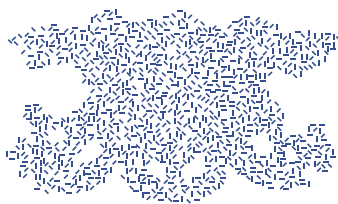


**A BEGINNER'S GUIDE**  
*to Swedish Academia*

**SVERIGES UNGA AKADEMI**

# A Beginner's Guide to Swedish Academia

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Welcome  
to Sweden!



# Preface

**AS MEMBERS OF** the Young Academy of Sweden, we know that internationalisation is essential to promote quality in research and education. By means of researcher mobility, the systems of knowledge and innovation are renewed and enriched with novel ideas, perspectives, and methods. The ability to attract international knowledge and competence plays an important role in strengthening a country's growth and prosperity. In an ever more interconnected world, knowledge needs to be able to travel across cultural boundaries without hindrance in order for societies to cooperate and respond to the great challenges of today and of the future.

While mobility is advantageous for the research system as a whole, individual scientists may often encounter obstacles. Indeed, when moving to a new country, one discovers a lot of formal and informal structures and traditions. How is my university governed? Where can I get funding for my research? How is undergraduate teaching organised? What support can I expect as a member of faculty? Many members of the Young Academy of Sweden, among them several authors of this guide, moved to Sweden some years ago and have had to face such obstacles. With this guide, our aim is to provide scientists having recently arrived in Sweden with important information of how to navigate Swedish academia and as such contribute to removing time-consuming obstacles. This guide is primarily aimed at faculty who are newcomers to

the Swedish research system, but we believe that some sections will also be relevant for postdocs and even for Swedish researchers transitioning to tenure-track positions.

In chapter 1, we provide an overview of the most important aspects of the Swedish academic system – Swedish academia in a nutshell. Subsequent chapters provide more in-depth information on the various aspects of academia, such as decision-making, positions, funding, and teaching.

In this guide, we have decided to emphasise major principles and structures. In an effort to illustrate how university policy and government regulation interplay with customs and habits, we have combined information from legislation and government sources with experiences of scientists who arrived in Sweden as junior researchers. In the last two chapters, we also provide some information on personal life and everyday practicalities, including social security benefits and language in Swedish academia.

While the guide is written in English, we have not refrained from using Swedish terminology in the hope that this will help you when looking to find further information or discussing with university representatives, perhaps at an interview or after you have received an offer of employment.

The Young Academy of Sweden wishes you a warm welcome – and much success in your academic endeavours!

# Chapter one

**Swedish academia  
in a nutshell**

## Higher education and research in Sweden

**SWEDEN INVESTS CONSIDERABLE** resources in research and development, both in relation to GDP (about 3.4 percent of GDP) and population size. Higher education and public research in Sweden are primarily acquired and conducted at higher-education institutions. Research institutes are much less frequent, which sets Sweden apart in terms of the organisation of the research system compared to some other countries.

Higher-education institutions in Sweden can be universities (*universitet*), university colleges (*högskolor*), or other independent education providers. There are approximately 50 higher-education institutions in Sweden and they are either public or private. However, there are relatively few private universities and, in practice, the difference between private and public universities is much smaller than in many other countries. Figure 1 shows an overview of universities and university colleges in Sweden and their locations. Universities and university colleges are regulated by law and only institutions designated by the Government are allowed to issue undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. You can read more about the different higher-education institutions in chapter 2, ‘Types of scientific institutions in Sweden’. Note that we, for the sake of simplicity, have chosen to use the word ‘universities’ when we mean universities and university colleges.

## Organisation of universities and university colleges

The ways in which Swedish universities are organised vary, but for all of them there is a vice-chancellor (*rektor*) who is the university’s highest executive and principal representative. The vice-chancellor is normally assisted by a number of pro-vice-chancellors for specific areas (e.g. research, education) or for specific scientific areas (sciences, social sciences, humanities).

There is a board of governors (*styrelse*) consisting of both faculty, students and members appointed by the Swedish Government. The vice-chancellor is also a member of the board and when a new vice-chancellor is to be appointed the Government makes the decision based on the board’s recommendations. Private universities follow similar arrangements, with the difference that the Government does not directly appoint members to their boards of governors.

The vice-chancellor is assisted by an administrative organisation usually led by a university director. This administrative body consists of services such as IT, human resources, property management, communication, legal and financial management.

Universities have significant freedom in how they structure their operations, but most institutions are divided into faculties or departments, led by deans and heads of department, who report to the vice-chancellor. In many departments there are faculty councils consisting of permanent academic staff, with varying functions depending on the university, ranging from advisory to collegial



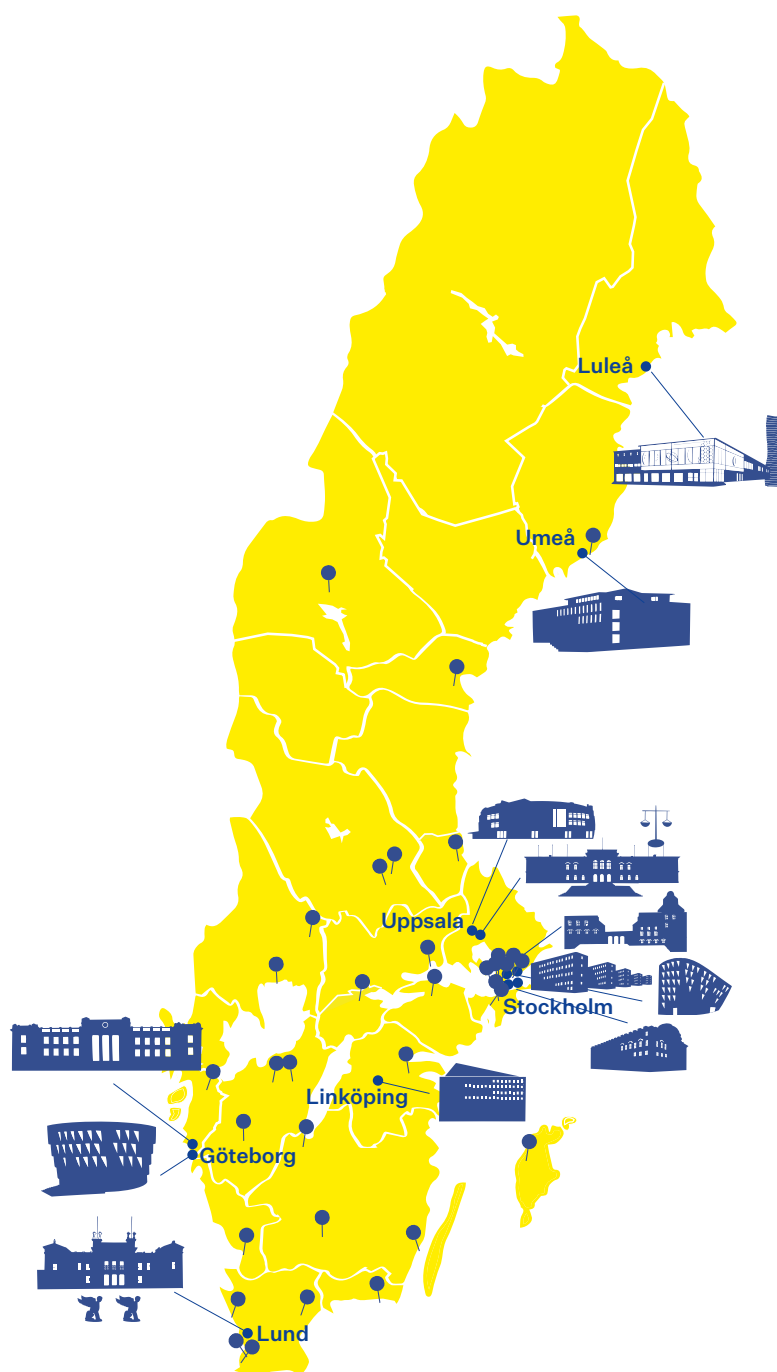


Figure 1. The location of universities and university colleges in Sweden marked with building silhouettes or pins. Many of the institutions have several campuses, in many cases spread over several locations. Some smaller campuses and 'other independent education providers' are not marked on the map.

decision-making. The degree of collegial leadership varies between universities, but is more extensive at the older and larger ones.

## Tenured and tenure-track academic positions

Universities have significant freedom in determining their own staffing, which means there will be differences between them. At the public institutions, nevertheless, there are three academic positions that are regulated by law: professor, associate professor (*lektor*), and assistant professor (*biträdande lektor*) (see table 1)<sup>1</sup>.

Recruitment and promotion to these academic ranks are based upon scientific and pedagogical qualifications. Applications are often evaluated by external reviewers, but it is up to the university to define the recruitment process and the level of qualifications required. Professors and associate professors can either be recruited externally, or internally by promotion according to merit. The latter is the more common way of becoming a full professor in Swedish academia. Some universities are more restrictive in promoting to professor and others may implement moratoria in certain disciplines if they already have a sufficient number of professors.

Holding a permanent position does not necessarily mean that it is financed by the university. Some positions are fully funded, but many faculty members in Sweden receive financing from the university only for a small-

er part of their salary. The remaining part needs to be covered by external grants, by teaching, or by additional internal funding for certain leadership roles.

The assistant professor position (*BUL*) is a tenure-track position for a duration between four and six years. The purpose of this appointment is to provide the opportunity to develop research autonomy and acquire the scholarly and pedagogic qualifications required for appointment as associate professor. As assistant professor you have the right to apply for promotion to associate professor and to be evaluated based on the criteria for such an appointment. As mentioned above, these criteria are determined by each university individually, typically described in local regulations.

Beyond these positions explicitly regulated by law, universities have significant freedom to recruit academics to other permanent positions, which may therefore differ significantly between institutions. Examples of such positions are *universitetsadjunkt* (often a teaching position), *forskare* or *forskningsprofessor* (often a research position) or *docent* (similar to senior lecturer, not to be confused with the title ‘*docent*’, see below).

The criteria and procedures for appointment and promotion to academic positions are usually described in a document called ‘employment regulations’ (*anställningsordning*) or ‘regulations for teaching and research staff’ (*arbetsordning för undervisande och forskande personal*). For more information on

ACADEMIC POSITION	INTERNATIONAL EQUIVALENT
Professor	Full professor
Lektor or universitetslektor	Associate professor (US) or senior lecturer (UK)
Biträdande (universitets)lektor (BUL)	Assistant professor (US) or lecturer (UK)

Table 1: Academic positions at Swedish universities.

specific positions, we recommend you to read the regulations for the institution in question.

