

# GU Journal

INDEPENDENT STAFF MAGAZINE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GÖTEBORG #5-6 DECEMBER 2022

## NEWS

These are the  
five profile areas

## NEWS

Top researchers from the  
Sahlgrenska Academy

## REPORT

Studying silence  
of museums

# MORE ETHICS IN ECONOMY

Joakim Sandberg calls for  
a greater social responsibility



UNIVERSITY OF  
GÖTEBORG

# EUTOPIA offers tremendous opportunities

**T**HE CHRISTMAS BREAK is approaching and it is almost time to sum up the year. Do you remember the beginning of 2022? When we still mostly worked from home, did not talk about inflation, saving electricity or rising food prices? The world had not yet experienced Russia's aggressive invasion of Ukraine or the violence in Iran that would ensue because of people's longing for freedom and basic human rights. In this issue, you can read more about Eutopia Week that took place in Ljubljana at the end of November. It was, as always, intense with a solid programme for all participants. Now the activities within the new application, EUTOPIA

MORE, are underway and there are tremendous opportunities for everyone in the alliance to participate. As always, the emphasis is on extensive collaboration in education and research, student engagement and mobility, for both students and employees. It was especially gratifying that our university alliance has now signed an agreement that invites global partnerships. It includes four universities - South Africa, Morocco, South Korea and Australia. During my time in Ljubljana, I had the pleasure of handing over the presidency of the alliance to the Vice-Chancellor

of Ca Foscari University of Venice, Tiziana Lippiello.

In November, the university made a decision regarding the profile areas we will proceed with in our application to the Swedish Research Council. Although the government has not yet made a final decision on the implementation of profile areas, and the timetable is somewhat unclear, preparatory work is underway to draft an application. In the budget proposals, it was clear that the government will return to the question of how research grants should be allocated in the future, so we are doing what we can to be ready when the news is announced.

**A LOT HAPPENS IN** a year, and at our university this autumn we had positive and joyful events such as the doctoral conferment in October and the jubilee doctoral conferment in November. It makes me genuinely happy to pay tribute to their achievements and to see them celebrate their successes together. Something immutable and traditional in a changing world.

At the time of writing, there are just over three weeks until Christmas Eve and we are about to put another term behind us.

I want to take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a restful and well-deserved holiday. See you in 2023!



Vice-Chancellor EVA WIBERG



UNIVERSITY OF  
GOTHENBURG

**Editor-in-chief:** Allan Eriksson, phone: 031-786 10 21, e-mail: allan.eriksson@gu.se  
**Editor:** Eva Lundgren, phone: 031-786 10 81, e-mail: eva.lundgren@gu.se  
**Photographer:** Johan Wingborg, phone: 070-595 38 01, e-post: johan.wingborg@gu.se  
**Layout:** Anders Eurén, phone: 031-786 43 81, e-mail: anders.euren@gu.se  
**Address:** GU JOURNAL, University of Gothenburg Box 100, 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden  
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Alexandre Antonelli talks about his book on biodiversity.

Photo: JOHAN WINGBORG

## Masthead

# Time to save in an unsafe world

**FIVE RESEARCH** areas have been included in the university's profile application to the Swedish Research Council in 2023. What will happen with the application is still quite unclear though - and it is also uncertain whether this kind of research investment will continue. Regardless, these are areas that the university want to invest in.

The doctoral students are in a stressed and vulnerable position. As many as 40 percent are international; information does not always reach them, and they feel rather excluded. Now all facts about the doctoral students' situation will be collected in a database that will be updated continuously.

**GU JOURNALEN** has been abroad, namely at the EUTOPIA week in Ljubljana. The program was full and the activities many. Allan Eriksson managed to do several interviews though, including with Vice-Chancellor Eva Wiberg. She explained that the EUTOPIA collaboration will expand and involve universities in Morocco, South Africa, South Korea and Australia. Allan Eriksson also made an interview with Deputy

Vice-Chancellor Torbjörn Lund and with doctoral student Luca Versteegen; he studies the importance of emotions in political choices and came second in the EUTOPIAN Science Slam.

**THE WORLD IS** an unsafe place, also here in Sweden. This winter we will have to do what we can to save energy and we also need to save on other things when inflation eats up our incomes. Joakim Sandberg believes that both banks and energy companies should take a greater responsibility for social development, not least for their own sake: a well-managed economy benefits everyone.

The problems that exist here are, of course, nothing compared to horrors in other parts of the world. Doctoral student Sama Khosravi Ooryad talks about the uprisings in Iran and Ukrainian researcher Valerii Vynohradov explains how he left a bombed Kyiv to come here with his family.

This is the last issue this year. We wish all readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Allan Eriksson & Eva Lundgren

# Five areas selected with GU profile

**On November 17, the vice-chancellor made a decision on the five proposals that will be included in the university's profile area application to the Swedish Research Council in 2023.**

**– The next step is to write a brief application to be sent to the Swedish Research Council in January before the full application is made in February–May, Carina Mallard, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, explains.**

IT WAS IN the 2020 Research Bill that the Swedish Research Council, together with Formas, Forte and Vinnova, was tasked with developing a proposal for a new, quality-based resource distribution model based on profile areas.

At the University of Gothenburg, it led to a process involving all faculties, the Research Board, the Vice-Chancellor's University Management Council and the university's international advisers.

The five areas to be included in the application have now been determined. These are profiles that cover large sections of the University of Gothenburg's operations, says Carina Mallard.

– But coming up with the proposals has not been entirely easy. The instructions were very vague and the latest budget proposal did not provide any clarification. We have also not received any clarity as to whether this is a one-off investment or whether a continuation is planned. Despite all the uncertainty, we have had very good discussions about how we can collaborate between different subject areas, which bodes well for the future. Regardless of



Carina Mallard says that the discussions have been very inspiring.

what happens, we do not want to lose the proposals that have been received.



**Anders Rosengren**, Professor of Molecular Medicine, is the contact person for the profile area

*Age-related disease and therapy development.*

– Problems with metabolism are the cause of many endemic diseases, which affect people of different ages. Often, the diseases are managed separately in silos and defined according to their symptoms; it involves, among other things, various forms of cancer, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and osteoporosis. But even if the diseases are very different, there can be commonalities at the molecular level. Our hypothesis is that changes in metabolism are one such commonality. If we succeed in finding the root causes of

various health problems, the opportunities for both prevention and treatment increase.

Therefore, the purpose of the profile area is to bring together researchers within the Sahlgrenska Academy who, on both a molecular and clinical level, conduct research on the major endemic diseases, Anders Rosengren explains.

*The Molecular Life Science profile area examines the macromolecules that control the function of living cells, for example control of chemical processes, metabolism and communication between cells. By learning to understand these processes, the potential of treating diseases in humans as well as in plants and animals increases. The field is directly linked to several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, such as Good Health and Well-Being, Zero Hunger, Life Below Water, Life on Land, as well as Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.*



**But even if the diseases are very different, there can be commonalities at the molecular level.**

ANDERS ROSENGREN

At the University of Gothenburg, there are approximately 60 research teams in the field and that several of them are very successful is demonstrated by the latest Shanghai Ranking: Human Biological Sciences at the University of Gothenburg is ranked highest in Sweden (23rd place internationally) and Biological Sciences is ranked second in Sweden (36th place internationally).



- The field involves collaboration between the Faculty of Science and the Sahlgrenska Academy, but also the IT Faculty, for example when it comes to machine learning to highlight relationships within large biological data sets and to extract new functional and medical insights that would otherwise not have been available. We also collaborate with external stakeholders, such as Astra Zeneca. Biotechnology is big in Gothenburg, so even from a Västra Götaland perspective, an investment in this area is very significant, explains **Richard Neutze**, Professor of Biochemistry.



**Ola Wetterberg**, Professor of Conservation, is the contact person for the profile area *Cultural Heritage and Sustainability*. It is about complementing the three dimensions of sustainable development - environmental, social and economic - with a fourth that highlights cultural heritage.

- Culture and sustainability are connected in a variety of ways. Some examples are sustainable construction and social planning, as well as sustainable tourism. We need to make a transition in every possible way, and knowledge of our cultural heritage plays a very important role.

Cultural heritage is about how people relate to their surroundings, and about what we bring

## FACTS

### The five profile areas that the University of Gothenburg has selected:

A Sustainable Digital Society

Age-related disease and therapy development

Cultural Heritage and Sustainability: towards an integrated approach (CULTSUS)

Molecular Life Science

UGOT OCEAN

### Preliminary schedule:

#### January 2023

A brief application with a description of the focus of the University of Gothenburg's profile areas will be sent to the Swedish Research Council.

#### February–May 2023

Complete application for the profile areas will be sent to the Swedish Research Council.

#### August 2023

Deadline for the Swedish Research Council's experts to submit their assessments.

#### January 2024

The result of the quality assessment will be sent from the Swedish Research Council to the Government Offices.

with us from the past to the future. The area has a philosophical and theoretical perspective and can be about growth and global justice. But it is also extremely practical and an applied field, where both craftsmanship, conservation practices and building technology are included, says Ola Wetterberg.

- The profile area is very interdisciplinary and connects six faculty areas and three centres: The Centre for Tourism, the Centre for Digital Humanities and the Craft Laboratory. The profile is also based on collaboration with the Heritage Academy, the Centre for Critical Heritage Studies and University College London.

Ola Wetterberg is not concerned that there is still a lot of uncertainty surrounding the profile areas.

- These are issues we want to work on, regardless of the funding model.



**Jan Ljungberg**, Professor of Informatics, is the contact person for the profile area *A Sustainable Digital Society*.

He says that the area consists of three parts: Development of digital technology, Innovations and value creation, as well as Critical understanding of technology's impact on society and its institutions.

The IT Faculty has been collaborating with all the faculties at the University of Gothenburg for some time.

- It is important to balance the potential of digitalization with an understanding of its consequences. Therefore, an interdisciplinary profile area on this subject is extremely important. The faculty also has a long tradition of collaboration with the City of Gothenburg, the Västra Götaland region and companies such as Volvo, SKF, Ericsson and Astra Zeneca. The faculty also hosts two centres, the Software Centre and the Swedish Center for Digital Innovation, both of which collaborate extensively with industry and the public sector.

- The idea behind the profile

area is to gather all these different stakeholders, take advantage of all the good experience and thus develop the IT area further.

Regardless of what happens with the profile areas, Jan Ljungberg believes that the IT Faculty will continue to develop collaboration regarding the opportunities and challenges of digitalization.

- In Scandinavia, there is no environment within information technology that can be compared to the one at the University of Gothenburg. We have both world-renowned research teams, an IT Faculty and a surrounding society with a strong focus on digitalization. A large proportion of Sweden's industrial companies are located in the region, and organizations such as AI Innovation Sweden have their headquarters here.

**THE 2022 BUDGET** proposal contains the following statement about the investment in profile areas: However, the government shares the assessment of research financiers and universities that more time is required to develop a model that is sustainable in the long term, which is why introduction in 2023 is no longer considered appropriate. The government's intention is therefore to task the research financiers, in consultation with universities and colleges, to carry out further work on the development of the model to enable introduction from 2024. The government will announce its intentions regarding the allocation of funds according to the new model in future budget proposals.

