

Operational plan LiU Junior Faculty 2014

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LiU Junior Faculty Office

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LiU Junior Faculty

Junior Faculty is a well known concept within international academia. At Linköping University, Junior Faculty was started in January 2006 at the Faculty of Health Sciences to enable a strong re-growth within research.

In 2007, a university wide Junior Faculty organisation, LiU Junior Faculty (LiU JF), was introduced at Linköping University, as the first university in Sweden to do so. The foundation of LiU JF was initiated by the previously existing steering group within the Faculty of Health Sciences (HU JF) with support from Rector. The university wide ambition for LiU JF highlighted the need for support, networking, career planning and clear career paths for junior researchers, as well as guiding with regard to funding applications, sources for intellectual conversation, cross-disciplinary networking, mentoring and leadership. Subsequently, LiU JF has become a part of the strategic efforts to raise up successful leading researchers for the future at Linköping University. In this context, LiU JF has become a recognized counter part and is accepted as the common voice for junior researchers at Linköping University, both towards internal and external stakeholders, with regard to university recruitment strategy, official career paths and employment terms.

LiU JF is monitoring the interests of junior researchers and operates as a sounding board for investigations regarding such issues. For example, LiU JF contributed to the decision to extend research assistantships after parental leave. Furthermore, LiU JF is taking an active interest in building a transparent career ladder with regard to positions (titles) and career guiding, so that freshly recruited junior researchers receive an optimal career start.

Continued Development of Activities

The aim of LiU Junior Faculty is to conduct and organize a university wide network for graduated PhDs until they have established themselves as independent researchers. LiU JF should also create a stable platform for increasing the quality of junior researchers and to guide them in pursuing an academic career while informing about alternative non-academic career paths. The aim can be obtained by arranging a series of seminars, workshops, career days, mentorship programs and courses in leadership and project management.

LiU Junior Faculty accepts junior researchers from all faculties and disciplines at Linköping University as members. The scope includes, but is not limited to, senior PhD candidates (last year before graduation), post-docs, assistant professors and senior lecturers as well as technical and administrative personnel (e.g. researchers and 1st research engineers). Additionally, within the medical faculty the scope includes employees within clinical professions such as surgeons, nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. In common for all the eligible members is that they are affiliated to Linköping University and have an aim to achieve Docent status and/or a permanent position within LiU or another university, or a research career outside academia. The purpose of LiU JF activities is to cater to the needs of all the different categories of members in a balanced way.

Organisation

LiU JF is currently organised according to the following structure:

LiU Junior Faculty Office consists of three part time employees (20%) who administer and implement the LiU JF operation. LiU JF Office is advised by:

- A reference group with representatives from the university wide membership. The reference group optimally consists of two to three junior researchers from each faculty and meets two to three times per semester to design activities together with LiU JF Office. The reference group members are in turn connected to:
- Three faculty specific steering groups (Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Science & Engineering and Faculty of Arts & Sciences along with Educational Sciences). These groups can organize activities tailored to meet the existing needs within each faculty. Such activities compliment other activities that are organized in a university wide context.

In terms of location, LiU JF Office is situated at External Relations with close connections to Grants Office, LiU Innovation, LiU Alumni and LiU-Nytt. This location and situation within the university is beneficial to the LiU JF operation as close connections are available with an existing network of experienced university staff. It should be noted that in until September 2011, Junior Faculty belonged to Human Resources (PA), but is since then part of Research Support and Alumni (FFA).

Junior Faculty Club

LiU JF is actively working with promoting networking within the eligible membership and in an inter-faculty context. LiU JF arranges monthly gatherings known as Junior Faculty Club. A Junior Faculty Club gathering takes the form of a seminar followed by snacks and refreshments designed to provide a meet-and-greet atmosphere. The topic of the seminar is chosen such that it should be relevant across the borders between faculties. The purpose of promoting networking in this context is to create a resource for brainstorming and a contact network that can aid junior researchers develop.

Examples of previous seminars include:

- Presentation techniques
- Grant Workshop
- How to write a portfolio of merits with a winning CV within academia.
- To transfer an idea to reality – Entrepreneurship and innovation
- What is required for Docent status?
- How to write a successful application for a lectureship?
- Discussions regarding academic career paths.
- How to improve one's pedagogic skills.
- How to create a successful research group.
- Stress and priorities – insecurity, career and demands from home.
- Hitting the glass roof – what about gender issues?
- What characterises cheating scientists?

The following activities are planned for 2012:

- Seminar about pedagogic meriting
- Cross-disciplinary workshop to promote collaboration
- Grant application workshop
- Mentorship workshop
- Seminar about collaboration with industry
- Workshop in economy for junior researchers
- Seminar about employment forms and salaries
- Seminar with representatives from the Ministry of education and research
- Course in project management
- Summer pub
- Christmas celebration

Career Planning

The employment system currently in place, with its career steps and constraints, often lead to strange career paths and significant insecurity regarding opportunities and possibilities in the context of getting a permanent position. Career developing operations and guiding towards both academic and non-academic careers can increase the sense of security within the membership of LiU JF. In collaboration with Human Resources, LiU JF has taken initiative towards implementing an informal mentorship program which started 2010. For 2012, efforts to follow up, evaluate and maintain the program are priorities. Each year LiU JF also arranges a Career Day to promote career planning, networking among members and contact with various companies.

Networking

- *Funding* - LiU JF has a close collaboration with Grants Office. They can supply the membership with seminars and workshops regarding how to write successful funding applications as well with continuing information about relevant funding opportunities.
- *Innovation and entrepreneurship* – LiU JF maintains a continuing contact with InnovationskontorEtt and all their partners, such as LEAD, Spetsa, CIE (Centrum for Innovation and Entrepreneurship) and the Key actor program (Nyckelaktörsprogrammet) and acts as a conduct for information regarding specific activities to increase entrepreneurship within the university, for example Venture Cup.
- *Leadership* – LiU JF is in close contact with Human Resources at LiU, which offers leadership courses for interested employees (Nyfiken på ledarskap).
- *Collaboration* – All the university wide activities aim to promote collaboration between junior researchers from different faculties. LiU JF also cooperates with Forum Scientium to arrange an event called “Forum forum” to promote collaboration between researchers across faculty borders.

- *National Networks* – The medical faculty of LiU was active in initiating a national network for JF in 2005. This network, National Network of Junior Scientists (NOJS), has had a big impact and has had media exposure. Unfortunately the network is currently not working properly. However, in October 2011 LiU JF had a meeting in Uppsala with representatives from other JF. The need and interest is still there, and there is an aim towards creating a national cross-faculty network for the research leaders of the future. Networking across faculty and university borders would strengthen the future national research efforts.
- *Sveriges unga akademi* – LiU JF is in contact with the newly started national academy for junior scientists through Per Eklund (IFM), who is currently a member.
- *EU contacts* – East Sweden, which is the contact in Brussels for our region, has contacted LiU JF to discuss how to best reach out to the eligible membership of JF. We also have some contact with Eurodoc – The Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers.

Marketing

LiU JF is actively working to market its operation and activities both within and outside the university. This work is conducted by continuous information dissemination efforts and activities. LiU JF has a close contact with LiU-nytt which has mentioned LiU JF in publications. The website of LiU JF is well frequented and receives traffic through links from other universities and networks.

Focus questions

During 2012 LiU JF should focus on the following questions:

- Activate members
- Re-establish the steering groups at the Faculty of Science & Engineering and the Faculty of Arts & Sciences
- Recruit a JF officer (from the Faculty of Arts & Sciences)
- Increase the visibility of JF
- Ensure close contact with decision making bodies within LiU.