

Aktum.

FOR EVERYONE WORKING AT UMEÅ UNIVERSITY • JUNE 2017 • NO 2

A DAY AT WORK

Umeå School of Architecture

Profile

Eva-Maria, a helping hand to researchers

TEDx

From fake news and alternative facts to leadership

Sustainability

Our climate footprint is down one Stockholm trip

Grants Office

Helps international colleagues find research funding



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Firstly...

A balancing act

A few weeks ago, Malin Grönberg and I paid a visit to Umeå School of Architecture resulting in 'A day at work' on page 17. Entering the School, my aim was to make myself as receptive as possible, avoiding any preconceptions. On my way back to the office, I felt the buzz of having spent the day in a fine-tuned learning environment.

At the same time, the Aktum readership may have expected a very different kind of story about the Umeå School of Architecture. A text covering an in-depth course of events, scrutinizing previous ongoings and providing a more complete understanding of what the School has been through.

I, too, can regret that Aktum hasn't contributed with such a story at an earlier stage. But in my mind, this can't be solved retrospectively. The situation changes, and in due course, looking back stops being constructive.

In news journalism, there is talk of neutrality to media effects. When making editorial decisions, first priority should be to keep the public informed on matter of interest, not the potential consequences to those covered in the report.

During my time as editor-in-chief for Aktum, I have considered whether this principle should be applied to me as well. The answer after some consideration is 'No'. Or 'Yes' with a big 'But'. Because I as an author and you as a reader are parts of the same context. We can't be indifferent to what happens to one another. There must be a way to be committed to ideals of truth and transparency, but still have each other's best in mind.

The task of being editor-in-chief of a staff magazine is in my mind chiefly about questioning and scrutinizing. But it's only half the job. The positive images also need a place.

Picturing things through rose-tinted glasses is always a risk. But it's even more dangerous to let silence get the best of us.

As long as we keep conversations going, we can always make room for another perspective. ●



JONAS LIDSTRÖM
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

“There must be a way to be committed to ideals of truth and transparency, but still have each other's best in mind.”

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www.aurora.umu.se/en

On the intranet Aurora, you will find the latest news for people working at Umeå University.



The artistic creation is not on summer holiday

Administrative secretary Robert Djärv has worked at Umeå Academy of Fine Arts for over two decades. Just as long as they have offered summer courses. If you ask him, choosing the selection of courses is all about current interest and being familiar with contemporary trends in the world of arts in order to meet students' demands. So far, filling the courses has been easy.

TEXT: Per Melander **PHOTO:** Malin Grönborg and Per Melander

THIS SUMMER, Umeå Academy of Fine Arts offers two courses with 20 places each. *Spacial Concepts in Contemporary Art Based on Sculpture, Installation and Public Space*, and *The Expanded Pictorial Space in Drawing and Painting*.

“Offering summer courses is partly to give our students the chance of applying for student finance over the summer, but also to give a boost to the School’s finances,” says Robert Djärv.

He continues by explaining that the School has nearly always offered courses in painting, simply because it is such a classical technique, at the same time as it is a large part of contemporary art.

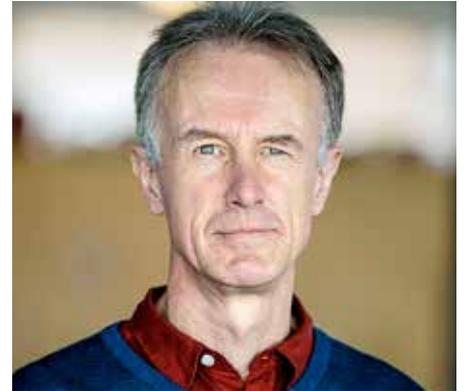
“Apart from that, we also often offer photography, video, performance and, like this year, *spacial concepts*. All our teachers are

active professionally, and are hence in the swing of knowing what is currently in question within the trade.”

When most people are looking forward to a relaxing holiday, you carry on. How do you feel about that?

“That’s not really how it goes. The summer courses start as the spring semester ends, but we work up until Swedish midsummer three weeks into June. The courses are teacher-led up until then. After that, the students carry on by themselves in July and into the first week of August. The teachers join the class again towards the end.”

“Admittedly, your pace slows down towards the end of the spring semester, and you need to take a deep breath and carry on just that little bit longer.”



ROBERT DJÄRV EXPLAINS that it is not just the School’s own students who rise to the bait when it comes to learning that little bit extra over summer. Among the applicants, many come from other parts of Sweden, but also from outside of Sweden. Umeå Academy of Fine Arts sets requirements on the students’ level of artistic experience, which is also assessed in the admissions round, Robert Djärv explains:

“Our courses are advertised, but news about them mostly spreads by word of mouth. After all, it is a small world.”

The grand finale is the exhibitions at the end. Last year, the exhibitions were held in the School’s own gallery in Sliperiet as well as in the newly renovated Scharinska villan cultural heritage building in the centre of town. ●





Big celebration at the university's Spring Graduation

On Saturday 20 May, new doctorates and award recipients were honoured at a formal ceremony in Aula Nordica. The ceremonies began on Friday when award recipients held lectures and academic talks.

During the two-hour-long ceremony on Saturday, a total of 112 new doctorates were conferred with a doctoral hat or laurel wreath, as well as a gold ring and diploma. Academic and scientific awards were also presented.

TEXT: Mattias Grundström Mitz **PHOTO:** Mattias Pettersson





PHOTO: MARKUS NORDIN

New research vessel has docked

A NEWLY RENOVATED and fully-equipped research vessel will be travelling its first nautical miles for biology this summer. Botnica – a 22 by 5 metre vessel – will be used for environmental surveillance and research, and is adapted particularly for coastal sampling. The vessel will work all over the Bothnian Bay, but will be stationed at Norrbyn and Umeå Marine Sciences Centre at Umeå University.

Euraxess at your service

ARE YOU A NEW researcher in Sweden? At Euraxess, the EU Commission research portal, you can find interesting openings in Sweden and the EU. As a researcher, you can also get in touch with collaborative partner institutes. Apart from job vacancies and relocation information, you can also find information on grants within all research fields. The Office for Human Resources runs the Umeå University Euraxess Centre.

New chairperson of the University Board

"I FEEL GENUINELY happy and honoured to be appointed this assignment. Umeå University has an incredible breadth and has great support in the region as well as success on an international scale," said Chris Heister, county governor of Stockholm, when the Government appointed her new chairperson of Umeå University Board. The first meeting with the new board is held on 12 June.



PHOTO: MIKAEL SJÖBERG

Doctoral students collaborate with external partners

WITH ITS UP TO 15 new doctoral students, the Industrial Doctoral School at Umeå University wants to help external parties such as companies and stakeholders in the public sector to find solutions to research-related problems. According to Benkt Wiklund at the Industrial Doctoral School, these collaborations generate new knowledge with benefits to both the external party, the University and the doctoral student. Read more about the Industrial Doctoral School, Företagsforsarskolan, in Swedish on Aurora.

Figuratively speaking **Erik Domellöf**



20

is the number of 23 possible points that Umeå University was awarded in the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency ranking of how well the environmental work functions at national public authorities. Umeå University is thereby ranked as one of the top Swedish institutes of higher education. In comparison, the University of Gothenburg scored a full 22 points. Other higher education institutions such as Uppsala University and Lund University scored 17 and 15 points respectively.