The five profile areas that the University of Gothenburg has selected:

A Sustainable Digital Society  
Age-related disease and therapy development  
Cultural Heritage and Sustainability: towards an integrated approach (CULTSUS)  
Molecular Life Science  
UGOT OCEAN

Text: **Eva Lundgren**

Photo: **Johan Wingborg**

# Saving electricity is everybody's responsibility!



**Turn off lights, computers and other equipment when you leave for the day. Do not open windows unnecessarily and do not use more radiators than necessary. This is just some of the advice from the committee tasked with reviewing energy use at the University of Gothenburg.**

**– Our job is not to lecture people, but to make energy consumption visible and provide useful advice, Dan Ekstrand and Henric Snygg explain.**

**IN ORDER TO REDUCE** the risk of electricity shortages this winter, the government has decided that most government agencies must save energy.

- Up to and including March next year, the authorities must report their electricity consumption on the 15th of each month, which will be compared with the same month in 2018, Dan Ekstrand, Facility Manager at Facility Services, explains.

According to the figures reported by the University of Gothenburg, electricity consumption in October was approximately 7 percent lower, compared to October 2018. The figure for November is even better, 14 percent lower than November 2018. The figure is affected by more factors than we have been able to implement ourselves thus far, Dan Ekstrand explains.

**– ON THE ONE HAND,** we have recently reduced the floor space of premises that are in use, to some extent. On the other hand, the autumn has been unusually warm, and also, since 2018, the property owners have implemented several energy-saving measures. But at least we are heading in the right direction.

To consolidate the cost-saving initiative, University Director Anna Lindholm has appointed a committee, under the leadership

of Dan Ekstrand. The committee will have discussions with Akademiska Hus and Higab, which own approximately 50 and 30 percent of the property portfolio, respectively, and with deans, heads of department and corresponding positions within the organization.

**THE COMMITTEE IS** also tasked with disseminating information and giving advice to employees and students, Henric Snygg, Campus Service Manager at the Lorensberg campus, explains.

- The property owners are very committed and are providing all the support we need. Akademiska Hus, for example, has made a major investment in solar panels, and also plans to replace old fixtures with LED lighting where appropriate; it is also important to think sustainably, not getting rid of equipment that is still working well.



What advice does the committee provide? Most of it involves fairly simple things, says Henric Snygg.

- Turn off lights, computers and other equipment before going home. If you are the last one to leave, walk along the corridor and make sure everything is turned off. If you work in a lab, make sure that fume cupboards and ventilated workstations are properly closed when not in use. Freezers should be used as efficiently as possible. If you are a student studying late in the evening, you may be able to sit in the library with other people and thereby reduce your electricity consumption.

**MANY PEOPLE** put additional radiators in their rooms when it is cold. But you should not do that, Henric Snygg explains.

- Additional radiators use a lot of electricity, and they affect



**“**  
**The department that has used less electricity than estimated gets money back that can be used for education and research.**

DAN EKSTRAND

the building's ventilation system, which is set at a certain temperature. An additional radiator causes the system to start working harder to cool the room, and so it creates a vicious circle.

**IT IS PRECISELY** the issue of lowered indoor temperatures that worries many people, says Dan Ekstrand.

- We have concluded that it is more effective to adjust the ventilation system than to lower the temperature. In many premises, the ventilation is on from four o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock in the evening. It would entail huge savings if it were reduced when the premises are not in use.

Saving electricity is important for many reasons, including financial ones, Dan Ekstrand points out.

- The electricity bill is part of the cost of the premises which is reconciled in August/September. The department that has used less electricity than estimated gets money back that can be used for education and research.

**TURNING OFF A** light may seem like a rather insignificant contribution to save energy.

- But you shouldn't think about it in that way, Henric Snygg points out. We all have a responsibility and a small contribution is still a contribution.

Text: **Eva Lundgren**  
Photo: **Shutterstock**

## FACTS

### **About the Energy Committee:**

The committee consists of Dan Ekstrand, Facility Manager at Facility Services, Marianne Dalbro, GMV, Johan Lindfors, Lennart Ahlkvist and Sara Sandbacka, Property and the Campus Service Managers Henric Snygg, Marianne Lextorp, Björn Hildenwall and Lina Hedenberg.

# Increased costs no immediate threat

**Inflation is driving up prices for premises, electricity, travel and equipment. Added to that is a rent increase of SEK 100 million for next year and escalating electricity prices. But according to CFO Peter Tellberg, the University of Gothenburg is well equipped to deal with inflation and increased costs.**

**INFLATION IS THE HIGHEST** it has been for 30 years. At the beginning of the autumn, it was almost 10 percent. This means that everything has become 10 percent more expensive. But for the University of Gothenburg, it may take some time before the price increases become noticeable, Peter Tellberg points out.

- The framework agreements we have signed for various services and goods are still in force. Only when a new procurement is carried out will the price level be adjusted upwards. In other areas, such as travel, the price increases are already being felt.

**GIVEN THAT THE** University of Gothenburg spends around SEK 100 million on travel, inflation entails a surcharge of SEK 10 million. Even the purchases of more expensive equipment can become significantly more expensive, given that the US dollar has increased in value by 20 percent against the Swedish

krona. Uncertainties in the global market also means that delivery times for any equipment that has been ordered will be longer than expected.

As for rental costs, the forecast points to a dramatic increase next year. Today, the CFO expects increased rental costs of around SEK 100 million next year. A large proportion, approximately SEK 30-35 million, is accounted for by the new Natrium, which the Faculty of Science will move into in August 2023. For Sahlgrenska Academy, for example, the increase will be around SEK 13 million in 2023. How big it will de facto be depends on inflation.

**- REGARDLESS OF** the reasons - the pandemic, the war in Ukraine or unemployment - SEK 100 million is still SEK 100 million, even if it is unclear who will be most impacted.

During the autumn, the escalating electricity prices have been a major social issue. But electricity prices are not a major expenditure item, they do not even account for 1 percent of all costs. In 2021, the electricity prices for the University of Gothenburg amounted to SEK 22 million, this year they are estimated to be SEK 29 million. What complicates the situation is that the university has 90 different leases and 26 different landlords. In some cases, electricity,



**For example, there are plans to switch to LED lighting, work that will now be accelerated.**

MARIE HORN FELT



Marie Hornfelt

water and heating are included. Some electricity prices are fixed, others are not.

One of the operations that has been hit the hardest is Experimental Biomedicine (EBM). One forecast is that electricity costs will be SEK 2.8 million higher this year and, in addition, increased rent is expected in 2023.

One of the operations affected is Experimental Biomedicine (EBM), within the Sahlgrenska Academy, with a forecast that electricity costs will be approximately SEK 3 million higher in 2023.

However, according to Marie





Morgan Palmqvist

Hornfelt, Head of Core Facilities and the Director of EBM, it is difficult to make major savings, as the business is strictly regulated by law with specific requirements for lighting, temperature and ventilation.

- **IN THE SHORT** term, it will be difficult to save on energy, but together with Sahlgrenska Academy and Akademiska Hus, we have been conducting work continuously for several years to reduce our climate footprint. For example, there are plans to switch to LED lighting, work that will now be accelerated.

Marie Hornfelt also points out that several measures have already been taken to save energy, including the introduction of individually ventilated cages and technology to recover heat from exhaust air. But that is not enough, she says.

-To be able to further reduce our climate impact and to be able to make greater energy savings, remodelling and investment in new technology and equipment are required. Preliminary studies for a remodelling of EBM have been carried out together with the property owner and we hope to start the work in 2024.

The increased prices have also

hit the University Library hard, which predominantly buys e-media and subscriptions in foreign currency. So far this year, the increase corresponds to SEK 1.8 million.

- We have not yet completed the analysis of what it will entail for the coming years, says Head Librarian Morgan Palmqvist. The major contracts for journals and databases are paid at the beginning of the year, and, of course, at this point in time we do not know what the exchange rates will be.

Furthermore, the introduction of a new governance and financing model, similar to the one in Uppsala, Lund and Umeå, facilitates this.

- This means that the University of Gothenburg is now in a better position to be able to take responsibility and manage these cost increases so that research is not affected, says Morgan Palmqvist.

**THE QUESTION**, however, is how significant the consequences will be in reality. Overall, the University of Gothenburg has retained earnings of just over SEK 1.5 billion. The largest proportion of which, 620 million, is held by Sahlgrenska Academy, mainly in

research that has not yet been realized. According to Kristina Johansson, Head of Finance at Sahlgrenska Academy, only a small proportion can be used to moderate rental costs and other price increases.

- A substantial proportion of the retained earnings are funds intended for individual researchers or specific strategic investments. A large proportion of the funds may be earmarked for future recruitment, she says.

The substantial buffer is also unevenly distributed within the university. Within Sahlgrenska Academy, for example, four institutes (clinical sciences, medicine, neuroscience and physiology and biomedicine) each have a surplus of around SEK 100 million saved. The Institute of Health and Care Sciences has the smallest buffer and faces challenges if costs continue to skyrocket.

**”**  
**This means that the University of Gothenburg is now in a better position to be able to take responsibility and manage these cost increases ...**

MORGAN PALMQVIST

**ALTHOUGH THERE** is considerable concern, the financial situation is good, Peter Tellberg states.

- We have a substantial amount of capital, but the situation can change quickly. What is worrying is all the new construction that will result in higher rents, but an impending recession might save us, if we receive an extended educational mandate.

### FACTS

The University of Gothenburg has a turnover of approximately SEK 7.4 billion.

64 percent constitutes salaries.

10 percent constitutes costs for premises.

23 percent constitutes other costs.

Allan Eriksson  
Elin Lindström Claessen

# Better environment for

**Doctoral students have a higher rate of absenteeism due to illness than other students, and 30 percent are uncomfortable about voicing any criticism. Now the results of a project have been presented, in six focus areas, which will improve the doctoral students' working environment.**

**PILLE STRAUSS-RAATS**, Development Manager at Human Resources within work environment and health, has recent experience from her time as a doctoral student. Last year, after quite some time, she finished her thesis on how flexible working methods affect the work environment and well-being in organizations that use temping agencies.

The goal is to highlight problems and give examples of possible solutions to improve the working environment for doctoral students.

**– DOCTORAL STUDENTS** are a vulnerable group and quite a lot of them experience burn-out, especially towards the end. After all, they are in between studying and working life, but that is often forgotten. The demands to deliver are high and at the same time they are at the bottom of the academic hierarchy. Instead of just offering courses in mindfulness, we should examine how to improve the organizational and systemic level more.

The work will be presented on the Employee Portal in December.

– The idea is to collate everything in a knowledge database that will be kept up to date. The real work actually begins now. It started as a

project but will now be part of our ongoing work. Of course, there is not just one solution that will fix everything, instead the circumstances vary across the University of Gothenburg as a whole. But we can learn a lot from one another.

**PILLE STRAUSS-RAATS** has reviewed the surveys that have been conducted in recent years, including ST's (the Union of Civil Servants) from 2021, which investigated the working environment of doctoral students, and the survey conducted by the University of Gothenburg's Doctoral Student Committee (GUDK) on how doctoral students were affected by the pandemic.



**Doctoral students are a vulnerable group and quite a lot of them experience burn-out.**

PILLE STRAUSS-RAATS

– There is a strong emphasis on individual responsibility and when talking about the working environment and health for doctoral students, one tends to dismiss the importance of organizational factors. We need to start discussing what the doctoral students' working environment is like. Is it the ability to endure stress, have a large screen and ergonomic chair, or an opportunity to develop their knowledge at a reasonable pace and be part of an academic community?

She believes that there is a culture of silence at the University of Gothenburg that makes it difficult for doctoral students to ask for and receive help.



**– We need a discussion on the doctoral students' working environment, says Pille Strauss-Raats, Development Manager at Human Resources.**

– In the ST survey, it was clear that doctoral students at the University of Gothenburg felt that their opinions were not taken seriously. As many as 30 percent of the respondents answered that they would not feel comfortable voicing any criticism. That is serious.

