

# Board Report

Mandate: July 2020 - June 2021



## ***The PhD Chapter at KTH / Doktorandsektionen vid Tekniska Högskolans Studentkår***

A report summarizing chapter operations during the mandate period July 2020 - June 2021 on the basis of which freedom from responsibility shall be assessed.

## Table of Contents

Purpose	3
Background	3
Elected Officials and Appointed Representatives During 2020/2021	3
Account on Financial Operations	5
Account on Educational Advocacy and Representation	6
Account on Internal Affairs	7
Account on External Affairs	7
Account on Chapter Events for Members	8
Potential Future Activities and Recommendations	8
Attachments	10

## Purpose

A Chapter Board Report is a summary and analysis of the activities conducted by the PhD Chapter during the past year. It accounts for the organizational operations undertaken by the Chapter, including its financial operations, work in educational advocacy and representation, internal affairs, and external affairs. This document is also intended to serve as a background for the auditors' report. Further, the THS bylaws<sup>1</sup> (via §9.1.1.) mandates each chapter to write an annual report, as does the PhD Chapters' statutes. This report has been written by Gloria Samosir, who was the chairperson for the PhD Chapter for the mandate year 2020/2021.

## Background

2020/2021 was a busy and rather unusual mandate year for the PhD Chapter. The operations of the Chapter were set against the backdrop of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and its attendant restrictions, which meant that most in person events (especially large public events) were off-limits, and nearly all meetings and advocacy work were conducted digitally. In spite of these challenges, PhD Chapter board members worked hard in many areas of student representation. For the first time in the Chapter's history, the PhD Chapter was granted an activity budget by KTH to the tune of SEK 1,000,000 per year, a milestone reflecting a recognition of the continued good work of the organization. The sections below present an overview of elected officials and the work done by the Chapter during the year. For more details on the latter, you can refer to the [Activity Report 2020/2021](#).

## Elected Officials and Appointed Representatives During 2020/2021

### PhD Chapter Board of Directors

Chairperson	Gloria Samosir
Vice Chairperson	Mohit Daga (2020) Federico Izzo (2021)
Treasurer	Tharagan Kumar (2020) Federico Izzo (from January 2021 to May 2021) Mohammad Abuasbeh (from May 2021)
Educational Manager	Jasmin Höglund Hellgren (from October 2020)
Council Coordinator	Saiman Ding
Communication Manager	Tanja Richter (2020)
Event Manager	Deniz Yildiz

<sup>1</sup> [https://cdn.thskth.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/THS\\_Reglemente\\_180515\\_ENG.pdf](https://cdn.thskth.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/THS_Reglemente_180515_ENG.pdf)



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Business Liaison	Inês Lourenço
Workgroups Manager	Sofia Broomé

## PhD Chapter Functionaries

THS Student Council (KF) Representatives	Mohit Daga Emma Riese
Auditors	Mirco Martino Lovisa Olsson
Nominating Committee	Mohammad Abuasbeh (2021) Mohit Daga (from July 2020 to October 2020) Alessandro Enrico (2021) Tage Mohammadat Robin Palmberg (2020) Sina Sheikholeslami Rinat Yapparov (2020) Deniz Yildiz (2021)
Masters of Ceremonies	Inês Lourenço Federico Rorro (2020)
Standard Bearers Group	Emma Riese (2020) Gloria Samosir (2021) Tage Mohammadat (2020) Deniz Yildiz (2021)
Head of Women Doctoral Students Committee (WOP)	Inês Lourenço (2020) Deniz Yildiz (2021)

## KTH Central Representatives

University Board (US)	Gloria Samosir
Strategic Council (SR)	Gloria Samosir
Faculty Council (FR)	Mohit Daga (2020) Federico Izzo (2021)
Future Faculty Group	Mohit Daga (2020) Federico Izzo (2021)
Language Committee	Sofia Broomé (2020) Gloria Samosir (2021)
Board of Education (UN)	Mohit Daga (2020) Jasmin Höglund Hellgren (2021)
Third Cycle Education Committee (FU)	Gloria Samosir (from July 2020 to October 2020) Jasmin Höglund Hellgren (from October 2020)

