

Up until spring 2025, LTU will create better processes for handling issues relating to responsible internationalisation. The purpose of the pilot project is to investigate how such processes shall be created – the aim is to create pragmatic processes that will work in the future. Since April 2024, LTU has decided on two process leaders who will be driving the process forwards. There is an internal reference group, and everything is reported to the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Council for Internationalisation. The desired outcome of the project is a catalogue of lessons and for these lessons to be disseminated both within LTU and outside.



**Expected effects and results**

Improving the critical thinking of all personnel on issues relating to responsible internationalisation will be the primary effect of the process. We live in a very politicised world, and although universities are autonomous, no university is immune to the political powers that influence our work. It is important that our personnel feel secure in being able to carry out their tasks, and that is why we are creating processes that will minimise the risks.

**Planned design and implementation**

We plan to make a few trips to our partners for educational purposes. Internally, we will be discussing the best design of a pragmatic process that will provide good support to our personnel. With limited resources and often limited information when it comes to the depth of international activities, it is extremely important to educate the personnel on issues where they need to seek further help from someone else in the organisation. Therefore, we are also planning major information initiatives in each department.

**Malmö University**

Responsible internationalisation at Malmö University

Grant from Vinnova: 100 000 SEK

Project period: August 2024 – November 2024

**Purpose and aims**

The project will develop a self-evaluation system as a planning tool for researchers writing applications to external funding bodies for projects with foreign collaboration partners. A general challenge is to get researchers to take more responsibility for responsible internationalisation of their own specific projects, at the same time as not making it too onerous, but instead strengthening the researchers in their collaboration with international actors.

**Expected effects and results**

The planning tool is a first step towards finding an effective way of establishing responsible internationalisation as part of the practice in research applications. The aim is for the tool to become a self-evaluation schedule that supports researchers' ability to strike a balance already during the planning process, and creates preconditions for implementing responsible internationalisation. Thereafter, a planning tool is designed to facilitate the application work and clarify the aspects that need to be taken into account in international research collaborations.

### **Planned design and implementation**

The target group consists of researchers at Malmö University. The method is to use interviews to discover what questions usually arise among researchers during such application processes. These experiences will then be compared with the national guidelines that have been developed as a result of the Government assignment on responsible internationalisation. Against the background of the knowledge obtained, a planning tool adapted to the HEI will then be designed to facilitate the application work and clarify the aspects that need to be taken into account in international research collaborations.

## **Jönköping University**

Responsible internationalisation when establishing international educational collaborations Grant from Vinnova: 95 000 SEK  
Project period: August 2024 – March 2025

### **Purpose and aims**

The purpose of the project is to increase awareness and understanding of responsible internationalisation, focusing on educational collaborations, at the same time as ensuring that the opportunities of internationalisation are utilised with as few limitations as possible at the HEI. The goal is to produce a proposal for an effective, sustainable organisation adapted also to small and medium-sized HEIs for integrating information collection, agency collaboration, risk assessments, and a clear decision-making process when goal conflicts arise, with focus on international educational collaborations.

### **Expected effects and results**

The expected result in the short term is that risk assessments and criteria are expanded and integrated naturally within existing processes for international educational collaborations, and to pilot and then establish an organisation for information collection, contacts with public agencies, and handling of any goal conflicts, with a clear escalation chain and decision-making process. Long-term benefits that arise are that we establish and disseminate a culture where we work as openly as possible and as securely as necessary with all the internationalisation work at the HEI.

### **Planned design and implementation**

To achieve the purpose and aims, we will be conducting study visits, benchmarking, and gathering information from other HEIs and public agencies. Workshops with operational support and representatives of vocationally oriented HEIs will be arranged, to disseminate lessons from the study visits and the interim report, but also to conduct case exercises and train us to make risk assessments, to review the type of

information we can produce ourselves, what public agencies we need to contact to implement the risk assessment, and to enable us to test our process and organisation, and how we are to handle goal conflicts.

# Appendix 5: Other countries' solutions for support functions

To better understand how Sweden can design an effective support function for responsible internationalisation, an international comparison was carried out. This appendix highlights how a selection of countries have addressed similar challenges through national support functions and policy initiatives.

The analysis is based on a systematic framework for characterising and comparing how different countries' solutions are based on strategies for and approaches to research security, knowledge security, and responsible internationalisation. The framework has been based on parameters covering central aspects, from the policy's goal and governance structures to risk assessment, implementation mechanisms, and collaboration models.