The results have been compiled in six focus areas: High workload, insecure position, inclusion and exclusion, relationship with supervisors, equal treatment and discrimination, and finally the

physical work environment. Under each area there are good examples that can inspire others.

**SHE EMPHASIZES** that a lot has improved in recent years. There are common rules governing the individual study plan but also the role of the supervisor. At the same time, she points out that it can be difficult to change a system from within and that it takes time.

To manage the workload,

# doctoral students

some departments have introduced induction programmes for new doctoral students, including holding courses in time planning and introducing a more flexible way of combining courses with fieldwork.

**A DOCTORAL POSITION** is a temporary form of employment with built-in uncertainty. So it is not surprising that a lot of people do not feel good about their uncertain position, but there is also a lack of transparency, says Pille Strauss-Raats.

- When it came to the issue of extending a student's doctoral studies, as a consequence of the pandemic, different decisions were taken depending on where the student was undertaking their doctoral studies. It was also not clear what the rationale was for the decisions that were taken.

The individual study plan is an important work environment tool, emphasizes Pille Strauss-Raats.

- Improvements have certainly been made in recent years, but much remains to be done. There seem to be different interpretations of the regulations both by supervisors and doctoral students. But it is important that doctoral students feel included in the shared work environment.

**AS MANY AS** 40 percent of the doctoral students are from another country. Although the University of Gothenburg officially strives for bilingualism, many foreign doctoral students feel left out.

- That is why it is so important that the information that is disseminated is in both languages, we cannot assume that everyone understands Swedish. Furthermore, you

cannot expect someone to be able to teach in Swedish after only one or two years while also doing research and taking courses. By not being able to teach, it also makes it more difficult to improve your credentials, which in turn affects future job prospects.

One suggestion that has been highlighted is that new doctoral students should be supported by a more experienced research student as a mentor. Another way is to advertise jobs concurrently, so that several doctoral students start at the same time. This means that you can support one another, says Pille Strauss-Raats.

**ANOTHER IMPORTANT** issue concerns the relationship with your supervisor. The latest survey shows that 31 percent of the female doctoral students feel that there is a need for improved supervision, compared to 18 percent of the male students.

- The match between doctoral students and supervisors is not always successful. There should be clear rules regarding how to change your supervisor without it becoming a personal issue. At Pedagogen, for example, they have created a doctoral students' council, where they have developed a checklist of what to expect from the process from both parties. There should also be routines for what happens when a supervisor is ill.

There is still much to be done in terms of discrimination and equal treatment, says Pille Strauss-Raats. Female doctoral students are more vulnerable.

- Twenty-seven percent of the female doctoral students feel that they are always treated fairly, compared to

forty percent of the male doctoral students. The fact that 4 percent of the University of Gothenburg's doctoral students have experienced a threat of violence, in some form, is also worrying. In our guidelines there are several practical examples of how to deal with the problem.

**THE NEXT WORK** environment survey, which will take place at the beginning of next year, will contain a special section concerning the doctoral students' work environment.

- The lessons learned from that survey will be an important part of the knowledge database we are building to improve their working environment, says Pille Strauss-Raats.

Text: **Allan Eriksson**  
Photo: **Johan Wingborg**

## FACTS

### Doktorander vid GU

About doctoral studies at the University of Gothenburg:

There are approximately 1,800 active doctoral students. The average age is: 33. There are an equal number of male and female doctoral students. 73 percent are married or live with a partner.

40 percent are international students.

60 percent study full-time. 80 percent work more than 40 hours a week.

Doctoral students account for a third of all the research in Sweden.



Foto: PRIVAT

**Sanskriti Chattopadhyay, doctoral student at the Film, Photography and Literary Composition Unit at HDK-Valand, thinks the work is a big step in the right direction.**

- **IT IS VERY** commendable that HR is delving into this and identifying what the core problems are and how to achieve a better working environment at the departmental level. Instead of seeing the doctoral students' questions as separate, they are put in a broader perspective. This creates awareness and initiates increased collaboration and exchange between different faculties and levels within the administration.

Sanskriti Chattopadhyay emphasizes that there is already a lot of information and statistics regarding the working environment of doctoral students, but it is a big thing to gather everything in the one place.

- I have high hopes that the work will lead to an increased exchange of information and best practice. It is important to have a more positive and constructive way of working, where you discuss issues together and arrive at different solutions.

# Researchers from the Sahlgrenska Academy at the top



Gunnar C. Hansson

**Among the researchers who are most cited worldwide, thirteen of them are from the University of Gothenburg, at least according to the company Clarivate Analytics. All but one come from Sahlgrenska Academy, and Karolinska Institute is the only university in Sweden with more names on the list.**

**AT THE TOP AMONG** the University of Gothenburg researchers is Karl Swedberg, Professor Emeritus of Cardiology and Care Science, who for more than 40 years has led a considerable number of international clinical intervention studies. His most cited article is from 1987 and was published in the prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine*. It shows that ACE inhibitors can significantly prolong the life of patients with severe heart failure.

- The article is based on a rather small study of 250 patients, but had an outstanding impact and was of great significance for the treatment of these patients. Since then, I have published over 400 articles on heart disease.

It is important to publish in reputable journals and write an article that demonstrates a result, positive or negative, as well as having correct documentation, Karl Swedberg emphasizes.

- **ALL TYPES OF** results are important, even those that do not show the desired effect.

In second and third place are



Malin Johansson



Fredrik Bäckhed



Kaj Blennow

Gunnar C. Hansson, Professor of Medical Biochemistry and Cell biology, and his former doctoral student, Malin E. V. Johansson, Professor of Biomedical Laboratory Science. The reason why they rank so highly is an article from 2008, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), says Malin E. V. Johansson.

- The article broke new ground by showing that it is the protective layer of mucus that keeps most bacteria away from the cell surface in the intestinal wall. Previously, it was thought that the immune system recognizes good and bad bacteria.

Research into intestinal diseases is an important area, Malin E. V. Johansson points out.

- **TREATMENTS FOR** ulcerative colitis, for example, target the symptoms. But to really under-

2011-2021	Publications	Highly cited articles
<b>Karl Swedberg</b>	316	20
<b>Gunnar C. Hansson</b>	121	11
<b>Malin Johansson</b>	74	13
<b>Petia Kovatcheva-Datchary</b>	29	9
<b>Joakim Larsson</b>	120	16
<b>Jan Lötval</b>	226	10
<b>Henrik Nilsson</b>	89	16
<b>Marcus Ståhlman</b>	89	5
<b>Valentina Tremaroli</b>	54	17
<b>Fredrik Bäckhed</b>	175	42
<b>Ulf Andreasson</b>	144	16
<b>Kaj Blennow</b>	622	49
<b>Michael Schöll</b>	74	12

stand what has gone wrong when an illness occurs, you have to acquire basic knowledge of how the body works.

Over the years, most articles attract fewer readers, but the article in PNAS is still at the top, Gunnar C. Hansson explains.

- Often it is overview articles that are read the most, or articles in clinical research because they are more aimed at researchers. The fact that our article is so appreciated is therefore remarkable, but it is due to the fact that it is so basic, and therefore interesting to everyone who works with gut bacteria.

Hard work is the key to success, Gunnar C. Hansson points out.

- But it is also important to take an interest in slightly unusual areas. If everyone is running in the same direction, there is little chance of finding anything new.

**FREDRIK BÄCKHED**, Professor of Molecular Medicine, also researches the intestinal flora. He appears on the list twice: in the field of microbiology and in molecular biology and genetics.

- This is because our research is so broad and spans several disciplines. Primarily, two articles are often cited: one on the development of intestinal flora in young children and one on the change in intestinal flora in metabolic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes.

Although it is great to be highly ranked on a prestigious list, the ranking does not mean anything special when it comes to our everyday work, Fredrik Bäckhed explains.

Having a number of research-

ers on the Clarivate Analytics list will probably affect the University of Gothenburg's place in the Academic Ranking of World Universities, says the analyst Magnus MacHale-Gunnarsson.

- Where we are already in 139th place. How much we will advance up the list is difficult to say, but 10-20 places is not unlikely, provided we do not fall when it comes to other indicators.

Text: **Eva Lundgren**

Photo: **Johan Wingborg**

## FACTS

### The company Clarivate

**Analytics** publishes a list annually of the researchers whose publications over a ten-year period have been referenced the most in 21 fields and one interdisciplinary field. This year's list is based on publications from 2011-2021. To appear on the list, a researcher must have a large number of citations as well as a large number of highly cited articles according to a complicated calculation system. In total, the list includes 6,938 researchers worldwide.

Among the Swedish universities, Karolinska Institute has the most researchers (17), followed by the University of Gothenburg (14) and then Lund University (6). The universities of Stockholm, Uppsala, Linköping and SLU have 5 names each.

The researchers that appear on the list from the University of Gothenburg are as follows: Karl Swedberg, Gunnar C. Hansson, Malin Johansson, Petia Kovatcheva-Datchary, Joakim Larsson, Jan Lötval, Henrik Nilsson, Marcus Ståhlman, Valentina Tremaroli, Fredrik Bäckhed, Ulf Andreasson, Kaj Blennow and Michael Schöll.

Two of the researchers are involved in more than one field: Fredrik Bäckhed, University of Gothenburg (2 fields), and Anders Hagfeldt, Uppsala University (3 fields).



**If everyone is running in the same direction, there is little chance of finding anything new.**

GUNNAR C. HANSSON

# Wants to start a campus 2.0

**The humanities' low funding priority, work environment, internationalization and a better integration of teacher education, these are some important issues for Åsa Arping. At the beginning of 2023, she will become the new dean at the Faculty of Arts.**

**– I also hope for a new start for campus teaching, a campus 2.0. Humanisten is a fantastic building with huge possibilities.**

**BECOMING A** foreign correspondent in Latin America was Åsa Arping's dream when she studied English, Latin American studies and journalism at Stockholm University in the late 1980s.

Instead, she moved to Gothenburg, continued her English studies and began studying comparative literature. Now she has been here for about 30 years.

– I like to write and I'm also very interested in civic issues and politics. But these are interests that suit a literary scholar just as much as a journalist. Gender issues in particular have always been important to me, but also issues of class.

**AMONG THE MANY** projects she has been involved in is *Swedish Women's Writing on Export*. The project led to a rather startling discovery.

– Carl Jonas Love Almqvist and August Strindberg have tra-

ditionally been the 19th-century authors upon whom Swedish literary history has focused. But outside Sweden's borders, it was completely different authors who gained prominence: the most translated author during the 19th century was Emilie Flygare-Carlén. A strong runner-up was Fredrika Bremer, a celebrated figure in the USA, for example. It is thanks to digitalization that we were able to go through volumes of library catalogues, reviews, newspaper articles and lists of translations, and thus discovered how widely read these women were.

**ÅSA ARPING HAS** also been involved in several literary history projects, including *Litteraturens historia i Sverige* (Literary History in Sweden) and *Natur & Kulturs litteraturhistoria* (Natur & Kultur's Literary History). This means that she was able to influence which authors should be highlighted in our time. And it is something that is currently a hot topic of discussion.

– The question of a Swedish literary canon emerges every now and then and then fades away. The fact that interest is waning is partly due to the fact that we already have a kind of canon, i.e. certain authors and works that recur in school and at universities and colleges. But it is also because it is difficult to determine what a canon should constitute. Classics or things that are popular right now? Women's and LGBTQ



”  
**Just like many other disciplines, humanists today use large databases and expensive software.**

ÅSA ARPING

literature, working-class writers, high or low brow? Regardless of how the issue is handled, it is not up to politicians to decide. Instead, teachers should have a lot of influence in terms of what to teach.