Most Swedish universities offer an academic degree called *docentur* or *docent*, which can be compared to the German and French ‘*habilitation*’ or ‘reader’ in the UK system. Though the specific expectations differ between universities, one needs to demonstrate the ability to independently carry out teaching activities and/or research to obtain the title of *docent*, for example by having published in scientific journals significantly beyond what is expected for a PhD degree, having demonstrated the ability to lead research projects, and/or having supervised doctoral students. In turn, a *docentur* is often required for principal supervisors of doctoral students, for sitting on PhD committees, or for examining PhD students. Functions that require a *docentur* vary substantially between universities. To find out what applies in your case, we recommend that you discuss this with a university representative.

## Temporary academic positions

As is common internationally, a substantial amount of research and teaching is conducted by people in temporary academic positions,

e.g. PhD students (*doktorand*) who are candidates for a doctoral degree, postdocs who already hold a doctoral degree, as well as scientists in other kinds of research positions. The conditions of such positions are either regulated in a collective bargaining agreement between the university and trade unions, or by law (the Higher Education Ordinance, *högskoleförordningen*, or the Employment Protection Act, *lag om anställningsskydd*, often referred to as *LAS*). When assessing budget and start-up packages, one should consider that salaries for PhD students and postdocs in Sweden can be higher than in other countries and can vary between universities and disciplines.

PhD students are enrolled into a doctoral study programme at a university. At the same time, most PhD students are also employees of the university and rather than applying to a doctoral programme, candidates apply for an available doctoral position. PhD students are thus both students and employees. You can read more about PhD studies in Sweden in chapter 3 ‘Teaching and degrees at Swedish universities’.

Having obtained a PhD degree, you can be hired as postdoctoral researcher (*postdoktor*). Some postdocs are employees of the university while other postdocs have a tax-free stipend.

Whether a position is of the former or latter kind is often determined by whoever is funding the position in question. If an employee, a postdoctoral researcher can be employed for a minimum period of 2 years and a maximum of 3 years. The employment can be extended in case of illness, parental leave, military service, and assignments within trade unions.

Universities are free to hire staff for other positions, e.g. researcher (*forskare*) or research assistant (*forskningsassistent*). Such temporary positions can be automatically converted into a permanent position after a certain period of time specified by the Employment Protection Act. For this reason, departments are sometimes quite restrictive in prolonging temporary contracts. For more information, you can consult the administrative services at your university or a union website.

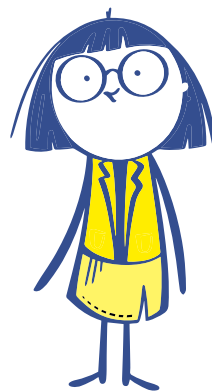
In some cases, it is possible to recruit undergraduate students to assist with teaching, research or administration (*amanuens*) or as clinical assistants participating in research projects. Such student appointments are limited in scope and time.

## Service departments and administrative support

Universities normally have service departments that provide administrative support. They are often part of the central or departmental administration. However, the amount and type of administrative support available varies greatly. To find out more you should ask what type of administrative support you can expect at your particular institution or department.

There is usually a library and an information and communication technology (ICT) department that assist with computer and telephone services, as well as human resources and financial services departments. A grants office may be able to help with preparing and submitting research grants. How these services are financed varies. Some support will be covered by the overhead the university charges on your external funding, while other support will need to be paid for on a per-use basis from your faculty or project budgets. Assistants helping you with organising teaching, scheduling meetings or booking travel is not common in Sweden.

Learn the system – not only get to know it, but really understand it!



You can make informed choices that increase the possibility to succeed in your research career. Try to not only get to know the system, but to really understand it. Read the promotion criteria, the employment regulations etc., and try to translate them into what they mean in your specific discipline.

# chapter two

**Organization of Higher  
Education and Research  
in Sweden**

## Governance of higher education and research

**HIGHER EDUCATION IN** Sweden is governed by the Swedish Parliament (*the Riksdag*) and the Government (*regeringen*) by means of the two most important regulations of the sector, the Higher Education Act<sup>2</sup> (*högskolelagen*) enacted by the Riksdag, and the Higher Education Ordinance<sup>3</sup> (*högskoleförordningen*) enacted by the Government. The Riksdag also allocates funding for the sector.

The Higher Education Act regulates the operations of public universities and university colleges. It stipulates their governance system and recruitment practices and contains provisions for gender equality and academic freedom. The Higher Education Ordinance provides further details on the system of qualifications and academic appointments. It is supplemented by the Government's annual appropriation directions (*regleringsbrev*) for every institution, which includes the amount of state funding as well as specific assignments.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Research (*Utbildningsdepartementet*) is responsible for a number of government agencies tasked with carrying out the activities decided by the Riksdag and the Government.

### Research policy

The research bill (*forskningsproposition*) proposed by the Government every four years, constitute an important element in shaping

Swedish research policy. The formulation of the research bill is, in practice, decided through a process of negotiation between the political majority and different actors involved in research and higher education in Sweden. The bill defines the budget and course for the Swedish research system for the coming four years. As an individual researcher, you will likely notice some effects as the priorities in the research bill affect all universities and public funding agencies.

## Funding of higher education and research

To succeed in your research, you will of course need funding, and with a basic understanding of how research in Sweden is funded, it will be easier for you to navigate and pursue the opportunities relevant to your research.

Figure 2 shows an overview of the gross domestic expenditure on research and development (R&D) in Sweden, its sources of funding, and where R&D is performed. It indicates that research in Sweden is conducted mainly within the business enterprise sector and the higher-education sector.

Commercial research in the industry and business sector represents approximately 70 percent of the total research investment. It is funded largely by the private sector itself, but also receives some public funding through, for example, the Ministry of Enterprise and the governmental research funding agency Vinnova. This research is primarily conducted in

2. <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Swedish-Higher-Education-Act/>

3. <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Higher-Education-Ordinance/>

private businesses, but also as commissioned research at higher-education institutions and other public entities (*uppdragforskning*).

Academic research, including basic and applied research, represents approximately 30 percent of the total research investment. Academic research is conducted mainly at universities and university colleges, and to a lesser extent at other public entities such as research institutes or public agencies.

### PUBLIC FUNDING

Universities in Sweden are primarily publicly funded. In 2020, 1.6 percent of the country's gross domestic income was spent on higher-education institutions and 80 percent of their research and higher-education activities were financed by public means. The Riksdag determines the annual budget and resource allocation for each higher-education institution, which receives separate allocations for education and research respectively. To some extent, this system of separate allocations contributes to a separation of teaching and research, and to the shaping of higher-education and research organisations.

Funding for education is allocated based on the performance of each higher-education institution, i.e. the number of enrolled students and the total number of credits they earn. Funding is also discipline-dependent. For example, medicine and the natural sciences traditionally receive more resources than the humanities and the social sciences. Funding for research is allocated by the Government in the form of a base grant (*basanslag*) that each institution can use and distribute as it sees fit. Only a small part of this funding is perfor-

mance-based. Distribution of the base grant within universities differs between institutions and depends on research domains. The distribution is often, to various degrees, based on historical factors, i.e. the size of appropriations in previous years, as well as different performance-based criteria such as external funds and number of publications.

In addition to base grants, research at Swedish higher-education institutions benefit from several other funding streams (see figure 3 for an overview of the funding of R&D in the higher-education sector). A significant amount of state funding for research is distributed through four main governmental funding agencies and is available to individual researchers and research teams by competitive application. These government agencies, the Swedish Research Council (*Vetenskapsrådet*), Vinnova, Formas and Forte, are tasked with funding research within different areas. Chapter 4 contains more information on the various funding bodies.

### OTHER FUNDING STREAMS

As mentioned above, Swedish research is funded by multiple actors, including the following public research foundations (see chapter 4 for more details): the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research (*SSF*), the Knowledge Foundation (*KK-stiftelsen*), Mistra, the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (*STINT*), and the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (*Östersjöstiftelsen*). These foundations were established with public capital, but are now independent of the Government and the Riksdag.

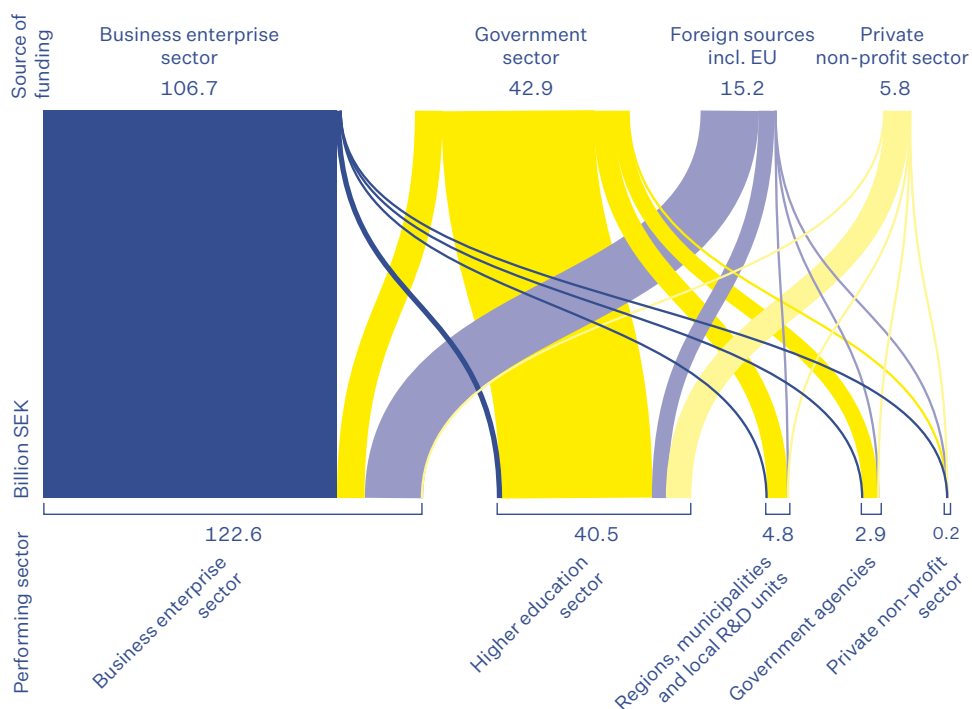


Figure 2: Gross domestic expenditure on R&D in Sweden 2019, divided by sources of funding and performers of R&D (billion SEK). Source: The Swedish Research Barometer 2021, Swedish Research Council.