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KTH Sustainability Council	Deniz Yildiz
Ethics Committee	Sofia Broomé
Scholarship Committee	Mohit Daga (2020) Inês Lourenço (2021)
Stockholm Trio	Deniz Yildiz
ISP Focus Group	Gloria Samosir
Time Compensation Workgroup for doctoral student commission of trust assignments	Sofia Broomé
Workgroup on “individuellt åtagande” for PhD students	Jasmin Höglund Hellgren

## Account on Financial Operations

During the mandate year 2020/2021, two significant developments can be highlighted regarding the PhD Chapter's financial situation. First, by the end of 2020, the PhD Chapter obtained an organizational bank card that allows expenditures to be paid directly from the Chapter account, where before, expenditures had to be initially covered by an individual and subsequently reimbursed by the Chapter. Second, after consistent lobbying efforts, the PhD Chapter secured an annual budget of SEK 1,000,000 from KTH to support Chapter activities, including activities related to educational advocacy, student representation, equality and diversity, as well as social events. This annual budget was for the first time transferred to the Chapter account at the end of the 2020/2021 mandate period, on June 18th, 2021. The pending activity grant combined with the ongoing global pandemic put on hold the planning of events that would potentially warrant large spendings, but set the Chapter up well to pursue future initiatives.

In total, SEK 14,233.68 has been spent on Chapter activities, mainly on food during events for members, membership fees for the Stockholm Doctoral Students Meetup group, and food for the first and final PhD Chapter Board meetings of the mandate period. For a full report, see attachment [Expenses and Income of 2020/2021](#).

## Account on Educational Advocacy and Representation

During the mandate period 2020/2021, the PhD Chapter Board continued to represent PhD students in the various central level forums (committees, councils, workgroups, etc.) at KTH. Results of the Doctoral Student Survey, which was published by the PhD Chapter Board in June 2020, were presented at numerous KTH central forums, including the Faculty Council, Board of Education, and FA-PA network meetings. The PhD Board raised issues on the basis of the survey results, which (among other things) highlighted a need for better and more consistent quality of doctoral student supervision across the different schools at KTH, improved quality of course offerings at the third cycle level, and a common introduction program for all PhD

students. Also grounded in the survey results, the PhD Chapter Board, through their participation in the ISP Focus Group, successfully advocated for the addition of a function in the Individual Study Plan (ISP) system enabling PhD students to initiate a revision of their ISPs (where previously only the supervisor could do so).

PhD student representatives from school councils were invited to participate in their school's quality dialogues, as part of UKÄ's assessment process of KTH's quality assurance system. Also within the context of quality assurance, the PhD Chapter Board, together with THS, worked on the issue of "broadened recruitment" (Sv: breddad rekrytering) and "broadened participation" (Sv: breddat deltagande) as they bear on the situation of doctoral students.

This year saw the inauguration of the Supervisor of the Year Award, an initiative started by the previous board, which was aimed at highlighting and celebrating good examples of supervision within third cycle education.

As the circumstances of the global COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges for many doctoral students, the PhD Chapter Board advocated for more generous policies and increased clarity in the processes of applying for an extension of the doctoral studies as a result of COVID-19-related delays.

A representative from the PhD Chapter Board participated in a workgroup, established and carried out this year, to create guidelines for time compensation for doctoral student commission of trust assignments. Based on these guidelines, all schools will be asked to create routines so that doctoral student representatives at all levels (and not just the central or national levels) will be able to get appropriately time compensated for their work.

## Account on Internal Affairs

With regard to the internal affairs of the PhD Chapter, we saw improved engagement on many fronts. The PhD Chapter Board held 20 board meetings during the mandate year, all of which took place digitally apart from the first and final meeting. We also held four Chapter meetings, also conducted digitally over Zoom.