Literature is not only about which groups or themes are addressed. The literary form is of at least of equal importance. Realism for example, what is it?

– **TOGETHER WITH FOUR** other Nordic colleagues, I was involved in a project about Uncle *Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe from 1852. At the time, it was seen as a realistic novel but it is not perceived as such today. The novel was first published as a serial and then became a book that was translated into 37 languages, and was a success all over the world, including in revised children's versions. It achieved considerable importance during the fight against slavery, but was criticized at the time for the reductive way it portrayed black



As new dean, Åsa Arping wants to focus on the work environment, as well as try to increase the incentives to engage in popular science and collaboration.

characters. The book is considered to be sentimental, but that particular feature has become less troublesome in recent years; the humanities are undergoing an affective change where emotionality is seen as something worth investigating.

In addition to engaging in research, Åsa Arping is involved in how research is published. Among other things, she is editor in chief and chair of the editorial board for Kriterium, a platform for the review, publication and distribution of high-quality scientific books.

– I THINK WE HAVE focused too intently on journal articles, we need greater scope in the publishing landscape. Some scientific works can also be read by an interested public. But in order to reach a larger audience, researchers often need to adopt a more popular-science app-

roach. Despite the fact that most people realize the importance of both popular science and other collaborations, such activities are usually not included in lecturers' workforce plans. It is something we need to discuss and try to change.

**THE PRICE TAG** system from 1994 also needs to be revised, says Åsa Arping.

- The calculations that were made back then are no longer correct, just like many other disciplines, humanists today use large databases and expensive software. The low remuneration means that many courses cannot afford more than perhaps 3-4 hours of teaching a week. It is far too little, especially considering that our students have an increasingly varied background.

Other important issues are more integration and visibility of teacher education at the faculty,

## Åsa Arping

**Currently:** New dean at the Faculty of Humanities, term January 1, 2023–December 31, 2028. The new Pro Dean is Fredrik Engström, Senior Lecturer in Logic.

**Books:** *Den anspråksfulla blygsamheten* (2002), *Hvad gör väl namnet?* (2013), *Att göra klass* (2022), *Swedish Women's Writing on Export* (2019) together with Jenny Bergenmar, Gunnilla Hermansson, Birgitta Johansson Lindh and Yvonne Leffler.

She has been active in a number of literary history projects, including *Litteraturens historia i Sverige* (2009/2013), *Nordisk kvinnolitteraturhistoria* (2016), *Nordens litteratur* (2017) and *Natur & Kulturs litteraturhistoria* (2021).

**Position:** Head of Education and Deputy Head of Department at the Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion. External member of the HS Faculty Committee at Karlstad University 2014–2016. Member of the University of Gothenburg's Board 2019–2021, from 2022 first deputy.

**Family:** Husband Erik Andersson (author and translator), one daughter.

**Lives in:** Västra Bodarne outside Alingsås.

**Hobbies:** Storytelling in all its forms, popular culture, politics, picking mushrooms.

as well as investments in internationalization.

- I would like more distance learning courses in English, but also in other languages. We also have to get better at getting our students out into the world, there are plenty of opportunities, such as Eutopia and Erasmus +. Not least important is increased cooperation with our Nordic neighbours.

A good working environment, both for employees and students, is also an important issue for Åsa Arping.

- After the pandemic, campus teaching would benefit from something of a fresh start. The students need to understand the point of coming here and meeting and having discussions with other people. Now we also have a remodelled building with fantastic opportunities for meetings, we should make more use of that.

**ÅSA ARPING POINTS** out that it is a well-managed faculty of which she will become head.

- The management and the departments have rectified the previous deficit, coped with the relocation issues during the remodelling and, in the midst of it all, a very difficult pandemic. So, you could say I will be captaining a steady ship. At the same time, we know that the rent increases will be dramatic and that certain subjects continue to experience difficulties in attracting students and attracting external research funding. Together with Pro Dean, Fredrik Engström, I plan to visit all the departments and talk to staff at different levels to get as good a picture as possible of the organization. Of course, being a dean means a lot of work, but there is a fantastic office and a skilled management team to provide support, so I'm looking forward to getting started.

Text: **Eva Lundgren**

Photo: **Johan Wingborg**



# A broader collaboration f

**– The major win with EUTOPIA is that we have new opportunities and a chance to learn from one another, says Vice-Chancellor Eva Wiberg, who, together with Deputy Vice-Chancellor Torbjörn Lundh, is handing over the leadership of the EUTOPIA network.**

**WE MEET IN** the lobby of the historic Grand Hotel Union - in the middle of the old town in Ljubljana - built at the beginning

of the 20th century and decorated in the classic Art Nouveau style. It has been an intense few days of meetings for Eva Wiberg, who has been president for three years and is now handing over the baton to her colleague Tiziana Lippioello, from Ca Foscari University of Venice.

– I am so happy with what we have accomplished in recent years. It has been extremely important to see each other here and to continue our work. What I am most proud of is that at EUTOPIA, we had a global



**The greatest advantage for the University of Gothenburg is that we create a community across faculty boundaries.**

EVA WIBERG

approach and included both research and education, as well as student collaboration from day one. The greatest advantage for the University of Gothenburg is that we create a community across faculty boundaries, we have a lot to gain from being involved. It is a project driven by challenges. We sometimes think we are the biggest and the best, but it's good to have a little humility. We also have a lot to learn.

The big thing this time was the signing of two declarations, a Manifesto for Inclusion, which EUT-



# EUTOPIA

European University



## For EUTOPIA

OPIA is the first to implement as a university alliance, and a Global Partnership Charter, which enables collaboration with universities in South Africa, Morocco, South Korea and Australia.

**HOWEVER**, collaboration across national borders with cultural and historical differences has its difficulties, Eva Wiberg points out.

- Our circumstances are all different. The most important lesson is that we gain an

increased understanding of our similarities and differences. While the universities in southern Europe have more of a top-down management structure, we have a more consensus-driven collaboration that is based more on a bottom-up management structure, but we need to work with both. It is the same as the Japanese MIRAI network, where it has been shown to be possible to collaborate and find common ground even though Japanese



Ljubljana by night.

se universities are strongly hierarchical.

One motto that Eva Wiberg refers to is: "Being strong by being kind".

- **PREVIOUSLY**, there were only 6 universities, but now that there are 10, we need to be more careful regarding formalities, we need to be more structured. Now the journey with EUTOPIA MORE has progressed this far, the most important thing is not that everyone needs to be involved in everything. Instead, it should be seen as a smorgasbord of opportunities. EUTOPIA is complementary, one thing does not exclude another and it is not a governing body. All departments and faculties can continue to work with their bilateral agreements, but collaborating with universities within EUTOPIA makes it easier.

**THE NEW DECLARATION** on expanded collaboration outside Europe is an expression of that. The fundamental principle is responsible internationalization. However,

collaboration with authoritarian regimes is still a sensitive issue, Eva Wiberg admits.

- For example, in certain projects we collaborate with North Korea, China and Saudi Arabia. Fundamentally, we do not give up our academic freedom, freedom of speech and the safeguarding of human rights, but we are not politicians and we should be careful when condemning the actions of states. The day we start shutting people out, we are not acting in a responsible manner. I believe we can influence and make a difference even if it takes time.

**ANOTHER MAJOR** challenge is the promotion of student engagement at all 10 universities.

- It is important that students feel included and that we continue to invest in sustainability, and strive to have a close connection between education and research. We create the future together, says Eva Wiberg.

Photo och text: **Allan Eriksson**



Photo: ALLAN ERIKSSON

The EUTOPIA week took place in the beautiful city of Ljubljana.



Photo: ALLAN ERIKSSON

Part of the delegation from GU in front of the main university building in Ljubljana. From the left: Taslima Syed Bastin, Emelie Markianos, Malin Hjort, Andrea Maris, Henrik Lindskog, Maria Bania, Torbjörn Lundh, Catherine Gillo Nilsson, Hans Abelius, Sylvia Vigmo, Pauli Kortteinen, Eddi Omrcen, Karin Jonson and Luca Versteegen.

FACTS

**EUTOPIA Week**, hosted by the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia, took place on November 21–25, 2022. The theme was “University of the Future, Universe of Opportunities” and it brought together nearly 300 participants, of which 250 attended in person and the rest participated digitally. So far, 6 meetings have been held, of which 3 were digital. This was the last within the framework of the EUTOPIA 2050 programme. The next summit, within the new EUTOPIA MORE alliance, will be held in Lisbon next summer.

**The University of Gothenburg** has been part of the EUTOPIA university alliance for three years. Together with ten other universities from all over Europe, the shared vision is to create a strong alliance with free movement for students, researchers, lecturers and other staff. In total, the alliance includes over 300,000 students, 45,000 researchers, lecturers and administrators, over 1,000 research teams and tens of thousands of alumni. In Europe, there are 44 university alliances. EUTOPIA stands for “European Universities Transforming to an Open Inclusive Academy”.



# Luca came second in Science Slam

**Last summer he cycled through the Balkan countries to support oppressed researchers, and now in November he competed, together with eight other young European researchers, in the art of presenting their research in a popular science format in less than five minutes.**

**Luca Versteegen, a doctoral student in political science, came second in the Science Slam competition in Ljubljana.**

– **I'M INCREDIBLY** happy with my presentation. I felt that my message got across and received a great response from the audience, says Luca Versteegen.

The competition, which was conducted as part of EUTOPIA Week, took place in the main lecture hall at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, and was streamed live; in addition to a jury and audience voting, you could also vote online. The winner was the favourite Matevz Dular from the University of Ljubljana, who spoke about exploding bubbles and how to manipulate them.

Emotions such as hate



and love govern political values and how we vote. It is the starting point of Luca's thesis work, which deals with the psycho-social reasons for the overwhelming success of the far right in the last 10-20 years.

The secret behind a successful performance is to prepare meticulously, but above all to connect with the audience and to use humour, Luca believes.

– **IT IS IMPORTANT** to relate the content to people's everyday experiences and questions, so I tried to connect it to the current political situation in Slovenia. I linked my presentation to a more general theory of party sympathy and emotions; you tend to think less of a person whose political views differ dramatically from your own. It's like dating someone who at first glance is nice and sociable

but when you find out they sympathize with a party from the other side of the political spectrum, it can lead to a change in your feelings.

**LUCA THINKS IT** goes without saying that, as a young researcher, he should take part in various popular science events.

– In addition to being fun, it's actually part of our job. For me, popular science is a way of paying back the taxpayers for the research that I conduct. Many researchers think that their research is finished when they have written a scientific article, but I have always seen it as self-evident. Furthermore, it provides great preparation for other career paths, where you benefit tremendously from being able to communicate. Then it doesn't really matter how many articles you have written.

This summer, Luca embarked on a 1,500 kilometre bike ride from Budapest to Athens,

and he raised SEK 18,000 for the Scholars at Risk network, a network that supports oppressed researchers.

– **THE BIKE RIDE** was also about gaining practical experience of my research. I cycled through the Balkan countries and Hungary to learn more about how the people there live and think, and why far-right parties are so popular in those countries. Personally, I was shocked by how poor it is in parts of the countryside and that there was hardly any infrastructure, and even a lack of running water and electricity. These people cannot afford to go on weekend trips to Paris or Berlin - how can we expect them to have the same ideas as us about diversity, measures to combat climate change and democracy?

