

## Platform for SWERA's Doctoral Student Council: Annual report for 2021/2022 and plan of operation for 2022/2023

In this document, the Doctoral Student Council's annual report for the year 2021/2022 and the plan of operation for 2022/2023 are described within the framework of the various areas that the Doctoral Student Council sees as central to its work.

### Aim and Direction

Postgraduate students in the field of educational science, regardless of university, have many questions and challenges in common. There is a need for social and intellectual organization of doctoral students in the field of educational science. The purpose of SWERA's doctoral student council is therefore to create a platform for networking between junior researchers, where different aspects of prospective research can be discussed and information about postgraduate courses, scholarships, conferences, services, etc. can be disseminated. The Council's main task is thus to work continuously during the year to strengthen the national infrastructure for research students in terms of collaborations, knowledge exchanges and publications in the field of educational science. In addition to this, the council works for the overall goal that the doctoral student perspective should be present in all of SWERA's activities, and that the Doctoral Student Council's work is clearly linked to the entire association's work and intellectual organization.

### Communication

The Doctoral Student Council's communication with the members takes place on an ongoing basis and mainly via the Facebook group "SWERA's Doctoral Student Council" and several member emails every working year. The two communication channels have a slightly different purposes, where the Facebook group is used to spread various important information, while the member email is preferably focused on upcoming and completed activities. Additionally, it is also important that information that is important for doctoral students is published on SWERA's website. During the working year of 2021–2022, Maria Lennartsdotter, the Doctoral Council's Communications Manager, has been primarily responsible for well-functioning communication.

During the past year, 2021–2022, the Facebook group has functioned as a platform for spreading information about doctoral courses in the field of educational science by both the working group and other members having informed each other and asked for tips. Via the Facebook group, tips about conferences, services, scholarships, special issues, and more have also been shared. During the year, the number of members in the Facebook group has increased continuously from approximately 150 to 176 members. Among the members are doctoral students from disciplines such as pedagogy, educational work, special education, didactics, work-integrated learning, educational history, pedagogical philosophy and educational sociology. In the coming years, 2022–2023, the goal of the work with the Facebook group is to continue to be an important platform for doctoral students in the field of pedagogical knowledge, perhaps even the most important platform for the working group's communication with members. It is also desirable to increase the interaction with the members, on the initiative of both the working group and the members. The Facebook group will continue to be a central part of the work of retaining and recruiting new members to SWERA.

During the past year, 2021–2022, four member emails have been sent out to members. These have mainly been about completed and planned projects such as the spring seminar and the SWERA conference. In the annual cycle that has been created for the work group's work during the past year, the member emails are posted on different occasions to ensure that the emails are sent regularly. In

the coming year, 2022–2023, the Doctoral Council's working group wants to continue communicating with members through membership letters.

The Doctoral Student Council has repeatedly emphasized the importance of information about various higher education courses at the doctoral level in the field of educational science being easily accessible, as this is currently seen as problematic to find. During the past year, the Doctoral Council's working group has therefore begun compiling a list of links to all Swedish higher education institutions' course offerings for doctoral students in pedagogy, pedagogical work, special education, didactics, educational history, pedagogical philosophy, and educational sociology. It is our hope that this list can be posted on SWERA's website in the coming year, 2022–2023, or that it will be communicated to the members through other channels.

### Recruitment of members

A continuous prioritized task for the Doctoral Student Council is the recruitment of new doctoral student members to SWERA, for example through arranged activities, via study directors, existing doctoral students in the association and the Facebook group.

During the year 2021–2022, the number of doctoral student members in SWERA, and thus members of the Doctoral Student Council, has increased from 126 to 140. It can therefore be stated that the focused work on creating increased interaction and communication with doctoral students has worked as a good way to spread information about the doctoral council's work and thereby retaining and recruiting members. Above all, we have seen that the interest in getting involved in the work that the doctoral council's working group carries out increases after the SWERA conference, the spring seminar and through personal contacts. After this year's spring seminar, the number of members in the working group increased with three new people, and through personal contacts thereafter with an additional one. At the same time, we have noted the risks that those who engage in the working group come from only a few universities and an increased geographical spread is therefore desirable in the future. In the coming years, 2022–2023, the work of retaining and recruiting new members will continue through various channels such as directors of studies, SWERA's board, existing doctoral student members in the association, the SWERA conference, spring seminar and members of the Facebook group. There should be an ongoing discussion about further possible ways to reach new members.