Throughout this year, the PhD Chapter Board liaised closely with THS for matters related to educational advocacy and organizational support. Monthly meetings were held between representatives from the PhD Chapter Board and THS management (the president, the heads of educational affairs, and the head of student welfare).

Strong communication and collaboration was maintained between the PhD Chapter Board and the five school councils, whereby the council coordinator continued to serve as a central contact point. The PhD Chapter Board began to coordinate meetings between the school council presidia, which are aimed at exchanging experiences and highlighting points of common interest across the different schools. The PhD Chapter Board also launched a seminar series focused on PhD student representation, featuring invited guests who can speak to different aspects of the work of student influence and student organization.

## Account on External Affairs

The PhD Chapter strengthened collaborations with a number of external bodies during the 2020/2021 mandate year. PhD Chapter Board members participated in meetings organized by SFS-DK, which during this mandate year especially focused on the adverse impacts of the pandemic on the doctoral student situation, and the potential measures that can be taken to mitigate those impacts. During the first half of the year, the PhD Chapter Board touched base with Stockholm PhDs, a network of several doctoral student organizations in the Stockholm region; this is a collaboration that the PhD Chapter could seek to rekindle in the coming future.

This year saw increased coordination between the PhD Chapter Board and the labor unions, in connection with the idea that PhD students to a large extent identify as both students and employees, and are thus impacted by both study and employment conditions.

On a more social and practical front, the PhD Chapter maintained good contact with KTH Relocation; board members joined them for a hiking event, we advertised in their newsletter to improve the visibility of the PhD Chapter, especially among new international doctoral students, we ran their Instagram account for a week, and (at KTH Relocation's invitation) we participated in an international conference to discuss what would constitute an ideal onboarding process for international (Master's and) PhD students arriving newly into a country and institution.

## Account on Chapter Events for Members

Due to the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, possibilities to organize major in person events were curtailed. Four Chapter Meetings were conducted during this mandate year, all of which took place digitally over Zoom, though the first of those meetings was followed by an afterwork pub event for interested members. During the fall semester, shortly before restrictions became more stringent, the PhD Chapter Board organized an outdoor lunch event, which was open to all PhD students and particularly targeted at new students. The PhD Chapter Board also created a group on the online Meetup platform named *Stockholm Doctoral Students*, to enable any (KTH) doctoral student to organize their own get togethers and events. A number of activities initiated by individual doctoral students took place through this platform, such as hiking events and a series of free virtual yoga sessions. As part of an effort to strengthen engagement in the area of equality, diversity, and inclusiveness (JML), the PhD Chapter Board also supported an initiative undertaken by the Women Doctoral Students' Committee at KTH (WOP) to hold a free virtual film screening of the documentary *Picture a Scientist*. The screening was followed by a panel discussing gender equality in the workplace, in relation to the context at KTH.

## Potential Future Activities and Recommendations

The substantial funds acquired during this past year, along with the gradual lifting of restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, create ripe conditions to organize more events



and activities for Chapter Members, which will help to foster engagement and strengthen fellowship within the doctoral student community. The funds can also be used to improve the quality and effectiveness of student advocacy work, as it, for instance, allows the PhD Chapter to pay for professional services where suitable (e.g. streamlining administrative routines, IT services/tools, event logistics, design services).

For a more comprehensive overview of potential future activities and directions for the PhD Chapter to pursue, you can have a look at the [PhD Chapter Operational Plan 2021/2022](#), which was prepared by the 2020/2021 PhD Chapter Board and approved by the Chapter Meeting in May 2021.

To all doctoral students and Chapter members, I hope your time at KTH will be filled with success and joy, and to all future boards, I hope you will find working for the PhD Chapter to be an enjoyable and meaningful experience!

On behalf of the resigning board,

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Gloria Samosir  
Chairperson 2020/2021  
Stockholm, 31 October 2021



# Attachments

## Expenses and Income of 2020/2021

### Background

During this year, we had a balance of SEK 1,038,896.32. The money that has been spent during the year was mainly spent on food for an outdoor lunch event for chapter members, membership fees for the Stockholm Doctoral Students MeetUp group, and food for the first and final PhD Chapter Board meetings of the mandate period. A substantial KTH grant that was transferred toward the end of the mandate period accounts for the unusually high account balance at the end of the year.