**THIS WAS THE** third time that Luca has competed in the Science Slam - he also came second in April.

– Similarly to the Eurovision Song Contest, it is not an entirely impartial competition, but it is still fun and educational. I hope my performance contributed to a little more love and a little less hate.

Text & Photo: **Allan Eriksson**

**Watch Science Slam:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ut81W4EuvdY>



Photo: PRIVAT

# An alliance to be reckoned with

**EUTOPIA More has now been launched and the work within the network has begun.**

**– But the bigger challenge is to make use of the network internally within GU, says Deputy Vice-Chancellor Torbjörn Lundh. Alongside Vice-Chancellor Eva Wiberg, he now ends his term as chairman.**

**ON NOVEMBER 23**, just as darkness falls over Ljubljana, Torbjörn Lundh settles into an armchair inside the lobby of the Hotel Union. After a long day of meetings, he can finally unwind. He has been chairman of the strategy group that developed the application Pilot Phase 2-2050, and has now passed the torch onto his colleague at Univer

sitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona. The work on the application and budget, a collaboration with 10 vice-chancellors, one from each partner university, is finally complete. This summer, the budget of 14.4 million euros was granted for the next four-year period, which is to be distributed between the ten universities.

In this context, it may not sound like a lot of money, but it is proof that EUTOPIA is an alliance to be reckoned with. Now the network is expanding and becoming global. The whole idea of internationalization is in line with GU's vision of being a university for the world. The work we put in now will benefit us in the future.

Torbjörn Lundh views the way they work within the Japanese network MIRAI as a sort of role model.

Both these networks create an incre-

dible synergy. EUTOPIA is now entering pilot phase 2, where it's becoming more integrated into the work we do, while also becoming more complex and with greater diversity. Of course, there are those who find this a bit more difficult to handle; there are university representatives down here who wish to go back to the way things used to be, but so far, we have managed to maintain this diversity. We want as many people as possible to feel welcome, says Torbjörn Lundh.

**HE EMPHASIZES THAT EUTOPIA** should be perceived as an opportunity to expand cooperation in education, research, and collaboration for all students and employees.

What is unique with EUTOPIA More, according to Torbjörn Lundh, is that the



**Torbjörn Lundh participated in a meeting between the vice-president's group and the local deans in Ljubljana about how EUTOPIA could support and enrich the faculties' work.**

network does not involve any designated research directions, but instead highlights the importance of having a clear connection between education and research, and of creating projects through a bottom-up process.

**– WE DON'T SAY WHAT** kind of research we're going to do, since we don't know. Our motto is: "Being bold, by being humble". I personally believe in a renaissance for classical knowledge. Soon we will run out of low-hanging AI-fruits and smarter algorithms will be required which in turn will need legitimate modeling skills.

Torbjörn Lundh thinks the time is ripe to look inward by offering teachers and researchers at GU new opportunities.

– We have to make sure that EUTOPIA does not become a forced desktop product, but that it instead sets a table of possibilities. There are a lot of exciting projects and learning environments here, and the goal must be to let many flowers bloom. I look forward to a day when students will declare that they have degrees from both EUTOPIA and GU.

For three years, the manifesto for inclusion, which was adopted at the summit, has been led by GU's coordinator Catherine Gillo Nilsson at Educational Affairs.

– We're proud to say that this was a GU-initiative. The fact that we also get a European dimension of the diversity



Torbjörn Lundh

work means that we can attract the best students. Our strength must be quality and openness.

**THE COOPERATION AGREEMENT** with the four universities in South Korea, Morocco, South Africa and Australia is also a step towards deepening cooperation, not only in education but also in research.

– Soon, more universities will join the network. It is important that Europe does

not become a fortress like the USA and China, but that it acts globally. After all, we do not cooperate just for the sake of it but, if one is allowed to think big, to address major global issues and contribute to global peace.

**Which are the biggest challenges?**

– We need to create a university alliance with as low thresholds for cooperation as possible. I myself believe a lot in the power of setting an example, so therefore we need to let go of prestige and learn to be a little humbler and to listen to the capillaries. We need to build trust from below.

**Is there a risk that GU will lose its influence when both you and the Vice-Chancellor leave your assignments?**

– I don't think we will lose influence, rather the opposite. At GU we have distinguished ourselves by often being the best in class. It is important that there is order within the alliance and we have delivered what we said we would. I am optimistic about the future and have confidence in the new management of EUTOPIA. Now GU can take the opportunity to be a little freer and perhaps even braver.

Allan Eriksson

# WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Text: **Eva Lundgren** Photo: **Johan Wingborg**

That is a question that Joakim Sandberg thinks both banks and business leaders should sometimes ask. He is involved in two projects dealing with some of the greatest problems of our time: the climate crisis and threats to biodiversity.



**A**t the University of Gothenburg, Joakim Sandberg is Professor of Practical Philosophy. But at the University of Groningen, in The Netherlands, he is a Professor of Economics and Finance from a Humanist Perspective. The professorship is the first of its kind and the aim is to create a deeper dialogue between economists and humanists.

And perhaps it is needed. The combination of humanities and economics is quite unusual - at least so far.

- In recent years, however, so-called PPE educational programmes - Philosophy, Politics, Economics - have become increasingly common, including at the University of Oxford. We are considering providing that type of education at my department as well. Today, the view of economics is very one-sidedly profit-oriented. But it hasn't always been that way.

In the past, companies were considered to be more a part of society, with a certain responsibility for its development, explains Joakim Sandberg.

- **A purely free-market** perspective, such as that which Reagan and Thatcher expounded, is quite new. The approach can work in good times, when self-interest leads to public interest; competition produces better or cheaper goods, the customer can choose what suits his or her own wallet, the economy trundles along smoothly.

But in a crisis, such as the current one, politics and ethics suddenly become important.

- One example is the banks that still barely provide any interest on deposit accounts, despite the fact that they themselves are now earning good money from the funds they have in the Swedish Central Bank. The fact that the banks can make huge sums of money without their customers getting anything in return shows that →



→ the market is not working. At the same time, energy prices are skyrocketing, which the energy companies explain by stating that their costs have gone up. If the banks and energy companies jointly took responsibility, it would have meant a better financial situation for customers and thus it would have benefited society as a whole.

**“The tragedy of the commons”** is a development noted by the renowned economist Elinor Ostrom: If, for example, everyone who lives next to a lake fishes as much as possible, they will, of course, benefit from it in the short term. But when the fish run out, everyone loses. A more responsible course of action would be to refrain from short-term gains and instead agree on how much fish each person can take. In this way, everyone benefits, although not too excess, but it prevents the fish stock from collapsing.

- That realization has not really reached society at large, nor the business schools. Instead, the students learn that companies, almost by definition, must devote themselves to profit maximization. The responsi-

bility for the climate, nature and fair working conditions lies elsewhere. Contrary to what many people think, however, many entrepreneurs think it is good if the state steps in and taxes carbon dioxide emissions or demands environmental labelling - the same rules apply to everyone.

The one-sided approach being taught in these courses affects the students, says Joakim Sandberg.

- Within economic psychology there are studies that show that business students actually become increasingly self-focused during the course of their education. It is very sad, especially since it does not have to be like that at all. The economics lecturers I talk to are not at all convinced that everything is just about money, on the contrary, many are committed to environmental and social justice issues.

**If the companies** have no particular responsibility for the environment and society, perhaps consumers do? By demanding eco-labelled goods, you can influence companies and even make eco-friendly products profitable, says Joakim Sandberg.



# Would we all just sit there quietly and hope that the state comes up with some new tax?



- But we humans constantly play different roles. I can talk about sustainability with my students and then still stand in the shower for ten minutes, without thinking too much about it. Moreover, it is not so easy to always act conscientiously; we cannot always know in detail how an item was produced or how it was transported.

Joakim Sandberg usually asks his students the following question: What would happen if a comet suddenly came hurtling towards the Earth?

- Would we all just sit there quietly and hope that the state comes up with some new tax? Or would we actually make an effort to do something about the comet before it's too late?

**Joakim Sandberg** runs the research team in financial ethics, which consists of about ten philosophers and economists engaged in questions about the financial market's responsibility for society and the environment. Their latest research project is *Mistra Finance to Revive Biodiversity* which aims to strengthen the market's interest in biodiversity.

- The climate crisis is relatively easy to explain to

## ■ Joakim Sandberg

**Works as:** Professor of Practical Philosophy at the University of Gothenburg, and Professor of Economics and Finance from a Humanist Perspective at the University of Groningen, in The Netherlands, Director of the Research Team in Financial Ethics, as well as the Deputy Director of the Sustainable Finance Lab. He also produces the blog *Finance and Philosophy*.

**Lives in:** Majorna with his daughter who is 11 years old.

**Is currently listening to:** Thåström, audio books and podcasts.

Is currently reading *Girig-Sverige* (Avaricious Sweden) by Andreas Cervenká and *A Hidden Universe – Adventures in Biodiversity* by Alexandre Antonelli.

**Favourite food:** Vegetarian food, preferably soup.

**Hobbies:** Socializing with friends, playing guitar and attending therapy.

the public, not least after the hot summers in Europe in recent years. But getting people to realize the seriousness of a hitherto unknown frog that is under threat of extinction is more difficult.

Where the money goes affects the society we ultimately end up with, Joakim Sandberg points out.

- One goal of the *Mistra* project is therefore to develop business models that protect biological diversity. Among other things, one could perhaps put a price on the destruction of nature. But, as Immanuel Kant pointed out, everything has either a price or a dignity; if nature is only about economics, maybe other values disappear?

**But what is money** really? Many people believe that money is material things that can be put into a bank vault, Joakim Sandberg points out.

- But that is not the case at all. Instead, money can be described as a social cement that regulates various relationships between people and that must constantly be in motion. Money sitting in a till, that is not in someone's hand, has no value at all.

The general perception of the state's responsibility in the financial area is also incorrect.

- Angela Merkel, once said that the state must behave like a conscientious housewife and curtail its spending in the event of a crisis. But, as the British economist John Maynard Keynes pointed out, the state's duty is exactly the opposite: In good times, it is important to save so that when the crisis comes, the state can increase its spending.

Joakim Sandberg is often out lecturing about this subject as well as others to both the business world and politicians. He has also written several reports for the Swedish Central Bank.

- I feel that people listen to me, although I'm not sure that this always leads to much practical action.

**That Joakim Sandberg** became a researcher is not so strange. Books and reading have interested him most of his life.

- In the eighth grade, I did a project on philosophy and quantum physics, after accidentally finding some books on it in an antiquarian bookshop. And when my friends were rummaging through a band's records after a punk concert, I was looking for the literature that might also be available to buy instead.

He graduated in economics and philosophy at the same time and started teaching at university when he was just 22 years of age.

- But it's not always good to just keep going at the same pace. For a while I was on sick leave due to burnout, so I've been trying to learn to slow down.

One way to take it easy is to go out into the archipelago, says Joakim Sandberg.

- For the past seven years, I've rented an apartment at Hyppeln every summer. There I get time for things that I don't otherwise have time for, such as reading fiction and popular science - and playing football with my daughter.

# SURIASHI

## *and the art of slow walking*

Text: Eva Lundgren Photo: Johan Wingborg

People rush about on their various errands, cars and bicycles whiz past, but Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt remain unfazed. Walking with knees bent slightly and leaning back somewhat, she walks slowly – very slowly – across London Bridge.

This is Suriashi, a fundamental cornerstone of Japanese dance and theatre, which involves taking one's place in the world in a non-aggressive way. →



# SHI



The tradition is to wear a kimono when practicing suriashi.