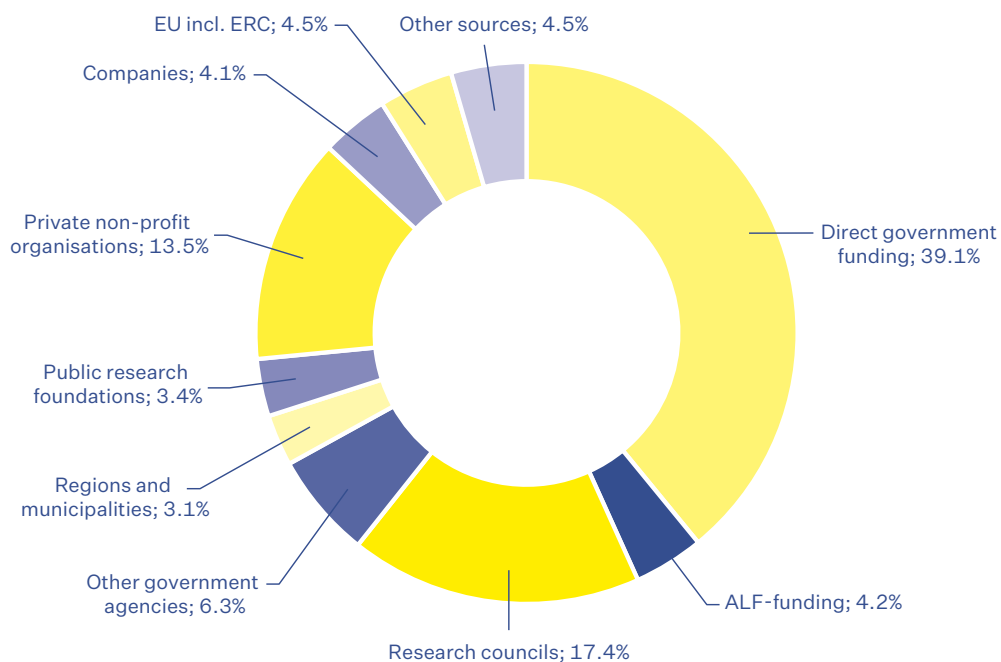


Figure 3: R&D revenues in the higher-education sector 2019, by source of funding. Source: The Swedish Research Barometer 2021, Swedish Research Council.



Research in Sweden is also supported by multiple private actors, notably private foundations, non-profit organisations, and industry. Several of these actors are private family foundations, the largest being the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation (*Knut and Alice Wallenbergs Stiftelse, KAW*). These foundations are governed by internal statutes that specify the research areas and/or type of research to be prioritised. In addition, private companies provide a large amount of research funding to higher-education institutions, researchers, and research groups, primarily in applied research.

The European Union, through its framework programmes for research and innovation, including the European Research Council (ERC), also constitutes an important source of funding for Swedish research. In 2020, Sweden had so far secured project funds of just over 2 billion euros within Horizon 2020<sup>4</sup>. This corresponds to 3.4 percent of all funds granted in the framework programme, making Sweden the ninth largest recipient of these funds.

In comparison with many other countries, research at Swedish universities is financed to a relatively large extent with external funds<sup>5</sup>. The direct base funding amounts to about 44 percent of higher-education institutions' total funding for research, which is lower than in many comparable countries

and the relative amount of external funding has increased in the last decades.

The availability of external funding differs between research domains. There are more external grants available for scholars working in medicine and technology. However, plenty of opportunities for external funding also exist for research in the social sciences and the humanities. In general, external funding creates many opportunities for you as an individual to pursue your ideas and carry out your research at a Swedish university. The heterogeneity of the system contributes to allowing a diversity of research to be conducted. Indeed, due to the many funding streams the research undertaken does not depend exclusively on governmental policies and priorities. In turn, the reliance on external funding can negatively impact the autonomy of the universities as an organisation, and the optimal balance between base funding and external funding is an ongoing topic of debate in Swedish research policy.

## Types of scientific institutions

### HIGHER-EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Most universities in Sweden are public, and the bulk of higher education and academic research is organised by public higher-education institutions. Public higher-education institutions are regulated by the Higher Education Act and the

4. Horizon 2020 was the EU framework programme for research and innovation 2014-2020. At the referred time, 60 of the programme's 80 billion euros had been distributed. In 2021, the new EU framework programme Horizon Europe was launched, which runs between 2021 and 2027.

5. With external funding we here mean all funding that is not direct Government appropriations. This includes funding from governmental research funding bodies as well as funding from domestic and foreign sources such as companies, private and public foundations, and non-profit organisations, as well as EU framework programmes.

Higher Education Ordinance, whereas private ones are regulated through agreements with the Government.

There are 18 universities, 12 university colleges and 5 university colleges for the arts in Sweden (listed in table 2 on the following spread). Student enrolment varies between a few hundred and fifty thousand. Research is conducted at both universities and university colleges and they provide higher education at various levels. However, they vary in how much focus is given to research. The broad-based, established universities and specialised universities are home to more extensive research activities than university colleges and newer universities, which are generally more focused on education and receive less government research funding. This has to do with the formal difference between a university and a university college – the right to award doctoral degrees. Public universities have general degree-awarding rights in the first, second, and third cycles, while university colleges must apply to the Government for permission to award degrees in specific areas in the second and third cycles. Some institutions – *Chalmers tekniska högskola*, *Handelshögskolan*, and *Kungliga tekniska högskolan* – use the term ‘*högskola*’ in their names despite being universities. Most university colleges use the term ‘university’ in the English translation of their name.

There are a few private universities. They receive government funding in a similar manner to public ones, and in practice the distinction between public and private universities is not very significant and considerably smaller than in many other countries.

Finally, there are a number of other independent education providers (not listed in table 2), most of which are small and focus on education in one or a few areas, primarily nursing, psychotherapy, and theological education.

There are plenty of funding sources available, the tricky part is finding them.



*The heterogeneity of funding streams contributes to ensuring that a diversity of research can be conducted in Sweden. However, it puts more of the responsibility of finding ways to finance their research on the researchers themselves.*

UNIVERSITIES		
BROAD-BASED UNIVERSITY	Uppsala University	PUBLIC
	Lund University	
	University of Gothenburg	
	Stockholm University	
	Umeå University	
	Linköping University	
SPECIALIZED UNIVERSITY	Karolinska Institute	
	Royal Institute of Technology	
	Luleå University of Technology	
	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	
	Chalmers University of Technology	PRIVATE
	Stockholm School of Economics	
UNIVERSITY	Karlstad University	PUBLIC
	Linnaeus University	
	Örebro University	
	Mid Sweden University	
	Malmö University	
	Mälardalen University	

Table 2: List of higher-education institutions in Sweden. Categories follow the division used by the Swedish Research Council and the Swedish Higher Education Authority.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES		
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE	Blekinge Institute of Technology	PUBLIC
	Dalarna University	
	Halmstad University	
	Kristianstad University	
	Swedish Defence University	
	Södertörn University	
	University College of Physical Education and Sports	
	University of Borås	
	University of Gävle	
	University of Skövde	
	University West	
	Jönköping University	PRIVATE

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES FOR THE ARTS		
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE	Konstfack, University of Arts, Crafts and Design	PUBLIC
	Royal College of Music in Stockholm	
	Royal Institute of Art	
	Stockholm University of the Arts	
	Beckmans College of Design	PRIVATE

### RESEARCH INSTITUTES

Traditionally, the number of research institutes in Sweden is rather limited compared to many other countries. Nevertheless, there are a few, the most notable being the state-owned Research Institutes of Sweden (*RISE*) with approximately 2 800 employees and hubs located at several universities. RISE undertakes industry research and innovation as well as testing and certification with a focus on future-proof technologies, products, and services. Some examples of other, smaller research institutes include the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Studies (*SCAS*) in the humanities and the social sciences in Uppsala, which hosts several fellowship programmes to support curiosity-driven research with governmental funding and support from private foundations. The Research Institute of Industrial Economics (*IFN*) is a private research institute in the field of economics. The Institute for Future Studies (*IFFS*) is an independent interdisciplinary research institute focusing on future-oriented policy-relevant research.

### PUBLIC AGENCIES

Several public agencies carry out research in-house, for instance the Swedish Defence Research Agency (*FOI*), the National Veterinary Institute (*SVA*), the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (*MSB*) and the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (*SMHI*). Also, some museums and other cultural heritage institutions conduct research.

### RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

Sweden has many different research infrastructures and collaborative research plat-

forms. Some examples of infrastructures that were highlighted in the 2020 research bill are the Science for Life Laboratory (SciLifeLab), a national centre for life science research, the radar facility in Kiruna that is part of the international EISCAT project, the European Spallation Source, which is the European neutron source, and MAX IV which is a Swedish national laboratory for accelerator physics and research using synchrotron light. Many other platforms exist to promote research within and across disciplines. You can find out more about Swedish research infrastructures on the Swedish Research Council website.

### LEARNED SOCIETIES

Sweden has several learned societies that organise prominent scholars in specific areas and disciplines, and award prizes, scholarships, and research grants: most notably the Royal Academy of Sciences (*Kungl. Vetenskapsakademien, KVA*), which awards three of the five Nobel Prizes; the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters and Antiquities (*Vitterhetsakademien*); the Swedish Academy (*Svenska Akademien*), which awards the Nobel Prize in Literature; the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (*Kungl. Ingenjörsvetenskapsakademien, IVA*); the Royal Swedish Agricultural Academy (*Kungl. Skogs- och Lantbruksakademien, KSLA*); and the Young Academy of Sweden (*Sveriges unga akademi, SUA*). Several other learned societies exist.

Although these academies do not conduct research or have formal decision-making powers regarding research policy, they play an important role as referral bodies to policy

makers and contribute to shaping the research landscape. By promoting science and research in society as a whole and engaging in more targeted advocacy efforts, they can to some extent influence the direction of research and research policy. The academies are highly independent and funded by their own capital or by grants from private foundations.

### **Suggested further reading**

Gunnar Öquist, and Mats Benner. (2012) *Fostering Breakthrough Research: A Comparative Study*.

Swedish Research Council. (2021) *The Swedish Research Barometer 2021 – The Swedish research system in international comparison*.

# chapter three

**Teaching and degrees  
at Swedish universities**

## Higher education in Sweden

**HIGHER EDUCATION IN** Sweden is divided into three cycles: bachelor's level (first cycle), master's level (second cycle), and doctoral level (third cycle). Bachelor and master students follow defined programmes leading to a degree, or can take free-standing courses, accumulating European transfer credits (ECTS), which may add up to a degree.

Universities (*universitet*) and university colleges (*högskolor*) are the primary sites for higher education (see table 2 in chapter 2). At both types of establishments research is conducted and higher education provided, but they vary in how much they emphasise research and teaching, respectively. You can read more about the different types of scientific institutions in Sweden in chapter 2 'Organization of higher education and research in Sweden'.

Admission to higher education is based on upper secondary school grades, credits, and grades from previous higher education when applicable, or based on a national university entrance exam (the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test SweSAT, *högskoleprovet*). A completed high-school education is a general prerequisite. There are also specific prerequisites for certain programmes and courses. There is no lower or upper age limit for admission to higher education.

