

Platform for SWERA's doctoral student council: Annual report for 2022/2023 and operational plan for 2023/2024.

In this document, the Doctoral Student Council's annual report for 2022/2023 and operational plan for 2023/2024 are described within the framework of the various areas that the Council sees as central to its completed and future work.

Purpose and direction

Doctoral students in the field of educational knowledge share common issues and challenges, regardless of university and research subject, which is why there is a need for social and intellectual organization of doctoral students. The purpose of SWERA's doctoral student council is therefore to create a platform for networking between junior researchers. In the Council, activities are carried out aimed at exchanging experience and disseminating information related to various aspects of research career, such as postgraduate courses, scholarships, conferences, etc. The Council's main mission is to work during the year to strengthen the national infrastructure and contexts for doctoral students in terms of exchange of experience and knowledge in the field of educational knowledge. In addition to this, the doctoral student council works to ensure that the doctoral student perspective is present in all SWERA's activities.

Communication via social media and member emails

The Doctoral Student Council's communication with the members is prioritized and takes place continuously and mainly via the Facebook group "SWERA's doctoral student council" and the LinkedIn group with the same name, as well as a number of member emails per year. The communication channels have slightly different purposes where our social channels are used to spread various important information while member emails are focused on completed and upcoming activities. During the past year 2022–2023, the communication responsibility has been shared by Sara Viklund who has been responsible for creating a LinkedIn profile and for maintaining communication via our social channels and Marie Gottfridsson-Bengtsson, who has handled the Council's member emails.

During the past year, 2022–2023, the Facebook group has served as a platform for communication about the doctoral student council's activities, but mainly the dissemination of doctoral courses, conferences, progression seminars, research/doctoral student positions, special issues, etc. During the previous year, an intention was expressed that the Facebook group would become the most important platform for the working group's communication with members and that interaction would be increased. The working group therefore recorded a film that was posted on the social channels with the aim of reaching out to more members and to make visible the spring seminar held in April. The number of posts in the Facebook group has not increased during the year, but the number of members has increased from 176 to 219 members as of June 1. Among the members are doctoral students from disciplines such as pedagogy, educational work, special education, didactics, work-integrated learning, history of education, educational philosophy and sociology of education. The same content is also communicated via the newly started LinkedIn group, which at the time of writing has 25 members. The difference between the social channels, in addition to the number of members, is that other members outside the working group are more active in contributing content to the Facebook group.

During the past year, six member emails have been sent out to the members, which have mainly been about completed and planned projects, such as the spring seminar and the SWERA conference. In the

circular calendar that was created during the previous year and that has been revised during the past year, member emails are added on regular occasions to ensure that these are sent regularly.

During the coming year, 2023–2024, both social channels will continue to provide a platform for information within the doctoral student council and be a central part of the work to retain and recruit new members to SWERA. The Doctoral Student Council's working group continues to consider it important to communicate with members via member email.

[Easily accessible information on postgraduate courses and progression seminars](#)

In addition to regular communication via social media and member emails, it is important for the doctoral student council that there is information on SWERA's website that is of interest to doctoral students. Members of the doctoral student council have repeatedly stressed the importance of information about different universities' third-cycle courses being collected and easily accessible to doctoral students in the field of pedagogical knowledge. During the past year, the Doctoral Student Council's working group has therefore continued to maintain the list of doctoral courses given at various higher education institutions published on the website. This list has not only been published on SWERA's website but also communicated via social media to the members. The working group has also compiled a list of links to higher education institutions' calendars for progression seminars.

For the coming year, 2023–2024, it is our hope that both of these lists can continue to be prioritized as several members have expressed their appreciation.

[Recruitment of members](#)

A recurring priority for the Doctoral Student Council is the recruitment of new doctoral student members to both SWERA and to the Doctoral Student Council's working group. This is done through arranged activities, through personal contacts with doctoral students in the association and via our social channels. During the year 2022–2023, the number of members has increased from 140 to 170 as of 1 June. It can therefore be stated that the focus on creating interaction and communication with doctoral students has been successful.

In general, interest in getting involved in the working group also increases after such events as the SWERA conference and the spring seminar, but also thanks to marketing in social channels and, not least important, through personal contacts. After the SWERA conference in 2022, the number of members in the working group increased by two, after communication on Facebook with another member and finally through personal contacts, the working group was expanded with two more members. In previous years, the risk of concentration of a few higher education institutions has been identified, which has led the working group to actively work to increase the geographical spread. At present, eight different higher education institutions are represented in the working group.

For the coming year, 2023–2024, the working group considers it important that the members of the working group represent as many different higher education institutions as possible, and that active recruitment work continues.

[Spring seminar](#)

An important issue for doctoral students, for example expressed through evaluations of previous spring seminars and evaluations of pre-conferences, is to interact with other doctoral students and to talk about their own and others' research projects. To meet this need, the doctoral student council's digital

spring seminar was held for the third year, in which some 30 doctoral students participated. In the spring of 2023, a record was broken in the number of presentations! The fact that fourteen doctoral students wanted to present their thesis work resulted in the presentations being performed in three "breakout rooms", based on a schedule. Other audience members could attend the room they found interesting. The presentations were conducted optionally in English or Swedish so that the spring seminar could be an inclusive context. After each presentation, there was an opportunity for feedback and questions to the presenter and finally a general reflection in each "breakout room". The spring seminar was appreciated and described by both presenters and listeners as an inspiring and friendly meeting place. It was appreciated to take part in research in different phases, in different subjects and at different universities in a curious and supportive context. In connection with the spring seminar, a "Book of abstracts" was also sent out.