	Outgoing	Incoming	Difference
Fee for STAD training	522		
Fika and food for PhD Chapter Board introduction day	1365		
Outdoor lunch event arranged by PhD Chapter	6936		
Meetup Pro membership	3022.68		
Nordea fees	950		
Food and drinks for final PhD Chapter Board meeting	1438		
THS membership fees		53130	
KTH funds		1 000 000	
			1 038 896.32*

\*Some PhD Chapter expenditures may not have appeared in this mandate year due to delays in reimbursement, in which case they would appear in next year's financial statement.

On behalf of the resigning board,



Gloria Samosir  
Chairperson 2020/2021  
Stockholm 31 October 2021

# Activity Report 2020/2021



Antagen av doktorandsektionens styrelse den 14 september 2020 och gäller till 30 juni 2021.

Enacted by PhD Chapter board on the 14th of September 2020 and shall henceforth be valid until 30th of June 2021 unless amended, replaced or repealed.

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**Doktorandsektionen vid Tekniska Högskolans Studentkår**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Document History</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Nomenclature</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Focus Areas for 2020/2021</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Social Events and Collaborations</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Educational Advocacy</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Central Level Representation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>School Level Representation</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Supervisor of the Year Award</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Council Coordination</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Treasury and Finance</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Sustainable Engagement</b>	<b>12</b>



## Document History

Version	Description, By	Date
Dr2020-CP-01	Drafted jointly as a shared document by the PhD Chapter Board of Academic Year 2020/2021 and adopted by the PhD Chapter Board Meeting of the 14th September 2020	14th September 2020
Dr2020-PB-01	Diary number changed from Dr2020-CP-01 to Dr2020-PB-01 by Gloria Samosir	1st October 2020
Dr2020-PB-12	Diary number changed from Dr2020-PB-01 to Dr2020-PB-12 by Gloria Samosir	11th May 2021



## Nomenclature

KTH: Kungliga tekniska högskolan (The Royal Institute of Technology)

FR: Fakultetsrådet (The faculty council)

US: Universitetsstyrelsen (The university board)

THS: Tekniska högskolans studentkår (KTH student union)

Dr/THS: Doktorandsektionen vid Tekniska Högskolans Studentkår (PhD chapter at KTH)

KS: Kårstyrelsen (The union's board)

KL: Kårledning (The union's management team)

KF: Kårfullmäktige (The union council or the general assembly)

CFU: Chef för utbildningsinflytande (Head of educational affairs)

PAD: Program ansvarig doktorand (PhD student representative for the program)

DrInK: Doktorand Integrerade Klubbmästeriet (Master of ceremonies group)

SFS: Sveriges förenade studentkårer (The Swedish National Union of Students)

SSCO: Stockholms studentkårer centralorganisation (Stockholm's student unions central organisation)

STAD: Stockholm förebygger alkohol- och drogproblem (Stockholm prevention of alcohol and drug problems)



## Background

The objectives of the PhD Chapter are to promote more effective and higher quality PhD education and research, promote a stimulating work environment, and improve the general conditions for its members. The PhD Chapter should also work toward fostering greater unity and fellowship among its members.

The purpose of the operational plan is to guide the executive work of the board of directors throughout the operational year 2020/2021. The creation of the operational plan was started on the introduction day for operational year 2020/2021, which was held on the 12th of August 2020. All elected board members **Gloria Samosir, Mohit Daga, Saiman Ding, Tharagan Kumar, Tanja Richter, Inês De Miranda De Matos Lourenço, Deniz Yildiz, and Sofia Broomé** participated in the development of the operational plan.

