

# Global Engagement – long term plan for international activities at Stockholm University

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**Description:**

The purpose of the long-term Global Engagement plan is to line out the ambitions of Stockholm University's work with internationalisation. A brief description of the strategic approach of the work enables collaborators, researchers, students and other actors to get an overview of the international goals of the University.



## Introduction

International exchange is a prerequisite for excellent research and the mobility among students worldwide continues to increase. In several areas of research and education, Stockholm University is among the most prominent institutions in the world and the intention is to further develop this position. This plan for continued internationalisation concretises the university's high ambitions. A changing world fraught with fact resistance and nationalist tendencies affects the mission of universities and makes it particularly important to safeguard inclusive, international openness. Since its foundation, knowledge, enlightenment and truth-seeking, together with critical thinking, have been the cornerstones of Stockholm University. Today, the university contributes to Agenda 2030 and the achievement of the global sustainability goals through its extensive research, education and collaboration.

The *Global Engagement* internationalisation plan is based on Stockholm University's comprehensive strategies. The plan presents the central starting points for the international activities of Stockholm University. The university will work to ensure:

- an international academic environment imbued with excellence;
- improved conditions for international recruitment, mobility and collaboration;
- increased visibility and presence on international research and education arenas.

*Global Engagement* emphasizes the importance of strategic analysis in order for the university to continue to act with both flexibility and a long-term perspective, but does not target specific geographical regions.

Whether proactive and forward-looking or reactive in response to changes in the environment, internationalisation is a transformative and natural part of the university's development and helps to increase the quality of its activities.

## Research and Education

### Overall

Researchers and teachers at Stockholm University engage in extensive international collaboration, as evidenced by their co-publishing with researchers outside Sweden. However, continued efforts are needed in the field of education, primarily in order to increase the number of students who study abroad, but also to attract more foreign students.

Stockholm University has a strong tradition of collaboration both within the Nordic region and with the rest of Europe. Stockholm University will actively contribute to European research and education collaboration. Additional opportunities for such endeavours are provided by the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, as well as the Erasmus programme. Stockholm University aims to coordinate more Nordic and European collaboration projects, while also creating more long-term partnerships outside Europe.



The university currently has three global strategic partner universities with management-level agreements, as well as a large amount of international collaboration at the departmental level. In its internationalisation work, the university will seek strategic partnerships that promote education, research and the use of research infrastructures. The partnerships will be active and well-functioning. Stockholm University will further develop its programmes for collaboration with strategic partners. Within Europe, the university is now deepening its commitment through a new European network, CIVIS. The goal of the network is to create in-depth partnerships for innovative and responsible teaching, research and cultural exchange within Europe, while being open to the rest of the world.

## Research

The international recruitment of teachers and researchers, researcher mobility and international collaboration are the cornerstones of excellent research. For many years, the international recruitment of doctoral students, teachers and researchers, as well as mobility and international collaboration, have been increasing at the university. This kind of internationalisation is now well established in many of the university's subject areas, but there is still room for improvement.

Stockholm University will continue to recruit through excellence programmes, for example through the European Research Council (ERC). Prerequisites for the strategic recruitment and retention of the best teachers and researchers include strong research environments with access to infrastructure, attractive terms and conditions of employment and a welcoming environment, as well as support in addressing practical issues that may arise. In a sector in which global competition is increasing, Stockholm University must offer clear and competitive career opportunities. In addition to the *tenure track* career programme, the university offers a programme for international *sabbaticals*. Postgraduate mobility will receive increased support, for example for applications to Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions and Erasmus + as will recently graduated PhDs for applications to the Swedish Research Council's international postdoc programme. Stockholm University will be an attractive employer that offers a stimulating working environment and career opportunities.

## Education

Stockholm University has a long tradition of receiving foreign students, which we continue to promote. Today, the university is aiming to prioritize activities that allow our students' international experiences to continue to increase, for example through mobility windows in education programmes, virtual courses and the possibility of stays abroad. The university will continue its efforts to increase student mobility. The EU goal is that 20 percent of university graduates in 2020 will have spent at least three months abroad. For Stockholm University students, the focus is both on increased mobility of various lengths of time, and on increased international experience, so that 20 percent of students who graduate in 2020 will have gained international experience. This development work requires surveys, analyses and project



support that will allow the university to increase the number of externally financed projects, for instance within the Erasmus and Linnaeus-Palme programmes.

Stockholm University focuses on education in close interaction with outstanding research. The university has a high proportion of internationally recruited teachers and researchers who contribute to its international environment. Together with our internationally mixed student groups, this contributes to the natural development of international perspectives in teaching. This may be further enhanced by deepening the engagement of visiting scholars and teachers. The university's teachers' participation in pedagogically oriented exchange programmes increases the internationalisation of teaching and should therefore be promoted. The university's projects with immigrant academics has led to the enrichment of internationalisation within the university, and the university will continue to benefit from this development.

The opportunity to study in English or in other languages at the university will be further highlighted and communicated externally. Today 65 percent of the courses and programmes at the advanced level are already held in English and, in addition to this, various language courses are offered. The university continues to strive towards increased internationalisation by creating more contact areas for foreign and local students, and through the continued development of course content and pedagogical tools, such as PhD student supervision with international partners and (via digital tools) joint online courses.

## **International Cooperation and Benefits to Society**

As a capital university, Stockholm University, together with Karolinska Institutet and KTH Royal Institute of Technology, plays a central role in developing high-quality research and education. It also has an important mission to ensure that the generated knowledge will be of value to the surrounding society, both nationally and internationally. The university will remain visible and continue to exercise international influence through participation in key strategic networks. This work is made possible, inter alia, by the commitment of the university's researchers and teachers, who occupy important international positions of trust.

Through its international collaborations in the fields of environmental issues and social and economic sustainability, the university will continue to contribute to the achievement of the objectives set forth in Agenda 2030, a framework for tackling global societal challenges. Capacity-building activities will also be promoted. The ambitions of researchers and teachers will be supported and better recognised.

The university collaborates with Swedish foreign missions abroad and Swedish authorities in the Higher Education sector. Stockholm University also continues to increase its cooperation with other Swedish universities in joint international cooperation ventures. These efforts will continue, especially in the Stockholm and Uppsala region (with Karolinska Institutet, KTH Royal Institute of Technology and Uppsala University), but also with the City of Stockholm



and the Stockholm County Council, and through collaboration within Stockholm Academic Forum. Joint initiatives within the region, as for example supporting an accompanying partner, will strengthen the university's international attractiveness and influence and help to reduce obstacles to international recruitment.

### **Funding and support**

The internationalisation work of the university's departments is important, and the funding and support for these efforts must be developed. Needs vary, but in all cases of education and research collaboration with the university's departments and centres, international counterparts require well-established and clear procedures.

To attract the best students, more scholarships and more support are needed with regard to, e.g., career planning, the search for housing and immigration processes. In order to improve Stockholm University's services and communication for internationally recruited researchers, teachers, other employees and students, information and official documents will be translated to a greater extent than today, mainly to English. External communications of the university's prominent research will receive improved support