### SWERA's annual conference and pre-conference

The Doctoral Student Council traditionally plans and conducts a pre-conference for doctoral students which precedes the annual SWERA conference and holds a council meeting during the main conference. For as many research students as possible to participate in the pre-conference, this will be conducted in English and digitally.

The past year, 2021–2022, began with a lot of reflection on SWERA21 and the writing of two texts about this conference, which have been published on SWERA's website. The work continued with the planning of the Doctoral Council's digital pre-conference in Karlstad through the representation of Maria Lennartsdotter and Line Isaksson in the local planning committee for the main conference. Furthermore, doctoral student representatives in the councils have been involved in the planning of the council seminar at the main conference. In the coming year, 2022–2023, it is a priority to continue the work with the goal that the research student perspective should permeate SWERA's activities and be linked to the association's work and intellectual organization. This is done by continuing the dialogue about how, and to what extent, research students are involved in various activities during the conference and in what way the research student perspective is taken under consideration during the conference.

### Spring seminar

An important issue that has been identified is the need to interact with postgraduate students from other universities. To meet this need, the Doctoral Council's spring seminar was arranged for the second time in April 2022. In the seminar about twenty doctoral students from several higher education institutions participated. During the spring seminar, the research students were allowed to present their research, followed by a short responsive discussion. The presenters had the opportunity to choose to present in English or Swedish. In addition, it was possible to reflect in small groups via Zoom. The spring seminar was an appreciated feature for both novice and experienced doctoral students. It was emphasized that it was a very friendly forum to present in and that there was a surprisingly positive and valuable response to build on. During the spring seminar, several new doctoral council members participated, which is why this can also be considered to contribute to an increased number of members. During the coming year, 2022–2023, the Doctoral Student Council will continue to work on activities, such as the spring seminar, with the aim of allowing postgraduate students from different higher education institutions to meet. In this work, the Doctoral Student Council sees the value of activities planned *by* postgraduate students, *for* postgraduate students *together with* postgraduate students.

### Other work and activities

During the past year, 2021–2022, the Doctoral Council's working group has created an annual cycle that makes the structure and systematics of the work visible. The intention is for the annual cycle to contribute to continuity and foresight for the work, which can facilitate the change of members in the working group.

The Doctoral Council's working group is represented on SWERA's other councils, whose activities are discussed extensively in the working group's meetings. Through this work, a closer relationship has been created between the Doctoral Council and other parts of the association. The intention is that the work will continue in the same spirit.

Furthermore, the Doctoral Council's working group continuously works with various long-term issues. This includes identifying issues that are important for us to continue working on together with the rest of SWERA. In addition, it is possible to arrange activities following the autumn's main conference, with the aim of contributing to the social and intellectual organization within the framework of the educational science area.

## The 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 Doctoral Student Council's work is organized partly through the council's working group and partly through representation on SWERA's board and its four councils. The Doctoral Student Council's representatives are thus involved in all parts of SWERA's organization, and this endeavor has worked very well.

The Doctoral Council's working group consists of a chairman, secretary, communications manager, council representatives and other members. The doctoral student representative in the local conference committee is also part of the working group. Members of the working group are elected for one year at a time and a total of a maximum of 3 years. Since there is no nomination committee, a routine has been developed where the doctoral council's working group compiles 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 in the coming year, which is considered particularly valuable. This routine was used most recently before the 2021 annual meeting.

During the past year, 2021–2022, the working group has met ten times, as well as in various constellations via Zoom, telephone, and email.

The working group during the working year 2021–2022:

#### **Members of the Doctoral Council's Working Group**

Chairperson	Jonas Udd, University of Gothenburg Tina Lidström, Linköpings universitet, acting chairperson 211001 – 220110
Secretary	Marina Karlsson, University of Gothenburg
Communications manager	Maria Lennartsdotter, University of Karlstad
The Research political council	Alex Örtegren, University of Umeå
Doctoral education council	Malin Kronqvist Håård, University of Dalarna
The Teacher Education Council	Sandra Svensson, University West Alex Örtegren, University of Umeå
The Journal Council	Maria Walla, University of Dalarna
Members	Line Isaksson, University of Karlstad Linnéa Rosengren, University of Gothenburg Sara Viklund, Umeå universitet Therese Friberg, University of Dalarna

#### **Övrig representation**

SWERA's board	Jonas Udd, University of Gothenburg
Local organizational committee for SWERA2022	Maria Lennartsdotter, University of Karlstad Line Isaksson, University of Karlstad