

Board Report

Mandate: July 2018 - June 2019



The Phd chapter at KTH/ Doktorandsektionen vid Tekniska Högskolans Studentkår

A report summarising chapter operations within the mandate period July 2018 - June 2019 on which basis, freedom of responsibility shall be assessed.

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Document versions

Version	By/comments	Date
Initial draft	Robin Palmberg, initial version	2019-10-14
Dr2019-PB-04	Robin Palmberg, after feedback from Emma Riese and Tage Mohammadat	2019-10-31

Purpose

A chapter board report is a summary and analysis of the activities performed by the chapter during the past year. It is supposed to account for the number of meetings and actions that have been performed during the past mandate year. The purpose of this document is also to be a background for the auditors' report.

This chapter board report has been written by Robin Palmberg, who was the chairperson for the chapter for the mandate year that is discussed.

Abstract and Background

During the mandate period 201807-201906, a lot of changes were done. The chapter board of directors had recruited a lot of new members who had not been part of the chapter before. This was intentional, as the chair and vice-chair had a plan to understand why the outreach of the chapter during previous years had been lacking. By involving new members to the board, we also got a better understanding of how one can motivate members to become more active in the chapter.

We realised that we needed to change the way we organise ourselves when it comes to parties and events (as our previous arrangements had failed to attract current, and possible new, members of the chapter), but the current work routines did not allow for flexible changes like that. It quickly became evident that the past form of the chapter structure was not optimal for handling such changes and a restructuring of the board of directors was proposed and accepted by the chapter meeting.

Two fundamental changes of the restructuring was that the board 1) went from a typical function board (where the board members do a lot of the work in the chapter themselves), to a semi-structured strategic board (where the board members have different areas of responsibility in which they can delegate) and 2) had the mandate periods overlap, as to get better continuation in the work of the board. The change to strategic board came in the form of dividing the different tasks of the board to separate board members who could then delegate those further to chapter members, working groups and committees. The overlap was made because of two reasons, 1) it is easier to elect 5 people to the board at a time than 10 and 2) it would be easier to have a continuous flow of work being performed by the chapter in general. Previously, the chapter meeting would elect 10 new members of the board and each year, the board would have to restart and "reinvent the wheel". We do believe that these changes will make the workflow and -load more manageable for the members of the board.

However, the mandate period had a shaky start when the previous auditors realised that the elections of the chair and vice chair had not been performed according to the statutes and bylaws. This meant that the elections of said positions had to be approved by the chapter meeting in order for the elected people to continue their work in those positions. The process for this was long winded and finished during the winter chapter meeting in 2018. After that, the process of gaining access to the bank accounts of the chapter started, which was ongoing throughout the spring of 2019. Due to the initial issue with the election process, the bank was reluctant to give us access and after getting rejected several times, the time for getting access during the current mandate period expired and then we had to wait until a new chairperson was elected until we could get access to the bank account.

The members of the chapter board of directors switched at two times. The first time was during the winter chapter meeting where Félix left the board and was replaced by Fatemeh, and the second time was during the second chapter meeting when Elena left the board and was replaced by Rinat. These changes can be tracked in the list of elected officials in the next section. Overall, this year focused on restructuring the work of the chapter in general and as a resigning chairperson, I can say that I feel rather happy with the outcome. We handed over the chapter to very capable hands in the new board that was elected during the third chapter meeting and it will be interesting to follow the development of their work.

Elected officials during 2018/2019

PhD Chapter Board of Directors

Chairperson	Robin Palmberg
Vice-Chairperson	Tage Mohammadat
Treasurer	Jesper Karlsson
Webmaster	Fangkai Yang
Member	Amanda Kessler
Member	Emma Riese
Member	Kateryna Morozovska
Member	Sriharsha Bhat
Member	Elena Malakhatka (2018)
Member	Felix Vautard (2018)
Member	Fatemeh Naqavi (2019)
Member	Rinat Yapparov (2019)

The PhD Chapter Board held 21 documented board meetings during the mandate.

PhD Chapter Functionaries

THS Student Council (KF) Representative	Tage Mohammadat
THS Student Council (KF) Representative	Robin Palmberg
Auditor	Milan Jocevski
Deputy Auditor	Ksenia Loskutova
Nominating Committee	Andrea de Giorgio (2018)
Nominating Committee	Muhammad Afzal (2018)
Nominating Committee	Elena Malakhatka (2018)
Nominating Committee	Bahram Saadatfar (2018)

Nominating Committee	Tage Mohammadat (2019)
Nominating Committee	Robin Palmberg (2019)
Nominating Committee	Kateryna Morozovska (2019)
Master of Ceremonies	Kateryna Morozovska
Standard Bearer	Robin Palmberg (2018 & 2019)
Vice Standard Bearer	Elena Malakhatka (2018) Amanda Kessler (2019) Kateryna Morozovska (2019)
Head of Female Doctoral Committee	Susanna Figueiredo De Rezende

KTH Central Representatives	Main Representative	Substitute
University Board (US)	Robin Palmberg	-
Faculty Council (FR)	Tage Mohammadat	-
Resource Allocation Committee	Amanda Kessler	Sriharsha Bhat
Future Faculty Group	Tage Mohammadat	-
Language Committee	Jesper Karlsson	Robin Palmberg
Education Committee (UU)	Emma Riese	Amanda Kessler
Directors of Doctoral Studies Group (FA)	Kateryna Morozovska (2018) Jesper Karlsson (2019)	-
Central Grants Committee	Fangkai Yang	-
KTH Sustainability Council	Sriharsha Bhat	Amanda Kessler
Equality Committee	Kateryna Morozovska	Robin Palmberg