## Comparison between different countries' strategies and support functions

An important part of the analysis has been to identify national policy typologies, based on how the attitudes and the support systems in different countries strike a balance between security demands on the one hand, and the need for international collaboration on the other hand. The table below summarises this analysis, where the different countries' models have been categorised as Restrictive, Balanced, or Collaboration-oriented, depending on their balances between security and collaboration.

Country	Typology	Justification
USA	Restrictive	Strict security-driven measures, with extensive export controls and university-led programmes, such as SECURE and CFIUC, to protect sensitive research.
Australia	Restrictive	Proactive and security-driven strategy with clear guidelines and support, such as ASPI's Critical Technology Tracker.

EU	Collaboration-oriented	Focused on multilateral coordination, particularly through Horizon Europe and joint recommendations for security and integrity.
United Kingdom	Balanced	Combines openness with well-developed security arrangements, such as Trusted Research and standardised agreements for international collaborations.
Germany	Balanced	Balances technological sovereignty and international collaborations through the support system via DAAD/KIWi and strong institutions, such as Fraunhofer and Helmholtz.
France	Restrictive	Focus on strategic autonomy and strengthened export controls to support sensitive technologies.
Netherlands	Balanced	Promotes openness and security through the National Contact Point for Knowledge Security and persons responsible for knowledge security at universities.
Denmark	Collaboration-oriented	Interaction between Confederation of Danish Industry and universities on security protocols for international collaborations, with an important advisory role played by the security service PET.
Norway	Collaboration-oriented	Guidelines from the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) and the Research Council of Norway to balance international openness against national security. Focus on specific sectors, such as maritime technology and Arctic research.
Switzerland	Balanced	At an early stage of developing strategies and support systems, with strong academic openness and security focus. At the same time, a strict export control system.
Canada	Restrictive	Proactive approach, with National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships,

which are implemented through the Research Security Center.

## **USA**

USA's strategy has a strong emphasis on protecting national security, at the same time as promoting innovation. The implementation of the National Security Presidential Memorandum 33 (NSPM-33) is a federally coordinated initiative to safeguard requirements for transparency and reporting within research funding and collaborations, aimed at protecting research integrity, intellectual property rights, and critical technologies. The White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Department of Defence (DoD), and central agencies, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) lead the policy design and safeguard compliance in research projects funded federally.

A key initiative is SECURE (Safeguarding the Entire Community of the U.S. Research Ecosystem), which is implemented within the universities with funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The programme offers tools and support to research institutions to handle security risks and promote information sharing between actors. SECURE also develops risk assessment methods and best practices for protecting sensitive technologies. Academic Security and Counter Exploitation (ASCE) Program offers universities and researchers training and tools to handle intellectual property rights, export controls, and international collaborations, in accordance with guidelines from federal agencies, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC).

USA places particular focus on protecting sensitive technologies, such as AI, quantum computers, and biotechnology, which are often the target of economic and strategic espionage. Mechanisms such as the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) are used to evaluate risks linked to foreign investments and ownership of critical technologies. Moreover, advanced methods such as hot modelling and scenario planning are used to improve the nation's ability to handle risks within the research sector.

Through initiatives such as SECURE and ASCE, USA has established a leading position within research security. The strategy combines regulatory frameworks with practical support systems, and balances the need for international research collaborations against the necessity to protect the nation's economic and strategic interests.

### **Australia**

Australia has adopted a proactive approach to what is seen as “foreign interference”, focusing on protecting critical technologies and national security interests. The central coordination is done through the University Foreign Interference Taskforce (UFIT), which develops guidelines and tools for universities to handle risks in international collaborations. The guidelines cover areas such as governance, risk management, funding sources, and transparency in research projects.

A particularly prominent part of Australia’s strategy has been the use of support to identify and monitor emerging technologies of strategic importance, such as quantum technology, AI, and biotechnology. These tools support policy decisions and research prioritisations using data-driven analysis. ASPI’s Critical Technology Tracker is a good example that has been used by both Australian and international actors.

Australia also emphasises collaboration between the government and academia. Through initiatives that involve universities and the defence sector, research institutions are linked to national security strategies for integrating research security into broader policy frameworks.

At a practical level, regular risk assessments and audits are carried out at universities, at the same time as educational initiatives reinforce the awareness of research security among academic personnel. Special initiatives are aimed at protecting sensitive research in sectors such as cyber security and space technology.

