

Appendix 6

Application to Sida-SAREC for continued support 2003 – 2006

20 April, 2002

1. Summary of programme

SASNET is a national network for research, education, and information about South Asia. The aim is to promote a dynamic networking process in which Swedish researchers co-operate with one another, and with researchers in South Asia and globally, thereby contributing in building strong research institutions. It is organised from a root node at Lund University, with an Internet gateway where all activities are documented. The gateway offers interactive communication, support and information for interested individuals and groups. The network supports planning of new research and education programmes by giving grants on the basis of evaluations made by a special reference group. For the period 2000-2002, the network has been co-financed by Sida and Lund University with a total amount of SEK 4.7 million. In this application, we apply to Sida for funding for the four-year period 2003 – 2006 with SEK 2.5 million per year, or totally 10 million.¹

2. Background

In 1998, a Swedish government working group set up to “intensify Swedish relations with Asia,” made an inventory of existing Asia related research and educational resources in Sweden. The group recommended that a Swedish base for building academic competence about contemporary South Asia should be established at one of the universities in Sweden (“Framtid med Asien. Förslag till en svensk Asienstrategi,” Ds 1998:61, Stockholm, pp. 239 and 258). This recommendation was also included in the strategy formulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Later on, SASNET has been mentioned as a partner in its new strategic plan worked out in 2002.

In June 1999 Sida invited the universities of Göteborg, Lund and Uppsala to send in declarations of interest how to best co-operate in building this competence about

¹ Sida grants are normally given for a three-year period. SASNET’s organisation with mandates for the board and appointment period for its director and web master is also organised in three-year periods. However, the initial funding by Sida was for only two years of regular activity. This is why we now apply for funding for 4 years in order to be able to synchronise the organisation of the programme and the funding.

South Asia. A working group at Lund University, in consultation with the local South Asia researchers, worked out a plan for such a co-operation, which was submitted to Sida in September the same year. In this plan, Lund University committed itself to support the activity with SEK 0.5 million annually.

In May 2000, Sida decided to give the responsibility to Lund University to develop a South Asia Centre according to the plan it had submitted. The funding was provided in two steps: for the year 2000 the amount of 0.7 million SEK was given, in order to present a detailed plan for such a centre, and if this plan was positively evaluated, an annual amount of 1.5 million SEK for the years 2001 and 2002 was guaranteed (see *Enclosure 1*).

Lund University set up a working group to plan for the building of a national network for South Asian studies. The group consisted of Staffan Lindberg, Sociology; Olle Qvarnström, History of Religions; Rajni Hatti Kaul, Biotechnology; Shisher Kumra, Environmental Economics; Jan Magnusson, Social Work; and Boel Billgren, International Office. Lindberg was appointed acting co-ordinator and Magnusson acting programme secretary, and the first strategy was to organise a conference in order to plan the network better. On October 14–15, 2000, around 70 Swedish South Asia researchers came together in Lund to discuss the formation of the new Swedish South Asian Studies Network (see <http://www.soc.lu.se/sasnet/con/index.html>). After the conference, a modified plan for the building of a network was submitted to Sida (see *Enclosure 2*, and <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/ourplan.html>), and in November Sida decided to fund the activities for the period 2001–2002.

After this, the building of SASNET has proceeded in several steps, which are thoroughly reported in the two work reports submitted so far (see *Enclosure 3 and 6*) and the minutes of the two board meetings (see *Enclosure 5 and 7*). The basic steps have been to organise the root node with a director/co-coordinator and a webmaster/programme secretary and establish an office at the International Office at Lund University (see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/organisation.html>). In co-operation with the Vice-Chancellor the directions for SASNET has been worked out (see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/directions.html> or *Enclosure 4*) and the composition of its first board decided upon (see *Enclosure 4* and <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/organisation.html>).