Account on Financial Operations

During the mandate year 2018/2019, the chapter had no possibility to utilise the chapter's bank account. This was due to the issues presented in the background, following the election process of the chairperson and treasurer. Because of this, the chapter did not spend much money during the mandate, as members of the board had to use their own money and get reimbursed as soon as the chapter has access to the chapter's bank account. However, some smaller expenses have been paid and are presented in the attachments. The chapter board did also decide to grant Women PhD Candidates at KTH (WOP@KTH) 25 000 SEK for their event "Raising stars" (a two day workshop). Not all of the grant was used, only around half (12 968), which covered the expenses for transportation between KTH and Djurönäset (location of the workshop) for all participants.

Account on Educational Advocacy and Representation

During this mandate period, the chapter board of officials continued the work of the previous board in attending and representing at all committees, councils and groups we are allowed to attend. Amongst the highlights of the advocacy work is the new guidelines on doctoral education and admission process for doctoral students, both of which relied on our representation in the faculty council, educational committee and university board. Additionally, in the beginning of the mandate, we distributed the representational tasks among the members of the board, but during the year it became evident that each of the representative tasks could be tied to different board members with specific purposes. That was the spark of the idea for reforming the board, which will be described in detail in the internal affairs section.

Account on Internal Affairs

As has been mentioned in previous sections, this year was meant as a year of reformation and restructuring. During the year, we tried to divide ourselves among the different topics of interest that we had discovered and that led to the 10 positions that are now described in the statutes. We also realised that it would be easier if all board members were working on separate tasks in groups of 2 or 3 and divided the topics among these 4 groups that arose. This made it possible to create an overlapping board where at least one of the members of each group has already been in their position when a new partner for the group joins the board. We hope and believe that this change will make it easier for the chapter to fill the positions of the board and to make it easier for new members to get onboard with the tasks of the chapter.

Apart from that, we had good engagement from the members of the board. We had a fixed time for the board meetings and they occurred once every other week. The reasons as to why someone would not show up was mainly due to scheduling issues or the person being ill. Towards the middle of the mandate we realised that it would be a good idea to have everyone report on their past activities since last meeting before the meetings, as well as indicate their availability. This was a very good strategy, since it both helped the members remember when and where the meetings were, as well as saving time in the board meetings, since the report section often took a lot of time.

Something that we were not prepared for was the existence of "Guerilla PhD Councils" that had formed around campus. They had either formed because they were the remains of old councils from before the school merging of 2018, but some of them also sparked from individual PhD Students who wanted a way for PhD Students to defend their rights. One of our activities during the mandate period was to find these councils and get them to join the chapter, as we stand stronger together. We managed quite well, and got to know the other councils during the same time. It is not clear if it was this work

or our work in general which led to our increased visibility. However, we could see that the number of members increased to 912 from the previous 784, while the number of PhD Students at KTH remained quite similar.

Throughout the mandate period, we had an ongoing work of updating the communication channels for the chapter. One of the most important changes relating to communication was the mailing system that was updated with relevant names and addresses. With this change, it should be easier for members of the chapter to know whom to contact for specific questions.

Account on External Affairs

During this mandate period, the chapter has worked extensively on gaining the trust from external partners, both at KTH and in the unions (including the student union), and also with other entities at other universities such as KI and SU. This work has been both meaningful and productive, as the awareness of our existence have increased tremendously. Previously, people thought that our chapter only worked with pubs and parties, but now they realise that we are the ones who are defending the rights of the PhD Students, as well as students in general sometimes. We wanted to be a force to be reckoned with within the Student Union THS, and it feels like we have accomplished that part.

Potential Future Activities and Recommendations

With the changes made to the structure of the chapter, we will start seeing differences in the way the chapter work. It will happen gradually, and the structure will probably need to be changed further once things start falling into place. As we could see in the first chapter meeting of the 2019/2020 working year, there were still things that were not thought of during the resigning boards mandate, such as election periods for the elected officials, which can be fixed in chapter meetings by the current board.

The chapter is supposed to be a living entity, and it feels like it got some fresh air during 2018/2019. As the resigning board, all we can do now is watch the chapter grow stronger and evolve in the hands of new officials, which is something that I look forward to!

On behalf of the resigning board,

Robin Palmberg
Chairperson 2018/2019
Stockholm, 31 October 2019

Attachments

Attachment - PB 2019

Expenses and Income of 2018/2019

Background

During this year, we have had a result of 34 741,23 SEK. As been described in the board report Dr2019-PB-04, this is because of the lack of access to the bank account during the year. Most of the money was either spent on the Female Doctorale Committee WOP@KTH conference in Djurönäset or for food for the chapter members during the meetings. The division of the money can be seen below

	Outgoing	Ingoing	Difference
Chapter Meeting Costs (Mainly Food) for 3 Meetings	3 320,77		34 741,23
Games for the Chapter	468,00		
Representation (Valborg fee for standard bearer and STAD)	642,00		
WOP Retreat	12 968,00		
Membership Fees		52 140,00	

On behalf of the resigning board,

Robin Palmberg
Chairperson 2018/2019
Stockholm 31 October 2019