



Stockholms Akademiska Forum
Annual Report 2020

Introduction

When the year 2020 began no one could imagine how it would end. We have been through a fundamentally different year, and we still do not know when the pandemic will end. We have learnt a lot about how quickly the society can adjust to new circumstances, how devoted people and organizations come together to offer their knowledge and help out in a new situation. In 2020 we also experienced how universities took a leading position by focusing their research on fighting the pandemic, or quickly designing specialized online courses for healthcare workers, or help the hospitals by producing hand sanitizer during the first acute phase etc. Researchers at our universities have explained, forecasted, debated and have been anchors in the society. It has been clearer than ever before that we need science and higher education to fight today's challenges and be prepared for the future.

We have also learnt a lot about the pros and cons of digitalization. While international borders have closed, the world has opened up digitally. In that sense the world has come closer, and having a digital meeting with someone in Taipei, Abuja or Quito, is as easy as meeting your colleague working in a different part of Stockholm.

Someday we will go back to normal again, but to a different normal. We will keep some of our practices, develop others, and abolish yet others. One thing that we at Stockholms Akademiska Forum will never abolish is our great trust in science and the academic knowledge production system. Even though 2020 has been a difficult year in many ways, Stockholms Akademiska Forum ended the year as an even stronger and a more resilient organization.

*Lars Strannegård,
Chairman of the Board*

Stockholms Akademiska Forum Annual Report 2020

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Our Mission

Stockholms Akademiska Forum's mission is to promote Stockholm as a place of academic excellence and to cultivate networking and dialogue between the universities located in Stockholm, the City of Stockholm, and other stakeholders by bringing together 18 universities and the City into a network.

For centuries, the Academia has cultivated knowledge. It has developed methods to share knowledge, think across boundaries, and advance new approaches to address the changes humanity has faced and continues to face. Knowledge plays a crucial role in the development and welfare of a society.

Compared to other cities, Stockholm ranks high in creativity, cutting-edge innovation, economic stability, equality, sustainability, social climate, and level of education. Here you will find 18 universities and university colleges, a highly-educated population, national and international companies with a high degree of innovation, a variety of incubators, as well as first-class research infrastructures. Stockholm's values make it both unique and attractive, nationally and internationally.

In 2020, Stockholms Akademiska Forum had a special focus on Stockholm Dual Career Network, with the intention

to reach out to more new members, affiliate new companies and offer a range of social and professional activities for the members.

The year started with moving to our new office at Narvavägen 30. But our excitement of experiencing the new office was cut short only two months later. In March 2020 the working conditions for Stockholms Akademiska Forum as for the whole society changed due to the pandemic. We adjusted quickly to the new circumstances, worked remotely, and adapted our activities for the digital space. We hoped for better times during the fall, and prepared for a hybrid version (on-stage as well as web telecast) of Stockholm Explorative Talks in the beginning of November. But since the spread of the infection increased again, we had to take a last-minute decision to postpone the event to September 2021.

We also had to cancel our two popular annual receptions, one for new international students and the other for international researchers in the Stockholm City Hall.

This Annual Report presents the different endeavors of Stockholms Akademiska Forum and the accomplishments thereof in 2020.



Stockholm Dual Career Network

Stockholm Dual Career Network (SDCN) is a network for the partners and spouses of international employees working at the network's affiliated organizations. SDCN helps its members settle in Stockholm, look for work, discover Swedish culture, and broaden their social and professional networks with the main target of facilitating the job searching process in Stockholm.

In 2020, 133 new members from 41 different countries joined SDCN. This was a reduction of around 90 members, as compared to 2019. The decrease was a consequence of the pandemic, and reduced mobility between countries. From March onwards all SDCN activities moved online. An unexpected result of this was reaching out to people in other countries who were en route to Stockholm. Our events served as a soft landing for them, getting them prepared in terms of relevant knowledge and expectations before coming to Stockholm. Overall, we felt that the circumstances presented by the pandemic, necessitated our support to SDCN members more than ever. We saw how several of them felt isolated in a new country with very few social and professional contacts.

