

National and international Theme call 2022

The LINXS Institute of advanced Neutron and X-ray Science invites proposals for new Themes relating to the application of X-ray and neutron-based science on any topic related to the LINXS focus areas (hard matter, soft matter, and life science). A Theme should be designed to progress that topic by resourcing interactions between different groups/areas through relevant and strategic activities that make the network more than the sum of its parts.

We welcome original, innovative, and pioneering proposals that will advance science using X-ray and neutron techniques and involve cross- and trans-disciplinary interactions between experimentalists, theoreticians, and modellers to provide new perspectives. We particularly encourage Theme proposals that expand the scope of research into new areas and/or involve new users groups.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the LINXS management and/or people currently active in Themes to find out more about how LINXS operates.

[Read more about how LINXS operates its Themes](#)

WHAT IS A THEME?

Themes run for 3 years and aim to bring research communities together. A LINXS Theme does not fund research *per se*, but facilitates research by bringing together active teams focusing on specific subtopics, in the form of *Working Groups*. A Theme has some funding to boost the formation and activities of the network, and should be connected topically to one or more of the primary LINXS focus areas. The scientific subtopics of a Theme should relate to the development and application of neutron and X-ray science, and associated techniques, and may cover fundamental science, data acquisition, experiments, data analysis, simulation, and/or theory. The Theme is coordinated by a *Core Group* containing representatives from each of the Working Groups, and chaired by the *Theme Leader*.

Apart from their research priorities, Themes should plan specific outcomes aiming towards sustainability and impact of the network of researchers (e.g. other external funding, development of new initiatives, and translational and social impact).

ELIGIBILITY - WHO CAN APPLY?

LINXS welcomes applications for Themes from everywhere.

To lead a Theme, a commitment of resources from the host organisation of the Theme leader is required. Anyone with a tenure, tenure-track, or relevant long-term position can apply as the lead applicant for a Theme.

LINXS welcomes diversity amongst the members of the Theme, and this is regarded as a strength and an asset. In assembling a Theme, gender balance of at least 60/40% is expected.

In a typical Theme, about 50% of the people active in the Core Group and Working Groups are from outside the partnering organisations. Theme applications are encouraged to show broad international engagement.

PARTNERSHIPS – WHO CAN LEAD A THEME?

Any organisation contributing resources to a Theme is a LINXS partner for the duration of that Theme. A Theme generally has some resources allocated to contribute to salaries of key persons and activities helping the Theme to run, with the majority of people contributing their time in-kind. This contribution typically includes some time paid for the Theme leader and Working Group leaders.

Partner organisations pay for their own staff. Lund University will contribute to salaries of its own participants. The partnership between the organisation(s) and LINXS will be governed by a collaboration agreement, including details on the financial investment agreed.

As an example, previous Themes with a single partner have had resources of about 40% full time equivalent per year spread among people leading the Core Group and the Working Groups, and an activities budget equivalent to about 25-30 k€ per year. However, this should not be seen as an upper limit. If many organisations are partnering in a Theme they could bring more resources to bear.

In summary:

- The Theme leader (main applicant) can be from any organisation prepared to contribute, for example person-months, travels, etc, to the resources of the Theme, and leads the Core group. Working group leaders can also be from any organisation.
- Any organisation can contribute to funding staff participating in a Theme and becomes a partner by doing so.
- The activities of a Theme with several partners are co-funded in accordance with a collaboration agreement.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The call follows a **two-stage application process**:

Stage 1 consists of the submission of a concept application by the lead applicant using a template (link at top of page) – this is a short application describing the key aspects of the proposed Theme. An application at this stage requires endorsement by the head of department (or equivalent) of the prospective Theme leader proposing it. A few applications will be selected using an external and independent advisory body. Successful applicants at this point will be invited to proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 consists of a more detailed version of the application, which includes a development plan with the timeline of operations, complete descriptions of initial working groups and their members, the level of engagement of the Core Group and Working Group members, and details on foreseen activities. Stage 2 applications will be evaluated based on their merits by the same independent and external advisory body. To proceed, a commitment from partnering organisations is required, via a Letter of Support from a faculty Dean, Vice-Chancellor, or equivalent position within the partnering organisations, detailing the resources committed. If a proposal passes Stage 2, a consortium agreement detailing the commitments is expected to be drawn up and signed before the start of Theme activities.

Further information:

The application should be written in English.

Applications are submitted by email in one (searchable) pdf file to submissions@linxs.lu.se.

An acknowledgement of receipt is sent to the lead applicant.