Simultaneously an Internet Gateway, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se>, has been constructed and inaugurated in August 2001 (see *Enclosure 6, Appendix II*). On this basis interactive communication with Swedish, South Asian and International

researchers, teachers and other interested persons have been initiated. Two board meetings have been held, one in August 2001 (*Enclosure 5* and <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/board01.pdf>) and one in January 2002 (*Enclosure 7* and <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/board0201.pdf>).

3. Driving force

SASNET is led by a board, which is chaired by Prof. Björn Hettne, PADRIGU, Göteborg, and by assoc. Prof. Rajni Hatti Kaul, Lund. The board consists of ten persons representing: Lund University (3), other universities and university colleges in Sweden (3), Universities and university colleges in the other Nordic countries (1), PhD candidates (1), Sida (1), and NGO's (1). In addition there are six deputy members (see *Enclosure 4*).

The staff consists of Staffan Lindberg, director/co-coordinator on a 50 % part time basis, and Lars Eklund, webmaster/programme secretary, working full time since September 2001. Lindberg worked as acting co-ordinator till the end of September 2001. The Vice-Chancellor then formally appointed him as director and co-ordinator for the period 1 October 2001 to 31 December 2003. Eklund worked part time, 50 %, as acting webmaster from 22 January to 31 August 2001, after which he was engaged full time as acting webmaster/programme secretary. After a suggestion by the board he was then formally appointed as webmaster/programme secretary from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2003, on a part time basis, 50 %.

Lisbeth Andersson worked part time as acting programme secretary for eight months during 2001, and was the main organiser of the workshop on Global networking in August. She also collected data for the register of individual Swedish researchers.

At the International Office Boel Billgren has co-ordinated the organisational efforts on behalf of SASNET, and Birgitta Hansson, Mats Roxendahl, and Birgitta Devlin have assisted SASNET with valuable services of administration, data operations, and language editing.

4. Aim and tasks of SASNET and main activities during 2001 and 2002

The aim of SASNET is to encourage and promote an open and dynamic networking process, in which Swedish researchers and teachers co-operate with colleagues in South Asia and globally. The network is open to all disciplines. Priority is given to co-

operation between disciplines and across faculties, as well as between institutions in the Nordic countries and South Asia. The basic idea is that South Asian studies will be most fruitfully pursued in co-operation between researchers working in different institutions, but with a solid base in their mother disciplines. In August 2001 SASNET organised a Workshop on Global Networking in South Asia studies to discuss how to best carry out this task (for a full report, see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/workshop.html>).

Besides its general task of supporting Swedish South Asian studies, and maintaining the Internet gateway, the network root node based at Lund University is also supposed to specifically initiate, stimulate, and support South Asian studies and related activities at Lund University, and within the framework of the Öresund University. (See reports on <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/lundactiv.html> and the <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/orsaf.html>).

The main tasks of the network are to:

- **in various ways initiate, stimulate, and support research co-operation** via planning and programme grants for networking (e.g., meetings, travel, visit of guest researchers, co-ordination, etc.) We have till now collected information about 41 research institutions in Sweden and presented them in <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/environment.html>, and also collected information about 195 individual Swedish researchers and presented them in <http://www.intsek.lu.se:591/sasnet/search.htm>, which can be searched. We have so far distributed altogether eight planning grants for research programmes during 2001 and 2002 (see *Enclosure 5 and 7*). The projects for which grants have been given, as well as invitations for the grants are found in <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/grantsinvite.html> and <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/grants.html> (see also *Enclosure 5 and 7*).
- **in various ways initiate, stimulate, and support academic South Asian studies** in Sweden, or studies relevant to South Asia, e.g., via grants for networking in developing undergraduate and graduate courses in Sweden and the Nordic countries, if possible in partnership with universities in South Asia. We have collected information about 17 institutions giving courses on South Asia in Sweden and presented them in <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/educationf.html>. We have distributed three planning grants for education programmes during 2001 and 2002 (See *Enclosures 5 and 7*).