Popular science as a fine-tuned show

At the beginning of May, TEDxUmeå filled Vävenscenen with 400 interested listeners. And four researchers from Umeå covered topics such as fake news and alternative facts, antibiotic resistance and leadership.

TEXT: Mattias Grundström Mitz **PHOTO:** TEDx Flickr

ACCORDING TO THE organisers of TEDx-Umeå, the event is an open-minded stage for ideas worth spreading from around the world.

It wants to challenge and make people think and rethink, understand and gain new perspectives. This year's event did indeed present a wide range of perspectives. For instance, Klara Johansson, researcher at the Unit of Epidemiology and Global Health, held a blazing speech on poverty, wealth, life expectancy, population growth, and level of education – all in the spirit of the recently departed epidemiology professor, Hans Rosling.

“I worked side by side with Hans Rosling for three years and I wanted to show the

crowd the fantastic diagrams that Hans' organisation Gapminder has developed, and which others can use to contribute to a fact-based worldview. Even if some focus was aimed at Hans Rosling, it wasn't the aim of the presentation – that would have annoyed him. To him, the message was always in focus,” says Klara Johansson.

Other researchers from Umeå University who participated at TEDxUmeå were Fredrik Almqvist at the Department of Chemistry, Elza Dunkels at the Department of Applied Educational Science and Markus Hällgren at Umeå School of Business and Economics.

ONE OF THE MOST inspiring presentations that day was Johanna Davidsson's, a nurse and alumna from Umeå University. She spoke about the importance of motiva-

tion and mental training to accomplish your dreams. One of her dreams had long been to reach the Geographic South Pole on skis – and she did it.

“My best advice is not to give up due to tiredness or boredom. Sooner than you think, it can all change. I for instance used a mantra to not let negativity affect me. Hence, I decided to never allow myself to express that the 120 kilo sleigh I pulled was heavy. Instead, I called it ‘relatively easy’,” says Johanna Davidsson.

Chemist Fredrik Almqvist spoke about the threat of antibiotic resistant bacteria and the possible future forms of treatment, and had a positive experience of TEDx.

“All researchers who have something to contribute with, should definitely consider TEDx. We are often used to holding presen-



tations at scientific conferences, but TEDx is different. One of the differences is the strict timeframe, which means that you can't just skip a few slides in the middle if time runs out. Another thing to adapt to is to present your result without going to deeply into analysis and theory, which can be a challenge," says Fredrik Almqvist.

He is backed up by Hans Adolfsson, Vice-Chancellor of Umeå University, who also visited TEDxUmeå:

"As a spectator I find that the academic community has a lot to gain from this type of popular science events. First and foremost, it's an advantage to researchers to improve their skills in presenting popular science, and talk to another audience than we're familiar with. This format sets other requirements of being more tangible and understandable, which I saw many good examples of today," says Hans Adolfsson.

TEDXUMEÅ IS SUPPORTED by Umeå University, Umeå municipality, Ledarskapscentrum, Nicke&Nico, Region Västerbotten and Blå Huset. The presentations were filmed and will be published on the TED YouTube channel. ●

5 questions

for **Olle Terenius** researcher at Uppsala University and Wikipedia enthusiast.



TEXT: Michael Nordvall

1 For several years, you have been the prime mover in a Wikipedia project for researchers, first at SLU and now at Uppsala University. How did you get involved in Wikipedia?

"I can't remember exactly how it came about. But I made my first attempts, mostly editing and reviewing, in 2006. I got annoyed when reading articles that were misspelt and I discovered how easy it was to adjust mistakes – so I started editing articles as I read them."

2 What subjects do you cover?

"Within the realms of work, I mostly write about my research on bacteria in malaria mosquitoes and viral infections in butterflies. Besides that, and thanks to funding from the Swedish Research Council, I also travel around Sweden talking on the topic of Wikipedia as a channel for disseminating research results."

3 Why should researchers spend time on Wikipedia?

"Because it's by far the easiest way to spread information about your research that simultaneously reaches the largest amount of recipients, particularly as the readers are also interested in finding out more. It's simply unbeatable!"

4 Does it not involve a lot of work?

"If researchers contributes with 0.1 per cent of their working hours, it amounts to around two hours per year. Updating a Wikipedia article based upon a published scientific article or essay with a few sentences and a reference to the own work takes less than 15 minutes."

5 Can you tell us more about Wikipedia Zero?

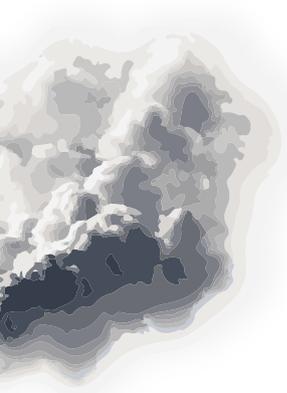
"Wikipedia Zero is a programme run by the Wikimedia Foundation and is first and foremost aimed at people in low-income countries. In the countries where Wikipedia Zero is active, one or more telecommunications companies enable free Internet for smartphones as long as the user surfs Wikipedia pages. That means that information on Wikipedia, which is always free, also becomes free to read. This naturally has a great impact and for instance means that results generated by researchers in Sweden can reach farmers in Kenya shortly after it has been published on Wikipedia." ●

wikimediafoundation.org/wiki/Wikipedia_Zero

The plane truth about air travel

In four years, Umeå University employees have reduced their air travel by on average 650 km per person, which equals one single flight to Stockholm. Through work alone, each of us still has a carbon dioxide footprint of nearly a tonne per year.

TEXT: Ola Nilsson **PHOTO:** Ulrika Bergfors **ILLUSTRATION:** Jonas Lidström



THE MOST IMPORTANT environmental footprint and impact on history that a university has is no doubt the knowledge and values imprinted in tens of thousands of students that they later act upon in their professions. Unfortunately, this impact is rather hard to estimate. What is easier – and not to

disdain – are the emissions we are the source of in the line of our work.

The University Management has set as our target that the climate and environmental impact from the University should be reduced in comparison to 2012.

THE UNIVERSITY'S HEAVIEST climate footprint by far comes from business trips – out of which air traffic is worst stands for the highest climate impact. On average, every employee generated emissions of nearly a tonne – 996 kilos to be precise – of carbon dioxide in 2016. The major share comes from air travel – as much as 972 kilos per person. Train journeys represent a microscopic one gram of carbon dioxide per person and year. Car journeys generate seven kilos. Not to forget, though, these numbers only include what we travel through work. Employees' commute to and from work is not included and

would otherwise increase the proportion of car journeys by far.

