

# The Social Sciences Student Union's Strategic plan 2019 - 2022



The strategic plan of the Social Sciences Student Union lists the goals and visions for the student union for a three year period. Each year, the yearly action plan is written based on the strategic plan.

Through further concretization in the action plans, the Social Sciences Student Union will achieve the strategic goals in this strategic plan by June 2022

## External communication

Today, we can see that the accessibility of the student union is perceived differently depending on who we are asking. Students that get involved tend to be happy about the way they are welcomed into the organisation but for those who are not yet active or in other ways included, the student union can seem unavailable and unclear. Word to mouth tends to be the most common way of knowing about the student union, rather than through our channels.

The student union disposes of several channels for communication and has a plan for external communication. However, compared to other student associations in Lund, our external communication is not as consistent, especially not when it comes to activities. This is believed to be due to the fact that the responsibility for external communication is shared by everyone in the organisation, and that there is no person or group especially responsible for maintaining the communication.

It is also clear that our successes in terms of student influence are not particularly visible. Apart from not being very visible through channels such as social media, the Social Sciences Student Union is not very visible at campus either. Our estimation is that not many students at the faculty would recognize our logo. This could be helped through selling more profile products to members, regardless of if they are active or not.

### The Social Sciences Student Union shall

- **be known to a majority of students at the faculty**
- **strengthen the brand of the Social Sciences Student Union among the students at the faculty.**
- **communicate clearly and cohesively with the students about the student union's work.**
- **communicate clearly and cohesively with the departments about the student union's work.**

- **have a detailed strategy for the use of communication channels**

## Recruitment

The Social Sciences Student Union is depending on students who are willing to spend their free time working in our different committees and groups. As well as most student unions and nations in Lund we are experiencing difficulties filling all our positions.

At the same time we see that some students stay active over multiple years. These members hold knowledge and experiences that are valuable to us and let our organisation run smoothly.

We believe that there are many reasons as to why students don't get active in the student union. One reason would be that they chose to be active in other student organisations such as programme associations or nations. Another reason would be that it is unclear what is expected from our active members and what their roles are. One aspect that needs to be considered is that some of our groups or projects have very clearly divided roles while some do not have this. At the same time, some roles with very clear expectations still are not attractive for students to take on. There is also the possibility that our external communication about getting active is not inviting enough and that students are either intimidated or simply don't know they can get active. Although recruitment over all needs to increase, we also see an issue with representation. Our student union does not reflect the faculty, creating even more barriers between us and potential active members who are in minority.

### **The Social Sciences Student Union shall**

- **increase the number of active members**
- **establish the use of functionaries for different activities and projects with the student union**
- **further clarify roles and responsibilities for active members**
- **make it rewarding and fulfilling to be an active member of the student union**
- **strive to establish novice activities in both fall and spring.**

## Internal community

To make sure the members of the student union feel involved within the community and are a part of the work we do, it's necessary that we in a good way educate our members. This includes primarily our student representatives (but also members who are active within other committees). The education itself can therefore vary, depending on what responsibility the active member has. The student union is overall perceived as offering adequate competence development, at least for some of our active groups. .

At the same time, we can see that community is overall strong, but it is limited to specific groups. Not all our active members feel a community with the rest of all other active members but rather

with members within their “field”. Strengthening the internal community across field borders would be important if the student union wants to become an organisation where it is easy to feel included. Events can be seen as an opportunity to welcome and attract new members to the union. But events can also be held as a thank-you activity to show appreciation for the work our active members do voluntarily. According to our members, active members of the student union wants to have more parties and other activities. With more events and activities, the student union would be able to develop a more solid internal community - where we can both attract new members and thank those who’s already involved in our work. Although the student union arrange several different activities - not all students are aware of the events and activities coming up. The events we hold need to be more visible if we truly want them to be used as a selling point.

Furthermore, the policy of decoration of the student union only focuses on some groups of active members. The decoration policy needs to be updated and reconstructed to make sure the student union strengthen the internal community. The student union should aim to have a decoration policy that includes more groups of active members, with different medals for different type of involvement. In that way, the student union show appreciation for not only some, but all of the active members. Thanking active members with medals or other types of decorations is also a way to become more visible over time and create a sense of community.