Apart from the university affiliates, the company affiliates at the end of the year were – Truecaller, iZettle, King, Kognity, Northvolt, 0+X, and Spotify. These companies face the same challenges as the universities: they need to attract and retain an international workforce. According to us, the key is to view international recruitment as hiring not just one person but facilitating a 'dual' career, by taking into account that high-level professionals often have highly-educated partners with careers of their own. During 2020 we introduced SDCN to several new companies, some of which will join as affiliated companies in 2021. We also streamlined our monitoring and evaluation of the network's results, in the form of a bi-annual report (in July) as well as an annual report, which were sent to the affiliated universities and companies.

The main goal for SDCN is to support its members as they settle down in Stockholm. SDCN's activities are tailored to aid members in finding jobs, discovering Swedish business culture and traditions, and broadening their professional and social networks. Members are offered Swedish language courses, career support and a range of different professional and social activities. During 2020 we offered 106 different activities.

We regularly get positive feedback from SDCN members who found jobs, succeeded in finding funds for their own research, or started their own business, that these processes took them considerably shorter time than it would have had without the network's support.

In December, the third SDCN International Talent of the Year was awarded. The recipient for 2020, was Peng Wu from the United States, now employed at Stellar Capacity. The award was created to recognize an SDCN member who has been active in the network, and successful in her/his professional development in Stockholm. This year we also introduced two new categories – The Honorary SDCN Membership, and SDCN Global Membership. The Honorary SDCN Membership recognizes individuals who have inspired and contributed to the network, and for being ambassadors to SDCN. The Honorary Memberships were awarded to Per Bengtsson, former University Director at Karolinska Institutet, for identifying the gap in Swedish universities' approach to talent retention. Jenny Harler, CEO at Scencia International, for introducing the very idea of SDCN International Talent Award. Laure Marcellesi, for being one of the founding members of SDCN, and Frithjof Stöppler, for being the President for SDCN Management Team during three and an half year. The SDCN Global Membership is conferred on distinguished former members of the network, who have departed from Stockholm to reside elsewhere, but made significant contributions to the network, and continue upholding SDCN's message of internationalism. The 2020 Global Members were Johanna Laurent, Ananya Sadhu, and Ann Wong.



133
NEW MEMBERS

20
CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

28
SOCIAL EVENTS

28
CAREER SUPPORT GROUPS

26
CONVERSATIONAL SWEDISH

4x16
SWEDISH LESSONS



Staf Analytics

Monitoring is crucial to be an up-to-date organization. It is important for us to be well acquainted with the academic ecosystem of Stockholm. At Stockholms Akademiska Forum, we do this not only by digging into statistics, news, and reports but also by meeting the right people, getting new contacts, and by growing networks in a wide range of areas. Open-mindedness and curiosity have opened up many new paths for collaboration.

By gathering statistics for all the universities and university colleges in Stockholm, we can follow trends and tendencies. Political and economic changes affect student flows to and from different countries, and it is important to follow how countries close or open up to other parts of the world.

Every year, Staf Analytics publishes a report on international student mobility in Stockholm, based on statistics from

the previous academic year. Study Destination Stockholm – International Student Mobility in 2018–2019, was published in March 2020.

During the academic year 2018–2019, 9955 international students came to Stockholm. The largest international student groups in Stockholm during the academic year 2018–2019 were from China, Germany, Finland, France, and India. Incoming students from India increased by 26% compared to the previous academic year.

The number of outgoing exchange students during the same academic year was 1 840. It was a decrease of 3% compared to the previous year. The most popular destinations were the USA, Australia, and Singapore. UK dipped as popular student destination for the second year in a row.



Staf Small Talks

At Stockholms Akademiska Forum, we not only bring universities together for activities targeting their international students or scholars, we also bring together key persons from the universities to share our findings about Stockholm as an academic destination or to discuss current issues from a strategic point of view.

In March, we presented the report from Staf Analytics at a webinar on International Student Mobility in Stockholm during the academic year 2018–2019. For the webinar, we had also invited Alma Joensen from the Swedish Council for Higher Education to talk about the new Erasmus program and what the Council does to increase the number of exchange students in the EU.

In April, we invited representatives from executive management at the universities to a breakfast webinar on internationalization. For the second time, we had a specific focus on China with the speakers – Frédéric Cho, advisor specialized on China, and Tommy Shih, from the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education, and Lund University.

