



SAMHÄLLS-
VETENSKAPLIGA
FAKULTETEN

PROJECT PLAN

Reg. No
STYR 2023/1630

21 September 2023

Organisational development towards fewer and larger units at the Faculty of Social Sciences

Principal:	Dean, Christofer Edling
Project manager:	Vice Dean, Charlotte Simonsson
Project period:	1 April 2023 – 31 December 2026

The project plan is to be revised as needed, but not later than 30 June 2024.

BACKGROUND AND AIM

On 2 March 2023, the Faculty Board (Reg. no STYR 2023/565) made a policy decision that the Faculty of Social Sciences organisation is to develop towards fewer units, and organisational changes are to be made progressively.

Today, in relation to its size, the faculty has numerous small organisational units (department/equivalent.) (See “The Faculty in Figures” below.) This leads to a series of organisational and administrative challenges, which risk having a negative effect on the faculty’s core activities. The issue has been noted by previous faculty managements, but the internal and external pressure for strategic and efficient use of resources and the increased need for ever more specialised support functions make the existing structure increasingly unsustainable. There is also a clear trend towards it becoming more difficult to fill academic leadership roles such as head of department or director of studies.

The aim of a reorganisation towards fewer but larger units is to equip the departments’ leadership, management and administration ahead of increased demands and expectations, while retaining a high degree of autonomy in the core activities.

The change is crucial, both in enabling the maintenance and development of collegial management of the organisation, and in order to develop and streamline administrative processes and support functions. This development is also part of a path towards creating better and more attractive conditions for academic management roles. A well-functioning management and administration are crucial in order to retain the quality of the core activities as they face a rapidly changing wider world with ever-stricter planning conditions. Fewer units also make it possible to maintain today’s diversified range of courses and programmes, combined with both broad and cutting-edge research. It should also be noted that the focus on efficiency in this context is not about financial savings, but rather on the capacity to rise to increased demands and challenges using existing resources.

The Faculty in figures, spring 2023:

778 employees, including 427 permanent staff (658 Full Time Equivalents), 5839 full-time students and a total turnover of around SEK 837 million.

The size of the faculty's 11 departments/equivalents varies widely:
Full Time Equivalent Staff: 23-103; Full Time Equivalent Students: 120-1040; Research turnover: SEK 10-70 million; Agency Capital: -2/+15)

Since January 2017, the faculty's work to develop the buildings within the Paradis area has been organised as the *Campus Paradis project*. Experience from this project has shown the significance of focusing on the development of good generic functional environments that can work for the vast majority of the departments. The idea is to create a common benchmark, allowing for flexibility and innovative solutions.

The Campus Paradis project has not been tasked with planning with regard to the formation of new units within the faculty. However, as the reorganisation project gets underway, the exchange of information and coordination between the two projects will be crucial, as will identifying both opportunities and risks that arise at the points where they meet. This is ensured through recurring progress reports (once per semester) between the projects and through the involvement of the Campus Paradis project manager in the organisational project.

GOAL

Impact goal

Having a smaller number and larger units is intended to achieve the following results:

- *Better conditions for securing long-term expertise provision for collegial assignments.* A functioning collegial management demands staffing levels far beyond the number of employees who work in management roles, department boards and nominating committees. Furthermore, collegiality demands not only employees who are prepared to take on collegial duties, but also that younger colleagues are available to be "trained" in collegial management.

- *A developed management function at departmental level* through the opportunities for bringing together various roles and professions into a management group with competent administrative support. The opportunity to work in teams also contributes to creating more sustainable and attractive management roles.
- *A developed management function at faculty level* through a more uniform and cohesive Council of Heads of Department which has the opportunity to take more responsibility for faculty-wide issues.
- *Increased opportunities to prioritise strategically and to deal with risks.* Increased financial dimensions bring both economies of scale and greater opportunities to plan strategically and to prioritise as needed. Small financial frameworks restrict the opportunities for strategic investments, and it is very difficult to handle risks or “turbulence” in the organisation (e.g. requirements for co-financing or reductions in external funding).
- *Improved coordination of administrative processes* within areas such as HR, finances, communication and quality assurance in research and education. Fewer units will provide the conditions for creating more efficient administrative processes and the Faculty Office can also build better, closer relationships with each department.
- *Reduced vulnerability and improved expertise within administration.* With fewer units, administrators are brought together to a greater extent, which creates both opportunities for specialisation as well as reducing vulnerability to sickness absence and the like.

