

# SDF Plan of Operations and Budget 2018

## Introduction

The SULF doctoral candidate association, (SDF), is a section within Swedish University Teachers and Researchers, (SULF), which has a mandate to monitor section-related issues. According to the SDF statutes, the Board is tasked with:

- protecting and monitoring section members' interests in accordance with SULF statutes and decisions of the Congress or the central union board
- conducting membership recruitment
- carrying out advocacy and publicise the activities of the section
- acting as a preparatory body for the union board on section issues
- keeping the union board informed about the activities of the section

In addition to the statutes, the SDF Plan of Operations is based on the SULF Congress period operational focus, which, in turn, is based on Vision 2030. The three priority areas for 2016-2018 include employment and career paths, education and professional influence.

## Theme for 2018: Increasing Stability for Doctoral Candidates

Of SULF's three priority areas, SDF will, during the financial year 2018, place extra focus on employment and career paths through our chosen theme for 2018: Increasing Stability for Doctoral Candidates.

Being a doctoral candidate is often characterized by instability. Research and the creation of new knowledge always includes an element of the unknown, and on top of this, doctoral candidates face uncertainty about their future employment and career paths. International doctoral candidates are confronted with additional questions about access to social benefits and insurance in Sweden and whether they will be able to remain in Sweden long-term. This instability often manifests itself in stress-related illnesses and other mental health issues, which in turn raises the question of how sick leave is dealt with when one has a contract with a fixed term and/or a research project with a limited time frame.

For this reason, SDF's overarching theme for 2018 is *stability*. Within this theme, SDF hopes to continue its work in several areas:

- Making doctoral candidates and their supervisors aware of their rights with regard to sick leave and/or other types of leave and prolongation of employment contracts and research time;
- Highlighting the mental health issues of doctoral candidates and seeking ways to mitigate the factors that lead to stress-related illnesses;
- Ensuring that international doctoral candidates are given access to the social benefits and insurance to which they have a right as workers employed in Sweden;
- Making residence permit renewal and applications for permanent residence and citizenship simpler and more straightforward for international doctoral candidates;
- Increasing resources for multilingualism at Swedish universities so that all can take part in collegial meeting places and participate in international research environments.

In addition to the above, SDF will seek other areas in which the stability of doctoral candidates' working environments can be increased. SDF will strive to make all of its written materials available in both Swedish and English.

The Plan of Operations is put into practice through the Mission Statement, which SULF and SDF divide into the following four target areas:

- Membership activities
- Recruitment
- Board activities
- Advocacy and opinion-building.

## Membership activities

The overall objectives of SDF membership activities are to:

- provide relevant information for members about issues concerning doctoral candidates
- disseminate information to members about SULF and SDF operations
- provide advice and support for members on union and professional issues

These objectives will be achieved by the following activities:

**Newsletter.** Send out a membership newsletter by e-mail 2 to 3 times per term in English.

**Contact Day.** Arrange a Contact Day in late spring for doctoral candidates interested in SDF's work. The day will be held in English and have a theme related to the 2018 theme of increasing stability for doctoral candidates. If possible, the Contact Day will also be streamed. The day will be marketed to members and all local associations will be notified about the event.

**AGM.** Organise an annual general meeting of representatives at SULF headquarters in relation to the SULF congress.

**SULF Day.** Promote SULF Day on 4 October. The content of the day is to be determined by the current SDF board and should reflect the year's theme.

**Facebook.** Regularly update and market our Facebook page with information linked to membership activities, such as the internal SULF website and upcoming events.

## Recruitment

The overall objectives of recruitment to SDF are to:

- Increase the number of doctoral candidate members of SULF
- Recruit union officials who are doctoral candidates

These objectives will be achieved by the following activities:

**Local recruitment.** Visit two local associations at the universities where the membership level among doctoral candidates is low in order to discuss how the local association can reach out to, and support, doctoral candidates.

**SULF activities for doctoral candidates.** Collaborate with the SULF central board so that doctoral candidates' interests are well represented in all SULF activities.

**Benefits.** Continue to work with the SULF central board and headquarters to seek and implement new kinds of benefits for doctoral candidate members and doctoral candidate union officials and disseminate information about membership benefits.

