



Recommendations concerning the 2020 research proposition

Science is developing at an unprecedented speed with technological, ethical and environmental frontiers pushing forward. To continue holding a position as a leading research and innovation nation, universities need to keep evolving. The research proposition presented in 2020 is the steering document for the future of research in Sweden, and will impact all early and mid career academics. The National Junior Faculty of Sweden (www.nationaljf.se) represents more than 3000 early/mid career academics at 10 universities in Sweden. Below we present suggestions of how Sweden can continue to secure its leading research and innovation position. Our suggestions are based on data collected from our regular surveys of thousands of members. These aim to identify the challenges that the next generation of researchers face in reaching their potential, which in turn impact the future of Sweden as a research nation.

Clear career trajectories: The introduction of the associate senior lecturer position was a step towards improved career planning. However, a full integration across institutions has not been reached. As a result, the majority of early-career researchers are still in uncertain and precarious positions hindering their careers and science. **We suggest** an increased institutional awareness on career planning and support. This includes improved branding of external career paths in combination with a rethinking of the academic career trajectory to embrace non-professor academic tracks and combined academic positions.

Academic citizenship and leadership: We all have responsibility for ensuring and supporting academic talent. However early career academics in general and underrepresented/marginalized individuals, in particular, are leaving the academic career path due to a sense of inequality in the academic work culture. **We suggest** to actively engage academic leaders at all levels to increase transparency in their decision making and increasing their awareness of bias and conflicts of interest. This should include introduction of clearly set guidelines for recruitment, funding and evaluation of scientific projects and excellence. This will allow the next generation of academics to focus on science and not institutional politics and hierarchical maneuvering for survival.

Streamlining position titles: Our recent survey shows that 10 percent of our members have positions that are not included in the higher ordinance. Many positions have unclear job titles, descriptions and qualification profiles. **We suggest** streamlining all position titles and responsibilities across all academic institutions. This will improve the recruitment process and promote mobility among universities and with external stakeholders.

Funding on equal terms: To promote diversity, inclusion and equality in academia, it is important to ensure funding schemes that bridge all career stages with clear evaluation parameters. **We suggest** further development of multi-tier funding schemes ensuring equal competition and opportunities within the tier.

With kind regards,

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