In June, we had another breakfast webinar on Talent Attraction and the Stockholm Dual Career Network. alongside our own presentation of the network, we invited speakers

from several domains – Staffan Ingvarsson, CEO of the Stockholm Business Region, Robert Käck, Global Culture Director of Spotify, and Lotta Rosenfeldt from KTH Relocation.

In October, we had another meeting on internationalization. This time we had our focus on India since Sweden and India share a cordial international relationship, and as said previously, we saw a recent trend of a remarkable increase in the number of incoming students from India. The invited speakers were – Henrik Chetan Aspengren, from The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, and Deepti Pabbisetty from Truecaller.

In December, we co-arranged a webinar with Scholars at Risk – Sweden Section, focusing on the process of hosting a scholar at risk. Astrid Söderbergh Widding, President of Stockholm University, introduced the meeting by talking about the importance of freedom of speech in academia. Four short presentations followed, by Karolina Catoni, University of Gothenburg, and coordinator for SAR-Sweden Section, Johanna Wiklund, SAR contact at Stockholm University, Ahmet Gürata, guest researcher at Stockholm University, and Brigitta Jaksa, SAR contact at Södertörn University.



Calendar

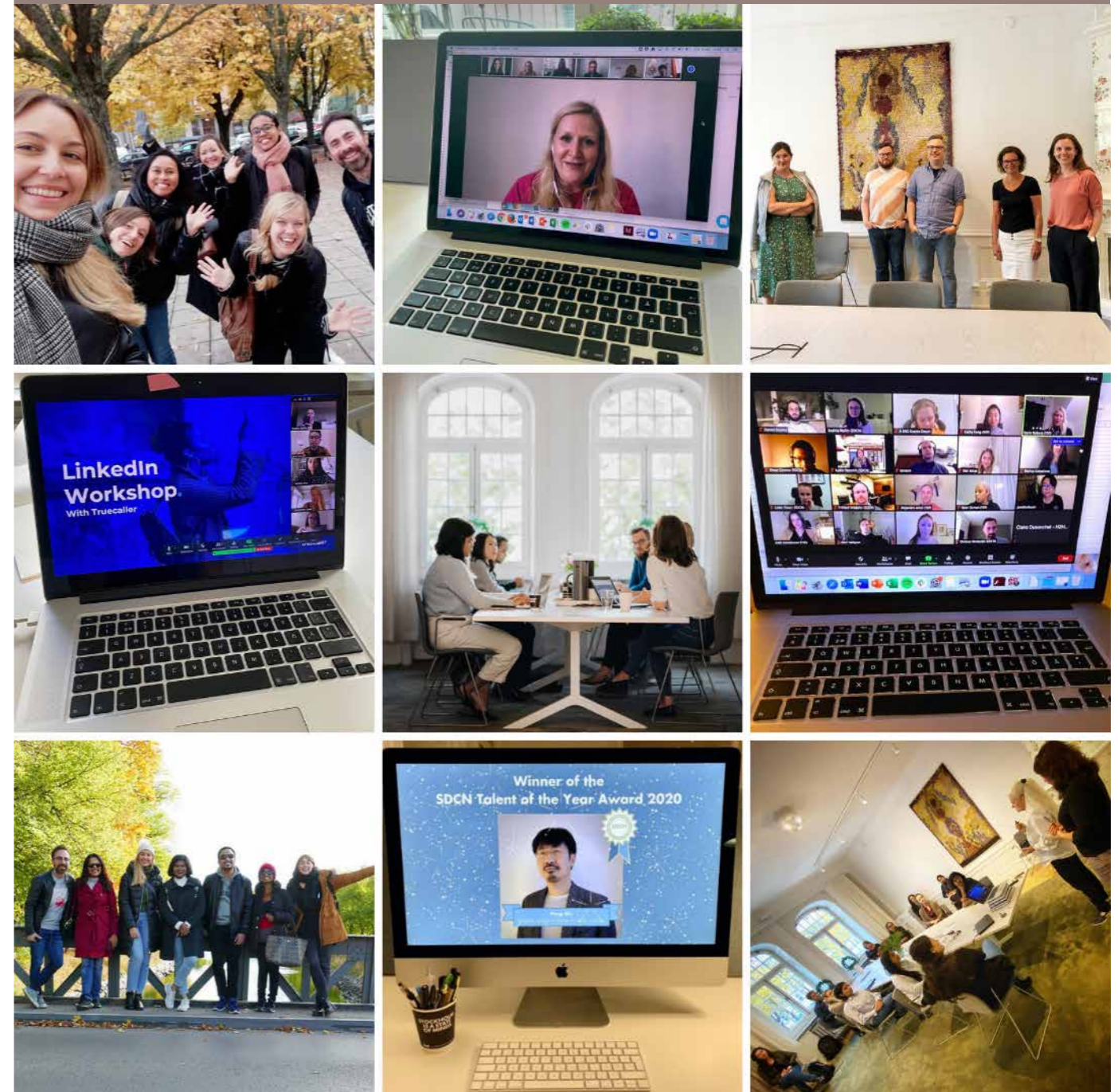
Reaching Out

Communication is a crucial element in Stockholms Akademiska Forum's work. Our overarching objective is to promote Stockholm as a destination of academic excellence as well as highlight the importance of academia in today's society. We have focused mostly on international students and scholars in order to attract global talent to Sweden's capital.

Digital communication across different channels is our main and most cost-effective tool. Stockholms Akademiska Forum operates three different websites. First, is the website for the organization – staforum.se – which presents our members and our activities. Our second website is – studystockholm.se. This website is directed at international students in Stockholm, and we engage the help of content creators from the international student community to keep the topics pertinent. The third website is the one for Stockholm Dual Career Network – sdcn.se.

We also communicate through social media channels, such as, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook.

- 4 FEBRUARY • Inauguration of the new office at Narvavägen
- 5 FEBRUARY • SDCN Spring Kick-off