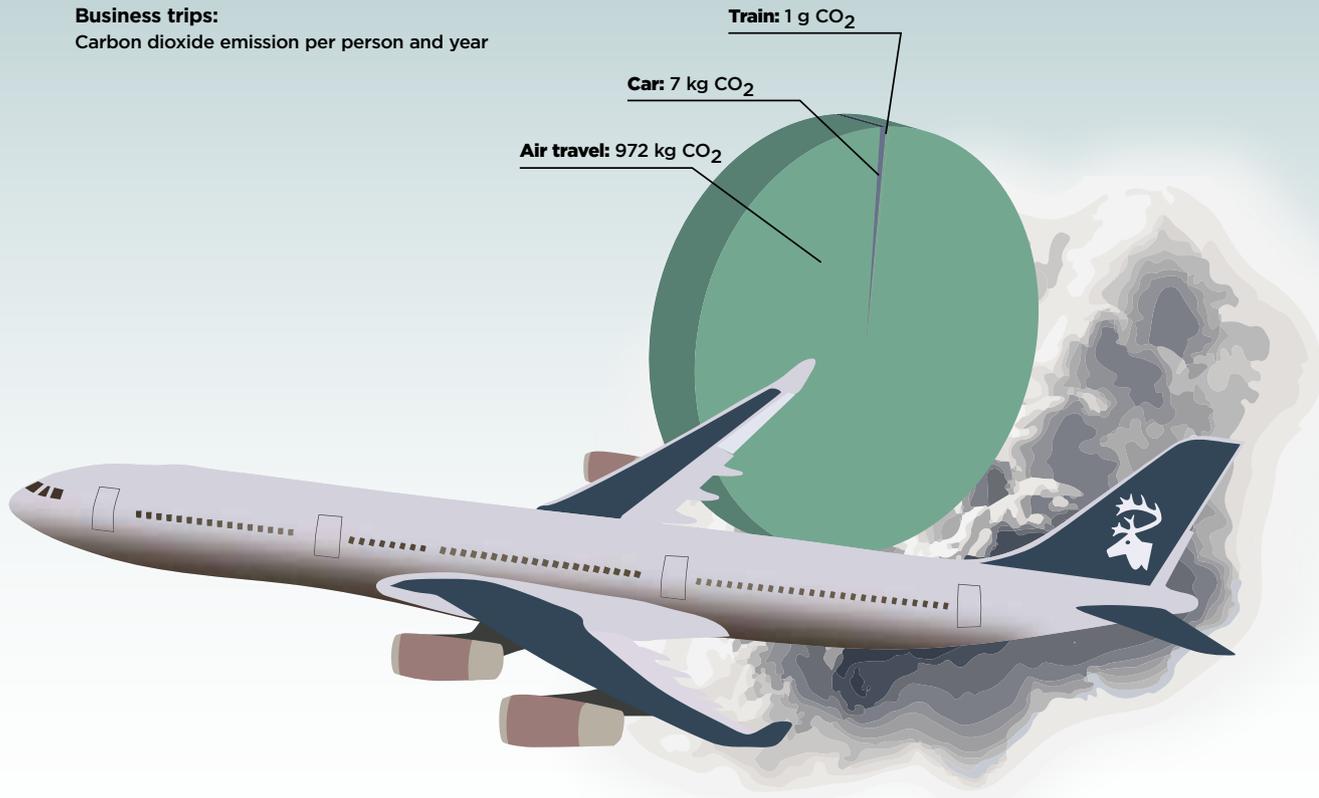
A tonne sounds a lot, but in comparison, one single trip to Thailand results in an emission of 2.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide per person. Hence, we can go on business trips for nearly two and a half years to reach the same environmental impact as a single holiday.

THE CLIMATE IMPACT from our business trips has reduced somewhat, partly by replacing some physical meetings with digital communication. A great reduction has also taken place in the energy consumption when it comes to heating, lighting, machinery and cooling. The objective to reduce energy use in comparison to 2012 has been achieved by far as the total energy consumption has dropped by 18.4 per cent. This equals the energy consumption of 343 regular sized family houses. This has been made possible thanks to us changing to more efficient office appliances, presence sensing or timed lighting and ventilation, and energy recovery of cool air.

All electricity that the University buys is carbon dioxide free green electricity, which hence has no climate impact to speak of. Our heating comes from the Umeå district heating system and is generated by burning of combustible renewables. 75 per cent of it is estimated as climate neutral. ●

Business trips:

Carbon dioxide emission per person and year



“Students’ knowledge is the most important imprint”

Umeå University is at the forefront when it comes to energy-saving buildings, but travelling is still a major climate burden. Sustainability aspects need to be diffused throughout the University’s operations more evidently than at present. This according to our environmental coordinator, Åsa Bäckström.

How successful are we in regards to sustainability?

“It’s a double-edged sword. Umeå University stands far at the front as far as reducing energy consumption from buildings go. The fact is, the most climate-smart building in Umeå is located on Campus Umeå – the Natural Sciences Building – in which we have reduced the energy consumption by 80 per cent. Just making sure that fume cupboards in labs are closed other than when being used has made a huge difference.

“The climate footprint from our travelling has reduced for a number of years, but is now levelling out at an unacceptably high level. It’s definitely worth considering a way forward.”

What do you wish for to make this a sustainable university?

“First of all, I’d like all of our students to get sound and in-depth knowledge of sustainability within the own subject field. What’s

most important is always what our students take home with them after their studies.”

How can we incorporate sustainability in all educations, take Swedish as a second language, for instance?

“In that example, you can learn terms and expressions within sustainability in order to teach future students so that they are able to participate in the public debate and can change their lifestyle in a sustainable direction. There is a sustainable dimension in all subjects.”

Is the environment, climate and sustainability given the right amount of focus at Umeå University today?

“Sustainability aspects ought to be more clearly introduced as a natural part of all planning. Unfortunately, not many are aware of the existence of Umeå University’s environmental policy, even fewer would be able to find it on Aurora.”

What is your sustainable 2050 Vision for Campus Umeå?

“We will have a campus full of ‘free’ ecosystem services; we let nature into our buildings, making green roofs for instance. The Ruggedised project shows how we can develop Campus Umeå into a more vivid and climate-smart district with on-site accommodation, heated bus stops where electric buses can dock to reduce energy-loss – obviously these will be run on renewable energy. A great amount must be done until 2050, just like in society at large.”



And finally, why do we not recycle?

“Of course we do. We recycle where it matters the most. The refuse collected from the University is sorted into 40 fractions that later become new materials or energy. In 2016, we collected 30 tonnes of electronic waste that was removed using environmental methods. In offices, we collect recyclable paper and in some public spaces we offer sorting of household and office waste. However, we have not deemed it reasonable to exchange each bin on campus for a waste recycling containers that cost SEK 15,000 per piece. That money can be more beneficial to the environment being spent in other ways,” says Åsa Bäckström. ●

OLA NILSSON



Sustainable trio of perspectives

Barbara Schumann, Jon Moen and Rickard Lindberg have something in common — they share a worry over the future of society in the ongoing climate change. But they have different methods at their departments to help shape the future through sustainable development.

TEXT: Jonas Lidström **PHOTO:** Mattias Petterson



NAME: Jon Moen

WORKS AS: Professor in ecology

TOPIC OF PARTICULAR INTEREST:

How we should achieve a more sustainable society that uses less resources

SUGGESTED READING: Applying resilience thinking to production ecosystems (2014)

Since 2008, courses in sustainable development have been mandatory for students in the Master's of Science in Engineering Programme at Umeå University. Jon Moen, professor of Ecology, is working to change this part of the education and place even more emphasis on sustainability.

“When students graduate from the University, they stand at the start of a 30–40 year-long career. In that time, society is expected to radically change. Already at the University, we need to pass on available insights into how we’re confronted with a vast readjustment towards a sustainable society, and also provide understanding for what an adjustment involves. In my mind, this is the biggest issue we can work with, and it’s something all future generations will be affected by.