- **encourage PhD studies focused on South Asia**, including networking among individual research students in institutions that do not specialise on South Asia. We have networked quite extensively with PhD candidates while building SASNET and we are now organising a Symposium for PhD candidates during October 2002 (see *Enclosure 7* and <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/phdsymp.html>).
- **promote student and researcher exchange between Sweden (the Nordic countries) and South Asia**. We have started this work through, for example, our contact journey to South Asia in February – March 2002 (see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/journey.html>) and by giving information about studies in Sweden and in South Asia on our gateway. We have also participated in academic conferences in Edinburgh, Bergen, Uppsala, Brussels, and Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala).
- **build an information system for South Asian studies** in partnership with academic and public institutions, media, business communities, and NGOs. Our Internet gateway, with its vast content of information covering a wide range of aspects on South Asia, is meant to serve this purpose. We have worked out principles regarding this Third task (see *Enclosure 8*). We have created <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/newsf.html>, giving links to the best sources of information available on the Internet. We also provide links to important development organisations and agencies involved with South Asia, in Sweden as well as internationally (<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/linksf.html>).
- **contribute to co-ordination of consultations** between researchers and different public institutions, business organisations, and NGOs. We have been doing this work since the start of SASNET, which involves day to day work at the root node connecting resource persons, like in December 2001 when we helped the Swedish Radio plan a series of programmes on India, transmitted in January 2002.

Other main activities:

- 1) We regularly publish newsletters (see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/newsletter14.html> for the latest newsletter)
- 2) We have organised larger meetings with researchers, teachers and doctoral students at Karlstad (<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/repkarls.html>), Uppsala

University (<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/repupps.html>), Göteborg (see *Enclosure 3*), and Linköping, and also had a number of smaller meetings with researchers from Sweden, Europe, and South Asia. There is a daily interaction of this type via Internet.

- 3) In August 2001 we started a one-year 20 credits academic course on India/South Asia at Österlen Folk High School (see <http://www.osterlen.fhsk.se/sydasiem/index.htm>). There are now 23 students on this course. A new course starts in August 2002.
- 4) We helped teachers and PhD students organise a section for Indic studies at the Dept of History of Religions at Lund (see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/indsemld..html>).
- 5) We have supported the setting up of the Nordic Centre in New Delhi (information given on our Research page).

5. Results achieved so far

The inventory referred to above (Ds 1998:61), as well as the interest declarations of the three universities, plus our own knowledge at that time, provide a base line in 1999, against which the efforts and results of SASNET can be evaluated. At Uppsala, Stockholm, Göteborg, Karlstad and Lund universities, researchers have since many years developed a high competence in the field of South Asian studies, as well as in natural sciences and medicine relevant to South Asian development problems. Other universities and colleges, like Linköping, Luleå, Dalarna, Malmö, and Kristianstad have also developed a certain competence in the field, but the problem was that these activities have had a weak institutional foundation and lacked countrywide co-ordination.

The main achievements of our work so far is that we have, with the help of the Internet gateway, established an interactive communication system in which Swedish researchers, teachers and students can find information about each other and the surrounding academic world. We have also started to network with researchers in Sweden and internationally. On this basis, it is now easy for us at the root node to handle a lot of questions and to link people with similar interests and/or needs with each other. We have also started to support ongoing and new research initiatives in research and education by giving planning grants and by providing active support to the work in these groups. We have started an undergraduate course on India/South

Asia at Österlen Folk High School and now intend to proceed with the development of Masters courses.

Equally important is that the Foreign Ministry and Sida initiative to support South Asian studies in Sweden has already had a snowballing effect on various activities at Lund and at other universities in Sweden. The force of this commitment, the communication network established, and the funds available through SASNET will help teachers/researchers and students to form effective interest groups at the Swedish universities, which can work for new priorities in allocation of resources at various departments and faculties.