Higher education at bachelor's and master's level in Sweden is free for students from the EU/EEA and Switzerland. Students typically finance their studies through a combination of subsidies and loans from the Swedish Board of Student Finance (*Centrala studiestödsnämnden*), which can be adjusted based on

the student's own income and their parental responsibilities. Failure to pass courses for a certain number of ECTS credits can lead to ceased payments and the total amount of time each individual can be supported is limited. Students often hold jobs on the side in order to increase their income and make ends meet.

## Degrees and programmes

Swedish higher education follows the Bologna system common in Europe. One year of full-time studies (40 weeks) corresponds to 60 ECTS credits, in Swedish referred to as *högskolepoäng* or *hp*.

In the first cycle, two degrees can be earned at different levels, with 120 credits (*högskoleexamen*, 2 years) or 180 credits (*kandidatexamen*, 3 years). In the second cycle, a degree can be earned with an additional 60 credits (*magisterexamen*, 1 year) or 120 credits (*masterexamen*, 2 years), depending on degree requirements. In the third cycle as well, there are two levels. With 2 years of full-time studies (120 hp), a licentiate degree can be earned. The licentiate degree is not a requirement for the PhD degree and is used to varying extent at different universities, and in many cases not at all. A doctoral degree requires four years of full-time studies (240 hp), of which a certain number of credits (which often differs) will be coursework and the rest is earned through completion of a written thesis.

### DOCTORAL STUDIES

PhD students are enrolled into a doctoral study programme at a university. Admission



as a PhD student at a public university requires full funding and all doctoral students receive financial support during their doctoral education. In most cases this is achieved through employment at the university, either using external or base funds, or a combination thereof. Typically, the financing model varies across disciplines and departments. Other models include scholarships and so-called industrial PhDs where an employer outside of the university provides the funding.

PhD student positions are typically advertised individually; departments do not have regular admission deadlines. PhD students are typically recruited by advertising an open position in a specific subject area. There is no pool of students in the doctoral programme waiting for an advisor assignment.

The duration of PhD studies in Sweden is four years, during which the student should complete a number of courses, gain enough research insights and demonstrate research results in order to meet the requirements for a PhD degree and write a PhD thesis. This timeframe can only be extended because of illness, parental leave, military service or assignments within trade unions, up to a maximum duration of eight years. PhD students are allowed – and in some departments expected – to teach, but never more than 20 percent of their time. If a PhD student teaches or performs other departmental duties, their contract will be prolonged with the equivalent time so that the total time for research remains four years.

A PhD dissertation can be a compilation of individual papers with an introductory and synthesising text called '*kappa*' or it can be a

monograph. The requirements and standards for both formats vary by discipline and department.

A doctoral degree is earned after completion of the required courses and the public defence of the thesis where an opponent will critique the thesis and ask the PhD student – in this context called the respondent – questions about the student's research. A grading committee, constituted according to rules set by the university, also poses questions to the respondent. This committee will then decide whether to pass or fail the thesis. There are no grades beyond pass or fail. It is extremely rare that a thesis will not pass when it has reached the stage of public defence. Supervisors and other faculty will advise the PhD student on whether or not they are ready to submit their thesis. Both the opponent and the committee members are asked to inform the department beforehand if they observe flaws serious enough for the thesis to fail. In this case, the decision is usually to postpone the defence and make the necessary changes.

## PhD student supervision

The formal and informal rules around student supervision also vary widely. Each PhD student has a main supervisor and at least one co-supervisor. In some cases, it is required that at least one supervisor has a doctoral degree (see chapter 1) and/or has taken a supervision course. For supervision of bachelor's and master's degree projects, the requirements are lower and are decided locally.

As for teaching in general, the student-advisor relation in Sweden is typically non-

As for teaching in general, the student-advisor relation in Sweden is typically non-hierarchical in the sense that open-door policies are common, as are informal lunches or *fika* between supervisor and student. Cultures vary between disciplines and departments, but in general PhD students have a high degree of freedom and can expect a high level of support from their supervisors. The requirements for PhD programmes are regulated in a general syllabus of each doctoral programme (*allmän studieplan, ASP*). This regulates the required coursework and the requirements for the dissertation. The individual focus, plan, and progression of each PhD student is regulated and documented in an ‘individual study plan’ (*individuell studieplan, ISP*). The ISP is an important document, it shall be updated regularly and signed by both the student and their supervisor. It is crucial that the ISP is always up to date and accurate. If any disagreements between the student and supervisor should occur, the ISP is of central importance when settling them.

PhD students at public universities have substantial rights regarding their PhD projects in the sense that they are entitled to change their direction of research and are allowed to switch supervisors. This also applies if the PhD student is part of a larger project with a defined objective and funded through external grants obtained by the supervisor. If a PhD student leaves a project and chooses a different supervisor and direction for their research, the department should provide other funding for the completion. Enrolling a PhD student is therefore a commitment not only for the supervisor but also for the department.

## Teaching in practice

The Swedish education system is informal. Surnames or titles are not used, and students and teachers address each other using their first names.

How the teaching load is distributed varies by discipline and department. In some disciplines, it is common that PhD students head up labs, or lead tutorials and exercises, while only faculty or senior researchers give lectures. However, other disciplines do not have this practice and will assign all types of teaching regardless of seniority. Many young researchers, including postdocs, are keen to teach not only out of interest, but because a certain amount of teaching is required for promotion or for acquiring permanent positions. For salaried postdocs, teaching is typically not included in the contract, but it can often be accommodated, in agreement with the supervisor. Postdocs on stipends, on the other hand, are normally not allowed to teach due to reasons of taxation.

Teaching formats vary between disciplines, levels, courses and teachers. Students are encouraged to be active in discussions, depending on the class style. Lectures, seminars, exercises, labs, and flipped classroom settings may all occur and it is up to the responsible teacher for each course to design the teaching.

Grading systems vary, and include a binary pass/fail (*godkänd/underkänd*), F-A scales according to the ECTS standard, numeric systems from 1-5, and others. Make sure to get acquainted with the particular grading system specified in the course syllabus (*kursplan*) when teaching a course.

Don't forget to invest time  
in pedagogical training  
and teaching!



Many young researchers are keen to teach not only out of interest, but because pedagogic training and teaching experience is often required for promotion and for acquiring tenured faculty positions.

## Pedagogic training requirements

At many universities, a series of courses in higher-education pedagogy is a prerequisite for permanent employment. This usually means a specified minimum number of credits, although new faculty members can be hired on the condition that they fulfil this requirement within their first few years. The universities offer courses in academic teaching and many PhD students attend them as part of their course package. Moreover, pedagogic training and teaching experience are often

required for being granted tenure, for promotion to associate professor or full professor, and to obtain the docent degree.

It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the criteria for promotion that apply at your university, to simplify your career planning.

## Teaching load

The teaching load varies greatly across disciplines and between teacher categories. It is often calculated in hours allocated to teaching, including preparation and grading. These hours are used for determining teaching load for different positions and in many cases for determining teaching qualifications in hiring and promotion processes. However, in some places, teaching hours and quantitative measures are not used at all and teaching assignments and assessment of teaching credentials is done by other means.

The way that teaching hours are calculated, and the terminology for teaching load, also varies greatly. A 'teaching hour' (*undervisningstimme* or *lektorstimme*) is traditionally 45 minutes of classroom teaching, and these hours are translated into 'clock hours' (*klocktimmar* – teaching including preparation) according to formulas that are specific to the department, and may also vary over time.

It is a good idea to ask how teaching loads are calculated and distributed at your department. Sometimes, the employment contract will include a specific teaching load, expressed as a percentage. To determine the number of hours you will be expected to teach, you also need to know your department's formula for calculating how many teaching hours, or

courses, your share corresponds to. Also, it is important to check if your department has a system in place to make up for excess teaching hours, for instance through reduced teaching in the following semesters or overtime compensation. Sometimes, external funding can be used to reduce the given percentage of teaching. Conversely, researchers with only external funds can in many cases take on teaching to fund part of their position.

Please note that sometimes application packages for positions or promotion demand information about the applicant's teaching experience, i.e. your number of hours taught. Teaching done in another country can be difficult to quantify in the same way. Since hiring committees and reviewers sometimes do assign a lot of importance to this measurement, it is critical that international applicants address the issue. You should be prepared to explain the extent of your teaching experience.

# chapter four

**Carrying out  
research projects**

**IN CHAPTER 2** we gave an overview of how research in Sweden is funded. In this chapter, we turn to younger researchers who consider applying for external funding.

A research grant enables you to set up and run your own research project. Grants are also vital to advancing your career. In order to attain a permanent position or get promoted in Sweden, you are often expected to have secured external funding. Even if you are in a tenured position, you are often expected to co-fund, or sometimes even entirely fund, your salary and research costs through external grants.

The good news is that Sweden is a prominent research nation and there are plenty of funding sources available.

## Funding agencies and grant schemes

It is a good idea to familiarise yourself early on with the vast landscape of funding agencies and grant schemes available in Sweden. Most universities have grants offices that can offer guidance and that also maintain lists of annual calls. Applicable funding agencies vary depending on the discipline and calls change from year to year.

To get you started, we have listed some of the largest government agencies, public foundations, and private funders, together with their web addresses where you will find valuable information about their research profile and current calls.

In addition to the funding bodies listed here, there is a large number of smaller private foundations that offer grants supporting research

initiatives and networking, travel, printing costs, proofreading, translation, workshops, and conferences. Your local grants office will have more information.

Make sure to stay up to date on current calls and start planning your application well in advance. The calls often require considerable preparation. For instance, you will need time to plan a budget, often together with financial staff at the department, and many calls require a statement from the head of department. If necessary for the project, you will need to submit an ethical review, plan for open-access publication, and set up a data management plan (*datahanteringsplan*). Check if your grants office provides seminars on how to plan and structure an application for funding. It will save you time and improve your application.

The four main governmental research funding bodies in Sweden are Vetenskapsrådet, Vinnova, Formas and Forte:

- **The Swedish Research Council** (*Vetenskapsrådet, VR*) is Sweden's largest governmental research funding body. VR funds research in all disciplines, such as the humanities, social sciences, medicine, natural sciences and engineering sciences.  
[www.vr.se/english](http://www.vr.se/english)
- **The Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems** (*Vinnova*) supports needs-driven research in the fields of technology, transport, communication and working life.  
[www.vinnova.se/en](http://www.vinnova.se/en)

- **The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning** (*Formas*) funds basic and needs-driven research in the fields of environment, land-based industries and spatial planning.  
[www.formas.se/en](http://www.formas.se/en)
- **The Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare** (*Forte*) supports and initiates basic and needs-driven research into the labour market, work organisation, work and health, public health, welfare, social services and social relations.  
[www.forte.se/en](http://www.forte.se/en)

There are a number of additional government agencies in Sweden that support research in various areas:

- **The Swedish Energy Agency** (*Energimyndigheten*) funds research on the supply, conversion, distribution and use of energy and the development of new technologies.  
[www.energimyndigheten.se/en](http://www.energimyndigheten.se/en)
- **The Swedish National Space Agency** (*Rymdstyrelsen*) is a governmental agency funding space related research.  
[www.rymdstyrelsen.se/en](http://www.rymdstyrelsen.se/en)
- **The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency** (*Naturvårdsverket*) funds research into the environment, environmental monitoring and inter-

national environmental and climate collaborations.