**It was in 2000** that Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt, heavily pregnant and mother of a two-year-old child, began studying Nihon buyō, i.e. classical Japanese dance, in Kyoto. Her master, Nishikawa Senrei focused quite extensively on Suriashi.

- Suriashi is a central part of Japanese dance, theatre and martial arts, where the stereotypes of “female” and “male” are expressed through posture. In Nishikawa Senrei’s studio, we

walked very slowly across the wooden floor without lifting our feet. The back should be kept straight, the gaze directed forward and the hands should rest on the thighs, and then with the knees slightly bent one foot is placed in front of the other. The goal is not the important thing, instead one’s concentration is focused on the present, on what you can see and hear around you, and on the experience of the ground under the soles of your feet.

The walker moves from place to place, but also from spirit to person, because dance in Japan is considered to have divine origin, says Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt.

- In order to feel the support of one’s forebears, who walked the earth before you, you lean back slightly. You move forward but blend into what has been, with each step you take a piece of past time with you. In Japan, this high-tech country, there is also a very active belief in the spirits of one’s ancestors. They also have a different view of age; in the West we think a dancer should be young. Instead, in Japan, spiritual maturity is valued, which means that an artist is considered to be in their prime in their 50s-70s.

**Master Nishikawa** Senrei toured the world with the performing arts practice that she created. In particular Paris, and the Japonisme that developed there, fascinated her.

- Among other things, she created performances about Camille Claudel, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Carl Jung, which she combined with her art of dance and Zen practice. She stated that East and West are separated but yearn

for each other, and pointed out that I was also part of this longing.

To further immerse herself in the culture, Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt also studied Japanese. - For a while, my husband and I even considered moving to Kyoto. However, we came to the conclusion that it was probably difficult with two small children. However, I see Kyoto as my second home and have thus far made nine trips there to study.

**In 2014, Ami Skånberg** Dahlstedt wrote a master’s thesis at Gothenburg University on Japanese medieval dance. But when she wanted to continue with doctoral studies, it was not possible.

- There were no opportunities for this, neither in Gothenburg nor Stockholm. Then I thought that I might be able to get a doctorate at a university in Kyoto, but that didn’t work out either. In the end I became a PhD student at the University of Roehampton in London.

What Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt wanted to study was not only Suriashi in classical Japanese performing arts, but also how one’s way of walking can be used to study power relations in public spaces.

- At first I wore a kimono, which you have to wear when you study Japanese dance. But because I wanted to investigate visibility and invisibility through walking slowly, I soon decided to walk in ordinary clothes and shoes, while sticking to the technique I learned at the dance studio. Walking using the Suriashi technique gave me an intense experience of the environment and of how we share our place in society, especially in urban spaces.

Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt has walked using the Suriashi technique in Europe, USA, Japan and China.

**- For the most** part, I have walked alone and felt invisible, as if I was in a kind of secure room in these various cities. When I walked together with other people - dancers, artists, researchers and amateurs - walking, conversely, created great visibility that affected the public space. One Suriashi walk that was particularly visible was when I walked with the drag artist Bruno the Bad Boy at a temple festival in Kyoto.

Activism is often perceived as something violent and outward-oriented.

- But the activism I engage in - Suriashi as an experimental pilgrimage - is quiet and introspective. Nevertheless, it



Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt has practiced suriashi together with

**Walking using the Suriashi technique gave me an intense experience of the environment and of how we share our place in society ...**

AMI SKÅNBERG DAHLSTEDT



is very clearly a matter of taking a stand.

Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt has also taught Suriashi at Japanese universities, both in Kyoto and Tokyo.

- The students often think that Japanese dance is boring and that the master-apprentice tradition is elitist. But it is also the case that different ways of expressing yourself are connected, there are similarities between Kabuki and hip-hop, among other things. Not everything Japanese is very traditional either, for example the art form Butoh is very anarchic.



with the drag artist Bruno the Bad Boy in Kyoto.

Dance was accepted as an academic subject very late in Sweden; it was only in 2016 at the University of Gothenburg that it became a subject in the dance teacher training at the Academy of Music and Drama (HSM).

– **Sweden is in urgent** need of higher education in the art of dance. Many people, including myself, go abroad to get both artistic and philosophical challenges. There are vocational schools in dance, such as the Balettakademien, but they have no academic foundation.

In her doctoral thesis, Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt highlighted people who were important in ensuring that dance become both an academic and an artistic subject, such as Gun Lund and the dance group Rubicon.

– When Pia Muchin and Cecilia Lagerström started master's programs at HSM, doors to higher education were also opened for dancers and choreographers with a focus on artistic research, a field I

am particularly passionate about. And I have noticed that there is a tremendous interest in dance at the university, for example among cultural heritage researchers, social scientists and literary scholars.

In addition to roughly 300 pages of text, Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt's doctoral thesis also contains 11 hours of video recordings.

– **The recordings** show how I perform Suriashi in lots of different places, alone or together with others. They usually serve as documentation but also as a longer, slow dance film. As far as I know, I am the first person in Gothenburg to have a PhD in dance, and I hope to contribute to increased curiosity about global dance techniques, artistic research and research on walking. I also hope that interest in Japanese dance will increase and that it will be given its rightful place in the Western canon which, without acknowledging it, has borrowed a great deal of knowledge from the East.



## Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt

About Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt: Her doctoral thesis is entitled: *Suriashi as Experimental Pilgrimage in Urban and Other Spaces*, at the Department of Dance, University of Southampton. The thesis is available on ResearchGate

Current position: Lecturer in Dance, and Program Manager for Master Dance Education at Stockholm University of the Arts, and University Lecturer at the Academy of Music and Drama, where she teaches dance theory, dance history, choreography, writing and dance film.

**Lives on:** Brännö

**Family:** Husband Palle Dahlstedt, two sons and three cats.

Suriashi is a walking technique and training method in Japanese martial arts, the Japanese tea ceremony, Nō, Kabuki and Nihon buyō. Walking using the Suriashi technique is one of the bases of how the dancer/actor positions him or herself on stage and in the studio.

Here you can watch Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt walking using the Suriashi technique on London Bridge:

<https://bloggenomdans.com/2017/06/04/suriashi-pa-london-bridge/>.

Världskulturmuseet:

<https://youtu.be/FTOMIsXzIJK>

Järntorget:

<https://vimeo.com/164801830>

Walking with cows:

<https://vimeo.com/232812256>

# Learning from silence

Textiles can tell a lot about the lives and history of oppressed women. British-born Jessica Hemmings, who is Professor of Crafts at HDK-Valand, is now doing a deep dive into the colonial heritage of The Netherlands.

**She has made a lot of** trips to the Torpenmuseum in central Amsterdam, Holland's museum of world culture. It contains a wealth of material that embodies our history, but aspects of which have so far been shrouded in obscurity. What Jessica Hemmings investigates in the Reading Material Project is how textile book covers were created by imprisoned women during the Dutch colonialization of Indonesia.

- I am very interested in the silence that prevails in the archives of our museums. That silence tells us a lot, says Jessica Hemmings, who two years ago received the prestigious "Rita Bolland Fellowship" enabling her to conduct research for three years about women's stories and voices from 1910s Indonesia.

- The covers are made in batik and according to the museum's current historiography, this is a textile dyeing technique that was taught to the female prisoners by Dutch men. There is every reason to question the idea that the women would not have known about batik before, says Jessica Hemmings.

**Throughout history**, it has always been predominantly men who have been interviewed and allowed to speak about the objects in museum archives.

- Women were considered less important and therefore, women's stories and experiences are largely omitted. If a major part of history is not to be lost, we need to gather facts about women's knowledge and tradition concerning arts and crafts.

According to Jessica Hemmings, the very fact that there is a lack of facts and knowledge about women's creative work and craftsmanship is due to the fact that their work had a low status until recently. The idea of the research project is

therefore to breathe life into the knowledge, life and experience of the female prisoners. She does this by letting poets and novelists write their stories.

A speculative project, partly based on the artistic process, Jessica Hemmings admits.

- It will be a publication containing a wide assortment of different types of texts. I will write an introduction to the publication that establishes the history around the objects. My approach will be to use an eclectic strategy where selected textiles become literary voices.

**Another example** is the writer Yvonne Vera who uses textiles to tell the story of women's lives and history, she often depicts violence against women in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. At the time, it was not possible to expressly write about the details, or even approach a literal depiction of women who were subjected to sexual abuse in the form of rape or incest.

- Instead of describing bodily injuries that can occur in connection with a sexual assault, she describes the damage done to their clothing. It might entail torn garments hanging in rags, for instance. In this way, the abuse is implied for the reader.

There are reasons why she became interested to the history of Indonesian women. Jessica Hemmings was born in Wales but spent her early years in Indonesia as a child. She moved there because her father was in the military and was stationed in different places. After Indonesia, the family moved to the United States, where Jessica Hemmings went to school. The question of where she feels at home is not an easy one to answer.

- **Even though** I was born in England, I don't feel at home there. I have spent so much of my life in other countries that I don't get many of the shared cultural references of the English. Home for me is where people don't expect me to feel at home.

She has also been on the move within academia and has worked at universities in Ireland, Great Britain and the United States.

- I have continued to move around. Mainly because I find it interesting. The challenges and conditions within the university world are quite similar in the different countries, what differs is the atmosphere and the students.

**She has held** several managerial positions, most recently as deputy head of research at HDK-Valand. But pursuing a career in academia was never something the teenage Jessica Hemmings could have imagined. I was only interested in horses back then. But the school she attended encouraged her to apply to the Rhode Island School of Design. She was a diligent student and showed the same dedication as she had done for horse riding. But despite a bachelor's degree in fine arts, she decided not to pursue a career as a designer. Instead, she was interested in working in developing countries, so she went to Kathmandu. But she was far too impatient for that kind of work and was drawn instead to studying African and Asian literature. She decided to do a master's degree in London and then a PhD in modern literature. That is when she immersed herself in Yvonne Vera's postcolonial writing in Zimbabwe.

Jessica Hemmings states, with a laugh, that it may sound like she has jumped from one thing to another, but she sees it in a different way.

- **Every time I've looked** for an essay topic, I've always returned to questions about how textiles are portrayed in fiction. Especially when it comes to authors who are exposed to censorship, or who for various reasons are forced into some form of self-censorship.

She thinks the best thing about teaching is being able to share what she writes with her students.

- Almost everything I write I use in my teaching. That way, I'm not just having a dialogue with myself. Today's students are also a couple of generations younger than me and constantly contribute new perspectives.

Text: **Hanna Jedvik**

Photo: **Johan Wingborg**



  
**Jessica Hemmings**

**Title:** Professor of Crafts at HDK-Valand. She has a PhD in modern literature, which she received in 2006 with her doctoral thesis *Yvonne Vera: The Voice of Cloth*.

**Born:** In 1976 in Wales, United Kingdom, grew up in the USA and Indonesia.

**Hobbies:** Long-distance running.

**Lives in:** Majorna.





# What did ancient times sound like?

Of course, there are no recordings from prehistoric times.

– But since we do not know of any societies that did not have music, we can assume that humans also played music in prehistoric times.

This was the topic being addressed by Margarita Díaz-Andreu at this year's Felix Neubergh lecture.

**The word archaeoacoustics** was coined in 2006. But archaeologists have been interested in the combination of music and archaeology for much longer than that, explained Margarita Díaz-Andreu, Professor at the University of Barcelona.