Currently for many engineering students, the course on sustainable development is something that is taken as a side course and which is not given too much focus in the programme. However, a plan to change this is taking shape.

Sustainable development is something that all students need to take seriously, and it’s my firm hope and belief that the course will provide enough room for consideration. We’re actually working along the line of letting the course run throughout the duration of the programme. That would give students an initial introduction using a theoretical course early on. It would then end with a problem-oriented project in order to work towards a set goal from start to finish.”



NAME: Barbara Schumann

WORKS AS: Researcher at the Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine

TOPIC OF PARTICULAR INTEREST:

Epidemiology and global health

SUGGESTED READING: A study of the correlations between temperature increase and mortality (in production)

In the field of public health, it is important to explain how climate change can lead to an increase in health related problems worldwide. Barbara Schumann has been strongly engaged in developing the course “Health, environment and sustainability” that started in spring 2017.

“The Master’s course in Public Health is needed now more than ever as the world is facing change whether we want it or not. The course aim is to teach students what health dangers are linked to environmental issues and how we can create communities that are more resistant to climate change. Communities need to adapt as we are faced with many future outbreaks of dengue and malaria in new areas compared to previously, as a direct consequence of global warming and changes in precipitation patterns.

Previously, we held the research course Climate change and health research methods, but we have developed the new course to see the wider picture, and give a more overall view of sustainable development, something that runs deeper than climate change alone. So far, we’ve learnt a lot from the first semester as we see a clear need of project work starting earlier.

Sustainable development is important for our future, and our department has taken certain measures. For instance, we encourage colleagues to choose train before airplane for business trips or to hold Skype meetings instead of travelling. At the unit, we buy locally produced fairtrade tea, coffee, and conference meals and snacks. On our planning days, we plan for primarily vegetarian and locally produced meals.”



NAME: Rickard Lindberg

WORKS AS: Sustainability coordinator at the Career Service at Umeå School of Business and Economics.

TOPIC OF PARTICULAR INTEREST:

Development that is financially, socially and environmentally sustainable in the long term.

SUGGESTED READING: New Transportation Technology: Norm Activation Processes and the Intention to Switch to an Electric/Hybrid Vehicle (2016)

At the Umeå School of Business and Economics, sustainable development work is something that is reflected in most areas, from its mission and vision to course syllabuses. Rickard Lindberg is one of the responsible people behind the autumn annual Sustainability Day.

“We want this day to become an interesting event that makes students actively participate in discussions. The objective is to invite guest lecturers from the business sector as well as organisations that work nationally or internationally with these issues. This will be the fourth annual Sustainability Day. Its content has varied but the common theme has been the breaking point between the financial sector and its sustainability challenges with for instance the fashion and food industries. Sustainability is an important

issue that students need to take with them, it needs to be included in their education, which leads to reflection and action in the working life. The Sustainability Day can be seen as a way to shed light on these issues.

A huge challenge that we can see when it comes to sustainable development is how long it takes to penetrate through such a large organisation as ours. On the department level, we work with sustainable development by focusing on three main fields: education, research and outreach with the addition of direct environmental impact.”

En route to a sustainable university district

Time-saving cycle superhighway, chargeable cargo bikes and an out of the ordinary bus stop sluice that attaches to the bus. In the next few years, a great deal of climate smart actions will take place on campus – and this autumn, you can participate by sharing your best ideas.

EVERY DAY, 40,000 people commute to Campus Umeå out of a 123,000 population. Only 3,000 stay over night within the area. Particularly at night, the area feels empty, dark, and sometimes scary. However, since 2013 some great plans are developing to make the so-called University District into a more attractive part of Umeå. Many stakeholders invest annually over a billion Swedish krona in buildings, accommodation, infrastructure and sustainable energy consumption. Albeit, the decisive point came at the end of 2016 when Umeå was granted EU funding for the project *Ruggedised* – a so-called Smart City project which focuses on the University District.

“Within 10–15 years, Campus Umeå will become a place bustling with life around the clock with restaurants open in the evenings and good service offerings,” says Carina Aschan, strategic developer at Umeå municipality and project manager for *Ruggedised*.

“Many of those who strive for a sustainable life will be attracted by new kinds of accommodation that render cars unnecessary. Apartment ent can for instance include room in a stairwell fridge to which food can be de-



PHOTO: ULRIKA BERGFORS

livered straight from the supermarket, and have bulky rubbish collected from houses and apartment blocks instead of driving it to a remote waste and recycling centre.”

SOME IMPORTANT KEYSTONES in the climate venture will be more or less invisible above ground, such as a geothermal storage for heating and cooling, and a sensor system registering how people move to optimally distribute energy between buildings. A new web platform for open data will also be set up to collect data on energy consumption, air quality, carbon dioxide emissions, travel data, and crime and accident reports across Umeå.

What will be more noticeable are the new transport routes on and through campus. On a regular working day in 2019, you can shorten your commute to work by minutes thanks to a new, wide cycle superhighway that will go through the area. If you wish, you can also borrow an electric cargo bike to do your weekly shopping. The bikes, charged by solar cells and special batteries, will first of all be available at three stations

– on Campus Umeå, in the city centre and at the retail shopping centre Avion.

“A bike pooling building is likely to be positioned by the Biology Building, but the idea is for the biking network to expand in time,” says Carina Aschan, and adds that plans exist for a showroom and a foodcourt in the same area.”

FOR ELECTRIC CARS, there will be two large clusters of charging stations – one by the Social Sciences Building and one by the Biology Building. If you instead choose to travel by bus, you will get a remarkable experience at the Universum bus stop, the single most popular stop to embark on in Umeå. And payments are made already at the bus stop. When the electric bus halts, the bus sluice attaches to the bus like a jet-way to an airplane. This reduces heat loss, and the bus can run longer on one charge.

“The idea is also to increase the status of traveling by bus, and to give passengers an experience while waiting. Although, the challenge of designing a bus stop that feels both safe and attractive remains. There will probably also be a need for bike parking in the vicinity. Having a good dialogue with members of staff and students is hence incredibly important,” Carina Aschan points out.

In autumn and winter 2017–18, a number of separate workshops will be held. Something else planned are the *Venture cafés* – meeting places where public actors, entrepreneurs and citizens can meet and develop new solutions and initiate new companies. ●

CAMILLA BERGVALL

About Ruggedised

Ruggedised relates to being ‘robust’ and is an acronym for Rotterdam, Umeå, Glasgow Generating Exemplar Districts In Sustainable Energy Deployment. The EU has granted SEK 180 million until 2021 into making the three cities more climate-smart, for instance with energy-efficient buildings, sustainable transportation and smart IT control. In Umeå, the University District is at the focal point, and the local partnership consists of Umeå municipality, Umeå Energi energy company, Upab municipal parking company, Akademiska Hus property company, Västerbotten County Council, SP – Technical Research Institute of Sweden, and Umeå University.



PHOTO: MATTIAS PETERSSON

Students teaching students about sustainability

In Uppsala 25 years ago, a shift occurred in an otherwise so traditional academia. Student dissatisfaction over the curriculum in the environmental subjects led to the creation of the centre Cemus, which since then has conducted teaching.

TEXT: Marcus Välimaa **PHOTO:** Uppsala University

CEMUS is an activist student movement that started in 1992 with the objective to overall change and improve climate and environmental teaching at educations at Uppsala University. Now, some 25 years later, Cemus is conducting a cross-border operation where students both teach other students and conduct outreach with society.