[www.naturvardsverket.se/en](http://www.naturvardsverket.se/en)

- **The Swedish Institute for Educational Research** (*Skolforskningsinstitutet*) funds practice-based research on teaching and learning in preschools and schools.  
[www.skolfi.se/other-languages/english](http://www.skolfi.se/other-languages/english)
- **The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency** (*Sveriges biståndsmyndighet, Sida*) supports research that can eventually improve the lives of people living in poverty.  
[www.sida.se/en](http://www.sida.se/en)
- **The Swedish Radiation Safety Authority** (*Strålsäkerhetsmyndigheten, SSM*) funds research related to radiation protection.  
[www.stralsakerhetsmyndigheten.se/en](http://www.stralsakerhetsmyndigheten.se/en)
- **The Knowledge Foundation** (*KK-stiftelsen*) funds research and competence development at Swedish university colleges and new universities with the purpose of strengthening Swedish competitiveness. The KK-foundation provides funding for collaborative activities between academic staff and business sector partners.  
[www.kks.se/om-oss/in-english](http://www.kks.se/om-oss/in-english)

Additionally, these five public research foundations support research in various fields:

- **The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research** (*Mistra*) invests in research aimed at solving key environmental problems and promoting Sweden's future competitiveness.  
[www.mistra.org/en](http://www.mistra.org/en)
- **The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research** (*Stiftelsen för Strategisk Forskning, SSF*) funds research in science, engineering and medicine, promoting strong research environments with significance for the development of Sweden's future competitiveness.  
[www.strategiska.se/en](http://www.strategiska.se/en)
- **The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education** (*Stiftelsen för internationalisering av högre utbildning och forskning, STINT*) promotes knowledge and competence development with an international outlook.  
[www.stint.se/en](http://www.stint.se/en)
- **The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies** (*Östersjöstiftelsen*) supports research, doctoral studies and scientific infrastructure related to the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe at Södertörn University.  
[www.ostersjostiftelsen.se/en](http://www.ostersjostiftelsen.se/en)

Another independent foundation within the field of humanities and social sciences:

- **The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation** (*Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, RJ*), is an independent foundation that promotes and supports research in the humanities and social sciences.  
[www.rj.se/en](http://www.rj.se/en)

There are many private foundations that fund a significant amount of Swedish research. Some are large and broad, while others are more specialised or regional. A few of them are listed below:

- **The Wallenberg Foundations** (*Wallenbergstiftelserna*) is the collective name for the public and private foundations established by the Wallenberg family or founded in memory of family members. It is the largest private funder of research in Sweden.  
[www.wallenberg.com/en](http://www.wallenberg.com/en)
- **Erling-Persson Foundation** (*Erling-Perssons Stiftelse*) supports interdisciplinary initiatives and projects that connect different sectors of society.  
[www.erlingperssonsstiftelse.se/en](http://www.erlingperssonsstiftelse.se/en)
- Charitable fundraising foundations such as the **Swedish Cancer Society** (*Cancerfonden*), the **Swedish Heart Lung Foundation** (*Hjärt-Lungfonden*), the **Swedish Brain Foundation** (*Hjärnfonden*) are independent, non-profit organisations that fund research.



[www.cancerfonden.se/om-oss/about](http://www.cancerfonden.se/om-oss/about)  
[www.hjart-lungfonden.se/om-oss/in-english](http://www.hjart-lungfonden.se/om-oss/in-english)  
[www.hjarnfonden.se/om-hjarnfonden/about-hjarnfonden](http://www.hjarnfonden.se/om-hjarnfonden/about-hjarnfonden)

- **The Kamprad Family Foundation** (*Familjen Kamprads stiftelse*) supports education and scientific research to promote entrepreneurship, the environment, competence, health and social improvement.  
[www.familjenkampradsstiftelse.se/in-english](http://www.familjenkampradsstiftelse.se/in-english)
- **The Olle Engkvist Stiftelse** supports the care or upbringing of children, care of the needy elderly or sick, as well as scientific research.  
[www.engkviststiftelserna.se](http://www.engkviststiftelserna.se)
- **Ragnar Söderbergs Foundation** (*Ragnar Söderbergs stiftelse*) supports prominent younger researchers at Swedish universities through calls within medicine, economy and science of law.  
[www.ragnar.soderbergs.org](http://www.ragnar.soderbergs.org)
- Regional foundations, such as **Kempestiftelserna**, **The Sten A Olsson Foundation** (*Stenastiftelsen*), **The Crafoord Foundation** (*Crafoordska stiftelsen*), etc.  
[www.kempe.com](http://www.kempe.com)  
[www.stenastiftelsen.se/en](http://www.stenastiftelsen.se/en)  
[www.crafoord.se/en](http://www.crafoord.se/en)

These are but a few! We eagerly encourage you to browse the lists of calls and grants found on the websites of Swedish research institutions.

There are also opportunities to apply for funding from international funding bodies. The EU offers several such opportunities. Early-career researchers can apply for a Starting Grant from the European Research Council (ERC), which is highly prestigious. Most universities have grants offices that provide internal support for researchers who apply for funding from the EU. This can include advice and guidance regarding administrative aspects, budget, and regulations. Some universities may also offer financial support for EU applications and project co-ordination.

*Horizon Europe* is the EU's research and innovation funding programme for the years 2021–2027. It consists of three main orientations (pillars) with each pillar grouping together various funding frameworks and clusters:

1. **Excellent Science:** European Research Council; Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions; Research Infrastructures.
2. **Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness:** Health; Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society; Civil Security for Society; Digital, Industry and Space; Climate, Energy and Mobility; Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment.
3. **Innovative Europe:** European Innovation Council; European Innovation Ecosystems; European Institute of Innovation and Technology.

There is also Nordic funding, for instance:

- **Nordforsk** is an organisation under the Nordic Council of Ministers that funds and facilitates Nordic research cooperation and research infrastructure.

*[www.nordforsk.org](http://www.nordforsk.org)*

- **Novo Nordisk Foundation** is a private foundation based in Denmark, which also awards grants across the Nordic region within different fields.

*[www.novonordiskfonden.dk/en](http://www.novonordiskfonden.dk/en)*

Many funding bodies allow you to include international scholars in your application as long as the main applicant is affiliated to a Swedish university.

## Indirect costs

When applying for funding, it is crucial to also consider indirect costs. Every cost, whether for materials, facilities, IT services or salaries, can be subject to an overhead fee (OH) levied by the university. Most institutions have defined fees for central, faculty, and departmental OH. These OH fees cover various administrative costs and basic infrastructure. For salaries, social security contributions (*lönekostnads-påslag*, LKP) will also apply. This means that the actual cost of a project is significantly higher than the costs of equipment, consumables, and salaries. The OH levels vary widely between institutions, departments, and subject areas and can be difficult to compare, as the way OH is calculated also varies between institutions. Public research councils typi-

cally cover these costs in full, whereas other funders may have restrictions on the type of costs that are allowed, in which case co-funding of indirect costs may be required.

It is very important to understand the applicable levels of LKP and OH early on when planning a project application. In some cases, a department will not accept funding from a particular source if it does not cover the indirect costs, and some universities are restrictive when it comes to providing co-funding for non-tenured staff. Therefore, before putting together an application, you must always communicate with and get approval from the head of department and discuss the matter with financial administrators. Typically, you will need to submit an approval by the head of department together with your application, and for some funding sources even from the vice-chancellor. Financial administrators, human resources, and trade unions can help when setting salary levels for different staff categories in your project.

## Ethical review

As in most other countries, any research conducted on human participants, human body tissue, or personal data needs to undergo an ethical review. Note that this does not only apply to medical research, but to all research fields.

In Sweden, there is a centralised government agency, Swedish Ethical Review Authority (*Etikprövningsmyndigheten*), which performs these reviews and grants ethics permits. Its website contains information about the process and will help you determine

whether your research needs to undergo ethical review. Currently, this information is available in Swedish only. Note that the ethical review process includes submission of several documents that must be provided in Swedish.

Once you submit an application, you can expect a processing time of 1–2 months. The review committee will then either approve your application right away or ask for clarifications or formulate concerns. Issues in need of clarification as well as concerns are usually formulated in a concrete way that helps you to address them in your proposal, which will undergo review again, possibly for several rounds, before approval is granted. Therefore, you should start your ethics review application as early as possible to make sure that everything is in place once your project is supposed to take off. Note, however, that your granted ethics review application expires if your research has not started within two years. Once started, it is valid until further notice. You can adjust the research plan as you go along, but remember to seek approval for additions if you change your research in a significant way. Costs for seeking ethical approval vary depending on the type of research and the number of research facilities involved, and should therefore be planned into your research budget when applying for funding.

Research involving animals also requires approval. The Swedish Board of Agriculture (*Jordbruksverket*) is in charge of the ethical treatment, breeding, and handling of animals for research. Applications are processed at one of six regional committees. Regulations apply regarding what animals may be used, where research may be conducted, where animals are

held and how they are traded and bred. Relevant information and the application process itself are available in Swedish only.

## Intellectual property rights of academic staff

The so-called ‘teacher’s exemption’ (*lärandantaget*) is an intellectual property right of academic staff, detailed in the Right to Inventions by Employees Act. The teacher’s exemption is an exemption from the general rule that employers obtain the intellectual property rights when employed researchers and inventors generate intellectual property as part of their employment. The exemption applies to patentable inventions and means that academic staff at Swedish universities hold the intellectual property rights to their own inventions, not the university. As academic staff, you thus have the opportunity to utilise your research results.

## Practical information

- Some funders may require you to have a data management plan. Templates for such plans are available from the Swedish Research Council.
- The Swedish Research Council, ERC and other funders require that research results are published open-access, which means that open-access publication is mandatory and related costs should be included in the budget when applying.

- Applications to the Swedish Research Council, Forte, Formas, the Karolinska Institute, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish National Space Agency, and the Swedish Institute for Educational Research are submitted using the same application system: Prisma. Here you can also keep an eye out for open calls.
- Reading other researchers' proposals is a great idea. Don't be afraid to reach out and ask to see successful grant applications. It is also possible to request to see the applications funded by government agencies such as the Swedish Research Council, since they fall under the principle of public access to official documents. Ask your colleagues to comment on your draft application, it is a great way to improve your application.