– An early attempt to unite musicology and archaeology was made at a conference held by the International Musicological Society at the University of California, Berkeley in 1977. At the time, a spectacular discovery of a music system from ancient Mesopotamia had been made. This led to the formation of The Study Group on Music Archaeology, where, among others, the Swedish music archaeologist Caisa S Lund was an active member.

Another example is The International Study Group on Music Archaeology that was founded in 1988. Over the years, the group has published numerous books in the field. Nevertheless, it is only in recent years that music has begun to receive greater attention within archaeology.

Research in archaeoacoustics can be divided into four areas, said Margarita Díaz-Andreu. – In part, it can involve prehistoric musical instruments, for example flutes made of bird bones. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether an ancient piece of bone was actually used as an instrument – the best way to determine this



*... how favourable the conditions were in terms of speech, music, reverberation and echoes, for example.*

MARGARITA DÍAZ-ANDREU

is to examine whether it works. Another example is lithophones, i.e. instruments consisting of stone formations in various sizes that are struck.

Another area is architectonic archaeology, where researchers investigate acoustics, echoes and reverberations in caves with prehistoric paintings or in megalithic tombs.

– Psychoarchaeology is another field that deals with how people react to sound. Very loud or strong notes create discomfort, while calm rhythms feel pleasant.

**The area in which** Margarita Díaz-Andreu has been particularly interested in recent years is archaeoacoustics in open landscapes. Since autumn 2018, she has led the ERC Artsoundscapes project at the University of Barcelona, which investigates sound in landscapes where prehistoric cave paintings have been found.

– The areas we have studied include the western Mediterranean, Altai in Siberia and Baja California in Mexico. Together with acoustic specialists, we have developed methods to investigate what these places sounded like: how fa-

vourable the conditions were in terms of speech, music, reverberation and echoes, for example.

One example is the Cuevas de la Araña in Valencia, which contain a large number of cave paintings, including an 8,000-year-old drawing of a woman gathering honey, Margarita Díaz-Andreu explains.

– **Around the cave**, at a distance of about 40 kilometres, there are another 16 sites, which makes us believe that the cave was some kind of centre. The echo in Cuevas de la Araña is much louder than anticipated, giving a solemn soundscape reminiscent of a church. Perhaps the area around Cuevas de la Araña was used by an ancient cult where people believed that the mountains were populated by spirits?

The lecture ended with a question and answer session.

Text: **Eva Lundgren** Photo: **Jonas Martinsson**

## ■ Facts

**About Margarita Díaz-Andreu:** The lecture *Hearing the past: the archaeoacoustics of rock art landscapes* was held on November 4 by Margarita Díaz-Andreu, Professor at the University of Barcelona. Apart from archaeoacoustics, Margarita Díaz-Andreu also researches identity and archaeology, including what we consider national cultural heritage to be, the relationship with colonialism and issues of gender. She has written 29 books and 160 scientific articles. Last year, she was awarded the prestigious Menéndez Pidal National Award for her research in the humanities.

The Felix Neubergh Lecture has been held every year since 1977. The lecture alternates between banking and finance one year, and, among other things, archaeology the next.

# Believes in a better future for Iran

On September 16, the morality police in Tehran murdered 22-year-old Kurdish-Iranian Zhina (Mahsa) Amini. Since then, protests have erupted all over Iran.

- Do I think it will achieve anything? It's not a matter of belief, the change is already underway, explains PhD student Sama Khosravi Ooryad.

- "**Jin, jivan, azadi!**" is, as far as I know, the slogan used by the Kurds during the Rojava Revolution in northern Syria. "Woman, life, freedom" has now become the slogan that rings out in the streets of Iran.

These are the words of Sama Khosravi Ooryad, an EU doctoral student at the Department of Cultural Sciences who researches online hate cultures. However, the protests are not only about women, she points out.

- Students are protesting, secondary-school girls are throwing away their veils, workers at the oil refineries are on strike, the LGBTQ movement is protesting, people are lighting fires and dancing in the streets. Different ethnic groups, such as the Kurds, Baloch and Azeris, are also united in their fight against oppression, corruption, poverty and constant economic crises - all of them want to get rid of the regime. Incredible scenes have been recorded using mobile phones which can then be viewed by anyone on YouTube. But mainly this is, of course,

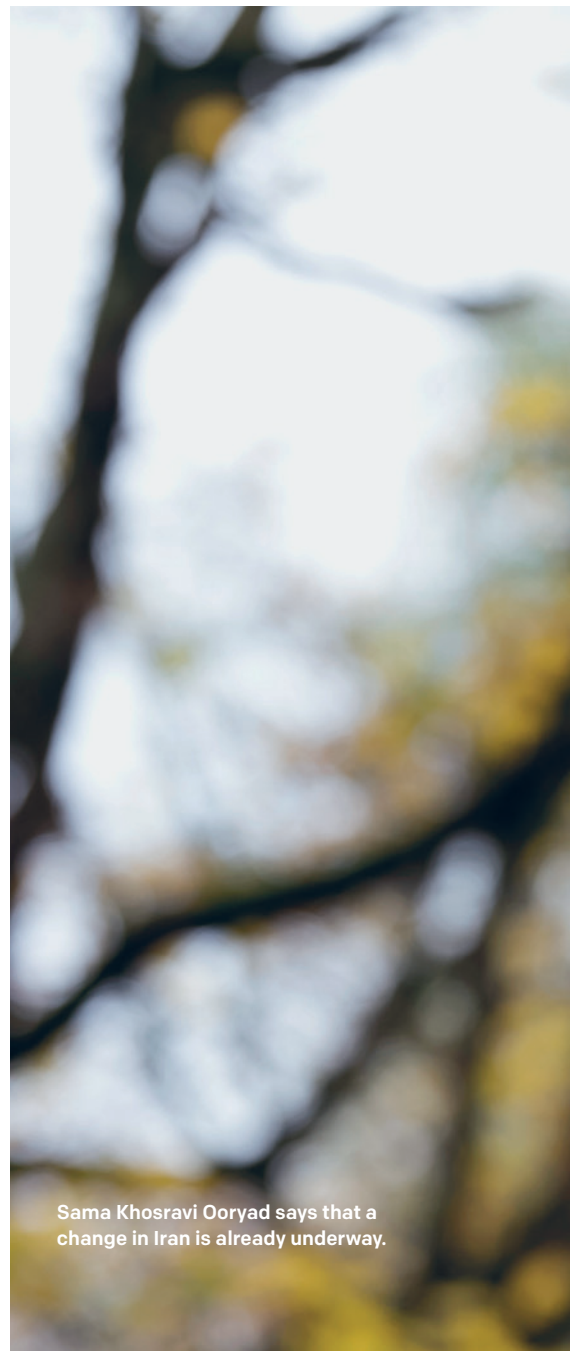
the women's protest; every single woman in the entire world should have the right to decide for herself about her body and what she wants to be in this world.

**Large-scale protests** against the regime in Iran have happened many times before. When Khomeini introduced the veil in 1979, it led to huge protests that lasted for six days. In 2009-2010, people demonstrated against electoral fraud, and the murder of a young woman, Neda Agha-Soltani, became a symbol of the protests then as well.

- Also in 2017-2018, people demonstrated against corruption and political oppression, with widespread arrests as a consequence. During the protests in 2019 when, among other things, the internet was shut down, roughly 1,500 people were killed. However, these various protests have not received much attention in the West, says Sama Khosravi Ooryad.

- Many people from the West are wilfully ignorant of what is happening in other parts of the world: invade or ignore seem to be the options. This is because the West still has a colonial view of the outside world. They do not want to clash with other undemocratic regimes, and marginalized groups outside the West, who are fighting for justice, are not seen as particularly important.

**This time, however,** things are different. All over the world, thousands of people are standing in solidarity with those protesting in Iran and demonstrating on the streets. Famous politicians, activists



Sama Khosravi Ooryad says that a change in Iran is already underway.



**Many people from the West are wilfully ignorant of what is happening in other parts of the world.**

SAMA KHOSRAVI OORYAD



and artists are showing their solidarity by cutting off their hair.

- The international support is extremely important. The people of Iran need to feel that their struggle is being noticed and not just forgotten. But the most important battle is still being waged by ordinary Iranians.

**During the peaceful** protests that have been going on since mid-September, hundreds of people have been killed, including children. More than 14,000 protesters have been arrested or abducted. Nevertheless, Sama Khosravi Ooryad

believes that the protests will eventually lead to change.

- Regardless of age, social status or ethnicity, people across Iran have united in their fight against oppression. Everyone is demanding freedom and that those in power be punished for their crimes against the citizens of Iran. That people are embracing their differences and fighting together in solidarity is in itself tremendous progress. Change is already underway.

Text: **Eva Lundgren** Photo: **Johan Wingborg**

## ■ Sama Khosravi Ooryad

**Works as:** An EU doctoral student (Marie Skłodowska-Curie) in the Aesthetics Unit at the Department of Cultural Sciences.

**Lives in:** Gothenburg.

**Comes from:** Gachsaran in south-west Iran.

**Background:** Studied English literature at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, completed her master's degree in women's and gender studies at Utrecht University, is now a PhD student in film and media studies at the University of Gothenburg.

**Hobbies:** Writing poetry.

# Got a job thanks to the Science Festival

He had trained track and field athletes in the Polish and Ukrainian national teams and has worked as a physiotherapist in the Soviet Union, USA, China and Latvia. He has written a doctoral thesis on training stimulation and recovery in elite sports. Valerii Vynohradov is now a visiting researcher in Gothenburg.

But it started with a visit to the Science Festival.

**Valerii Vynohradov** was born in the port city of Sevastopol in Crimea. He has been involved in sports all his life; in 1977, when he was 25 years old, he was one of

the Soviet Union's top 10 hurdlers over 110 metres. But above all, he has devoted himself to sports medicine and the training of elite athletes, both practically and as part of his research. His focus has been the preparatory routines of elite athletes, as well as massage and recovery after various types of injury or strains.

**– I completed my studies** at the National University of Physical Education and Sports in Ukraine, where I also got my doctorate and eventually became a professor. But I have also been a federation masseur in sixteen sports in a large number of countries besides the Soviet Union and Ukraine, such as the USA, China, Poland and Latvia. As a masseur, I have participated in 13 European Cham-

pionships, 21 World Championships and six Olympic Games.

It was early morning on February 24 that Valerii Vynohradov's life, and that of his family, was turned upside down.

– I live in central Kyiv with my wife and mother-in-law. At five o'clock we woke up to a lot of noise and people shouting. We ran down to the basement and turned on the BBC news. We were told that Kyiv was being bombed and that Russian troops were on their way.

**It took a week** for Valerii Vynohradov and his family to decide what to do. But on the third of March they decided to go to Poland.

– We packed our rucksacks and headed to the station. It was full of pe-



ople. We had to wait three hours for the train to Lviv, which became overcrowded very quickly.

**In Lviv, they stayed** overnight with a friend of Valerii Vynohradov's mother-in-law. Early next morning they took the bus to Kraków.

- Our daughter and her friend, who live in Gothenburg, called and told us to come and stay with them. So we continued our journey to Gdynia, took the ferry to Karlskrona and then the train to Gothenburg. We now live in our daughter's friend's small one-bedroom flat, but hope to receive support for housing from the Swedish Migration Agency and the municipality. We are very grateful for all the help we have received from the Swedish

authorities, but it is difficult to have no work and just wait for the war to end.

It was when Valerii Vynohradov and his family visited Nordstan at the beginning of May that they saw a group of people who seemed to be doing something interesting.