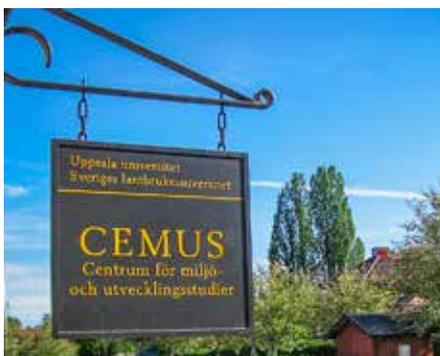
“The Cemus initiative became a success as a result of profitable conditions where people in established positions created opportunities for students to start a whole new thing. Another way to put it is that Cemus was born out of the student dissatisfaction over the course offerings, which they turned into something positive,” says Malin Östman, course coordinator at Cemus.

GREAT PARTS OF CEMUS, the Centre for Environment and Development Studies, is operated in collaboration between Uppsala University and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. The initiative in turn led to the establishment of new educations. Cemus is still run by students who annually offer courses, lectures and events to further develop the role of society and the academic community to contribute to a more just and sustainable world.

At the end of each term, Cemus organises an event called Uppsala Sustainability Festival, with ‘bloom’ as its theme, which offers a full day of lectures, workshops, poetry



According to Malin Östman, Cemus gives students the chance to change climate education.



and food. This event aims to call attention to worldwide issues such as global warming, poverty and integration. However, far more than problems is on the agenda – such as the increasing ratio of renewable energy in the total energy production.

SINCE ITS FOUNDATION, Cemus has raised issues like the climate threat and sustainable development. The course offering spans across sustainable development and global environmental history, but also Master’s level courses. Student ambition and opportunities to shift the academic approach to a subject area is something Malin Östman regards as rare at Uppsala University with its very strong academic traditions.

“Cemus also has good collaborations with other departments and universities where researchers and lecturers are hired to teach in Uppsala. We are constantly adapting the context of the course to aspects that are considered important and topical,” says Malin Östman.

In 2017, Cemus turns 25 which is celebrated for instance by publishing weekly essays and stories throughout the year. The texts are available on Facebook and in the magazine Cemuse.

At the end of the year, the material will be compiled into a full collection for publishing. The essays and stories are both personal experiences and more academic texts, both in writing and as podcasts or videos. ●



A helping hand to researchers

‘Communications Officer’ is Eva-Maria’s official title, but maybe ‘facilitator’ would have been more appropriate. At KBC and MIMS, she is the adhesive that brings together infrastructure and widespread researchers to a close-knit research environment.

TEXT: Jonas Lidström **PHOTO:** Mattias Pettersson

EVA-MARIA DIEHL is parked at the desk of the small communications office of the Chemical Biological Centre (KBC) when Aktum pays a visit. I catch a glimpse of the characteristic, short hairstyle through the window towards the open-planned café.

This is where she spends half of her working hours. The other half is spent at *the Laboratory for Molecular Infection Medicine Sweden (MIMS)*. She took on this patchwork post in 2009 and despite being split in two, she wants to keep it that way.

“It may seem split, but I kind of like the mixture and it’s sort of the point of this job,” says Eva-Maria Diehl.

“At KBC, I work at least 80 per cent of my time with internal communications and organising conferences, workshops and courses. I make sure researchers get the practical help they need to spend their time on research instead. I focus on good service, and do what it takes,” she says.

TO CROWN IT ALL, Eva-Maria Diehl has become a person who really gives reason to the epithet ‘profile’ at the

University. She has a huge network of contacts, often works tightly with the researchers, and makes a point of meeting them on their own terms:

“I nearly always find it better to go see people where they work, rather than have them come to me. My door is of course always open, but it’s important for me to understand how the researchers work.”

On the question of what image she thinks researchers have of her, it makes her laugh:

“I can’t really say. But they dare contact me because they know that I’ll do everything in my power to solve their issues. They trust that I take them seriously,” she says and continues:

“Many have opinions on what a communications officer should and should not do. But if necessary, I don’t mind bringing Carl Kempe a cup of coffee when he pays a visit. That task is just as important. Just like everything else that helps us continue to run a successful research environment with good collaboration.”

THE FIRST MOVE to Sweden from her home-country Germany took place in the beginning of the 1980s. After two years in Lund, Eva-Maria came to Umeå when the ►

“The KBC group has a very pleasant working climate. They’re all highly pragmatic, and rule out bureaucracy to solve problems swiftly.”

Eva-Maria Diehl

Age: 56 years.

Does: Communications Officer at KBC and MIMS

Interests: “My spare time is spent working on the board in the building society where I live. Our building is like a big cooperative in which we are all committed to contribute to the cheerful atmosphere.”

Reads: Karin Bojs “My European Family” and a Swedish grammar book.



PhD supervisor of her then student husband took a job at Umeå University.

“I started studying environmental health here in 1989. I was trained as a biologist but needed to take a national aptitude test in Swedish to get accepted to the programme.”

Her memories of Swedish universities before Sweden joined the EU in 1995 gravely contrasts the internationally characterised context of KBC at present:

“In Lund, I once sat at a table opposite two Swedes who laughed and spoke in Swedish. It was so uncomfortable because I could sense that they were talking about me without being able to understand them. That just doesn’t happen today.”

THE CHEMICAL BIOLOGY CENTRE is a proper bottom-up initiative, something that Eva-Maria Diehl sees as crucial for the research environment to become as well-functioning and successful as it is.

“The researchers realised the need for collaboration and initiated the centre themselves,” she says.

Much of the collaboration within the realms of KBC is to share labs and research infrastructure. A positive addition is the social aspect and to strengthen the network of researchers working at the affiliated departments.

The centre is run by a group consisting of eleven board members, the so-called KBC Group.

“The KBC group has a very pleasant working climate. They’re all highly pragmatic, and rule out bureaucracy to solve problems swiftly. I take the role as secretary at the meetings, all of which have been very constructive and positive ever since I started in 2009.”

However, she expresses regret that the bottom-up initiative sometimes collides with the prevalent top-down rule of the University.

“For example when it takes the KBC Group over a year to try to push through a proposal on a new organisation for a research infrastructure. That resulted in more hindrance than help from above. I find that unfortunate.”

BEFORE HER RETURN to Umeå about eight years ago, Eva-Maria Diehl worked as Head of Communications at the well-reputed Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry. Career wise, the move was somewhat a demotion. But there are so many things that are more important than the size of the pay cheque, she argues:

“My husband and I came to Umeå because we really wanted to. Our jobs in Germany paid more, particularly mine, but those things aren’t what matters in life. In Sweden, you have much more respect for the private life than in Germany. But it’s hard to judge when you live between two worlds. Now, however, we are in Sweden and we like it here. We might even stay for the rest of our lives, who knows?”

I ask if it was ever close that she started pursuing a research career herself.

“It’s not an easy question,” says Eva-Maria Diehl with a laugh, whilst admitting that such a turn may have been possible at some points in life. But what’s inspired her has always been to widen her knowledge base rather than to specialise.

“There are days when I regret that I didn’t take a doctorate. Previously, it wasn’t so evident, but now I think you get taken more seriously and have better opportunities of making an influence if you have completed a doctorate.”