*Sweden has a diverse landscape of public and private funders, which provides a lot of different opportunities, but might also be difficult for newcomers to navigate. It is a good idea to map out the variety of grant schemes early in the process, don't forget to consult with the department head, and let other researchers comment on your proposal.*

# Chapter five

**Rights, benefits,  
and practical information**

**SWEDEN IS A** progressive country in the sense that workplace cultures generally encourage a healthy work-life balance. This is possible because of existing well-developed public services and a social insurance system that offers many rights and benefits.

This chapter provides an overview of employee rights and benefits in Swedish academia, such as salary, social insurance, family support, and gender equality, but also some practical information for newcomers. The benefits are the outcome of Swedish legislation, collective bargaining agreements between employers and trade unions, and policy guidelines applicable at universities. The information in this chapter is to a large extent sourced from public authorities such as the Social Insurance Agency (*Försäkringskassan*), the Swedish Tax Agency (*Skatteverket*), and the Swedish Pensions Agency (*Pensionsmyndigheten*). Here is a list of relevant authorities that will come in handy when joining Swedish society.

- **The Social Insurance Agency** (*Försäkringskassan*) administers the social insurance system in Sweden, such as insurance benefits for families with children, people with a disability or illness and the elderly. For example, matters like compensation for sick leave or care of children.  
[www.forsakringskassan.se/english](http://www.forsakringskassan.se/english)
- **The Migration Agency** (*Migrationsverket*) considers applications from people who want to live in Swe-

den, visit the country, seek protection from persecution or be granted Swedish citizenship.

[www.migrationsverket.se/english](http://www.migrationsverket.se/english)

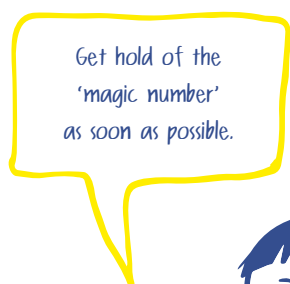
- **The Swedish Tax Agency** (*Skatteverket*) manages civil registration of private individuals and collects taxes such as personal income tax, corporate tax, VAT and excise tax. This is where you apply for a Swedish personal identity number, which you will need for numerous services.  
[www.skatteverket.se/english](http://www.skatteverket.se/english)
- **The Swedish Pensions Agency** (*Pensionsmyndigheten*) is responsible for and pays the national public pension.  
[www.pensionsmyndigheten.se/other-languages/english-engelska](http://www.pensionsmyndigheten.se/other-languages/english-engelska)
- **The Swedish Public Employment Service** (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) is responsible for public employment services and labor market policy activities. Mediates jobs.  
[www.arbetsformedlingen.se/other-languages/english-engelska](http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/other-languages/english-engelska)

In our interviews with colleagues who arrived in Sweden as junior researchers, we identified three themes that complicate the matters covered in this and the following chapter: 1) the circle of bureaucracy, 2) migration rules, and 3) strategies to learn the Swedish academic culture. We begin this chapter by briefly looking into the first two themes – the third is covered

in the last chapter – and then proceed to present employee rights and benefits in Swedish academia.

## The circle of bureaucracy

The ‘circle of bureaucracy’ refers to the fact that many elements of the Swedish bureaucratic system, such as your personal identity number, address of domicile, and bank account, are interconnected. International researchers that were interviewed for this guide emphasise that it is not always easy to enter this circle, but once it happens things start to work more smoothly. However, foreigners living in Sweden can sometimes experience bureaucratic challenges for several years after their arrival.



*It is important to apply for a personal identification number on the first day of your arrival, since you will need it for everything else. Swedish people know their personal identification number by heart.*

Our interviewees highlight difficulties with issues such as finding accommodation, getting official documents in order, and understanding how society works. While most recognise that these things are inevitable when moving to another country, they also highlight that, when the time frame of your position is two years (e.g. for a postdoc), it can be challenging to deal with practicalities that take a long time to get in place. Many universities use relocation services to assist researchers with things such as applying for a personal identity number, opening a bank account and finding housing. In addition, as several of our interviewees point out, in order to learn more about Swedish society and culture, interacting with colleagues in the lunchroom and over coffee is helpful.

## Visas and residence permits

Applications for visa and residence permits can sometimes create bureaucratic challenges for international researchers. Indeed, some of our interviewees mention challenges relating to applications for and renewal of residence permits, or relating to changing their immigration status, e.g. from studies to work. For example, one interviewee who was renewing their residence permit as a researcher from a non-EU country had to be careful not to leave Sweden before their new residence permit was issued. Indeed, if you travel abroad when your current permit is expiring it may be difficult to return to Sweden before a new permit is granted. These rules may create obstacles for researchers who want to travel for international conferences, data collection, or research visits. Another interviewee, a post-

	STUDYING IN HIGHER EDUCATION	PHD-STUDIES*	RESEARCH**	OTHER POSITIONS
UP TO 3 MONTHS	Visa	Visa	Visa	Visa Work permit
MORE THAN 3 MONTHS	Residence permit for higher education	Residence permit for doctoral studies	Residence permit for researchers	Work and/or residence permit
<p>* If you are a visiting doctoral student but not admitted to doctoral studies in Sweden, you should apply for a residence permit for visitors.</p> <p>** Researcher, postdoctoral research associate, etc. The amount of research in employment exceeds 50 percent.</p>				

Table 3: Simplified overview of which permits are needed for non-EU citizens to work or study in Sweden. However, it is important to find out what exactly applies to you, by visiting the website of the Swedish Migration Agency.

doctoral researcher who came to Sweden from outside the EU, highlighted that everything is slower for academics who are not EU citizens, due to additional security measures and incompatibilities in relation to bank accounts, healthcare systems, etc.

EU and EEA citizens can normally move to Sweden for work or studies without needing to apply for a visa or residence permit, whereas non-EU citizens in most cases need a work permit, residence permit, and/or visa. The requirements vary for researchers from different countries and depend on certain personal circumstances and the type and duration of your position. In table 3, we have compiled a simplified overview of which permits are needed for non-EU citizens, but we stress that it is important to find out what exactly applies to you, by visiting the website of the Swedish Migration Agency.

Permits and visas normally need to be applied for and granted before entry into Sweden, but it may be possible to submit an

application for a residence permit from Sweden as a spouse of an EU citizen, or to renew an expiring permit when already living in Sweden. However, conditions and regulations can change and we urge you to find out what applies to your particular situation.

## Swedish personal identity number, identification, and bank accounts

If you are moving to Sweden and plan to stay for one year or more, you are usually required to be listed in the Swedish population register. This means that you will be registered as a resident in Sweden and receive a personal identity number (social security number, *personnummer*). This number is in many ways your entry ticket into Swedish society and you will need it in many situations, for example in contact with authorities such as the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, for accessing various services, for opening a bank account, and for



signing a cell phone contract. To obtain a personal identity number, you need to visit the Swedish Tax Agency in person and provide proof of your status<sup>6</sup>. As a non-citizen, you can also receive an identification card from the Tax Agency.

Before opening a Swedish bank account, you need to be registered as a resident in Sweden. It is possible to get a bank account without a Swedish personal identity number, but typically only the larger bank offices will know how to do that. To open a bank account, you need to visit a bank office.

Various forms of electronic identification are becoming popular in Sweden. With these services you can electronically sign agreements, file your income tax return, and get bank loans, among other things. Means of electronic identification can be obtained from a number of commercial actors, e.g. banks (*BankID*), certain telephone service providers (*Telia ID*), and dedicated companies (*Freja eID*). BankID is the most commonly used at the time of writing.

## Salary

Your salary is negotiated between you and your employer before you start your appointment and then once every year during an annual salary review. As an instrument to stimulate commitment and professional development, yearly salary increases are set individually within a certain range determined

by a collective bargaining agreement between the university and the trade union according to your level of responsibility, competence, and results. In practice, the bracket for raising salaries is narrow and differences among colleagues tend to be small. Therefore, it is important to negotiate your salary before you start your position. Statistics about salaries (*lönestatistik*) that may help in identifying appropriate levels can be obtained from the trade unions or the university.

Doctoral candidate salaries, however, are regulated through local collective bargaining agreements. These agreements, often referred to as ‘doctoral candidate ladders’ (*doktorandstege*), ensures a minimum starting wage which is usually increased every year based on how far the candidate have progressed or how long they have been enrolled.

## Social security

Social security benefits depend on whether you are receiving a stipend or a salary. You are entitled to all of the benefits below if you are employed with a taxable salary. If you are on a stipend, you may not be entitled to all work-based benefits, such as sickness benefit, parental benefit, or other benefits in the social insurance system. Instead, your stipend will be paid out as usual<sup>7</sup>. It is important that you find out what applies to you. For more information, you can ask your human resource department or a trade union.

6. You can find a list of required documents at the Swedish Tax Agency.

7. Doctoral students at public universities may be entitled to compensation through the Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency (*Kammarkollegiet*) for absence from studies due to illness or parental leave.

## VACATION

In the higher-education sector, the number of vacation days you are entitled to depends on your age: 28 days if you are under 29 years old, 31 days if you are between 30 and 39, and 35 days if you are 40 years or older. If your employment does not span an entire year, the number of vacation days are reduced accordingly. If you do not use all your vacation days, it may be possible to save the remainder for use in subsequent years.

## PENSION

The pension system in Sweden rests on two pillars. There is a public pension system (*allmän pension*), which is based on the salary you earn during your working life. In addition, there is an occupational pension system into which payments are made by your employer. At the time of writing, all universities and university colleges in Sweden contribute to the occupational pension system.

You can choose to save more of your salary towards your pension by means of salary sacrifice (*löneväxling*). This reduces your salary and increases the payments to your pension fund. Taxes are deferred to when your pension is paid out. Your employer pays lower social security contributions and typically transfers part of these savings to your pension fund. You can ask your HR officer if you have particular questions about salary sacrifice.

## HEALTHCARE

When arriving in Sweden, it is important to enrol in the national health insurance system using Form 5456 'Information for registration in Försäkringskassan' as soon as you

have received your personal identification number. This can be particularly significant if you would later move to another EU country. When filling out the form, you should request to receive a European Health Insurance card. This will trigger the Swedish Social Insurance Agency to process the enrolment immediately.

If you need medical care, you can either call 112 for emergencies or you can make an appointment with a healthcare provider. You may want to enrol at a primary healthcare facility (*vårdcentral*) of your choice by visiting them and requesting to be enrolled. While you can visit any healthcare provider of your choice, in some regions the consultation fee may be lower when visiting the healthcare provider with whom you have enrolled.