Delivery goal

According to the Faculty Board’s decision named above (Reg. no STYR 2023/565), the development towards fewer units is to take place gradually. The stated goal is to reduce the number of departments/equivalents from the current eleven to around half that number within two terms of office, including a reduction to eight units in the next three to four years.

The Board’s decision is a policy decision and therefore makes no mention of which departments are to merge and there are no set ideas

about how the new, larger units are to be organised. As well as establishing support for the project's aim and goals amongst the faculty's staff and students, the project will therefore focus on exploration and information gathering in its initial phase.

The following delivery goals apply to the project's initial phase:

- A round of conversations with the management of each department is to be completed no later than October 2023.
- A presentation of the project group and the aim of the project is to be delivered to all departments/equivalents' boards or employee groups no later than December 2023.
- Interviews and study visits to three to five units that have undergone similar mergers, both within Lund University and other higher education institutions, are to be completed no later than December 2023. Insights from these conversations will be presented to the steering group no later than February 2024.
- Proposals/scenarios involving one or more potential mergers that could be undertaken in an initial phase will be presented to the steering group no later than February 2024.
- An overarching process for how a merger is to be accomplished is to be produced no later than March 2024. Such a process includes more general issues related to facilitation, HR, finances, resource usage, election of head of department and board, MBL (Co-Determination in the Workplace Act) negotiations etc.
- After the autumn's conversations with the management of the respective departments/equivalents, a joint workshop with heads of department, assistant heads of department and faculty management will be held no later than by February 2024.
- In March/April 2024, the project group and the steering group is to undertake a risk and impact analysis for the project as a whole, based on their discussions with managers and staff from various departments/equivalents. Further risk and impact analyses will probably be necessary during the course of the project.
- If circumstances allow, a decision will be made in spring 2024 about one or more mergers, with a view to the merging taking place at the turn of the year 2024/2025.

THE PROJECT GROUP'S ASSIGNMENT

The project group is to proceed within the following framework in accordance with the Faculty Board's policy decision:

- It is to work towards achieving the objective of the policy decision.
- It is to conduct or order necessary investigations.
- It is to produce required supporting documentation for decision making and negotiation.
- It is to ensure that the process is transparent and that the faculty's employees are kept informed.
- It is to ensure that the process and the decisions do not jeopardise the quality of core operations.
- It is to ensure that the process and the decisions do not restrict the academic freedom of teaching staff.
- It is to ensure that the process does not result in an additional layer of administration and increased bureaucratisation.

Based on the above, the project group's role can be described in terms of initiating, facilitating, supporting and "mediating" rather than being responsible for the concrete implementation as new units are established. The project group's assignment is to develop a process for and to support the establishment of new, larger units. It may require efforts at both department and faculty level to secure the long-term development of management, organisation and administration. Even if the project group's assignment does not extend to organisational development in general, the project can contribute by identifying the need for development initiatives regarding, for example, academic leadership or delegation rules that are necessary for the new, larger units to work effectively.

RISKS

Different ways of organising operations entail different pros and cons. The risks, previously identified by the Council of Heads of Department, predominantly relate to issues of subject identity and outward profiling; asymmetry between units; tensions between the existing delegation rules and revamped organisational structures.

Other risks may include increased distance between management and staff and an increasingly complex structure with new hierarchical levels within each department. The optimal size of a department is not given and can surely vary according to the composition of the department. A further risk might be that the organisational project itself causes so much unease that it impacts the quality of operations. The project group is tasked with taking these and other potential risks identified during the process into account.

As mentioned above under *Delivery goal*, an in-depth risk and impact analysis for the project as a whole will be undertaken during the 2024 spring semester. As the new units are established, a risk and impact analysis will be conducted for each of them.

ORGANISATION

Principal:

Dean, Christofer Edling

Steering group

The organisation project is to be led by a steering group, as decided by the Faculty Board on 29 March 2023 (Reg. no STYR 2023/782).