During the coming year, 2023–2024, the doctoral student council will continue to work to ensure that doctoral students in SWERA can interact and present their research in contexts such as the spring seminar. In this work, the Doctoral Student Council continues to see great value in activities being planned by doctoral students, for doctoral students and with doctoral students.

Annual pre-conference of the Doctoral Student Council

The Doctoral Student Council traditionally plans and conducts a pre-conference for doctoral students in connection with SWERA's annual conference. In order for as many people as possible to participate, it will take place in English and digitally, although it is possible to meet on site in Gävle, where the conference will be held in 2023.

The past year, 2022–2023, began with follow-up and reflection on the SWERA22 conference. Writing two texts, *Summary of pre-conference* and *Summary of doctoral Council session'*, was the result of this reflection. These two texts will be published on SWERA's website during the *conference 2022*.

In the spring of 2023, the planning of the upcoming conference began with the expansion of the working group with two new members from the University of Gävle, Amelie Nebes and Sara Mörtzell, both of whom are part of the local organizing group for the main conference SWERA23. Furthermore, doctoral student representatives in the councils and the newly started ethics committee have been involved in the planning of the program for SWERA23 in various ways.

In the coming years, 2023–2024, it is a priority to continue the work with the goal that the doctoral student perspective should permeate SWERA's activities and be linked to the association's work and intellectual organization. The work of the working group will continue to focus on planning, implementing, and following up the pre-conference in this spirit.

The inner workings of the working group

During the past year, 2022–2023, the working group of the Doctoral Student Council has met about once a month. Since the working group consists of doctoral students who can only sit in the working group for a limited number of years, continuity will constantly be a challenge. During the year, the working group has therefore created a procedure where the chairman and secretary are responsible for saving the documentation of the doctoral student council and the working group. When changing chairman and secretary, the documentation is passed on from the outgoing to the newly elected chairman and secretary in order to preserve the history of the doctoral student council and the working group. This

practice is particularly important when the turnover of members of the working group is a constant and unavoidable challenge.

In order to facilitate the continuity, foresight, and systematics of the working group, an annual wheel was created during the previous year in which the work of the working group is described month by month. During the current year, the working group has continued to revise the annual wheel so that it makes even clearer visible the working group's work with the two major events, the spring seminar, and the autumn conference, as well as with member communication. Since then, regular revisions have been made to keep the annual wheel current and alive.

During the past year, the annual wheel has been supplemented with two major planning documents for the doctoral student council's two major events: the spring seminar and the autumn conference. In these two planning documents, all information, templates, workflow, and division of work are gathered, which facilitates the working group's joint work. The fewer document files there are, the easier it is to keep track of what applies. The fact that all information is gathered in two larger files has reduced the flow of emails within the working group and created clarity and foresight in the working group's work.

The outgoing working group hopes that the annual wheel and the two planning documents can benefit the work of future working groups and continue to contribute to continuity, systematics, clarity, and foresight.

Other work and activities

The Doctoral Student Council has representation in SWERA's other councils as well as the newly established ethics committee, whose activities are discussed at each meeting, depending on which meetings have been relevant. This has increased the relationship between the doctoral student council and the association's other work, and it is intended that this work can be maintained in consultation with the other councils.

Moreover, the doctoral Council is continuously discussing long-term questions such as ethical dilemmas, climate of publishing, as well as SWERA's adoption of the Vancouver guidelines, but also the working environment of doctoral students. The intention is therefore to arrange activities during the upcoming pre-conference that goes in line with the indications that emerged at the Doctoral Council's session SWERA2022.

Doctoral Student Council in SWERA – working group and representation in SWERA

The Doctoral Student Council consists of all SWERA's members who are doctoral students. The work is organized partly through the Council's working group and partly through representation on SWERA's Board and its four councils and the newly established Ethics Committee. The doctoral student council is thus included in all parts of SWERA's organization.

The working group consists of the chairman, vice chairman, secretary, communications manager for social media, communications manager for member emails, council representatives and other members. Doctoral student representation in the local organizing group for SWERA23 is also included in the working group. Members of the working group are elected for one year at a time and for a total of a maximum of three years. Since there is no nomination committee, it has become routine for the doctoral student council's working group to compile a proposal for new election and re-election, and

that the working group and any vacancies regarding representation in SWERA's council can be filled during the coming year. This routine has been used for both the 2021 and 2022 annual meetings.

During the past year, the working group has met 9 times and in addition to these meetings worked in different constellations, preferably via email and zoom.

Composition of the working group for 2022–2023:

Members of the working group:

Chairman: Sandra Carlsson, University West

Vice Chairman: Linnea Rosengren, University of Gothenburg

Secretary: Marina Karlsson, University of Gothenburg

Swedish Council for Doctoral Education: Marie Hysing, Dalarna University

Research Policy Council: Therese Friberg, Dalarna University

Teacher Education Council: Line Isaksson, Karlstad University, Marie Gottfridsson, University in Halmstad

Journal Council: Maria Walla, Dalarna University

Head of Communications, social media: Sara Viklund, University of Umeå

Head of Communications, e-mail: Marie Gottfridsson-Bengtsson, University in Halmstad

Board member: Jenni Nilsson, Uppsala University

Local organizing group for SWERA23: Amelie Nebes & Sara Mörtzell, Gävle University

Other representation from the working group:

SWERA's Board: Sandra Carlsson & Linnea Rosengren

SWERA's Ethics Committee: Sandra Carlsson