We have already had very positive responses from certain departments, which are ready to start new undergraduate courses, such as the Dept. of History and the Centre for Gender Studies at Lund University. At Uppsala University, a Masters course has been started in September 2001, which can also be seen as a response to the increasing interest in South Asian Studies (see <http://www.afro.uu.se/Southasiaplan.html>). The Centre of Asian Studies at Göteborg University is now including South Asia in its curriculum for undergraduate courses on Asia (see <http://utbkat.gu.se/utbildning/utb/A108KXZ2100.html>)

6. Financial situation in April 2002

During the work we have made up budgets for the work, which have been decided by the working group and later the board. The budget for the planning period during 2000 can be read in Work report 1 (*Enclosure 3*, p. 13). The budget and balance sheet for 2001 is presented in Work report 2 (*Enclosure 6*, p. 19). The budget for 2002 is presented in *Enclosure 9*.

From these budgets it can be seen that we have kept the budgets tight. In 2000 there was a surplus of SEK 76 584, which was transferred to 2001. For 2001 there was a total surplus of SEK 411 133, mainly due to the fact that we did not get enough good applications for planning grants, so that the reference group and the board decided not to use all the allotted funds for that purpose. This surplus will be spent during the year 2002 mainly in funding planning and networking activities.

7. Plans for 2003 – 2006

In August 2001, the SASNET board discussed the basic priorities of the work in SASNET (see §5 in *Enclosure 5*). A summary of the discussion is given here:

- “Interdisciplinary research and education was identified as one of the key areas of SASNET activities. The board had a wide discussion on how to promote this. By connecting researchers and teachers, identifying new research issues through meetings and workshops, and by supporting the establishment and reinforcement of research centres, SASNET can promote interdisciplinary research. It was also recognised that there is a great need to strengthen intra-disciplinary networks within many disciplines as well.
- A second key area was identified to be the third task, namely how to reach out with information to the media and schools. It was argued that SASNET should connect journalists with researchers, and through the Gateway offer links to relevant information. The principles laid down for the third task were approved.
- A third key area discussed was the key role of both undergraduate and PhD education. Interdisciplinary education was stressed, as well as the need to integrate economics in various courses. Concerning the difficult situation for post-doctoral researchers, suggestions were made how SASNET could involve these in research networks and identify funding sources.”

On January 24, 2002 the following plan was made by the board of SASNET: The general thrust of SASNET work will continue to be networking in order to achieve the main objectives according to the Directions.

Priority should be given to the following activities:

- 1) Continue to initiate, stimulate and support research and education projects and programmes all over Sweden in partnership with South Asian scholars and institutions. Emphasis will be put on intra-disciplinary networks and the involvement of PhD students in the activities. The main work will consist of giving focused information about partners and sources of information, as well as by giving planning and networking grants after due application and reference group evaluation.
- 2) Research and education themes, which have so far been supported, include biotechnology, mineral technology, maternal health, water and poverty, food research, gender and religion, managing common pool resources, and history of technology. It is important that SASNET continues to support these programmes, but also if possible tries to initiate research and education on other and supplementary themes.

- 3) Promoting undergraduate and graduate South Asia courses at Swedish and Nordic universities, especially try to initiate and support multidisciplinary Master's courses. In connection with this, the use of ICT-based distance education should also be stimulated.
- 4) Updating and further development of the Internet gateway in close interaction with the networking activities mentioned under 1). With the help of the Internet gateway further develop the information system for South Asian studies in partnership with academic and public institutions, media, business communities, and NGOs. Improving the technical capacity of the gateway with an advanced search function.
- 5) Promote student and researcher exchange between Sweden (the Nordic countries) and South Asia via information on the Internet gateway.
- 6) Continue to build an Öresund Network of South Asian Studies with a comprehensive course programme, including a Masters degree in South Asian Studies, if possible.
- 7) Organise lecture and visiting programmes for South Asia scholars, if possible in co-operation with Nordic institutions. Lectures can be organised by any of the institutions participating in SASNET.
- 8) Develop a network of collaboration with researchers and research institutions in South Asia in order to be able to act as a broker between students, researchers and these institutions.
- 9) Develop a network of collaboration with European South Asia research institutions and centres (Heidelberg, Leiden, Amsterdam, Edinburgh, etc.) as well as with some of the most important non-European ones.
- 10) Organise a conference/workshop every second year at Lund or other institution in Sweden.