Is it a flaw of the academia that a person with wide knowledge but without a doctoral degree does not have more influence?

“No, not at all. At a university, the researchers have to have influence. Those mostly qualified must be the ones calling the shots – the researchers, that is.”

THE HALF-TIME POST spent on MIMS took a sudden and unexpected turn in 2011 when a French group leader began publishing articles that people soon started paying real attention to.

Emmanuelle Charpentier and I started at MIMS around the same time. From the start, we had lots to talk about – about moving to Umeå and such,” says Eva-Maria Diehl.

“I wrote the first news release about the publication in Nature in 2011. Back then, people didn’t know how huge CRISPR-Cas9 was going to become.”

The big hype came after Emmanuelle Charpentier had left Umeå. But the collaboration between her and Eva-Maria Diehl has never ceased.

“I’m practically in daily contact with her still. She can send me a text message to look at a text that a journalist has written about her or something like that. When I really can’t make it, I ask for a respite. But, naturally Emmanuelle has top priority,” says Eva-Maria Diehl.

“Umeå University has a lot to thank Emmanuelle for, at least that’s how I see it, and that’s why I place her first in line. I have an agreement with both my bosses, Per Gardeström and Bernt Eric Uhlin, that I help Emmanuelle if she needs me.”

With great amounts of sympathy, Eva-Maria Diehl explains the paradox in which Emmanuelle Charpentier today finds herself, how her research success has practically made it impossible for her to spend time on her favourite task: To conduct research.

“She’s such a nice person. When I ended up in hospital after a bike accident in 2015, she was the first person to send flowers – even though she was in Berlin at the time.”

SUMMER IS APPROACHING with lightning speed. To Eva-Maria and her husband, this means an eagerly awaited stay in the summer house in the Swedish High Coast.

“It’s become a popular retreat for our German relatives. My mother-in-law who’s 85 years old will visit for the second time, and then come siblings, nieces and nephews. We might even get a week to ourselves.”

“In the future, I’d like to refurbish the summer accommodation to include alternative solutions for drainage, solar-powered electricity and so on. As both of us are ecologists, it would be nice to try out some innovative solutions, which could also set an example to other summer houses in the delicate Bothnian archipelago. There’s so much we could do.” ●

In an open space

An exterior that attracts at a distance, and an interior that greatly differs from most educational spaces. But how is life at Umeå School of Architecture for staff and students? Aktum editor-in-chief, Jonas Lidström, spends a day in the building by the river and opens up his senses to impressions.

TEXT: Jonas Lidström PHOTO: Malin Grönborg

Third year student Josefin Antus in a supervision meeting with instructors Richard Conway and Sangnam Shirke.



A day at Umeå School of Architecture



▲ The team of teachers meet in the staff lunch room for a brief coordination meeting. From left: Sara Thor, Pablo DeSoto, Amalia Katopodis and Toms Kokins.



◀ Student Gustav Söderhult is slouched down with his computer and headphones to watch a Japanese documentary film on architecture for a history assignment. When there are seventy persons sitting in the same large working room, one is permitted to do anything they want to shut themselves off from things.

T'S A CRISP May morning and the Umeå School of Architecture is a lit up cube, from corner to corner in all directions. At the same time, some seventy first-year students gather at nine o'clock in the darkest room of the building. Only four weeks remain until the exhibition that all work is aimed at, but lots of hard work still remains.

"Shall we wait a couple of minutes to see if anyone shows up late," says Amalia Katopodis, who is course coordinator for year one.

When she finally starts her presentation, she sounds both like a veteran and like one of the students:

"The creative process is like parkour, guys. We all need to avoid obstacles and find ways to keep moving forward.

That's what we do as architects, we keep finding solutions."

ONE OF THE first year teachers is Sara Thor. Contrary to many others, she speaks Swedish. She is originally from Gothenburg but has worked in practice in England for many years. She has spent nearly two academic years in Umeå now, which has been a positive and constructive time.

"There are about 20 of us teachers, but some only work part-time. And there are about seven or eight administrative members of staff. It's a rather small institution."

In the break room, I find IT technician Sven-Erik Hil-



▲ Left photo: Jesper Haglund demonstrates his model for Sara Thor.

Right photo: Sandra Kärnstrand sketches in a traditional way with pencil, paper and ruler.

► The teacher is having a rare day without teaching and supervision. On the wall next to Carla Collevocchio's workplace, an aerial photograph of the Norwegian island Traena is posted, which is the scene for the year two students' major, joint project:

"Together with the people on the island, we have this Facebook group. There, the students can ask questions about what happens in a certain area of the island, and islanders immediately start sending pictures, maps and drawings."



berer and economist Margareta Brinkstam chatting over a cup of coffee. In Swedish, one must add. It can otherwise go days when people speak nothing but English.

"I came here from Umeå Institute of Design, so I'm quite used to speaking English. It's rather stimulating in a way," says Sven-Erik Hilberer.

"The language can be a challenge in issues regarding work environment for instance, when it's tough to find the right nuances. But you get used to it."

FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS a great part of the spring semester has revolved around a project based on the train station area in central Umeå. In the School's entrance, you can see a model of the area to scale. A

few students are presenting the building process based upon maps and a comprehensive work to measure and map the actual city area was done in that process.

To Sara Thor, the rest of the day will be spent on student tutorials. She takes a look at the booking list to see who comes next. It's Julia Herbert, whose drawings portray a circular building with a flat, green roof.

"If you want a rounded window, I'd draw the detail in this manner," instructs Sara Thor showing her idea with her finger.

Julia Herbert takes out a few more sketches.

"What's important is that the building does not only become its own volume, but to also provide a context," says Sara Thor. ►

A day at Umeå School of Architecture



▲ There are so many that come here and say "wow, so cool!" However, there are pros and cons that it's so open-spaced, reasons student Linnea Ågren, situated left in the photo, speaking to her desk neighbour Stina Nordström.

► Students Mikael Parkman, Martin Smedsen and Tove Brunberg with the large model of the station area in central Umeå.

◄ Håkan Hansson works as a workshop technician at Umeå School of Architecture:
 "We have a really good wood workshop for students to use, and we also have a digital wood workshop with a laser cutter and other cutting tools."



Julia Herbert agrees. When her time is up, she returns to drawing.

"It's easy to forget that those who see the drawings haven't got the same idea or insight into the plan as me. You need to clear your mind and imagine that you're looking at it for the first time," says Julia Herbert.

LUNCH TIME IN the staff kitchenette. Visiting lecturer Pablo DeSoto from Spain is passionately talking about his research and his road to Umeå via Brazil. The time is approaching one o'clock. The rest of the teachers join for a short status report before they spread out again to have more individual tutorials.

In the open plan office for teachers, it's nice and calm. Only one person is sat at a desk working. It is Carla Collevocchio, course coordinator for year two, who is having some well-needed office time.

"Recently, I've been with my students all the time, having briefs, tutorials or group conversations. I only spend roughly one day per week here."

For nearly ten years, she has worked simultaneously as an architect and as a teacher at the Central University of Venezuela. But she has now lived in Umeå together with her husband for nearly a year and a half.

"It's a much smaller school, so it's nice to be able to contribute in a meaningful way.

I'm pleased about contributing to the entirety in a more evident way."

I ask Sara Thor one final question before I leave the building: What is it that makes me find Umeå School of Architecture as such a harmonious and safe place?

