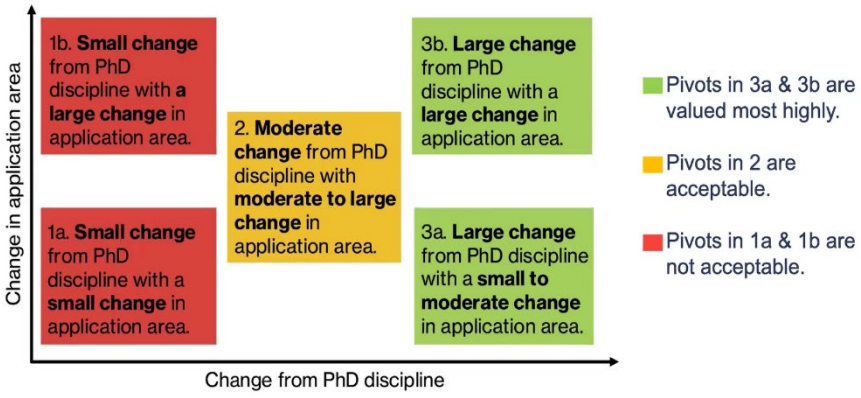
Internal prioritisation process for project proposals from Karolinska Institutet to the Schmidt Science Fellows program 2025

The Schmidt Science Fellow is an initiative of Schmidt Sciences, which strives to build a community of scientists and supporters of interdisciplinary research. They believe that global challenges cannot be addressed by one discipline alone, instead by bringing together different perspectives, ideas, and skills, interdisciplinary science broadens the view, thereby enhancing the ability to innovate and solve complex problems facing science and society. Their focus is therefore to support the best emerging scientists in the natural sciences to pivot from their PhD discipline and pursue an interdisciplinary research career.

Central to Schmidt Science Fellows mission is the disciplinary pivot that the scientist will pursue. *The graph illustrates that a large change from PhD discipline is valued most highly whilst a small change is not acceptable.*



Proposed pivots must be in Natural Sciences (Astronomy, Biology*, Chemistry, Earth Sciences and Physics), Engineering, Mathematics, Computing or any of the sub-disciplines). Pivot to the Social Sciences are outside of the scope of Schmidt Science Fellow.

The fellowship provides a personal stipend of up to $110 000 a year for up to 2 years of postdoctoral study in a different area from their PhD, at any approved location worldwide.

For more information https://schmidtsciencefellows.org/

Schmidt's eligibility criteria

- Studying for a PhD in Natural Sciences (Astronomy, Biology*, Chemistry, Earth Sciences and Physics), Engineering, Mathematics, Computing – or any of the sub-disciplines.

*At Karolinska Institutet (KI) all PhD degrees are within Medicine. Schmidt Sciences considers those degrees to belong to the subject area Biology.

- Expected to complete all requirements for receiving their PhD degree between May 15, 2025, and June 30, 2026.
- Able to start their Fellowship in July 2026 or October 2026.

The internal prioritisation process

Schmidt Sciences has invited KI to nominate up to two candidates to the program. The selection of PhD students to be nominated to the Schmidt Science Fellowship is based on an evaluation performed by an internal review committee. To be considered for the internal prioritisation process applicants needs to submit the following documents to grantsoffice@ki.se by **April 10th, 2025**:

1. A document (max 2 A4 pages) which entails:
    a. A short description of the candidate's academic career to date.
    b. How the pivot will enable the candidate to achieve the scientific goal that is not possible while continuing on the current course and/or allow them to overcome a scientific challenge using different approaches and perspectives.
    c. A short description of experiences in collaboration and leadership.
2. CV

Contact:
Rose-Marie Karlsson, Grants Office
E-mail: rosemarie.karlsson@ki.se, Tel: 08-524 866 99

Assessment criteria for Schmidt Science Fellows

Background

The programme is open to PhD students within Natural Sciences (Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences and Physics), Engineering, Mathematics, Computing – or any of the sub-disciplines. At Karolinska Institutet (KI) all PhD degrees are within Medicine. Schmidt Sciences considers those degrees to belong to the subject are Biology.

The target group is academically excellent, risk-positive, early career researchers who can demonstrate a commitment to ambitious high-impact science. Candidates should be curious and creative scientists who are interested in broadening their horizons by pivoting away from their PhD research area. The Pivot is an essential evaluation criterion. Nominated candidates should be expected to complete all requirements for receiving their PhD degree between May 15, 2025, and June 30, 2026. They should also be able to start their Fellowship in July 2026 or October 2026.

Three overall criteria will be applied to the nominee assessment. The different criteria should be graded according to a five-grade assessment scale:

5 = Outstanding
4 = Excellent
3 = Very good
2 = Good
1 = Poor

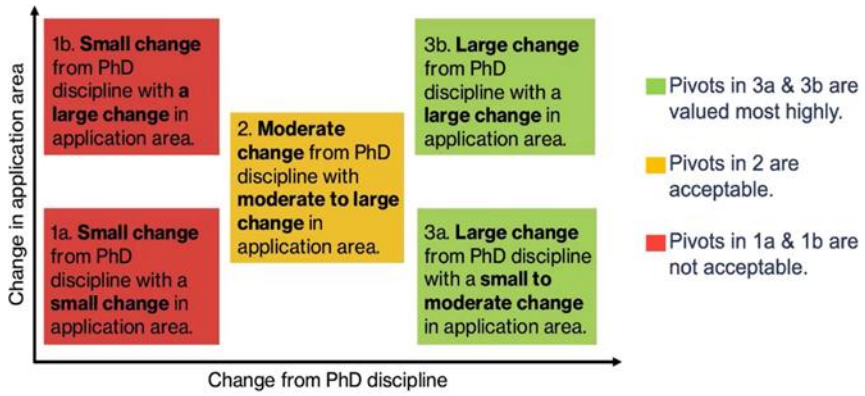
Assessment Criteria

1. **Academic achievements – weight 0.3**

- Publications: quality from an international perspective and quantity.
- National and international awards
- Presentation of research results at national and international conferences
- Evidence of commitment to high -impact and/or interdisciplinary science.

2. **The pivot – weight 0.5**

- The applicants reasoning and commitment to make a pivot to a different field of study during their post-doctoral fellowship (in accordance with the pivot graph from Schmidt Sciences presented below).



3. Experiences in collaboration and leadership – weight 0.2