

## Minutes for the board meeting

Date: Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2023

Time: 18:00 – 21:00

Location: **Lipid Room, Neo, Blickagången 16** and **Zoom**

Acronyms: DSA: The Doctoral Students' Association, MF: Medicinska Föreningen, DO: Doctoral ombudsperson, FuM: MF Council (Fullmäktige), KI: Karolinska Institutet, KF: Committee for Research, KFU: Committee for Doctoral Education, KPK: Course and Programme Committee, CSTP: Clinical Scientist Training Program, SFS: Sweden's United Student Unions, SFS-DK: SFS doctoral committee, SSCO: Stockholm Student Union's Central Organization, AGM: Annual General Meeting

Board: Manouk Verhoeven; Fredrika Hellgren; Niels Krämer, Sviatlana Sukhanava, Ioanna Tsea; Luca Love, Osheen Sharma, Linnea Påvénius, Jelena Mistic, Axel Winroth

Present: Manouk Verhoeven; Fredrika Hellgren; Niels Krämer, Sviatlana Sukhanava, Ioanna Tsea (via Zoom); Luca Love, Osheen Sharma (via Zoom), Linnea Påvénius, Axel Winroth (via Zoom)

Others in person: Vladimir Pabón Martínez, Petar Mitev, Laura Covill

Others via Zoom: Madeleine Lehander, Daniel Söderberg, Maria Belikova, Lu Pan, Jingjing Xu

Absent board members: Jelena Mistic

## Formalia

- F1 Opening of meeting: **18:01**
- F2 Proper proclamation of the meeting: **Yes**
- F3 Appointment of person to preside the meeting: **Manouk Verhoeven**
- F4 Appointment of person to write the minutes: **Niels Krämer**
- F5 Appointment of person to sign the minutes: **Fredrika Hellgren**
- F6 Reported absences: **Jelena Misic**
- F7 Previous protocols: **Minutes for DSA board meetings on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March**
- F8 Approval of the current agenda: **Approved.**
- F9 Verbalization of the decisions per capsulam: **None**

## Reports

### R1 Ombudsperson

The ombuds people are working on their report for 2022 that will hopefully come out soon. The number of cases the ombuds people are working on have increased. This is a good thing as it means that people are finding the ombuds people.

### R2 KI careers

New career courses will be given in August and the whole of September. There are some events going on right now and these can be found in the KI Career Service agenda and [newsletter](#). KI career service will be a little absent in May as Vladimir will be away.

### R3 DSA Chairperson

Manouk has been busy driving a seminar with Robert Harris. She is also working on many different tasks inside the DSA.

### R4 DSA Workgroups

#### a. Doctoral Education (Luca)

The workgroup is currently distributing the [PhD Information Booklet](#). Posters with a QR code linking to the webpage with the booklet have yet to be made and distributed. This will happen soon. If people have suggestions for improvements, they can send these to Luca. Changes in the booklet will be implemented once every semester/year.

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The RIMS team has given the Doctoral Education Workgroup an update about the teaching platform. They are currently implementing tags individuals can use to look or apply for either teaching (in courses) or supervising students. The team will get back to the Doctoral Education Workgroup before September to see what the implementation will look like.

An Academic Productivity Seminar was held today. Five people attended. There will be one more in person and one more virtual event.

The Doctoral Education Workgroup will work on the mentorship program next. However, the participants in the workgroup are all busy and so far things have moved slowly.

b. Student Representation (Osheen)

Osheen has been filling out KIs definitive list with the different elected representatives on departments, research programs and KI centrally. Osheen will meet up with Shengxin Liu (the previous workgroup manager for Student Representation) to start up the work for this year's election. She has also been in contact with the local student representatives in order for them to promote the PhD conference. Lastly, she, Luca and Axel will organize a meeting with all student representatives which will be co-hosted by Career Services.

Osheen has been to the most recent URO meeting. The onboarding of new students with regards the MF, the elections for different positions, and the pros and cons of digital lectures were discussed. The faculty board also gave an update on the new joint master's program in biostatics and computer science with KTH and SU, the focus points coming from the Ministry of Education, and a new system to enroll for exams. However, this is aimed at big courses and will thus probably not affect PhD students as their courses have comparatively few participants.

c. Social Events (Linnéa)

The focus of the Social Events Workgroup has been on the summer party. They and KIPA have worked on the budget, and this will be discussed later in this meeting.

Another hike has been organized; the attendance has doubled.

Linnéa has had a meeting with a representative from KIPA. They have discussed potential activities they could organize together. These activity proposals will be discussed during a discussion point at the next DSA Board meeting.

d. PR (Ioanna)

Ioanna has focused on promoting the PhD conference, including via the KI newsletter. Information about the PhD booklet has also been included in the KI newsletter. Ioanna has uploaded the entire booklet to the website of the DSA. She will continue promoting the different DSA activities going forward and Ioanna will be back in Stockholm in ten days.

e. Welfare and Health (Jelena)

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Work on the Mental Health Survey has started up again and this will be discussed later during the meeting.

