

General Study Plan for PhD students employed at Stockholm Resilience Centre

Revised 2009-10-10

General

PhD students employed at Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC) must be formally accepted by a university department (“host department”) and comply with the General Study Plan at that department, as well as this General Study Plan at SRC. The distribution of commitments between SRC and the host department - concerning financing, work office, courses, supervision, examination etc – are stated in an “Agreement” that is specifically made for each student. This Agreement is an attachment to the Individual Study Plan (see 5.2). PhD students employed at SRC are automatically enrolled in the Resilience Research School (see 5.5).

1. Research area

The research area can be broadly described as resilience in social-ecological systems. Whether the analytical focus is on biodiversity and ecosystem functions or stakeholder collaboration the larger picture is resilience in social-ecological systems. These systems are complex and adaptive and the important dynamics occur at a continuum of scales. Understanding of ecological drivers, disturbance regimes, basins of attractions etc are combined with understanding of social and economic drivers, governance regimes at multiple organisational levels and development trajectories. The theoretical framework also includes the interplay of periods with incremental and abrupt change, windows of opportunity, as well as adaptability and transformability of social-ecological systems.

2. Purpose of the PhD research education

The purpose of the research education is to train students to do research on complex adaptive social-ecological systems, drawing on the theoretical frameworks described above and employing and developing tools and methods originating from the social and natural sciences as well as the humanities and law. The ability to formulate novel research questions, to structure a problem, and to discuss the research results in a larger social-ecological context is particularly emphasized.

3. Entrance requirements

The general requirement is

- a completed exam at advanced level (Master’s degree or equivalent), or
- four full years of courses (at least 240 credits/hp) of which at least 60 hp on advanced level.

The specific requirement for being enrolled as PhD student at SRC is a completed thesis at advanced level of at least 30 hp.

4. Acceptance and criteria for selection among applicants

Decisions of acceptance are made by the director of SRC after consulting the intended supervisors. PhD students can only be accepted if researchers with appropriate competence accept to be supervisors and if the financial situation can be guaranteed for four full years of study. The student must either be employed or be granted a research stipend

(utbildningsbidrag) that allow the student enough time to complete his/her PhD within eight years, i.e. the minimum speed should be half-time.

Criteria for selection are:

- Subject knowledge relevant for the research task,
- Practical experiences and knowledge of the particular research task,
- Knowledge in scientific theory and methods,
- Analytic ability, manifest in research publications, reports and theses,
- Personal references of the applicants, and
- Gender aspects

The application should include certificates of degrees and marks, scientific publications, thesis, letter of intent, recommendation letter and other relevant document that supports the skills of the applicants. SRC may call the applicant for an interview which in that case also will influence the decision.

5. Outline of the PhD research education

5.1 General

The PhD research education normally requires four years full-time studies (240 credits/hp). The education consists of a course part and a thesis part. The extent of the course part is determined by the supervisors and the student together, with respect to the general study plan of the host department.

5.2 Individual Study Plan

Directly after the acceptance of a PhD student s/he will, together with the supervisors, write an individual study plan, based on the templates that exist at the Faculty that the host department belongs to. This individual study plan is signed by the student, the supervisors, the director of SRC and the head of the host department. It includes:

- A research plan including a time-line,
- A plan of the course part,
- A description of other scientific commitments such as international collaborations and conferences,
- A description of other commitments by the student, the host department, and SRC to ensure an effective education,
- A financial plan for the full time of research education.

A written “Agreement” – specifying the distribution of commitments between SRC and the host department concerning financing, work office, courses, supervision, examination etc – is attached to the Individual Study Plan.

5.3 Course part

The student will complete the courses that are compulsory at the host department as well as at SRC. Exceptions from this requirement need to be accepted by both the board of the host department and the SRC director. For 2010 there are two compulsory courses at SRC:

- Linking resilience theory to research questions and design (7,5 hp); and
- Research on social-ecological systems (7,5 hp).

The course part for a PhD should be in the range 60 - 120 hp depending on the expectations of the host department. The optional courses are chosen by the student after consultation and approval by both supervisors.

Students with a 2-year master's degree may, after application, count up to 60 hp as part of the PhD research education.

5.4 Thesis part

The instructions follow the requirements of the host department.

5.5 Teaching and other commitments

Other commitments beside taking courses and writing a thesis are described in the individual study plan. SRC expects the student to be fully enrolled and take active part of the Resilience Research School at SRC, including for example organizing seminar series. Besides, SRC has some, but limited, expectations regarding teaching at undergraduate courses. This non-research work for SRC is financially remunerated to the student, extending his/her time to complete the thesis. The extent of this non-research work is limited (0-20%) and the details are specified in the individual study plan (see 5.2).

5.6 Supervision

The director of SRC and the head of the host department together appoint supervisors for the student. At least one should fulfil the qualification of associate professor ("docent") and have tenure at Stockholm University, and at least one should have completed a pedagogic course for supervision at PhD level.

The main supervisor shall inform the director of SRC and the head of the host department about the annual progress of the student, using the individual study plan as a benchmark. The procedures for changing supervisor and for examination follows what is said in the general study plan at the host department.

6. Licentiate research education

This education for a Licentiate Degree consists of two years full-time studies (120 hp). The course part is at least 45 hp and the remaining is the Licentiate thesis. An individual study plan is needed (see 5.2). The courses are chosen by the student after consultation and approval by both supervisors. The instructions for the thesis and examination follow the requirements of the host department.