Healthcare in Sweden is relatively inexpensive at publicly subsidised healthcare providers. A patient who visits a general practitioner or is admitted to hospital only pays a small part of the treatment. Furthermore, most medical fees and prescription drugs are capped and count towards an annual cost ceiling for medical care and medicine (*högkostnadsskydd*). Dental care is more expensive. However, under the age of 23, dental care is free. Glasses, lenses and services rendered by an optician are not subsidised, nor is psychological counselling, unless by referral from a general practitioner. For certain treatments, waiting times may be long to see a specialist or get an appointment at a hospital. You can also seek healthcare at non-subsidised private healthcare facilities, but then you will have to pay everything yourself. Furthermore, you may also have the possibility to get private health insurance, in

which case you might be able to see a specialist directly, without referral.

Most universities reimburse certain health-care costs, such as prescription drugs, terminal glasses etc., which are then considered taxable benefits. You can find out when reimbursement is available on the relevant university website.

#### **SICKNESS BENEFIT**

If you cannot work because you are ill, you can get sickness benefits. During the first two weeks of illness, your employer will usually pay this benefit instead of your regular salary, with a deduction for the first day of illness (qualifying deduction, *karensavdrag*). If you are still ill after two weeks, your employer must notify the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (*Försäkringskassan*) that you are ill and after that you can apply for sickness benefit from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. The sickness benefit is approximately 80 percent of your salary. From the eighth day of sick leave, you should get a doctor's certificate certifying that you are unable to work. Finally, when returning to work, you should provide your employer with a written certificate stating that you were unable to work because of your illness. Most universities have an online portal where you do the necessary paperwork.

#### **HEALTH PROMOTION BENEFITS**

Swedish universities provide reimbursement for certain costs related to so-called 'health promoting activities'. This benefit (*friskvårdsbidrag*) can be used for diverse types of activities, such as membership at a gym, massage sessions, ski passes, and riding lessons.

Many universities also offer a wellness hour

(*friskvårdstimme*), meaning employees are free to spend one hour per week, during working hours, on health and wellness activities.

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

Sweden does not have a compulsory unemployment insurance scheme, so it is up to the individual employee to enrol in an unemployment insurance fund (*A-kassa*) if so desired. Some unemployment insurance funds are managed by trade unions, but it is also possible to enrol in *Alfa-kassan*, an independent unemployment benefit fund. As a member of an unemployment insurance fund, you pay monthly dues and in return you receive unemployment benefits if you lose your employment. If you have been a member for at least one year, you are entitled to 80 percent of your previous salary, although a benefits ceiling applies. If not, you can still receive a basic benefit, but the compensation is lower. If you are a member of a trade union the benefits ceiling is higher. To qualify for unemployment benefit, you will need to apply for jobs and be prepared to accept an offer of employment.

### **Living in Sweden with children**

#### **PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH**

Healthcare during pregnancy is provided by a maternity clinic (*mödravårdscentral, MVC*), which provides support through the pregnancy and assures that you undergo health checks at specific intervals. Compared to many other countries, the number of interventions and tests during a pregnancy is quite low. It is not unusual, for example, to

have just one or two ultrasound scans during the entire pregnancy. In case of an uncomplicated pregnancy, antenatal care is overseen by a midwife, and an obstetrician/gynaecologist is usually only called in if a medical complication is detected during screening.

#### PARENTAL LEAVE

As a parent, you are entitled to parental leave (*föräldraledighet*) in order to care for your new-born child. Your parental leave can be full-time or part-time, and amounts to a total of 480 days per child during which you will receive parental benefit (*föräldrapenning*). The 480 days can be allocated to either parent, by transferring days to each other. Note, however, that 90 days per parent are earmarked and cannot be transferred. Two parents can claim parental benefit for the same calendar day (*dubbeldag*), but not for more than 30 days and only during the first year after childbirth.

390 out of the 480 days are sickness benefit qualifying days, and the compensation amounts to about 80 percent of your income, although the compensation will be capped at a certain level. For the remaining 90 days compensation is fixed at a lower level (*dagar på lägstnivå*). Note that the benefit level is based on your sickness benefit qualifying income (*sjukpenninggrundande inkomst, SGI*), which is based on your salary and calculated by the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. To receive sickness benefit at the 80 percent level during parental leave, you must have had a sickness benefit qualifying income for 240 consecutive days before the estimated delivery. If not, you will receive parental benefit at a base level for the first 180 days and com-

pensation based on your income after that. You can contact the Social Insurance Agency to calculate your benefit level and to request further information about parental leave.

In addition to this, many universities provide extra benefits during parental leave through collective bargaining agreements, like a parental allowance supplement or parental salary.

#### TEMPORARY PARENTAL BENEFIT TO CARE FOR A SICK CHILD

You can also receive compensation if you need to stay home from work in order to care for a sick child (*vård av sjukt barn, VAB*) between 8 months and 12 years of age, for up to 120 days per year. You may 'go on VAB' (*'vabba'*) for a whole day or for part of the day, e.g. if you need to accompany your child to a medical check-up or a dentist's appointment. The benefit is about 80 percent of your annual salary, although capped at a lower level than for regular parental leave.

#### HEALTHCARE FOR CHILDREN

Young children living in Sweden are registered with a nurse at a child welfare clinic (*barnavårdscentral, BVC*) that assumes the responsibility to monitor your child's development and make sure it gets all the medical support it needs. The vaccinations covered by the national vaccination programme are also offered at the BVC, free of charge, according to a schedule. When the child reaches school-going age, a school nurse takes over the responsibility for following up on the child's health.

You should not primarily reach out to

the BVC in case your child falls ill. To have your child examined by a doctor, you typically make an appointment with a general practitioner at your regular healthcare clinic (not primarily a paediatrician, which may be more common in some other countries). BVC appointments are free of charge, as is dental care up to and including 22 years of age as well as prescription drugs while under the age of 18. Children and adolescents up to the age of 19 who need glasses or contact lenses can receive a subsidy.

## CHILDCARE AND THE SWEDISH SCHOOL SYSTEM

### *The first year*

Due to the parental leave benefits, children under the age of 1 are commonly taken care of by one or both parents. At this age, there is no organised day care and, if need arises, it is usually privately arranged with a nanny or babysitter. The BVC organises parent groups (*föräldragrupper*) where you meet other parents and children. To facilitate social contact and provide group learning experiences, so-called ‘open preschools’ (*öppna förskolor*) provide indoor play areas and meeting places for new parents and their children. Open preschools are usually run by the city, but also by churches or by parents as cooperatives, e.g. to cater to specific languages.

### *Preschool*

From the age of 1, your child can enter the Swedish childcare system. The procedures for signing up as well as availability may differ between cities, so this can be worth

investigating before your child is born. Most children attend either a private or a public preschool (*förskola*), but there is also the possibility to have your child attend a form of day care known as *dagmamma*, where a licensed caretaker runs a smaller operation, typically out of their own home. Swedish preschools are open to all residents. They are subsidised and the maximum cost tends to be around SEK 1,500 per month, which normally covers all costs arising during the time the child is at the care facility, including diapers and food. Whether a preschool or school is operated by a public or private organisation does not affect the cost to parents.

All children above 12 months of age that are Swedish residents have the right to a place at a preschool in their home city. Note, however, that this right does not guarantee that you will be offered a spot at your preferred preschool, as waiting lists may be long. You can usually remain on the waiting list even if you accept a place somewhere else, and then switch if there is an opening. Only reject an offer for a guaranteed place if you have the flexibility to stay at home with your child, as doing so usually results in a long waiting time.

To select a preschool or school for your child, the best starting point is usually the municipal website. Most preschools regularly hold open days, allowing you to visit and ask questions.

All preschools are required by law to follow a national curriculum of skills and knowledge. It may come as a surprise to foreign parents that the curriculum for this age group focuses somewhat less on developing traditional ac-

ademic skills such as learning numbers and letters, but rather emphasise the development of collaborative skills, citizenship and societal participation, and communication.

### *Primary school*

An overwhelming majority of Swedish children attend preschool. However, school is not compulsory until the year the child turns 6 and begins to attend preschool class (*förskoleklass*), which corresponds to the first year of primary school (*grundskola*). At this stage, classes assume a more traditional form. From this age, children are also entitled to free education to develop their native language (*hemspråk*) for about one hour a week. Schooling is provided free of charge and the school is expected to provide all meals and materials that children need for their education. An exception are private schools, that do not follow the Swedish curriculum, and which may charge fees, such as international baccalaureate schools that typically cater to short-stay visitors.

Primary school in Sweden is ten years divided into four stages: *förskoleklass* (year 0), *lågstadiet* (years 1–3), *mellanstadiet* (years 4–6) and *högstadiet* (years 7–9). Many schools offer classes at all four stages, but changing schools when changing stages is also not uncommon. Mandatory schooling spans only part of the day, typically until the early afternoon. After that, most children up until the age of 13 stay at school to take part in afternoon activities known as *fritids*. These activities are subsidised and the cost is capped at approximately SEK 1,000 per month.

### *High school*

After finishing primary school, most Swedish children continue to a three-year-long high school programme (*gymnasium*), choosing a track according to interest (for example natural sciences, social sciences, or music). Application to high school is competitive and admission is based on the grades achieved during the final years of primary school.

## Home insurance

It is worth considering getting home insurance (*hemförsäkring*) when moving to Sweden. It is not mandatory, but might be required by some landlords and most people have it. Home insurance usually covers personal property, personal liability, and legal expenses, typically for everyone who is registered in your household. Many home insurance policies also contain travel protection in case of illness or accident. Make sure to find out what kind of home – and other – insurance you might need.

## Trade unions

Trade unions can give support and advise on matters concerning your employment in return for a membership fee. They negotiate collective bargaining agreements regarding salary and other conditions for all employees. Their websites contain useful information, such as current members' salary statistics (*lönestatistik*), which you can consult when negotiating your own salary. Many of the trade unions have overlapping profiles and it may not be obvious which union is most useful

Sveriges universitetslärare och forskare, SULF	The Swedish Association of University Teachers and Researchers	An association for university teachers, researchers and PhD students	<a href="http://www.sulf.se/en/">www.sulf.se/en/</a>
Akademikerförbundet SSR	The Union for Professionals	A union in the field of social sciences	<a href="http://akademssr.se/kontakt/english">akademssr.se/kontakt/english</a>
Fackförbundet ST	The Union of Civil Servants	An association for state agency employees	<a href="http://www.st.org/english">www.st.org/english</a>
Naturvetarna	Naturvetarna	A union for natural scientists	<a href="http://www.naturvetarna.se/en">www.naturvetarna.se/en</a>
Saco: Sveriges akademikers centralorganisation	The Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations	A politically independent umbrella organisation with 22 unions	<a href="http://www.saco.se/en/">www.saco.se/en/</a>

Table 4: Examples of trade unions that may be relevant for university employees.

for you. A good strategy can be to ask around among your colleagues. Certain unions may have a strong presence at certain universities. Note that some unions also offer discounted dual memberships, for example for someone identifying both as a university teacher and as a psychologist. Table 4 provides examples of trade unions for university employees.