## Focus Areas for 2020/2021

### Social Events and Collaborations

This year, the PhD Chapter aims to put significant effort into organizing social events and activities for its members. A variety of ideas are in the works, including pub & quiz nights, a mentor (or “buddy”) program for new students, picnic lunches, and other kinds of social mingles. The PhD Chapter can expand its network and increase its outreach by collaborating with other established groups that share an interest in enhancing the well-being and social scene for KTH doctoral students, including THS, KTH Relocation, and labor unions. For example, the Chapter is currently working with KTH Relocation to organize social activities with a focus on well-being, such as hikes in the forest and guided tours. The Chapter has started collaborating with the THS International Reception management team to start a tradition of holding a Reception for new doctoral students. This would allow new students to be introduced to the PhD Chapter and its goals from the beginning. The Chapter also hopes to work with other activity groups at KTH (e.g. KTH outdoors, KTHSS), and increase doctoral students' participation in these groups. Furthermore, the Chapter shall aim to create a platform to connect the doctoral students on a common platform where fellowship among the students is promoted.

In order to allow the PhD pubs to be organized sustainably, the Chapter should ensure that there is ample promotion through our communication channels (e.g. social media, newsletters, emails, etc.) to fill positions of Master of Ceremonies.



Done:

- Set up the Stockholm Doctoral Students Meetup group, which serves as a common platform for doctoral students to organize social events.
- Continued collaboration with KTH Relocation, which has allowed the PhD Chapter to join a Relocation hiking event, get a Chapter meeting advertised in the KTH Relocation newsletter, get the Meetup platform publicized by KTH Relocation, and get the PhD Chapter to run the KTH Relocation Instagram for one week in November to showcase their activities.
- Collaboration with THS International Reception was initiated, though a decision was later made to organize a smaller outdoor lunch event (instead of large-scale indoor party) in order to keep things social distance friendly.
- Organized an Outdoor Lunch event at the beginning of the year (primarily targeting, but not exclusive for) new doctoral students.
- Organized an afterwork event following the first Chapter Meeting (given the inability to host pub nights in the Chapter Hall under present circumstances).
- Working with a PhD student to coordinate a yoga/wellness event.
- Regular monthly check-in meetings between PhD Chapter Board and the THS Management team.
- Increased contact with labor unions and engagement with matters where the PhD Chapter and the labor unions can align on common issues (e.g. salary ladder criteria, salary levels, extension of the doctoral employment due to COVID-19-related delays). A PhD Chapter Board member has joined the Saco-S board for the coming year and a meeting with a PhD student representative in ST is forthcoming.

## Educational Advocacy

Section §4a of Chapter 1 of the Högskolelag<sup>1</sup> (1992:1434) states “The students shall have the right to exercise influence over the education at the higher education institutions.” The PhD Chapter is part of the student union at KTH (THS - Tekniska högskolans studentkår). THS is responsible for student influence at all levels of education, including third-cycle education. In the last academic year, THS has delegated the PhD Chapter to represent the doctoral students and appoint representatives for them. This was done via a decision of the THS Board dated 12th December 2019<sup>2</sup>.

### Central Level Representation

The PhD Chapter representatives in central level bodies of KTH shall engage in dialogues in connection to subjects that include but are not limited to Doctoral Courses, Supervision, Individual Study Plan, Stress and Well Being

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Swedish-Higher-Education-Act/#chapter1>

<sup>2</sup> <https://cdn.thskth.se/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/ks06-1920-handlingar.pdf>





and Subject Study Plan. The Doctoral Student Survey Report - Recommendations<sup>3</sup>, which is based on a student survey conducted in Nov-Dec 2019 and published in June 2020, can serve as a basis for selecting doctoral issues to highlight at relevant forums. The PhD Chapter's representatives shall actively engage the different bodies of KTH and present issues concerning the doctoral students. The Chapter shall place consultation with school councils as a matter of paramount importance, particularly for representations about doctoral student issues in all major work-groups, which emanates from the central organizational bodies of KTH including the third-cycle education committee.

The Chapter shall actively work to anticipate future issues about doctoral education, and raise it appropriately at different forums of KTH. The current reality of the global Coronavirus pandemic will continue to impact the doctoral students' work situation, e.g. transforming or restricting how teaching or research is conducted. It is critical that doctoral students' voices and perspectives are an active part of shaping how these challenges are dealt with.