### **The Social Sciences Student Union shall**

- **create a strong sense of community among its active members**
- **gather all members, and not only active members**
- **further develop its ways of thanking active members**
- **make events more visible towards active and non active members.**
- **develop the way our house Samvetet is used by active members**

## **Internal organization**

This fiscal year, the Union has faced great challenges with heavy workloads for many different positions in our organisation.. This has emphasized a need of continue working on developing the student union’s organisation. This has been made very clear especially by the massive pressure on the full timers, often working more than 40-hour weeks. A review of our organisation is in dire need since the pressure has had severe consequences. The events of the year 2018/2019 have also revealed some very vulnerable parts of our organisations and the union needs to strengthen these weak spots.

A problem that has been re occurring for the student union is not having enough workers for our events. We might have many active members, but just a few of them that help out with matters “outside” their ordinary area of responsibility. To get more people active in the union and also to get more workers, a “worker pool” could be set up to gather people that might help out at events. The current community of “Samhällsvetarkårens active members” is currently not

serving that purpose. To motivate people to join the group, there will be a bigger need of thank you activities. A key thing for the Union to develop is the way we manage and thank our active members. The union currently organises thank you events for our active members, but this is something the union can do more. This might make us a more attractive organisation and also to keep members in our organisation for a longer period of time. People that are involved in our organisation for a long time gain a lot of knowledge and experience that is lost when they leave the organisation. The union needs to work more on how we manage our information assets and how to best keep the information in the union for a long time. A way of managing this is not only keeping information but also to continue educating our active members on the matters of the student union and all students.

Another issue is the role of the sections in the student union. Their responsibilities towards the student union, and the student union's responsibility towards the sections can be clarified and attempts have been made to author new agreements that would establish the relationship in more detail.

#### **The Social Sciences Student Union shall**

- **Work towards structuring the work of the active members so that expectations and roles as well as mandates are clear**
- **make sure that active members can develop themselves more from their work in the student union**
- **make sure that all members, regardless of background or previous experiences feel welcome in the organisation**
- **clarify the roles of the student union sections**
- **continuously follow up on the relationship with the sections.**
- **with regards to the investigation about the boards constitution done in 2018/2019 proceed with appropriate actions**

## **Education surveillance**

The student union's primary purpose is to monitor and improve the education at the university. We do this primarily through appointing student representatives. The work they do however is not always very visible, and students do not always know where to turn with matters regarding their education. It is our wish that all students at the faculty would know who their representatives are and that they can turn to them if they would like to suggest improvements. It is also very important that students know where to turn if there are more immediate problems or emergencies. In such cases students should turn to us but not all of them do. Reaching out to students about student influence is in some cases made even more difficult by the fact that heads of departments and other staff have vague or false conceptions about what student representatives do and what the student union's role is. There is room to improve the student unions communication towards the faculty at this point.

### **The Social Sciences Student Union shall**

- **organize student representatives at all departments at the faculty**
- **ensure continuity in the work with education monitoring**
- **communicate clearly and cohesively with the departments about the student role in the education monitoring**
- **develop the role and the organization of class representatives**

## **Labour market matters**

How we work with labour market matters within the student union is today independent from the rest of the student union's work. When recruiting, there is often competition between education, social events and labour market, and the labour market area is not connected with education and social events. Furthermore, the labour market coordinator is today working like the Event coordinator with event planning to create work preparatory events. Because the student population at the Faculty of Social Science is very heterogeneous, it is hard to cater to each student group's needs. The student union does not have insight or knowledge about what each student group needs and is asking for when it comes to labour market connection in their education. Today there are a lot of selective actions done during the fiscal year, but there is no holistic approach about the labour market situation for social sciences students. When we arrange events together with organisations and companies we are not taking payments like other student organisation do. Furthermore, the program associations and sections are closer to the students they represent which means that they have other pre-conditions to work with labour market connections, and it would be in favour for both program associations, sections and the Social Sciences Student Union with a closer collaboration.

It would be in line with the student union's main purpose if the Labour market coordinator would work more with educational politics and getting the labour market perspective in different boards, groups and other organs at the University through our student representatives. This is to get the faculty and the institutions to work more with the labour market connections themselves and take the student perspectives into consideration even more to ensure the quality of the educations.

### **The Social Sciences Student Union shall**

- **make the labour market area more connected to education surveillance**
- **work closer and support the program associations and sections in their work with labour market matters**

# Sustainability

Social Sciences Student Union at Lund University shall be an organization who works for sustainability and who takes care of the world we live in. As an organization representing thousands of students the Social Sciences Student Union need to be responsible and have a sound attitude towards sustainability.

## **The Social Sciences Student Union shall**

- **evaluate how operations at the union can be more environmentally sustainable**
- **strive to establish a culture of good sustainability practices**
- **ensure environmental concerns are considered when making decisions**