## Gender equality, equal treatment, and diversity in Swedish academia

The Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination and harassment at work based on sex, gender, ethnic background, functionality, age, sexual orientation, religion or other belief.

The overall objective of the Swedish Government's gender equality policy is equal power for women and men to shape society and their own lives. Since 1994, all Swedish public authorities, including state-funded

universities, are required to undertake gender mainstreaming work as a primary strategy to implement the national gender equality policy. Importantly, to support 'equal pay for equal work', all employers – private and public – have to perform annual salary surveys (*lönekartläggning*) to assess whether men and women with similar work tasks and responsibilities are equally paid. For example, people working part-time or people on parental leave should receive the same benefits, salaries and salary increases, as people who are not. Equal work for equal pay is part of Swedish discrimination law and enforced by the Equality Ombudsman. As a result, almost all universities have different programmes aimed at achieving improved gender balance, ranging from special support, mentoring programmes or leadership training for women who have been identified as potential leaders, to financial incentives.

Over the last decade, the gender ratio at different academic career stages has become

more balanced. As of today, the ratio falls within the interval of 40–60 percent for all career stages, except for professors, of whom 31 percent are female and 69 percent are male. In 1997, the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) set a goal for the gender distribution among newly recruited university professors. The Government considers that the progress towards a gender-equal higher education sector is too slow and has set a goal to increase newly recruited female professors to 50 percent by 2030.

One of our interviewees highlighted the importance of supporting partners of newcomers to Swedish academia, for example, by assisting them in finding employment. There are several good initiatives aiming to do so, but there is still room for improvement. For example, some universities provide networking or coaching opportunities for partners that move to Sweden. Associations such as the Stockholm Dual Career Network seek to help newcomers to the Swedish job market.

## Suggested further reading

The Swedish Higher Education Authority.  
(2021) *An Overview of Swedish Higher Education and Research 2021*.



# Chapter six

## Language

**SWEDISH, A NORTH** Germanic language, is the principal language of Sweden. There are, however, also five officially recognised national minority languages (Finnish, Yiddish, Romani, Sámi and Meänkieli) as well as a number of common immigrant languages. English is widely used in Swedish academia and spoken to various levels of proficiency by a vast majority of the population.

## The use of Swedish at universities

While most academic staff at Swedish universities speak English and you most likely will be able to communicate with colleagues without problem, you might be restricted from opportunities and responsibilities if you do not speak Swedish. The first few years of undergraduate programmes are often taught in Swedish, which means that speaking Swedish may be a requirement for teaching many courses. The working language in the university administration is often Swedish and administrative personnel may be more comfortable speaking Swedish.

Official documents are often in Swedish. However, some universities have policies to translate certain information and documents into English. In some cases, for example as a lab manager, knowledge of Swedish might be a legal requirement. Similarly, applications to the Swedish Ethical Review Authority (*Etikprövningsmyndigheten*) must be written in Swedish. Some universities may have requirements that you need to learn Swedish after a given number of years.

We conducted a survey about language barriers for foreign-born scholars in Sweden,

and learnt that language can be an issue at Swedish universities. There are often language policies in place, but they are rarely well-known and it is sometimes unclear what is expected in terms of learning Swedish. Moreover, most Swedish researchers are confident and happy to speak English, which may give the impression that knowing Swedish is not necessary. English may be used in formal meetings, but you may be left out of informal discussions, which is something many respondents in our survey testified to. Language is not always automatically changed to English if a non-Swede joins the conversation, indeed, one interviewee pointed out that there is a discrepancy between how Swedish people see their culture as inclusive and how people from other countries experience it.

## Learning Swedish

There are various opportunities to learn Swedish. Anyone who is a resident in Sweden can enrol in the state-organised language programme called ‘Swedish for immigrants’ (*Svenska för invandrare, SFI*). Opinions about the quality of the SFI programme are mixed. You can attend an SFI evening programme, often with classes 1 or 2 times per week. Once you have completed SFI, it is possible to enrol in ‘Swedish as a second language’ (*Svenska som andraspråk*), which is a course in Swedish at high-school level.

Alternatively, many universities organise language courses for their employees. They can often be taken during the day, but are not always available, especially at more advanced levels. Check whether expenses for courses

are covered by the department or by your research budget. In some disciplines, once you master Swedish at a basic level, you may start teaching in a pre-university bridge programme (*basår*), in order to learn the jargon of your field in Swedish. If you do not want to register for a regular language course, you may look for a private tutor. Some universities also organise free ‘language cafés’. Another possibility is to look for a tandem partner, a Swedish speaker who wants to learn your native language in exchange for teaching you Swedish.

Swedish public service radio and TV offer news broadcasting in easily understandable Swedish, which is a good way to practice your comprehension: *Radio Sweden på lätt svenska* and *Nyheter på lätt svenska* (radio and TV, respectively).

#### STRATEGIES TO UNDERSTAND SWEDISH ACADEMIA

In our interviews with colleagues who arrived in Sweden as junior researchers, several strategies for mastering Swedish academic culture emerged. While some interviewees received lots of help from colleagues, for example to find a place to live and to understand university structures, others turned to various public institutions to receive necessary information.

‘I learned a lot in the kitchen’, one interviewee said, referring to the local tradition of having lunch together in the personnel room, which provided him with important information on how the university is organised. In Sweden, it is not uncommon for all faculty to bring a lunch box. Another interviewee referred to a colleague who helped him navigate the university system. ‘It was very personal’,

he said, ‘which I really liked. At the same time, I wondered – what if this support from a colleague did not exist?’ A third interviewee, who was more comfortable accessing formal information, found it incredibly useful having colleagues that do not mind speaking English. He explained that ‘I always found correct information, but only bits of it, because one institution did not know the procedures of another institution’.

One interviewee recommended newcomers to Swedish academia to learn the rules, since the public universities are authorities that must follow the law and their internal regulations. It can save you time and give you a stronger position when knowing them, for instance, being able to point to a particular statute.

No matter what strategy you adopt, the general advice is to be pro-active and engage with your fellow colleagues to discover and understand the unique bits of Swedish academia that you may find confusing at first.



*English is widespread in Swedish academia which may give the impression that knowing Swedish is not necessary. But it is a good idea to learn Swedish as you may otherwise be left out of formal as well as informal opportunities, such as teaching and fika conversations.*

# Glossary

**of Swedish words  
and abbreviations**

ABBREVIATION	SWEDISH TERM	ENGLISH TERM
	Anställningsordning	Employment regulations
	Arbetsordning för forskande och undervisande personal	Regulations for research and teaching staff
ASP	Allmän studieplan	General syllabus
	Basanslag	Base grant/Block grant/Direct appropriations
	Biträdande lektor	Assistant professor (US)/Associate senior lecturer or lecturer (UK)
BVC	Barnavårdscentral	Child welfare clinic
CSN	Centrala studiestödsnämnden	Swedish Board of Student Finance
	Doktorandstege	Doctoral candidate ladder
ECTS	Högskolepoäng	European Credit Transfer System
ERC	Europeiska forskningsrådet	European Research Council
FOI	Totalförsvarets forskningsinstitut	Swedish Defence Research Agency
Formas	Forskningsrådet för miljö, areella näringar och samhällsbyggande	The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning
Forte	Forskningsrådet för hälsa, arbetsliv och välfärd	The Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare
	Högskola	University college
	Högskoleexamen	Higher Education Diploma
IFN	Institutet för Näringslivsforskning	Research Institute of Industrial Economics
IFFS	Institutet för framtidsstudier	Institute for Future Studies
ISP	Individuell studieplan	Individual study plan
IVA	Kungliga Ingenjörsvetenskapsakademien	Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences
KAW	Knut and Alice Wallenbergs Stiftelse	Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation
KK-stiftelsen	Stiftelsen för kunskaps- och kompetensutveckling	The Knowledge Foundation
KVA	Kungliga Vetenskapsakademien	The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
KSLA	Kungliga Skogs- och Lantbruksakademien	The Royal Swedish Agricultural Academy
	Kursplan	Course syllabus
LAS	Lag om anställningsskydd	Employment Protection Act
	Lektor	Associate professor (US)/Senior lecturer (UK)
	Lärarundantag	Teacher's exemption
	Lönestatistik	Statistics about salaries

	Löneväxling	Salary sacrifice
<b>MVC</b>	Mödravårdscentral	Maternity clinic
<b>MSB</b>	Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
<b>HEI</b>	Lärosäte	Higher-education institution
	Personnummer	Personal identity number/Social security number
<b>PhD student</b>	Doktorand	Doctoral/PhD student
<b>OH</b>	Overhead/Indirekta kostnader	Overhead fee/Indirect costs
	Rektor	Vice-chancellor
<b>RISE</b>	Research Institutes of Sweden	Research Institutes of Sweden
<b>RJ</b>	Riksbankens Jubileumsfond	The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation
<b>SFI</b>	Svenska för invandrare	Swedish for immigrants
<b>SGI</b>	Sjukpenninggrundande inkomst	Sickness benefit qualifying income
<b>SSF</b>	Stiftelsen för Strategisk Forskning	The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research
<b>SCAS</b>	Swedish Collegium for Advanced Studies	Swedish Collegium for Advanced Studies
<b>SciLifeLab</b>	Science for Life Laboratory	Science for Life Laboratory
<b>SMHI</b>	Sveriges meteorologiska och hydrologiska institut	Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute
<b>SVA</b>	Statens veterinärmedicinska anstalt	National Veterinary Institute
	Svenska Akademien	Swedish Academy
<b>STINT</b>	Stiftelsen för internationalisering av högre utbildning och forskning	The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education
<b>SUA</b>	Sveriges unga akademi	The Young Academy of Sweden
<b>SweSAT</b>	Högskoleprov	Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test
<b>UKÄ</b>	Universitetskanslersämbetet	The Swedish Higher Education Authority
	Universitet	University
<b>VAB</b>	Vård av sjukt barn	Temporary parental benefit
<b>Vinnova</b>	Verket för innovationssystem	The Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems
	Vitterhetsakademien	The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters and Antiquities
<b>VR</b>	Vetenskapsrådet	The Swedish Research Council
	Östersjöstiftelsen	The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies

# **A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SWEDISH ACADEMIA**

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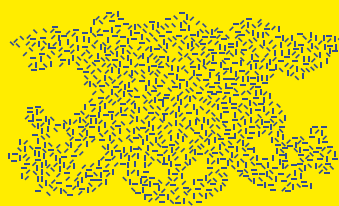
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