### **European Union (EU)**

The EU is developing a joint union framework for handling research security, knowledge security, and responsible internationalisation, focusing on promoting collaboration and reducing risks. The EU’s strategy for economic security emphasises collective actions to protect sensitive technologies and knowledge resources, at the same time as balancing international collaboration. In May 2024, the European Council’s recommendation on increased research security was also adopted.

Through the Horizon Europe programme and the establishment of the European Cyber Security Competence Centre, EU member states’ abilities to identify risks, strengthen cyber security and safeguard research integrity will be improved. The EU Research Security Task Force also functions as a coordinating actor for disseminating best practice and ensuring compliance with security guidelines at national level.

At operational level, member states are encouraged to establish national coordination bodies for managing risks, such as espionage and data infringement, in line with the EU’s directive. By combining initiatives

such as Horizon Europe with local implementations, the EU is building an effective bridge between policy and practice to strengthen research security.

### **United Kingdom**

The United Kingdom combines openness to international collaboration with an increased focus on protecting research integrity and intellectual property rights. The Trusted Research Programme, developed by the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), offer guidance for researchers in how to identify and manage security risks in international collaborations and protect research integrity.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) plays a key role in providing guidelines and tools for ensuring that collaborations that involve sensitive technologies comply with national security rules. The Research Collaboration Advice Team (RCAT) also works on supporting research institutions by sharing information about threats and best practice.

At policy level, these initiatives are complemented by the implementation of the National Security and Investment Act (NSIA), which reinforces the protection of British research results against improper access through investments and collaborations. By combining the policy framework with practical tools with a robust policy framework, the United Kingdom ensures that security measures are both implementable and widely accepted.

### **Germany**

Germany has developed an extensive framework for balancing openness and research security. Policies led by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF) focus on promoting innovation at the same time as protecting critical technologies and intellectual property rights. Strategic investments in areas such as AI, quantum computers, and green technology reflect Germany's ambition to manage global challenges at the same time as safeguarding national interests.

Implementation mechanisms include initiatives such as the Centre for International Academic Cooperation (KIWi), which is coordinated by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). KIWi offers guidelines and tools for protecting intellectual property rights in international collaborations and supports research institutions in navigating risks linked to dual-use technologies. Furthermore, the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft and the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres play key roles in operationalising research security by offering expertise and monitoring for research institutions.



By integrating support mechanisms such as KIWi and cooperating with leading research organisations, Germany demonstrates how extensive policies can be operationalised effectively. This framework is based on a balance between freedom of research and security, where clear guidelines and a common set of values strengthen international collaboration.

### **France**

France's strategy for research security is closely linked to the country's ambition relating to technological sovereignty and strategic autonomy. The Ministry of Higher Education and Research leads initiatives to protect sensitive knowledge, in particular in areas such as cyber security, AI, and space technology. The country's policy for protecting the nation's scientific and technical potential (PPST) is central for safeguarding research integrity by regulating sensitive areas and implementing protective mechanisms, such as zones with restrictions (ZRR).

The implementation is operated by public and private partnerships, where actors such as the French Cybersecurity Agency (ANSSI) offers guidelines for counteracting cyber threats and protecting intellectual property. The French Export Control Updates have also been expanded to cover emerging technologies, which ensures that sensitive information does not end up in the wrong hands. The PPST framework is complemented with economic security measures that are monitored by the Strategic Information and Economic Security Department (SISSE).

France participates actively in the EU's framework for responsible internationalisation, but maintains an independent stance in bilateral collaborations. The country strengthens its global position by integrating research security in broader economic and innovation strategies.

### **Netherlands**

Netherlands is known for its proactive and balanced approach to research security and knowledge protection. The Government, in collaboration with the Dutch Research Council (NWO) and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, has developed extensive Knowledge Security Guidelines. These guidelines protect sensitive information and intellectual property rights, at the same time as they ensure that international collaborations can be conducted in a responsible way. Special emphasis is placed on risk management and preventive measures against improper knowledge transfer.

The operational implementation is managed by the Knowledge Security Service Desk, which offers practical advice, risk assessments, and

support for export controls. Universities are also enjoined to appoint persons responsible for knowledge security, who function as a bridge between the management and national agencies. This structure ensures that knowledge security issues are dealt with systematically and in an integrated way.

Through national workshops and courses in high technology sectors, such as quantum computers, semi-conductors, and biotechnology, Netherlands contributes to integrating research security in a collaborative innovation environment.