To the extent that time permits, SASNET should also aim at:

- 11) Trying to initiate the development of suitable courses for personnel at public institutions, media, business communities, and NGOs. Some of this work could be done with the Nordic Centre in India as a base.
- 12) Co-ordinating consultations and exchange of information between researchers and governments, foreign ministries, aid directorates, other public institutions, media, private business, and NGOs.

- 13) Encouraging and promoting public education through service to information networks, media, schools, etc.
- 14) Promoting teachers' education in South Asian topics by co-operating with institutions like Sida, Folkuniversitetet and NGO's involved in such education.

8. Budget for 2003 – 2006

The SASNET board approved this budget on January 24, 2002.

Grants per year:

Sources: Sida: 2.5 million (increased with 1 million over 2001-02 budget)
Lund University: 0.55 million (increased with 50 000 over 2001-02 budget)

Total amount available to spend 2003

3 050 000

Expenses during 2003

I. Network root node at Lund

- Network co-ordinator, 50 %, 40 170 per month ²	241 020
- Webmaster/secretary, 100 %, 29 525 (see Note 2)	
354 300	
(Subtotal, salaries	595 320)
LKP, 48.67 %	289 742
Total, salaries	885 062
Travel budget director, webmaster	50 000
Travel, two board meetings	30 000
Travel, Lecture/visiting programme inviting some South Asian scholars to Sweden and the Nordic countries	60 000
Gateway, extra costs	25 000
Expenses, material, including subscriptions, handbooks	25 000
Øresund Network of South Asian Studies (incl. Masters course administration)	
142 375	

² Based on an increase of 3 % over the estimated salary of 39 000 in 2002.

Subtotal, root node	1 217 437
Administrative charges, 18 % (or 15.25 % of total amount used at Lund)	219 139
Total for network root node	1 436 576

II. Conference/ workshop, organised every second year by the root node or by other institution, (inclusive of 18 % administration charge at Lund)

118 000

III. Programme activities (anywhere in Sweden): (Total amount available
1 495 424)

At the SASNET conference at Lund 14-15 October 2000, the principle taken was that overall 2/3 of the available programme funds should go to research and 1/3 to education. In the beginning, however, more money could be spent on planning and starting education programmes. Thus, the figures below are preliminary estimates:

Research programmes/projects	2/3	996 949
Education Programmes/projects	1/3	498 475

Total expenses	3 050 000
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Comments to the budget

1. This budget is a model budget. According to the size of the Sida grant, the SASNET board will then have to decide a more detailed and exact budget for each of the four years of operation. The cost for salaries at the root node is expected to increase with 3 % per year over the four-year period. This amount will have to be allocated from the other posts during the years 2004, 2005, and 2006, keeping in mind the overall principles for the annual budget of SASNET.

2. In this budget, the decision by the SASNET board to upgrade the webmaster/programme secretary position to 100 % has been incorporated. The main reason is that is unrealistic, given the aims and ambitions of SASNET, to operate the whole network with only two half-timers. Administrative work takes some time, and there is not much time left for networking, taking new initiatives, and very importantly,

constant updating of the Internet gateway. (See minutes from the board meetings: *Enclosure 5*, §10, and *Enclosure 7*, §8).

3. The budget has followed the principle of allocating at least half of the funds to support the network partners. It has also incorporated the idea to include a smaller amount (SEK 60 000) for the creation of visiting lecturers programme, which could be organised by any of the partners in the network. This amount as well as the amount for a bi-annual conference-workshop (SEK 118 000) should be considered along with the funds for planning and networking programmes (SEK 1 495 427) as funds allocated for the use of network partners.

4. As concerns funding, the basic principle is that the funds granted by Lund University (550 000) will be used for local activities at Lund and the Öresund region, which includes part of the salaries for co-ordinator and webmaster, while the Sida grant (2 500 000) will be used for networking activities outside Lund. In the budget presented above, Lund University funds also cover part of the salaries for networking outside Lund.