R5 PhD Conference

The deadline for signing up is in three days. If people want to join, they have to sign up now. There will hopefully be more than fifty people. The conference has a great venue, interesting international speakers and all looks good, and it would be great if people pushed the word-of-mouth promotion a little in these next days.

R6 The Senate (Konsistoriet)

There has not been a meeting of konsistoriet since the last DSA board meeting.

R7 Faculty Board (Fakultetsnämnden)

There has not been a meeting of the faculty board since the last DSA board meeting.

R8 Committee for Doctoral Education (KFU)

There has not been a meeting of the committee for doctoral education since the last DSA board meeting.

R9 Committee for Research (KF)

There is currently no student representative from DSA on the committee for research.

R10 Medicinska Föreningen (MF) and Fullmäktige (FuM)

There has not been a meeting of FuM since the last DSA board meeting.

R11 Other boards, and committees

Lu Pan (student representative for [KI NMA](#)) mentions that the budget for 2023 has been set, that the KI NMA collaborative grants for 2023 will be open soon, that the NMA symposium 2023 will be held in October and that the alliance is planning a Nobel Conference in the series "Frontiers in Medicine" in 2024. She also recommends people to apply for the NMA collaborative grant as PhD students can apply as well.

## Information and discussion points

I1 KFU Funding 2023-2028

*Presenter: Madeleine Lehander*

During the March DSA Board meeting, KFU's budget and the likely cut to KID funding was discussed. However, there were potentially also other options to cut KFU's spending and the meeting decided to table forming an opinion until it was clear what those other options entail.

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Madeleine gives a presentation about the role of KFU. Currently, KFU will have an estimated deficit of 8,000,000 SEK by 2028. As such, the budget needs to be adjusted to ensure this deficit does not materialize. The budget will be set in September, but Madeleine and Luca want to have DSA's input now so that this can be taken along during the discussions. Madeleine walks the meeting through the budget as it stands now. KID funding is by far the biggest chunk out of the budget. If the deficit is to be decreased to zero, 5 or 6 out of the 65 KID-funded positions need to cut. Another option is to (partly) reduce the deficit by cutting spending spread over other posts. However, these budget posts are important for the already existing PhD population as they include budgeting for – for example - PhD courses. As such, the DSA thinks cutting from these posts is not preferable. Moreover, if the other budget posts are cut, the quality of education might be lower for everyone, including the KID-funded PhD students. The budget cutting is a good opportunity to evaluate the quality and functional status of several budget posts before deciding where to cut. One last thing to consider, is the possibility that KID-funding could be reduced from 50% of the PhD funding to 45%. In that way a similar amount of grants is available, as KID-funding can really help out researchers when trying to grow their groups.

I2 Sustainable development and climate action in medical research  
*Presenter: Daniel Söderberg*

Climate change is one of the major challenges the human species is facing. The UN goals for sustainable development, which include battling climate change, are also a key element of KI's strategy 2030. Despite overall awareness of the issue, students rarely discuss or think about how research impacts climate change and sustainable development. As researchers at a university with a focus on sustainable development for everyone, these issues should be discussed more frequently. Should and if yes, how can the DSA contribute to furthering KI's doctoral students to implement sustainability in their research?

It is discussed that there are already groups at KI that are working on this topic, for example MF's Students for Sustainable Development and KI's Climate Network. However, the DSA could bring sustainable development up in talks with KI central, and promote the work of other groups. Cauliflower. Potential options are to implement this topic in the mandatory courses PhD students have to take, to make it part of the ISP or to create an altogether new course. There was some discussion whether a written document or a discussion would be better to make students actively think about it. The good thing is that sustainable development can already fall under some of the learning outcomes of doctoral education, so it should not be too difficult to implement this. Manouk will discuss this with Bob Harris, Madeleine can bring it up during the next KFU meeting and Shayida Maimaiti (doctoral representative on the course and program committee, not present during the meeting) can bring it up as well.

I3 Exit poll data  
*Presenter: Manouk Verhoeven*

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The yearly KI exit poll has been held and the results are presented by Manouk.

The response rate for the survey has been going down and it is unclear why this happens. Things that stand out from the survey are the facts that about 20% of the doctoral students feel they have not had adequate supervision, that follow up during the doctoral education is lacking, despite them having had a half-time, and that it is generally rather hard to interpret the data of the survey. What stands out as well, is that there is around 15% of people that notice or experience unequal treatment. One last thing that stood out was that the number of people that are active in research before formal admissions has remained steady, however once again the data makes it unclear whether that is as pre-PhD students or as parts of master's research projects. However, it should be noted that the vacancies at KI are usually already filled by internal people and that this is technically unfair competition (and a waste of people's time).

