

## Society Quest: A base for societal collaboration

### What is Society Quest?

The society's current and future challenges need sustainable solutions. The growing demand in societal challenges have become the driving force to find new solutions that can lead to new business opportunities.

Linköping University contributes to societal development by strengthening its collaboration with the surrounding society.

Society Quest is an open societal collaboration forum where society and research can meet with the focus to match challenges from society with the knowledge and research from academia.

The Society Quest forum presents business opportunities and related questions that affect society challenges. These are then discussed in a workshop. The purpose is to give researchers an insight into related questions, initiate collaborative research and development projects but also an opportunity to establish new contacts and networks.

### Example areas

- Environmental technology and management
- Sensors in the green industry
- The whole society crisis
- Inclusion of senior citizens
- Autonomous vehicles
- Construction logistics
- Sustainable cities

## Key factors for a successful Society Quest

### Identify area of interest

A current societal challenge topic is suitable for a Society Quest. In order to confirm there is an interest to participate, the concept must first be established with researchers, businesses and organisations, preferably with local ties, which have shown active involvement and interest. After this, a topic can be decided upon.

Previous Society Quests have had between 15 and 100 participants.

### Invite participants

In order to arrange a successful Society Quest, it is important to engage people knowledgeable in the topic of discussion.

To suit most participants, it is advisable to arrange a Society Quest on a Tuesday-Thursday between 09:00-16:00.

### Collect questions

The questions, which are discussed in workshops, are collected from the participants in conjunction with invitation and sign-up. The questions are then matched with researcher expertise.

To be able to match questions with researcher expertise, the questions need to be clarified and specified in detail. The questions should be open for discussion without the restriction of a confidentiality agreement.

## Match questions with researcher expertise

After defining questions, they need to be matched with researcher expertise. It is preferable to allocate more than one researcher to each question. In some cases, researchers are able to handle questions outside of their specialised area. Senior researchers often have broad competency and have often taught outside their main research focus.

Distribute the questions to relevant workshops and decide what researchers should be included in the workshop. The participants decide upon on-site registration which workshop to participate in.

## The venue

The venue should be big enough to fit all participants in plenary, and should be equipped with both a sound system, projector and screen. Make sure there are additional smaller rooms for parallel workshops and focus groups. These rooms should be in different sizes as the number of people in a focus group varies. Also make sure there is a suitable area for mingling, lunch and coffee breaks.

## Planning

### Week 1-6

- Preliminary discussions with researchers and organisations to confirm there is an interest for the suggested topic
- Determine topic, date and venue
- Settle on participants to invite

### Week 7

- Send out invitations

### Week 8-10

- Personalised contact with organisations
- Focus on collecting specific and precise questions

### Week 11-12

- Process the questions
- Identify and contact relevant researchers

### Week 13

- Determine workshop themes
- Facilitate moderators and, if need be, secretaries

### Week 14

- Carry through the Society Quest

### Week 15

- Define which discussions from the Society Quest should be evaluated further
- Offer selected participants to take part in a Deep Quest

### Week 16

- Inform the participants of the projects
- Start work on identifying project owners

### Week 17-24

- Assist in creating project groups

## Week 25

- Evaluate the event
- Settle which projects have formed throughout the Society Quest process

## The typical implementation of a Society Quest

### Workshops

Every workshop must have a facilitator and a secretary. For smaller workshops one person can cover both tasks. The facilitator's responsibility is to lead the discussion while a secretary documents the details of what is said and by whom.

### Follow up

1. The project group collects and summarises the documentation. Potential projects and collaborations are identified.
2. The summary is distributed to all participants along with an encouragement to express interest in continuing the participation in specific projects, so called Deep Quests. The project group should also strive to identify project owners. This follow-up process is important and a number of weeks should be dedicated to the process.
3. Three months after the Society Quest event the project group meets and documents which projects have been initiated. The project group for the Society Quest must not become the long-term owner of the specific projects. During this meeting the project group also evaluates the Society Quest workshop.
4. It is beneficial to follow up over a number of years to study the effects the Society Quest have had.

## Programme layout suggestion:

### Part 1: Presentations

09.00 Registrations and coffee

09.30 Welcome and introduction

09.45 Presentations about the research and development within the topic

12.00 Lunch and mingle

### Part 2: Workshops

13.00 Workshop in parallel sessions based on specific questions

14.45 Summary

15.00 End