To members of the steering group from *decision date* up to and including 31 December 2023:

Christofer Edling, *dean of the Faculty of Social Science*, chair
 Agnes Andersson Djurfeldt, *pro-dean of the Faculty of Social Science*
 Malou Engberg de Carvalho, *head of the Faculty of Social Science Office*
 Eva Stengard, *head of finance, Faculty of Social Science Office*
 Andréa Björk, *HR Manager, Faculty of Social Science Office*
 Helena Lind, *communications manager, Faculty of Social Science Office*
 Magnus Jirström, *member of the Faculty of Social Science Board*
 Charlotta Kjällström, *principal health and safety representative*
 Student representative and substitute member nominated by The Social Sciences Student Union

Project group

Members in the project group from *decision date* up to and including 31 December 2026:

Mersiha Hamzic, *administrative manager, Department Service, Faculty of Social Science Office*

Robert Holmberg, *senior lecturer, Department of Psychology, project manager Campus Paradis*

Malin Schatz, *assistant head of faculty office, Faculty of Social Sciences Office, assistant project manager*

Charlotte Simonsson, *vice dean, project manager*

Reference groups

The Council for Heads of Department is an important reference group and the project will hold regular progress meetings with this group.

Further reference groups will be appointed where required.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Achieving the goals of the project and ensuring successful implementation requires continuous communication that provides the conditions for insight and participation. It is of great importance that staff and students know why the project is being undertaken and what it will entail. A central part of the project's communication is to listen to the organisation, regularly update staff and students about what the information gathered has been used for, what stage the project is at and the next phase ahead. A more comprehensive communication plan for the project will be developed in a separate document. Only the primary communication efforts are presented here:

- The project is to have a page on the Faculty of Social Sciences' internal website, to be continually updated with news about the process.
- The project group conducts dialogues with departmental management and provides information at staff meetings during the various stages of the project.
- The project group will deliver frequent rolling updates to the Council for Heads of Department and the Faculty Board.

- When important decisions that impact the organisation are made, particular efforts in the form of workshops, presentations or similar will be made.
- Employee organisations are to be kept informed, at least once per semester.
- The Social Sciences Student Union is represented in the steering group, in the Council for Heads of Department and in the Faculty Board, and as such is continuously kept informed. Further special meetings with the student union will be conducted if required.

In the event of a concrete merger proposal, a separate communication plan for the directly affected departments will be produced.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The organisation project directly or indirectly affects all staff and students at the faculty. Below is a list of the groups that the project has to relate to. In terms of students, the project group has included the Social Science Student Union among its stakeholders, but aside from that communication with students should primarily be via the departments (especially in connection with mergers and the students affected). When newer, larger units are being established, a specific stakeholder analysis will be conducted for the units directly affected.

Stakeholders for the project in its entirety

- Faculty Board
- Departmental management
- Department Service
- Department boards
- Faculty of Social Sciences Faculty Office
- Local Health and Safety Committee (HSE Committee)
- Staff
- Employee organisations
- Council for Heads of Department
- Campus Paradis project
- Faculty of Social Sciences library
- Student Union
- Steering group for the project

BUDGET

Salary expenses:

- Project manager, 20% of full-time hours
- Project participant, 10–20% of full-time hours

Staffing resources in time:

- Assistant project manager, 20% of full-time hours
- Project participant, 10–20% of full-time hours

Running costs: approximately SEK 20,000 per annum (study visits, workshops etc.)

TIMETABLE

- October 2023: A round of conversations with the management of each department is to be completed.
- December 2023: A presentation of the project group and the aim of the project is to be delivered to all departments/equivalents' boards.
- December 2023: Interviews with units who have undergone similar mergers, with insights from these conversations presented to the steering group no later than February 2024.
- February 2024: Proposals/scenarios involving one or more potential mergers that could be undertaken in an initial phase are presented to the steering group.
- March 2024: An overarching process for how a merger is to be accomplished is produced.
- March/April 2024, the project group is to undertake a risk and impact analysis for the project as a whole, based on the conversations with managers and staff from various departments/equivalents.
- January 2025: the earliest point at which the first mergers could be implemented.
- January 2027: the faculty comprises no more than eight units.

As the intention is for the organisational change to emerge gradually in dialogue with the organisations it is difficult to predict a precise timeline. Decisions will not be forced, nor will they be spun out unnecessarily. Given this, it is important that the project plan is

allowed to develop gradually and to be adapted to the circumstances and conditions that emerge along the way.

According to the policy decision made by the Faculty Board (Reg. no STYR 2023/565) the organisation project is to run over two terms of office, up to and including 2029. The current project group's remit applies until 2026, which means that this project plan covers the first term of office. The project plan will be updated and developed as necessary, at least annually.