The meeting discussed whether KI has a plan to deal with the experience of unequal treatment inside the organization. Manouk will take this up with KI central, as it is unclear right now. Moreover, it is difficult as names are often not mentioned and thus it is difficult to keep tabs on people. KI might not know exactly how to deal with this problem too. However, people that are in bad situations should report, either to the study director, the ombuds people or as a whistle blower, despite that being difficult. If this is not done, problems will never be apparent. Currently, there is little trust from the student population that things will actually change after complaints are made, even though KI has intervened in the past and red lights have been given to problematic PIs.

There was some material missing from the presentation (for example about sustainability or people using less time than mandatory). The presentation Manouk went through came from KI's website, so it is unclear why this is gone.

The DSA will think about the results for a while and will come back to it, once we have a reaction from KI central as well.

#### **Break from 19:17 – 19:29**

I4 [Mental health survey 2023](#)  
*Presenter: Fredrika Hellgren*

The mental health survey for 2023 should be sent out soon. Which corrections and improvements will be implemented after last year? It would also be good to discuss the advertisement campaign for the survey.

Manouk, Jelena and Fredrika went through the survey and decided on some changes. Some of these will be discussed now. After the meeting there will be a test survey for the board to look at. In the middle of May, the survey should be rolled out, and as such, the finalized survey must be ready before the next board meeting. In the new version of the mental health survey the questions pertaining to Covid-19 have been removed to free up space for other questions. One of these

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is aimed at understanding what participants define as mental health issues. The meeting discussed whether or not this should be an open or multiple choice question, with them opting for the latter option as participants might get annoyed having to write out things in mandatory questions. Another option is to start the survey with a definition of mental health issues, however that risks excluding people's experiences. Some of the questions have been rephrased to be more precise, while also linking to other questions in the survey. Laura suggests including physical dangers in the lab as an option of factors that can have a negative effect on a PhD student's health. This will be included. The adapted survey will be sent out to the DSA board for some last input.

I5 Board communication

*Presenter: Manouk Verhoeven*

With regards to all forms of board communication (both to the outside world and inside of the board), it might be a good idea to discuss the best strategy for this year.

Everything should be collected in the DSA email. Internal deadlines should be adhered to, Teams should be checked every day/every other day, important things should always be sent via the email. Communication also means letting Manouk/Fredrika know that things are slowing down. Timelines for responding are also useful, so that the other person knows things have been seen.

I6 Summer Party

*Presenter: Manouk Verhoeven*

Manouk has looked into options for the summer party and she discusses these during the meeting. The DSA is a little late to the party with regards to the organization of this party, however it is doable. The main question is if the board thinks the party can attract 400 attendants. Based on the previous party and other events this is possible in the month and a half that are still left before the preliminary date of Friday the 26<sup>th</sup> of May. In case the party (and the DSA as a whole) run a deficit, next year's FuM will decide how to deal with this. It is possible that the DSA might get a budget cut in that case, though this decision is FuM's. If it is clear there will not be enough attendants, the party can be cancelled up to two weeks before the event. Manouk proposes the meeting goes through the budget and approve it. As such, the board votes to add a decision point to the agenda where they will decide on the budget for the summer party. **The board decides to take a decision later during the meeting, with no against votes.**

**Decision points (10 minutes)**

D1 Workshop for the student representatives see **Budget proposal for second dep reps meeting 2023**

*Presenter: Osheen Sharma*



An evening fika will soon be organized, with the aim of inviting departmental student representatives to discuss expectations about their work and how to communicate within their departments and with the DSA. The budget for this event can be decreased from 1,000 SEK to 350 SEK as relatively few people will attend. Vladimir mentions he could join too, and that KI Career Service can take care of the costs of the fika.

It is quickly discussed whether the central student representatives could join as well, though despite the differences in work it seems best to let all student representatives meet and discuss together. As such, the meeting decides to have a joined fika.

Since KI Career Service will pay for the fika, no decision on the budget proposal needs to be made.

D2 Preliminary budget for organizing the Summer Party 2023 (continuation from Information Point 6)

*Presenter: Manouk Verhoeven*

Manouk presents an estimate for the budget for the Summer Party (attached to the minutes). We are required to have 1 guard per 100 people at the party. We will start with 5 guards and push to sell many tickets. The meeting discussed that there can be three rounds of sale: one early bird ticket of 50 SEK, one pre-sale ticket of 80 SEK and the door-sale ticket of 100 SEK.

**The board votes on the preliminary budget for the Summer Party 2023 with no against votes.** If there are major changes to the budget these will be taken as a per capsulam decision.

Manouk and Linnéa will talk with KIPA tomorrow. The promotion will start next week and the logistics for ticket sale are already in place.

### **Open discussion**

Lu Pan (student representative for KI NMA) has just defended and will stay at KI until the end of the year. She will continue as student representative until someone can take over from her.

**End of meeting: 20:19**



# Signature page

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