



New call for early career researchers' participation in Sweden-Korea Future Laureates Societal Challenges Programme 2025-2026

Sweden-Korea Education, Research, and Innovation Collaboration (SKERIC) is a collaborative project between eight leading universities in Sweden and Korea (www.skeric.org/partneruniversities). SKERIC focuses on the next generation of academics and innovators in Korea and Sweden. It aims to introduce blended collaborative platforms and models for international and interdisciplinary career development programmes, international academic leadership programmes and matchmaking events for researchers and representatives of research-based start-ups/spin-offs. SKERIC is co-financed by the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT).

SKERIC invites doctoral students and researchers who have obtained their PhD in 2020 or later, to apply for participation in the *Future Laureates Societal Challenges Programme*.

The Future Laureates Societal Challenges Programme gives you the opportunity to be part of a dynamic interdisciplinary group of early career researchers. You will work together and meet regularly for one and a half years (between early fall 2025 and late fall 2026) to discuss and address complex societal challenges. The programme is designed to widen your perspectives, thereby enhancing your CV, facilitate the expansion of your research networks, give added value to your research competence, and guide you in improving your skills in an international collaborative environment.

The groups are already existing and started working together during 2024. New members will be additional to the existing groups.

You apply to participate in one of the following interdisciplinary thematic groups:

1) Dynamic, secure, and sustainable society

Applicants from Seoul National University and KTH Royal Institute of Technology are welcome to apply.

The group explores two perspectives under the umbrella of innovation.

The first perspective focuses on the social, human, and environmental impacts of technological and policy change, examining how innovation affects access to public goods, reshaping social dynamics, and may lead to both positive outcomes and unintended inequalities.

Under the second perspective, the group investigates the technological and infrastructural dimension of innovation, looking at systems such as high-performance

computing and mega data centers, and their role in driving technological advancement, productivity, and challenges.

Both perspectives are expected to contribute to a broader understanding of how innovation – as a transformative force – can be directed toward more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient society. *The group is therefore particularly keen on adding members involved in innovation, entrepreneurship or related policy research.*

2) **Artificial intelligence**

Applicants from Seoul National University, Korea University and KTH Royal Institute of Technology are welcome to apply.

The current group consists of 9 mentees and 4 mentors from Sweden and Korea, who work closely and collaboratively as a group on a variety of planned activities to be conducted in both Sweden and Korea. They bring together expertise from a wide range of scientific disciplines and are positioned to contribute to socially-just and technically-robust data infrastructure for AI applications resolving ageing issues, e.g., health promotion and dementia prevention, at multiple levels, both at systematic levels and at intervention levels. The group bridges perspectives from social science, public health, AI, and ethics.

Join the programme to:

- Deepen your understanding of global challenges and the complex issues facing our world today. Delve into various interdisciplinary approaches to address these.
- Expand your network of contacts and establish relationships with other researchers within a range of disciplines from leading universities in Sweden and Korea.
- Add value to your research skills and investigate new methodologies for tackling complex problems.
- Improve and expand transferable skills, such as intercultural communication, science communication, ethics, and grant writing.
- Apply for mobility funding, to spend between 5-6 months at one of the partner universities in Sweden or Korea.

About the Programme

The *Future Laureates Societal Challenges Programme* bring together around 50 early career researchers from the member universities in SKERIC. Researchers are divided into five thematic groups, each comprising approximately ten early career researchers with diverse academic backgrounds and at least two experienced mentors. At the end of the programme the groups are expected to be successfully established and in the process of preparing a major grant application, publish joint papers and publications or to organize outreach activities about their research.

The researchers will, with the help of the mentors, define the research questions that they want to address and decide how to set up their project and structure their work and meetings. Experienced mentors will provide guidance and expertise to the groups.

Both digital and physical meetings are included in the programme. Once a year a week-long mandatory conference is organized in either Korea or Sweden. In 2025, the conference will be

held in Korea between 17-21 November. In 2026 it will be held in Sweden. In between the on-site conferences you will meet digitally with your research group, monthly or as often as the group decides. Seminars will be organized every semester, focusing on specific themes, such as intercultural communication, science communication, ethics, and grant writing.

Expenses

The programme is offered free of charge to selected participants. Each home university will cover the expenses for travel and accommodation during the physical meetings.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants are those currently registered as doctoral students, or who have obtained their doctorates in 2020, or later, and who are employed or registered at one of the SKERIC partner universities. Applicants should have a minimum of 1,5 years remaining on their programme/contract at the time of application. Proficiency in English is essential, as the programme will be conducted in English.

Application

To apply for the programme, submit the following documents, written in English in .pdf format to Elisabeth.Axell@global.lu.se:

- Application form where you motivate your commitment to participating in the programme, how you can contribute to the research theme that you are applying for, and how participation in the programme would benefit your research activities.
- CV, maximum 4 pages
- Doctoral students: Recommendation letter from the supervisor. Other researchers: Statement of Support from Head of Department (or the like)

Application deadline is **13 June, 2025**.

Note: Confidential information should be excluded from the application. Submitted applications are considered official documents subject to the principle of public access to information. Referees from third country will have access to the application.

Contact persons at each SKERIC university:

Korea University: Pureun Kim (purnkim@korea.ac.kr)

Seoul National University: JaeyeonShin (colormysoul@snu.ac.kr)

KTH: Charlotte Almqvist (alm3@kth.se)

Selection

Applications will be reviewed based on how the applicant's current research and academic background could contribute to the research theme, in combination with merits and motivation to participate in the programme. Selection results will be announced by early July 2025.

More information about SKERIC: www.skeric.org