**- A very nice woman** told me that she came from the University of Gothenburg, that it was the Science Festival and that they were just holding the Make your own passport workshop. I told her that I am a professor in Kyiv, that I came to Gothenburg two months ago with my family and that I would like to find a job.

The nice woman was Catherine Gillo Nilsson, Coordinator of the Section for Student and Educational support at the

University of Gothenburg. She took Valerii Vynohradov's details and then contacted the International Centre as well as Astrid Schubring, at the Department of Food and Nutrition and Sport Science. She, in turn, contacted the Center for Health and Performance (CHP).

A few months later, the CHP got in touch. Valerii Vynohradov was asked to come for an interview.

- I talked about my research, including Kinesio taping for rehabilitation and injury prevention and the importance of recovery. I also told them that in my lectures I always quote the well-known Nobel laureate Arvid Carlsson: "The symptoms are more important than the diagnosis". When I found out that I had been accepted as a visiting lecturer at the university where this great researcher worked, I felt very honoured!

**Valerii Vynohradov** will be working at the CHP until the end of March next year. Among other things, he will lecture in theory of physical exercise and sports medicine, in particular injury rehabilitation, Kinesio taping and recovery. Furthermore, he hopes to have time to write two articles for publication in a scientific journal.

- On November 14, to my great joy, I held my first three lectures on Kinesio taping!

Text: **Eva Lundgren** Photo: **Johan Wingborg**

## Facts

**Name:** Valerii Vynohradov

**Currently works as:** Visiting researcher at the Center for Health and Performance, (CHP).

**Family in Gothenburg:** Wife Olena, mother-in-law, daughter.

**Background:** He has, among other things, worked as a masseur for national teams in 16 sports in the Soviet Union, USA, Poland and Ukraine. He has participated in six European Championships, 21 World Championships and six Olympic games. Since 2002, he has worked at the National University of Physical Education and Sports of Ukraine, and been a professor since 2010. He is the author of more than 100 scientific and educational works.

In 1977, he was one of the top 10 best hurdlers in the Soviet Union.



Alexandre Antonelli has just published his book, *The Hidden Universe – Adventures in Biodiversity*.

# Biodiversity on its way to disappearance

– The scenery in south-eastern Brazil that I got to know as a child is disappearing, right in front of my eyes. In order to draw attention to the seriousness of what is happening, I have written a book that everyone, even those who know nothing about biology, should be able to understand.

These are the words of Alexandre Antonelli. He has just published the book *The Hidden Universe – Adventures in Biodiversity*.

**Threats to** biological diversity are an even greater problem than the climate crisis, says Alexandre Antonelli, Professor at the University of Gothenburg and

Director of Science at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London.

– If we do everything we should do, that is, reduce our emissions, preserve and replant forests and other types of natural environments that bind carbon dioxide, we will hopefully be able to restore a stable climate in perhaps 50-100 years. But species that have died out cannot be brought back and ecosystems that have been destroyed never re-emerge.

**And things do not** look good for biodiversity. In Sweden, roughly 2,000 species are estimated to be under threat. Worldwide, it is about one million. But the numbers may actually be significantly higher, explains Alexandre Antonelli.

– The reason for that is because we don't actually know how many species there are in the world. According to some estimates, there are about 8.7 million,

but new species are being discovered all the time. This is due, among other things, to the technological development in recent decades, which makes it possible to find increasingly smaller, rarer and more specialized species. Also previously inaccessible areas, such as deep oceans and dense rainforests, can now be investigated.

A completely extinct species cannot be brought back. But a species that becomes extinct in a certain place can be reintroduced with the help of individuals from somewhere else. A spectacular example can be found in Yellowstone National Park, in the USA, says Alexandre Antonelli.

– **In the 1920s**, the wolf was wiped out from the entire park. This led to the deer population in the area spreading with intensive grazing as a result. More and

more plants were at risk of disappearing, which also led to increased erosion.

In 1995, the park tried to do something about the problems by releasing eight wolves into the area.

– **The result was** astonishing. Not only did the deer population decline, the plants also began to recover, including willow trees. This in turn increased the number of beavers, which feed on willow trees. More beavers meant more ponds, which affected water turnover in the park. This led to the fish population thriving, as well as more and more birds being attracted to the area. The reintroduction of a single species thus became significant for the park's entire ecosystem and even affected the direction of the rivers!

The amount of natural capital has decreased by almost 40 percent over the past two decades. At the same time, the capital produced, such as buildings, machinery and roads, has increased by almost 100 percent.

– We humans often see ourselves as the pinnacle of creation. Nature exists to serve us. When explaining why biodiversity is important, it is therefore often based on the human need for all of nature's ecosystem services, such as food, fuel, water and pollinating insects. And of course, all of this is extremely important! But nature also has value in itself, not just because it can serve us in various ways.

**So what can we do** to protect biodiversity? On the one hand, we can try to put pressure on those in power and on governments to protect endangered species through laws and international agreements, and ban toxic substances, emissions and overexploitation of resources, Alexandre Antonelli explains.

– In part, you can try to make environmentally friendly decisions in your everyday life.

The world's most important conference will commence on December 7.

– The UN Convention on Biological Diversity, COP15, will be held in Montreal. The hope is that the countries of the world will succeed in coming up with four long-term goals up until 2050 and 22 interim goals that must be achieved by 2030 at the latest. This conference represents perhaps the last chance to reverse the trend and stop the loss of biological diversity.

It was the pandemic that gave Alexandre Antonelli the opportunity to write his book.

– I have long wanted to write a popular science book about biological diversity.

Since England was practically locked down for a year and a half, I decided to stay at home in Gothenburg during the pandemic. It was then, in the early hours of the morning, that I finally had the peace and quiet to sit down and write. The book is intended for people who know very little or nothing about biology. To my delight, I have also received many positive comments, even from colleagues who think that I have written an important book.

#### **What are you going to do now that you have finished your book?**

– I will of course continue my work both here at the University of Gothenburg and at Kew. But my wife and I have also bought 120 hectares of the Atlantic Forest in eastern Brazil, which is being deforested. With the help of donations and investments, and by engaging local people, I hope to protect more forest, replant deforested lands, and create a biodiversity centre there. When that becomes a reality, one of my biggest dreams will have come true!

Text: **Eva Lundgren** Photo: **Johan Wingborg**



## **Facts**

**The Hidden Universe** – Adventures in Biodiversity was written by Alexandre Antonelli, Professor of Biodiversity and Systematics at the University of Gothenburg, Visiting Professor at the University of Oxford, Director of Science at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London, and founder of the Gothenburg Global Biodiversity Centre.

The Swedish publisher is Natur & Kultur. Alexandre Antonelli has recently also published two articles in Science about biological diversity in Madagascar.

## **Alexandre Antonelli is also co-author of two articles in the renowned journal Science. Both of the articles are about the threat to biodiversity in Madagascar.**

**Madagascar is a** “biodiversity hotspot” that is both extremely rich in species and under extreme threat, says Alexandre Antonelli.

– The majority of the plants, animals and fungi found on the island are endemic. They have thus developed there and are found nowhere else. After the arrival of man, however, the entire megafauna has become extinct. Substantial parts of the current flora and fauna are also under threat.

The article, Madagascar's extraordinary biodiversity - threats and opportunities, shows how overexploitation and unsustainable agricultural methods threaten approximately 60 percent of vertebrates and almost 90 percent of all plant species. Other threats include climate change, invasive species and infectious diseases.

The article, Madagascar's extraordinary biodiversity - evolution distribution and use, describes the historical and current biodiversity in Madagascar. Despite dramatically increased knowledge of the island's numerous plants, animals and fungi, many species are still unknown to science. Collection in the field and digitalization of the discoveries are of crucial importance for filling in the gaps in our knowledge.

– You could say that Madagascar functions as a living laboratory for our understanding of evolution and the complex interaction between man and nature. There is, for example, great potential when it comes to discovering species that could be used in medicine, as food, and for remedial climate action. But further collection and analysis of data is required, explains Alexandre Antonelli.

The main authors are Alexandre Antonelli and Allison Perrigo, Director of the Gothenburg Global Biodiversity Centre (GGBC). A further 19 authors at the University of Gothenburg and/or GGBC collaborated on the articles.

# Doctoral conferment 2021



On October 28, the delayed doctoral conferment ceremony from 2021 was held in the Swedish Exhibition and Congress Centre. One hundred and forty-five new doctors, nine honorary doctors and two prize winners were lauded and celebrated for their wonderful achievements.

**This was the** second conferment ceremony to be held in 2022 in order to catch up after the pandemic. Everyone who completed their PhD and received their doctoral degree between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021, as well as those who completed their PhDs the year before, were invited - a total of 270 doctors. Most of the new doctors were from Sahlgrenska Academy, 95 of whom were in attendance. Otherwise, there was a wide distribution of scientific disciplines and ages, the youngest person was born in 1993 and the oldest in 1957.

This event was in many ways very similar to the previous one. But a small, important change was that the conferment ceremony booklet was in English and Swedish, and that interpretation of all the speeches was provided, even during the banquet, for the benefit of the international guests.

In her introductory speech, Vice-Chancellor Eva Wiberg referred to



Carolina Klüft is one of the University's new honorary doctors.

the University of Gothenburg's vision: A university for the world.

- The conferment ceremony in particular is truly evidence of the university's significant international involvement, with many doctors and guests from other countries.

**A doctoral conferment** ceremony is not just any event. It is a well-orchestrated spectacle of just over two and a half hours. What makes the University of Gothenburg's conferment ceremony unique are the students from the Academy of Music and Drama, who play and perform. It is solemn, dignified and a little magical.

After filing out to the music of Bernhard Crussel, all 900 guests were offered champagne and canapés; 200 of

the guests sat on the stage. Afterwards, a banquet for 735 guests awaited, with dinner, speeches and entertainment.

The renowned decathlete Carolina Klüft, an honorary doctor at Sahlgrenska Academy, delivered the speech thanking the honorary doctors. She was proud and happy about the honour bestowed upon her, but pointed out how important it is to create the right conditions for being physically active and finding joy in being active, something that many young people today do not have access to in Sweden - in violation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Fighting for this right may be a lofty goal, but it is not something she finds daunting:

"I am not particularly afraid of failure, in every setback a lesson emerges that



moves you forward, but what would make me hugely disappointed would be to stop trying.”

**In her speech to** the new doctors, Sara Grehn praised her main supervisor Yael Failer as “the best kind of supervisor”, who used to say: “The most important things I have learned were not from my teachers - but from my students”. She emphasized how important it is to keep moving: “We need to listen as much as we speak, and be prepared to reconsider things just as much as we cherish proven knowledge”. Finding reassurance but also having the courage to embrace new things was a message that touched the audience.

The party that started early for all the new doctors continued late into the night.

Text: **Allan Eriksson** Photo: **Johan Wingborg**



Hat, ring and diploma are the new doctors' insignia.



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The list is long of all the rights we have as employees. But they didn't happen by themselves. They are a result of the efforts of Swedish trade unions over many decades. There is no guarantee that they will last forever - they must be constantly monitored, defended and improved.

### **We're stronger together**

How do we do this best? Together! The more we are involved, the more influence we have on our working conditions.

### **You can contribute to a good workplace**

Do you want to contribute to a good workplace at the University of Gothenburg, with safe and sustainable conditions for everyone? Join the Union of Civil Servants (Fackförbundet ST)! All employees can become members, regardless of duties, position or education.

*Want to know more about what ST does and the benefits of a membership? Welcome to [st.org/english](https://st.org/english)  
Seasons greetings from the ST section at the University of Gothenburg!*