

## **Summary from the Doctoral Council's session during SWERA2021**

In the Doctoral Council's session during SWERA2021, the participants took part in small group-discussions in different breakout rooms, with between four and five participants in each virtual room. The Doctoral Council's working group had prepared a document for the participants, which contained three questions to discuss. Each group chose a member who took notes. This person was also responsible for sending these notes to the doctoral council's working group at the end of the meeting. After the group discussions had ended, each group summarized to the other participants in the meeting what they had discussed.

Overall, the theme of the conference on internal and external boundaries was considered an interesting theme that created many thoughts. Some doctoral students highlighted the fact that the doctoral council's session took place at the same time as other program items in the SWERA conference, which meant that it was impossible to attend both of these occasions. We then discussed that it is important to keep in mind that we as a doctoral student council should not disconnect too much from SWERA's main conference. Instead, we should be a part of the main conference while also having our own activities.

During the main conference, Ulrika Haake presented her research about the subject areas in which senior researchers within SWERA are active. From a doctoral student perspective, it can be useful to gain knowledge about the subject areas doctoral students are active and in which educational subject doctoral students are writing their thesis. In addition, it would be interesting to see if there are any differences in methodology between different sub-disciplines and investigate what type of research that takes place within educational research, for example based on aspects such as study objects, context studied, school levels, etc.

We also discussed the need for a self-critical view within the academy, where we need to reflect on which aspects control research in the education field. Active researchers have a responsibility to highlight the values and invisible norms that exist within academia, in order to be critical and to re-evaluate things that previously have been taken for granted. This was also something that Anna Jobér and Alli Klapp talked about during the panel discussion at the doctoral council's pre-conference. Furthermore, we as doctoral students also have a responsibility. However, it might be hard as a doctoral student to make decisions because we sometimes lack knowledge about the consequences of these decisions. Writing a monography or a compilation thesis is just one example. Doctoral students are also in a position of dependence in relation to supervisors and to traditions within the research area / subject discipline / at the department where the doctoral students work. Career paths for doctoral students was also discussed, in relation to independent thinking. It becomes a paradox, when career paths are about thinking right; on one hand, as a doctoral student you should be independent and develop your own thoughts, but on the other hand, you need to think correctly in relation to one's discipline. Sometimes, life as a doctoral student may be difficult.

Finally, the spring seminar arranged by the Doctoral Council's working group in May 2021, where doctoral students had the opportunity to present their on-going research, was discussed. The members really appreciated this spring seminar and therefore another spring seminar will be organized in April 2022.