**Information material.** Continue work on the starter kit for new doctoral candidates of foreign origin, which will be available on SULF's website.

**The Nominations Committee.** Support the work of the 2018 Nominations Committee by inviting the members to the annual Contact Day and at least one board meeting during 2018 and provide support and education to the Nomination Committee. Ensure that there is a nominations committee for 2019.

**Facebook.** Regularly update and market our Facebook page with information related to recruitment, information such as membership benefits and local SULF events.

## Board activities

The overall objectives of the SDF Board of Directors are in accordance with Section 13 of the SDF Statutes as follows:

- To conduct business in accordance with the section's purpose and take decisions in the matters specified in the section charter.
- To execute decisions taken by the union representatives
- To keep records of cases taken up and decisions made
- To prepare matters to be presented to the representatives' meeting and draft the following year's Plan of Operations and Budget.

An active and well-qualified Board is required in order to achieve this. These objectives will be achieved by the following activities:

**Handover to 2019 Chair and Board.** Submit spoken and written information to the forthcoming Chair and perform an evaluation at the final Board meeting to identify what works well and what can be improved for the future Board.

**Board meetings.** Hold at least two face-to-face meetings and three online meetings before the 2018 AGM and produce minutes of these meetings. At least one board meeting should be a retreat covering two consecutive days and, if possible, include board training and networking opportunities at a university where SDF has members in this retreat.

**Board training.** Board members are encouraged to undergo the internet-based basic union course and take advantage of any other union-related trainings offered during the year.

The Chair/Vice Chair will invite lecturers/trainers in connection with board meetings for educational purposes in accordance with the board's needs and interests.

**Facebook.** Regularly update and market our Facebook page with information related to board activities, such as current board activities.

## Advocacy and opinion-building

Close cooperation between SDF, the central board, and the SULF headquarters is a prerequisite for effective and fruitful work for doctoral candidates. SDF must also work with doctoral candidates involved in the local union and with SULF local associations. Likewise, it is important that SDF works with other organisations on issues specific to doctoral candidates. The overall objectives of the SDF advocacy and public opinion-building activities are to:

- Engage in advocacy and raise awareness of the section's activity by being active in the research policy debate
- Contribute information when requested
- Act as a preparatory body for the central board on section issues
- Keep the central board informed on section activities

These objectives will be achieved through the following activities:

**Published material.** Publish at least two opinion articles or letters during the year related to the 2018 theme of increased stability for doctoral candidates.

**Saco Student Council.** Collaborate with the Saco Student Council and attend their members' council and chair network to contribute a doctoral candidate perspective.

**SFS-DK.** Meet the SFS-DK Chair, committee or other relevant parties at least once to discuss collaboration on common issues.

**Online visibility.** Improve SDF's overall online visibility.

**SDF's vision document.** SDF will collaborate with SULF office and SULF central board to update the current SDF vision document. It shall be a document that both SULF and SDF stand behind.

**Facebook.** Regularly update and market our Facebook page with information related to advocacy and opinion-building activities, such as our debate articles.

## Budget

Target area	Activity	Cost	Comment
<b>Membership activities</b>	Newsletter	0	*Including travel cost for 25 participants (1500 SEK per person)
	Contact Day*	60 500	
	AGM	15 000	
	SULF Day	2 000	
	Facebook	500	
	<b>Total: 78 000</b>		
<b>Recruitment</b>	Local recruitment	6 000	
	SULF activities for doctoral candidates	2 000	
	Benefits	0	
	Information material	3 000	
	Nominations Committee	7 500	
	Facebook	1 000	
<b>Total: 19 500</b>			
<b>Board</b>	Handover	5 000	*Based on 4 physical board meetings and 9 board members
	Board meetings*	130 000	
	Board training	5 000	
	Facebook	0	
	<b>Total: 140 000</b>		
<b>Advocacy and opinion-building</b>	Publications	0	
	Saco Student Council	10 000	
	SFS-DK	2 000	
	Online visibility	0	
	SDF opinion document	0	
	Facebook	1 000	
<b>Total: 8 000</b>			
		<b>Total: 255 500</b>	