#### Done:

- The results of the Doctoral Survey Report have been presented at numerous KTH central forums, including the Faculty Council (Sv: Fakultetsrådet), Board of Education (Sv: Utbildningsnämnden), and FA-PA network meeting (Sv: Forskarutbildningsnätverksträff).
- Participated in an eISP Focus Group, where the Dr side manage to get their main suggestion from the Doctoral Survey Report recommendations (that the doctoral student, and not just the supervisor, should be able to initiate a revision of the eISP) voted through as a feature to be implemented in Spring 2021.
- Participated in the Language Committee (Sv: Språkkommittén). A Language Survey was sent out. Dr has proposed to expand the range of Swedish language course offerings (e.g. to include research-focused courses) and opportunity to take courses (e.g. for time or credit).
- Advocated for increased clarity in the processes of applying for an extension of the doctoral studies as a result of COVID-19-related delays.
- Issues have continued to be raised at central forums based on the Doctoral Survey Report. The Third Cycle Education Committee (Sv: Forskarutbildningsutskottet) has agreed to work further with supervision quality, third cycle courses, and a common introduction for doctoral students at the school level.

### School Level Representation

The PhD Chapter shall work with the various School Councils and coordinate appropriately. The Chapter shall encourage the School Councils to use the aforementioned Doctoral Student Survey Report - Recommendations to highlight doctoral student issues. Furthermore, the Chapter shall constantly seek feedback from the school councils

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.dr.kth.se/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/06/Report\\_on\\_Survey\\_Results.pdf](https://www.dr.kth.se/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/06/Report_on_Survey_Results.pdf)



to understand issues faced by them and raise them appropriately at central bodies of KTH. The Chapter shall work with School Councils in ensuring proper representation. For details see section on Council Coordination.

Done:

- Council coordinator regularly attends school council meetings and liaises between the PhD Chapter and school councils.
- Regular emails sent to school councils to communicate news and items of particular interest to the councils.
- The doctoral survey report was sent out again to all of the school councils.
- School councils were given the opportunity to participate in FA-PA Research Education Network meetings.
- School councils have been briefed on the opportunity to participate in the program analysis process.
- A presentation of the doctoral student survey report was given at a SCI FA-PA meeting.
  
- ITM has used the Doctoral Student Survey Report to highlight areas of improvement for the school.
- The Applied Mathematics Department in SCI has succeeded in getting the number of requisite credits for their program decreased partly using the survey results to support their case.
- School councils were invited to send a representative to participate in their school's quality dialogue meeting.

### **Supervisor of the Year Award**

To promote good supervision at the third cycle level at KTH, the PhD Chapter Board of Academic Year 2019/20 had proposed to give out the Supervisor of the Year Award. The rules for this award were decided by the PhD Chapter Board Meeting held on 23rd April 2019<sup>4</sup>.

In this academic year, the PhD Chapter shall invite the nominations for the inaugural Supervisor of the Year Award. The Chapter shall engage the School Councils and seek possible coordination regarding this award. The Chapter shall work in cohesion with THS and respective bodies at KTH to ensure that the Supervisor of the Year Award is given at an official KTH Ceremony.

Done:

- The Supervisor of the Year Award has been initialized and launched. Communications regarding the award were sent out through a variety of channels, including PhD Chapter emails, council emails, social media, school-level newsletters, and the KTH Relocation newsletter. More than 50 nominations have been submitted and will be evaluated by the Jury. The winner will be announced in January 2021.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dr.kth.se/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/04/Meeting-20200423-Minutes.pdf>



- The winner of the inaugural Supervisor of the Year Award has been selected, announced, and handed the award.

## Professional Development

The PhD Chapter shall work to facilitate the professional development of doctoral students. One of the prime focus areas would be to work with THS Armada to find career opportunities for the doctoral students. The THS Armada career fair is the largest career fair in Scandinavia. In 2020, this career fair will take place virtually. The PhD Chapter Board shall strive to work with THS Armada to ensure that doctoral students could find career opportunities via THS Armada's virtual fair. The Chapter will aim for continued collaboration with THS Armada for 2021, the planning of which will begin in March 2021.