- 10 FEBRUARY • Board Meeting
- 26 MARCH • Staf Small Talks on International Student Mobility
- 2 APRIL • Breakfast Webinar on Internationalization with focus on China
- 13 MAY • Board Meeting
- 13 MAY • Annual Meeting
- 16 JUNE • Breakfast Webinar on Stockholm Dual Career Network and Talent Attraction
- 9 SEPTEMBER • Fall Kick-off
- 15 OCTOBER • Breakfast Webinar on Internationalization with focus on India
- 13 NOVEMBER • Board Meeting
- 10 DECEMBER • Breakfast Webinar on Scholars at Risk
- 15 DECEMBER • International Talent of the Year Award 2020



STOCKHOLM IS A STATE OF MINDS.



I feel blessed to have been surrounded by very supportive people throughout my job search, specifically the SDCN team who provided me with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to enhance my professional portfolio.

MEI LI HEMAN

At first, I would say tailor your CV according to the job description and prepare for the interview. I usually record videos answering the interview questions. The more you practice more comfortable you get.

SCDN has helped and guided me immensely in the right direction. You also helped me to meet people and network.



LUIZOME BARYLO



Thank you SDCN for all the support! Because I was working remotely for a company in my home country, I wasn't able to join as many meetings as I wished but each one I was part of gave me more confidence and knowledge to find the right opportunity. So thank you!

LUIZA BRANCACIO

Members, Board and Staff

Members

Beckmans College of Design
 The Erica Foundation
 Ersta Sköndal Bräcke University College
 Karolinska Institutet
 Konstfack – University of Arts, Crafts and Design
 KTH Royal Institute of Technology
 Royal College of Music in Stockholm, KMH
 Royal Institute of Art
 Sophiahemmet University
 Stockholm School of Economics
 Stockholm University
 Stockholm University of the Arts
 Swedish Defence University
 Södertörn University
 The Swedish Red Cross University College
 The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, GIH
 University College of Music Education
 University College Stockholm
 The City of Stockholm

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Lars Ågren, Stockholm School of Economics

Staff

Maria Fogelström Kylberg, CEO
Anirban Dey, Communicator/Writer (August–December)
Dan Johansson, Project Manager (Parental leave July–December)
June Low, Project Assistant
Brita Lundström, Senior Analyst
Martin Sahlin, Project Manager
Sophia Wallin, Senior Strategist

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