

SULF:s kongress 2024

Skills to make an impact!

There is increasing interest from international staff to become involved in the work of SULF, for example by joining a working group, or joining the board of a local SULF association. This involvement in trade union activities often happens in parallel with the process of learning the Swedish language and familiarising with Swedish culture.

The internal operation of SULF is complex, and our organisational culture stems both from a foundation of Swedish "folkrörelsedemokrati" (democracy of popular movements) and the unique history of SULF itself. This causes confusion for those who become involved for the first time. There have been instances where the integration of colleagues with international backgrounds into local SULF boards has resulted in internal conflicts.

The journey from passive to active SULF member can be made smoother by providing better information, in English, at an earlier stage. This would reduce the risk of internal conflicts, and enable us to have a greater impact as a collective. It would also lower the threshold for interested members to start engaging actively with the work of SULF.

A course for interested members could inform about foundations of organisational structure and culture in a Swedish context, as well as the role and history of trade unions in Sweden. It could also provide training in relevant transferable skills, such as communication and project management. This could be packaged as an online course that members are free to access at whatever time suits them.

The wider benefit of such a course would be to increase awareness of SULF's internal workings among SULF's members, thus resulting in more effective communication with our members, and better feedback received from them.

More broadly, SULF should consider the possibility of offering at least some of its trade union courses in English as well as in Swedish.

The SULF Doctoral Candidate Association therefore submits that the Congress decide:

- that SULF shall investigate the possibility of offering to its members a course, in English, designed to provide knowledge and skills that would support members to actively engage with the work of SULF; this may include: understanding organisational structure and culture, learning how to effect

change, and developing project management and leadership skills – all in a Swedish higher education and trade union context;

- that SULF's courses in general shall be made available in English as well as in Swedish, at least for such courses where the cost of translation is reasonable in proportion to expected demand.

We wrote this motion in English, which is the main working language of the SULF Doctoral Candidate Association. Below is our proposal for decision in Swedish.

SULF:s doktorandförening hemställer därför:

- att SULF ska undersöka möjligheten att erbjuda en kurs för medlemmar, på engelska, som ger kunskaper och färdigheter som underlättar för medlemmen att engagera sig inom SULF; en sådan kurs kan förslagsvis omfatta organisationsstrukturer, organisationskulturer, hur man bedriver påverkansarbete, projektlednings- och ledarskapsfärdigheter – allt utifrån en svensk högskole- och facklig kontext;
- att SULF:s kurser i allmänhet ska erbjudas på engelska såväl som på svenska, åtminstone vad gäller sådana kurser där kostnaden för översättning är rimlig i förhållande till förväntad efterfrågan.

Motionen undertecknas för SULF:s doktorandförenings styrelse av:
Mohamed Al-Sabri, Chairperson