TIMELINE

- **Deadline for Stage 1 applications: 2022-11-18**
- LINXS will invite Stage 2 applications by 2022-12-16
- **Deadline for Stage 2 applications: 2023-03-03**
- LINXS will send the final decision by 2023-03-31
- **Earliest date for Theme start is 2023-04-03**

COSTS THAT CAN BE COVERED

Please note that approval of the Theme does not entail approval of all submitted potential costs. Activities are discussed, planned and budgeted for in anticipation of any coming year. Theme participants are then expected to execute that plan.

Personnel costs: Typically, a contribution can be made to the salary of the Theme leader and key coordinating participants (such as Core Group members and/or Working Group leaders), if they are employed at a partner organisation. Core group and Working group members from non-partner organisations can have travel and accommodation covered for specific activities if needed, but are required to contribute their time in-kind.

Activity costs, such as: conferences (including hosting and travel of keynote speakers), Core Group and Working Group meetings, workshops, hackathons, hosting and travel of guest researchers, schools, seminars, and training and outreach activities. The list is non-extensive and LINXS welcomes new activity ideas that contribute to the success of the Theme.

Applicants are encouraged to contact LINXS for more information on costs that are typically covered.

DIVISION OF COSTS IN THEMES WITH PARTNERSHIPS

People – Each organisation funds its own people. LINXS can contribute for any person employed at Lund University with a maximum of 0,1 FTE per person, and a total of 0,4 FTE per year per Theme. The contribution to salaries is specified in the application, and is typically divided up among participants with around 10% of an individual's time funded. This contribution is traditionally meant to cover coordination. Most people participating in a Theme do so in-kind, out of interest and because it benefits their research.

Activities – All partners are encouraged to contribute to activities in their localities, as set out in the collaboration agreement. LINXS can contribute up to 250 kSEK/year for activities connected to its locality.

Other – LINXS contributes with baseline costs to each Theme, including administration, communication, and web support. If a Theme is led by a partner organisation (i.e. the Theme leader is based at that organisation), that organisation is expected to contribute an administrator at the level of at least 0,1 FTE/year.

REPORTING

Each Theme is expected to report annually, listing activities, expenditures and scientific achievements, as well as a final report at the end of the Theme duration. The final report should list the Theme's scientific contribution, impact, and scientific activities. The basic reporting of resources spent among partner organisations is specified in the collaboration agreement. The Theme leader is ultimately responsible for reporting.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Applications will not be distributed or published by LINXS by default, but are not, in principle, confidential. LINXS does not encourage the inclusion of confidential material in any proposal.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The LINXS Management will gather the applications received and check the formal eligibility of applications. All eligible applications will be evaluated by the LINXS Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). The external evaluation of the applications will consider the potential contribution of the Theme and its proposed activities to the mission of LINXS.

The SAB will evaluate and rank all applications on the basis of the criteria listed below, as well as the balance of the total contribution of resources made to the Theme.

1. Scientific excellence, impact and timeliness, and potential to contribute to the advancement of, and breakthroughs with, X-ray and neutron science at large-scale facilities.
2. Relevance to one or more of the LINXS focus areas, and potential to bring different scientific communities together and exploit interdisciplinary, intersectorial and/or inter-methodological engagement.
3. Potential to enhance existing user communities and/or develop new user communities (including industry and the public sector, if relevant) for synchrotron and neutron-based science.
4. Relevance to LINXS' mission, and strategic complementarity in relation to existing Themes and the diversity of activities at LINXS.
5. Excellence, networks and capacity of the suggested Core Group and potential Working Groups. It is expected that these include members external to the partnering organisations. The target (but not a strict requirement) is ~50% fellows from non-partner organisations active in Core and Working Groups. Diversity and gender equality (60/40% acceptable) will be considered.

The SAB submits their recommendations for Stage 1 to the LINXS Management Group which then invites applications to Stage 2.

The Stage 2 evaluation is performed by the LINXS Management group with the advice of the SAB, considering budget availability and operational capacity. The LINXS Management informs successful applicants.

CONTACT PERSONS

Potential lead applicants are encouraged to contact the LINXS management to discuss their ideas prior to submission, the relevant contacts are:

- Trevor Forsyth, LINXS Director, (trevor.forsyth@linxs.lu.se)

- Marie Skepö, LINXS Vice-Director, (marie.skepo@linxs.lu.se)
- Jörgen Larsson, LINXS co-Director, (jorgen.larsson@linxs.lu.se)
- Oxana Klementieva, LINXS co-director, (oxana.klementieva@linxs.lu.se)
- Anna Ntinidou, LINXS Head of Administration, (anna.ntinidou@linxs.lu.se)

APPLICATION DEADLINE STAGE 1

2022-11-18, 17:00 PM CET