Still with a focus on improving doctoral students' contact and collaboration with external research bodies and industry, the PhD Chapter will explore possibilities of organizing workshops or discussions with invited speakers. The Chapter will also look into creating discussion spaces that explore the idea of "communicating research for a popular audience", an important question for many academic researchers.

### Done:

- The PhD Chapter liaised with THS Armada. This year, the THS Armada virtual career fair explicitly catered to doctoral students (in addition to first- and second- cycle education students) for the first time. Collaboration with THS Armada is intended to continue in 2021.

## Council Coordination

During the previous mandate period, there has been improved coordination between the PhD Chapter and the school councils. This year, the Chapter hopes to continue to strengthen this relationship. The council coordinator will continue to serve as a point of contact for all doctoral school councils and ensure that there is synchrony between central and local representation. The Chapter aims to hold a "PAD Workshop Day" (an idea which has been floated around in previous terms) this year, an event in which doctoral student representatives from all parts of KTH can learn more about the purpose and possibilities of their role. The precise format of the "PAD Workshop Day" is subject to the constraints of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. If circumstances allow it, the event could be conducted as a full-day lunch to lunch event with an overnight stay at a venue in Stockholm, and could double as the 40th Birthday Celebration of the Chapter (a plan that was postponed from academic year 19-20).

The Chapter also hopes to present a modest grant opportunity for school councils, in which the PhD Chapter would support some school-level initiatives. The awarding of this grant would be contingent on the submission of



a feasible proposal by the PhD school councils intended to benefit the doctoral student community at their particular school.

Furthermore, the Chapter will continue to advocate for comprehensive student representation at all levels of KTH. To that end, the Chapter shall encourage the school councils that a doctoral student representative (PAD) is appointed for every program. The PhD Chapter Board shall ensure that free and fair elections are held for all these positions.

In order to facilitate school-level event management efforts, the Chapter shall encourage the school councils to nominate student representatives to undertake STAD training with support from the PhD Chapter. STAD is a qualification that allows a person to operate a pub in student areas at KTH. STAD-holding student representatives would thus be able to make use of the Chapter Hall, T-Centralen (for example) to host school-level events, hopefully improving doctoral student life at KTH and bolstering the relationship between the PhD Chapter and school councils.

#### Done:

- The PhD Chapter has continuously consulted the school councils, including with regard to issues to be raised at the FA-PA research education network meetings, program analysis, and the Time Compensation workgroup.
- The PhD Chapter is helping the school councils to administer elections to elect council members for 2021.
- The Seminar Series on Doctoral Student Representation has been initiated. The “series” format, which entails multiple shorter meetings with one main guest who is the focus of each meeting, was decided as preferable to a full-day event given the constraints of the online format. The first meeting will take place on May 20th and features Ingrid Iliou (PhD Student Advisor) as the guest.
- Meetings between the School Council Chairs have been initiated, and a Slack channel has been set up, to ensure that there is synergy and exchange of information between the councils.
- Information guidelines were sent out, e.g. regarding the right to student representation in school- and program- level advisory and decisional bodies and recommendations on how to account for hours spent on doing commission of trust assignments.

## Communication

The PhD Chapter aims to strategically improve communication strategies to reach a wider audience and raise awareness of the Chapter and its work. The PhD Chapter’s communication strategy for these efforts will greatly focus on its established social media presence (e.g. Facebook) and website (dr.kth.se). Occasional emails will be primarily used to introduce new doctoral students to the PhD Chapter and refer to social media and the PhD Chapter website for further information. The Chapter plans to gradually improve our website to provide a more up-to-date appearance and user-friendly interface. In addition, the Chapter aims to create an introduction video of



the PhD Chapter, which can be added to our Facebook page and website, and shared with our collaborators, such as KTH Relocation.