"We work very closely with students and want them to feel comfortable enough to approach us. The building helps as well as it's very open," she says.

"From year one, a lot revolves around how students experience their own space at school. We're not here to judge or criticise, but to help; like a team that builds together," says Sara Thor. ●

Everyone deserves a good work environment

PHOTO: MALIN GRÖNBORG



“A fundamental requirement for Umeå University to continue its development, is for us members of staff to feel assured and comfortable.”

SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT and climate – important aspects in times like these when things seem uncertain and the climate is under threat. Events in our vicinity give us plenty of reason to reflect over our closest surroundings as well. As always, it’s important to base our decisions on facts and not let speculations take the better of us. The words sustainability, environment and climate often bring us to think about macro-perspectives covering the entire globe, but we should also dig where we stand. With that, I refer to our local work environment and workplace climate. A fundamental requirement for Umeå University to continue its development, is for us members of staff to feel assured and comfortable. Having a good work environment, that is.

One ingredient for a good work environment is a good workplace climate. As a public authority, we should comply with the state sector’s basic values, and to make this applicable in practice, we have taken on a mission. At a meeting for heads of department and managers, the first steps were taken towards common values at Umeå University. And in 2017, the work will continue at faculties, departments, centres, schools and the administration – everyone is involved. It’s important that the work is firmly established to aid in the continued efforts to develop our mutual work environment. I’m looking forward to this work.

ANOTHER INGREDIENT FOR a good workplace climate is honesty, and I’m confident that everyone agrees that the operations at our universities should be run exempt of cheating and misconduct. On a national level, the report on the Misconduct Inquiry, *New arrangement to promote good practice and manage scientific misconduct*, has been presented and investigator Margareta Fahlgren visited

Umeå at a seminar on 2 June. The Inquiry includes proposals for a new public authority, a board for investigation of misconduct in research. Furthermore, a statutory definition of misconduct is also suggested. More on this at the seminar.

A few weeks ago, Umeå University held its annual dialogue with the Ministry of Education and Research. To me, it was a positive first time. At this dialogue, the Vice-Chancellors are given the opportunity to present important activities at their institution of higher education. In conclusion, our university is doing well and I’d like to take this opportunity to give you some feedback, as you are the ones making Umeå University into what it is.

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION and Research’s motto is: ‘All of the country, all of our lives, all of the world’. The State Secretary Karin Röding’s message is that Umeå University is certainly doing its part in this, and it’s appreciated. The Ministry perceives us as an attractive and well-established institution for students throughout Sweden. We have a modern approach, act rapidly when necessary, and the Ministry appreciates our efforts! In their eyes, we also seem to be having fun – and we are! I hope all members of staff have at least some joyful moments at work every day, even if it’s not all a bed of roses.

FINALLY, I’D LIKE to wish you all a wonderful summer with time for pleasures and joy, laughter and recovery. The 100 days of barbecuing soon begin!

Katrine Riklund, Pro-Vice-Chancellor

“The Election Committees at the faculties have undertaken a thorough job in presenting candidates with high qualifications, and who are also well-established at their departments and offices. I know many of them since before, and I’m looking forward to working with them in their new roles at the faculties.”

Hans Adolfsson after selecting eight new deans and pro deans to the university faculty boards. The term of office runs from 1 July 2017 until 30 June 2021.



PHOTO: MATTIAS PETERSSON

“As the then most northern higher education institution in Sweden, Umeå University played a huge role in changing the image of higher education in the North.”

Heidi Hansson about widening participation to higher education. blogg.umu.se/ledningsbloggen (In Swedish)



Annett Wolf, research coordinator at Grants Office.



Bodil Formark, research coordinator at Grants Office.

Helping foreign researchers in the jungle of funding

TEXT: Anna Lawrence PHOTO: Ulrika Bergfors

Finding ways to fund your research is important these days. So, how do international researchers navigate among the Swedish jungle of research funding bodies? Grants Office offers some good advice.

Not least international members of staff have extensive hurdles to overcome, particularly in navigating among the Swedish research funding bodies and types of grants.

Grants Office is assigned to support university researchers when it comes to research funding and research application processes to a few particular funding bodies, for instance when the funding body requires an internal nomination process. Grants Office also offers assistance in applications where other countries are involved as this often complicates budgeting, accountancy and audits, for instance in applications to the EU project Horizon 2020 or the National Institutes of Health.

BOTH BODIL FORMARK and Annett Wolf are research coordinators at Grants Office, and they testify that there is an abundance of implicit knowledge that can be hard for new Swedes or visitors to get their heads around. In other countries, for instance, it can be common with an active dialogue between researchers and research funding bodies, which is not at all expected in Sweden.

“In my mind, one of the most important actions for international researchers at Umeå University is to identify the available Swedish funding bodies and their funding opportunities. The research funding system is somewhat of a jungle that is constantly changing,” says Bodil Formark.

“A good idea is to take a look at lists of approved projects published by most funding bodies. They give an indication of how well the own research fits the funding profile of the funding body,” she continues.

SOMETHING DISTINGUISHING for Sweden, and which could simplify matters for international members of staff, is also that all applications to public funding bodies in Sweden are public documents. This means that anyone can ask to get copies and read other peoples’ applications.

“Nevertheless, restrict how many applications you ask for to avoid getting overloaded. Our best advice is to pick out a few approved applications from the funding body that you’re interested in applying to. Analyse the application set ups, how the hypotheses reflect the information provided in the research funding calls, and how the topicality and feasibility of the projects have been described,” says Annett Wolf.

Language and content is also worth considering.

“Whoever reviews your application is knowledgeable within an academic field,

although not necessarily yours in particular. Also, the reviewer often has copious amounts of applications to read. Some funding bodies also use other stakeholders to review applications, such as politicians, public officials or entrepreneurs. It’s vital to set aside time to design an application that fulfils the requirements set by the funding body, and to make sure it’s well-written and reader-friendly,” says Annett Wolf.

TO THOSE WHO would like to learn more about how to successfully apply for research grants, Grants Office organises a seminar series each semester where various funding bodies are presented.

To a small extent, Grants Office has also started holding seminars in groups of people with similar interests to analyse already approved applications. In doing so, Grants Office can provide clues to how the researchers’ own applications can be improved from the perspective of the reviewer.

