

A word from the Deputy Dean



It has now been three and a half years since we employed our first assistant professor under the new employment procedures commonly called the “tenure track”. This includes the right to be promoted upon application, and we have now begun the first few promotion processes. This is an extremely important task for us in faculty management, as well as for future recruitments of academic staff. It is the promotional committee, i.e. the deans and section deans, that will make the assessment and decide whether to accept or reject the promotion based on extensive documentation. This will include statements from multiple external reviewers. We consider it one of our most important tasks this year to ensure that this promotion process works well, and that it is both thorough and fair.

More than 25 assistant professors have now been employed in the Academic Area of Science, and it is very gratifying to know that we have been able to recruit so many strong, promising colleagues. These were attractive positions with a large number of applicants and great international breadth, and more than half of those employed had completed their PhD at a foreign university. This sets high standards for their ability to earn research and teaching qualifications, adapt to the Swedish academic landscape and make the so-called “life puzzle” work. In order to provide support in this process, we started a mentorship programme just over a year ago, and the first batch completed the programme in February. The reactions have mainly been positive, and the mentees expressed a very strong appreciation for their mentors and the valuable insights they gained.

The SciLifeLab is a national centre for large-scale bioscience with a focus on health and environmental research. Thus far, however, the environmental component has constituted a very small part of the operations. The strong and broad environmental research conducted at Stockholm University puts us in a good position to create strong research environments that will utilise the high-tech facilities at the SciLifeLab and contribute to SciLifeLab’s development in the environmental field. The Board of Science recently made a decision that pointed in that direction by approving the advertisement for a new SciLifeLab Fellow, i.e. an assistant professorship that will be placed at the SciLifeLab for the first 4-6 years. ACES will be the host department, and the position is linked to the environmental field, more specifically to the subject of ecotoxicogenomics. Together with the recently appointed professor of toxicological environmental chemistry, Jonathan Martin, the new assistant professor will constitute the first two research groups at SciLifeLab with a research focus on environmental contaminants and their effects on living organisms.

At the end of 2016, the board of SciLifeLab decided what facilities will operate in 2017-2020. Eight new facilities will start in 2017, and five will be phased out or converted. There is now a total of 40 facilities organised within 11 service platforms at the SciLifeLab. One of the new facilities is “Ancient DNA”, which will offer DNA sequencing of materials that have been subjected to degradation. The facility is co-hosted by Stockholm University and Uppsala

University, with Anders Götherström from the Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies as the coordinator at SU. This means that the Academic Area of Human Science is now also actively involved in SciLifeLab's service operations.

In June, representatives from several of SciLifeLab's facilities, both new and old, will come to the Arrhenius laboratories to present their operations and service. In connection with this presentation, we are planning to announce project funding for smaller projects, "seed money", at one of SciLifeLab's facilities. Priority will be given to research groups that did not receive funding in the last round and that want to use a facility of which they have no previous experience. It will thus be useful to come and listen to the presentations of the facilities and what types of analyses they can provide. Keep an eye out for the advertised presentations, which are tentatively scheduled to be held on 13 June.

Ylva