

A word from the Deputy Dean

Autumn has arrived, and the ground is covered by fallen leaves in different shades of red and yellow. The harvest season is coming to an end, but there are still plenty of mushrooms to find in the woods and market stands

Autumn is also a time of high work intensity in research, education and administrative duties. The Faculty's preparatory and decision-making bodies are working at full steam with the constant development and change efforts that are part of operating at a modern University.

The Science for Life Laboratory, SciLifeLab, is working intensively to develop its new organisation for 2013, when it changes from being a regional resource for SU, KTH, KI and Uppsala University to being a national resource. With the significant increase in funding from the government in the latest budget bill, this is a natural development. It is important for the Faculty to ensure that our researchers have easy access to the platforms without long waiting times, and that the analyses are carried out in a professional manner that guarantees quality. The increased funding for SciLifeLab will also allow for the recruitment of a number of prominent researchers, who will have the opportunity to conduct their research in the stimulating environment of SciLifeLab. These researchers will be employed at one of the four "parent universities", which now have an important task in determining what fields of study to advertise for. Hopefully, these researchers will further strengthen or introduce important research specialisations in the life sciences at SU. An important aspect of the government's commitment to SciLifeLab is that it raises the prospects for young researchers and our students in the life sciences. Perhaps it can also put the spotlight on a future area for all the primary and secondary school students who currently reject chemistry studies in particular as something old-fashioned and boring. When will these students realise that this is the future?

Scientific research has always had a very strong international character, and we can hardly imagine a successful career as a researcher without a postdoctoral fellowship at a foreign university, or a Stockholm University without an incredible diversity of foreign students and researchers at various stages in their career. To further stimulate international contacts, the Vice-Chancellor has allocated special funds for 2013 to projects including a postdoctoral programme for visiting researchers and a programme with sabbatical semesters to allow for teachers/professors to spend some time at a foreign university. It is hoped that, in addition to contributing to the individual teachers' development and expertise when it comes to research/teaching, this programme will act as a stepping stone for developing student exchange at, for example, the Master's level. Establishing such an exchange programme requires motivated people who will take the time to develop it on location at a foreign university. It is, therefore, an important task for some of the outgoing teachers/professors to take on the role of "ambassador".

Autumn is not only a time to reap the rewards of nature, but also a time when universities and individual researchers get to reap success in terms of allocated funds from several major research foundations. The Faculty's researchers did very well this year in the competition for major grants from The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation. No fewer than three major grants are going directly to projects at SU Faculty of Science, in addition to participants in a couple of other projects (read more). It is now time for a new announcement from the same foundation, and it will be exciting to follow the next round of creative applications from our faculty.

Regards Ylva