“We hope to organise more such seminars in the future as it gives us an opportunity to spread our experience in the different types of applications to more researchers at Umeå University,” says Bodil Formark. ●

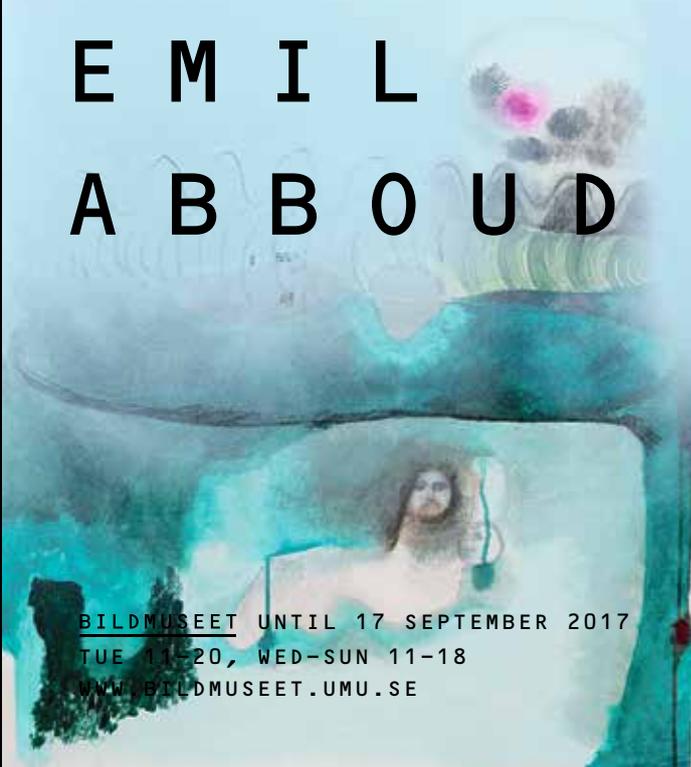
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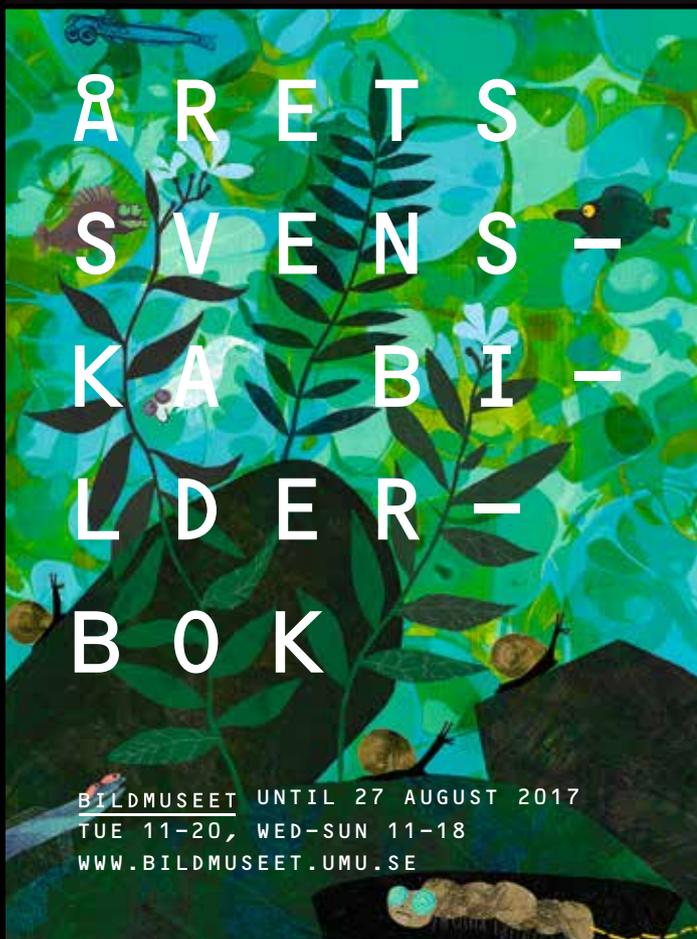
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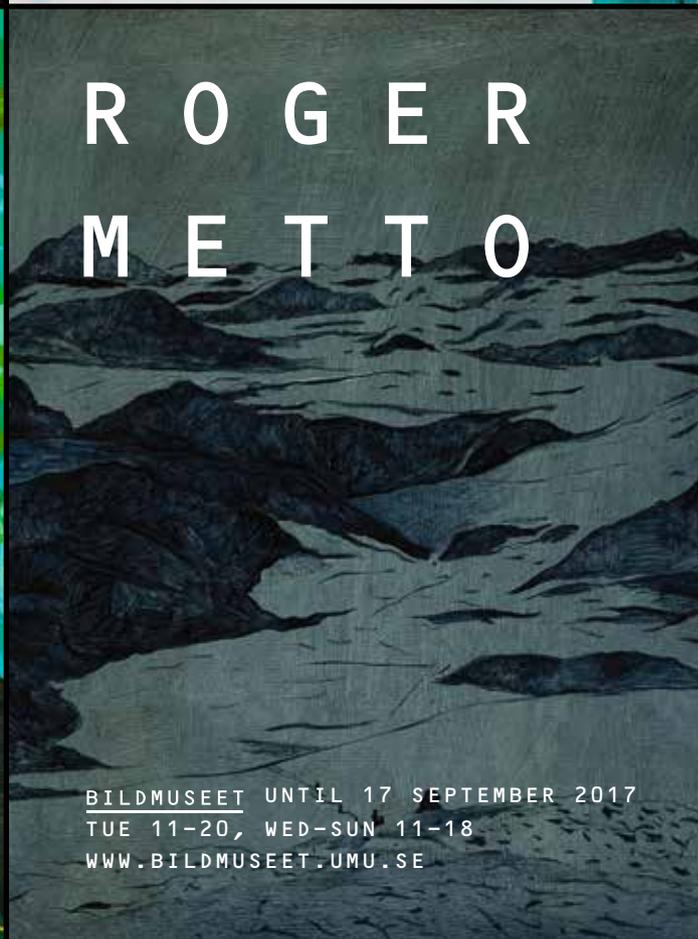
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PHOTO: MATTIAS PETTERSSON

Olof Malmberg is a communications officer and coordinator of the Umeå University external web pages, as well as the intranet Aurora.

With the passion to advance

I T'S NOW 2017. In the entrance of the Administration Building, you can still find a notice proclaiming the opening times of an office that closed a long time ago. Still, the faded notice has remained. In the same entrance, there is also a functioning key phone for anyone that needs to make a phone call. Changes can be slow at a university.

In 2017, it's reasonable to set high demands on the variety of web services at a university. Particularly if you're a student. Even if a university has many target audiences, it's clear as daylight to me that the student group is the most important one. Umeå University has about 30,000 students and we know exactly who they are. We can ask them what they need from us. We can let them evaluate what we offer. We can let their responses guide us in the constant process of change that has to characterise a university. Still we don't.

WE DON'T ACT as one university, but fifty different ones. Each department has its own way of offering web services to students. Naturally, each department should be at liberty to develop its education on its own. But is it really beneficial to students to have five ways of registering for a course? Is it reasonable to handle course applications in six different ways? Is there any point in distributing schedules to our students through more than one method?

It's no exaggeration that most employees at Umeå University curse when they find themselves in a situation where our services are as confusing and defective as what we're offering our students.

ONE REASON FOR finding ourselves in this position is that many of the solutions offered from the central administration are deemed as flawed. Since the academic community is known for its critical and problem-solving abilities, other 'better' solutions often emerge instead. Over and over again. Simultaneously, the frustration is reaching a climax. Should it really be so hard to succeed? It's not exactly rocket science.

In order to design good web services, a great deal of design know-how and hard labour on the service design part is required. Design consciousness needs to permeate the entire organisation – all the way from the top down. Design presupposes that we put the user, and not ourselves, at the centre of attention. Design requires a desire for change. Design takes resources, but has a great return.

With new times – I mean, it's 2017 already – comes new expectations. It takes new ways of working to meet them. Let's throw out leftover key phones and fading notices on notice boards, and instead introduce design consideration and a constant passion for improvement. We're here for our students, not the other way around. Changes must be rapid at a university. ●

OLOF MALMBERG

Would you like to write an Aktum column?

Get in touch with the editorial board!
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