### **Denmark**

Denmark's strategy for research security is based on Nordic values, such as trust and cooperation, at the same time as the country is addressing new risks through targeted measures. The Ministry of Education and Research (UFM) leads the initiatives and collaborates closely with universities and industry to implement guidelines that protect sensitive knowledge and intellectual property rights.

A central tool is the partnership between Danish industry and universities to develop standardised security protocols for international collaborations. These protocols include risk assessment, handling of intellectual property rights, and transparency in funding agreements.

The security guidelines are implemented through mandatory courses for research personnel and regular audits. The Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) provides support to increase awareness of security threats and gives practical advice to research institutions.

### **Norway**

Norway has adopted a pragmatic approach to research security by utilising its innovative research environment and strong collaboration between government and academia. The Ministry of Education and Research leads the policy development with support from the Norwegian National Security Authority (NSM) and the Norwegian Police Security Agency (PST), which play key roles in identifying and managing security risks.

A central initiative is the development of guidelines for responsible international knowledge collaboration, which includes tools for risk assessment, export controls, and management of intellectual property rights. These guidelines, published by the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) and the Research Council of Norway, aim to balance international openness against national security.

The Arctic Research Coordination Office, which is part of NSM, plays an important role in protecting research relating to the Arctic and

managing security challenges linked to the area's geopolitical importance. Universities and research institutions are obliged to appoint persons responsible for research security, who ensure that risk assessments are carried out and that academic personnel receive relevant training.

Regular monitoring and review of research collaborations are conducted to ensure compliance and to handle potential threats. These measures are particularly important in sectors such as maritime technology, energy technology, and advanced sensor technology.

### **Switzerland**

Switzerland combines its tradition of neutrality and independence with strong international collaborations and robust security measures. The State Secretariat for Education, Research, and Innovation (SERI) leads the policy work, with the support of organisations such as the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Swiss Export Control Agency (SECO).

To implement its guidelines, Switzerland has established a Knowledge Protection Support Programme that offers funding and advice to universities and research institutions to protect intellectual property rights in international collaborations. Export controls of dual-use technologies are handled strictly by SECO, which ensures that sensitive knowledge does not end up in the wrong hands.

By establishing a National Research Security Panel, Switzerland offers guidance on handling risks in international collaborations. The particular focus is on sectors such as biotechnology, quantum technology, and precision production, where regular audits carried out by SERI ensures that security guidelines are implemented effectively at university level.

### **Canada**

Canada has developed an extensive strategy for research security that combines openness with management of risks linked to foreign influence and intellectual property rights. The National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships, introduced by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), defines steps for researchers and institutions for handling risks in international collaborations.

The implementation is supported by the Research Security Center, which offers tools and guidance on risk assessments and collaborates closely with the Tri-Agency Research Funders (NSERC, CIHR, and SSHRC) to integrate security aspects in funding decisions. NSERC has also published detailed guidelines and frequently asked questions on

how research security is to be handled by institutions, with special emphasis on sectors such as AI, quantum technology, and clean energy.

The Research Security Center also provides training courses and tools adapted to support research in emerging sectors, and initiatives such as the U15 (group of 15 Canadian research universities) leading practice for protecting research strengthen national guidelines through university-driven measures.

Canada's collaboration with global frameworks, such as the G7's working group for research integrity, reinforces the country's international strategy. By combining proactive measures and institutional support systems, Canada demonstrates how research security can be integrated in the innovation system.

### **Emerging trends and innovations**

A number of emerging trends and innovations have been identified as central for future strategies in research security. Technology-driven policies, such as the integration of AI and OSINT-based due diligence tools, are increasingly used to monitor risks and strengthen security. Countries such as USA and Canada have already implemented such solutions in their risk management systems.

At the same time, future-oriented strategies are being developed, addressing new challenges, including 6G technology and Massive IoT. The EU, via Horizon Europe, and Germany have integrated such issues in their broader innovation agendas.

Finally, the importance of ecosystem development is increasing, where research security becomes part of countries' overarching strategies for economic competitiveness and technological sovereignty within critical areas of technology. United Kingdom and Netherlands are prominent examples of how security measures are integrated in innovation-driven environments to reinforce both national and international collaborations.

### **The proposal for a Swedish national support system in an international context**

The proposal's focus on proactive initiatives, such as meeting places, training courses, and support to build up capacity and culture, reflect an emerging international trend where responsible internationalisation and research security are seen as part of an ecosystem development, rather than as only a defensive measure. The proposal also addresses emerging technological challenges, and underlines the need for international coordination, in particular within EU contacts and strategies relating to new technology.

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