### Information Dissemination

Another focus area for communication between the PhD Chapter and doctoral students will entail the transmission of important information. The Chapter will prioritize creating guides and flyers that can be distributed among the doctoral students. This material could include:

- A guide on “How to do a PhD”, with experiences and stories from alumni.
- A flyer with information about the social groups and services that exist at KTH (e.g. counselling, the doctoral Student Advisor), as well as entities that new students might find beneficial to join, e.g. the Student Union, SSSB, a labor union, A-kassa, etc.
- A flyer about the PhD Chapter itself; the activities that the chapter is planning, its new ideas (e.g. the FAQ, the survey), its goals, contact details of its board members, etc.

These could be distributed to the students during our events and printed and placed in different parts of KTH, as well as posted on our website.

#### Done:

- Flyers advertising the PhD Chapter were printed for the Outdoor Lunch event at the beginning of the year and posted in various locations around KTH.
- Social media (Facebook) use has increased.
- Emails containing news and updates from the PhD Chapter have been sent out to all students.
- Blog entries have been posted on the PhD Chapter website covering upcoming events and ongoing advocacy work.

## Treasury and Finance

At present, the PhD Chapter only receives their share of member fees from THS. However, it is matter of fact, that every other Chapter, in addition to THS member fees, receives an annual grant from KTH to support their activities. The Chapter aims to rectify this discrepancy during the coming year. Having additional financial resources would allow the PhD Chapter to pursue more initiatives (academic, social, and professional) for the benefit of doctoral students at KTH.

Currently, the PhD Chapter's payment system could at times be inconvenient to use, as it requires an individual to cover Chapter expenses upfront and claim reimbursement later. This year, the Chapter will look into obtaining SWISH or other bank account or debit card options that would allow for more hassle-free transactions, though the Chapter has to weigh additional fees involved (if any) against the value of increased convenience.

#### Done:



- The PhD Chapter inquired with THS into the possibility of acquiring funding from KTH to support doctoral student activities. This has recently been announced as a strong possibility. The Chapter Board drafted a budget proposal to cover a variety of student influence, JML, wellness, professional development, and introductory reception activities. THS Management is now in dialogue with KTH to secure the PhD Chapter a share of annual funding for student activities.
- Application for a PhD Chapter debit card is underway.
- A decision was made not to obtain Swish for the time being, as it would incur an additional fee for each payment made.
- The PhD Chapter's budget proposal of SEK 1.000.000/year for its activities was approved in full by KTH.
- The PhD Chapter has obtained a debit card, which will facilitate paying for Chapter-related expenses in the future.

## Sustainable Engagement

Section §4a of Chapter 1 of the Högskolelag<sup>5</sup> (1992:1434) states "The higher education institutions shall work to ensure that the students take an active part in the work of further developing the education. Lag (2000: 260)." Further, Section §7 of Chapter 5 of the Högskoleförordning<sup>6</sup> (1993:100), includes elected positions in Student Union as a possible ground on which the employment of doctoral students may exceed more than the ordinary stipulated time.

Adequate time compensation for doctoral students working in commission of trust positions shall be a critical issue for the PhD Chapter. A workgroup addressing this very matter has been initiated by Forskarutbildningsutskottet (Third Cycle Education Committee), in which the Chapter Board has a representative. The Chapter hopes that a fair, transparent, well-defined, and standard process for securing time compensation for doctoral student representatives across all parts of KTH will be achieved during this year.

Done:

- The Workgroup "Time Compensation for Doctoral Student Commission of Trust Assignments" is underway and the first meeting has taken place. School councils have been informed and invited to give input. A time compensation proposal is due to be presented at the Third Cycle Education Committee (Sv: Forskarutbildningsutskottet) by March 2021.
- The Workgroup has finished a final version of guidelines on "Time Compensation for Doctoral Student Commission of Trust Assignments." Based on this, the KTH vice president of education will initiate an assignment for all schools to create appropriate routines.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Swedish-Higher-Education-Act/#chapter1>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Higher-Education-Ordinance/#chapter5>