

Introduction for PhD students

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Here is a non-exhaustive list of all the things that you have to do or you should do as a new PhD in Stockholm and at MISU.

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1. Life in Stockholm

1.1. Administrative procedures

1.1.1. Personnummer/National ID number

For EU citizens and most other European countries: You can move to Sweden without applying for any kind of permit.

For non-European countries: When it is decided that you have been approved for as a PhD student at the Department of Meteorology at Stockholm University (MISU), MISU will apply for a visa for you. On the first day of your arrival here you should visit Migrationsverket, the Swedish migrations Agency.

<https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Contact-us/Find-us.html>

You need to have a working permit with you to this meeting. The permit will be issued by MISU. At Migrationsverket you will receive a preliminary identity card. This you can use during the approximately two weeks it takes for you to get your real ID-card issued by the Swedish Tax Agency, see below.

In Sweden, you will need a "personnummer" (a personal identity number) for almost everything. This is the first thing to do when you start working here. To get this number, you need to be registered in the Swedish population register at "Skatteverket", the Swedish Tax Agency

<https://www.skatteverket.se/servicelankar/otherlanguages/inenglish.4.12815e4f14a62bc048f4edc.html>

You can go to any office without appointment to be registered. Be ready to wait (30 - 45 min). Here you can find the Skatteverket-office that is closest to the University.

https://www.google.se/search?rlz=1C1GGRV_enSE751SE753&q=skatteverket+stockholm&npsic=0&rflfq=1&rlha=0&rllag=59334606,18041581,1479&tbm=lcl&ved=2ahUKewitkZ3qqtneAhWCCSwKHUuYBo8QtgN6B AgEEAQ&tbs=lrf:!2m1!1e3!3slAE,lf:1,lf_ui:4&rldoc=1#rifi=hd;;si;;mv:!1m2!1d59.34568137032307!2d18.094210584989696!2m2!1d59.327646888114685!2d18.02983756863227

When you get into the office, you will have to fulfill a document about your personal data. You can do it online before going to the office with this link:

https://www1.skatteverket.se/fhxp51/inv_anm/valkomstsida?pk_vid=b488fff0b947e27b1537178977aa5850

You will need to bring these documents to be registered (original documents preferably or certified copies):

- Passport or national ID card. For EU citizen, EU driving licence is not an approved ID document.
- Any documents relative to your family (civil status certificate, birth certificate) if you are not unmarried and/or if you have children.
- Your PhD contract with Stockholm University. If your contract is for less than 12 months for whatever reason (normally it won't be), you can't apply for a personnummer.
- A document showing that you have comprehensive health insurance, at least for your first months in Sweden. For EU citizen, you just have to give your European Health Insurance Card.
- For non-EU countries: You will need to bring your permit of residence.

- They will give you a document you have to sign showing that you have enough money for the duration of your studies.

You will get your personnummer from two up to four weeks after this step at Skatteverket. If getting the number is an emergency, or if you haven't received anything after 4 weeks, you can contact Skatteverket via email giving them with your name and date of birth to hear why it is delayed.

They should send your personnummer to your home address.

Once you have this number, you can start doing the following points.

1.1.2. Health Insurance System

All the fees regarding Health Insurance are paid by Stockholm University.

You have to register at Försäkringskassan (National Insurance Office)

https://www.forsakringskassan.se/privatpers/!ut/p/z1/04_Sj9CPykssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfljo8ziTTxcnA3dnQ28LdyNTQ0cAwMMjU38jby8gg30w_Wj9KOASgxwAEcD_YLsbEUAFUIRCA!!/dz/d5/L0IDUmITUSEhL3dHa0FKRnNBLzROV3FpQSEhL2Vu/?keepNavState=true

For this purpose MISU's personnel administrator will give you a document that you have to fulfil on your first days at MISU.

This document can be very confusing. Keep in mind that you are supposedly considered as an employee for the system, and you will need to ask the administration of MISU for information such as company number, etc...

Be careful that you won't have any conflict between the Health Insurance of your country and the Swedish Health Insurance. They should ask you for a document showing that your home Health Insurance is gone or will be gone at some point.

You will need to send the document to the address written on it. After some weeks you may have to call them to be sure that they received your information. Normally they should call MISU's Head of administration to ask some questions.

Once you are in the system, you will get reimbursed 95 SEK from Stockholm University when you go to see the doctor. MISU will also reimburse for the full amount if you are prescribed medicine.

For EU citizens, you can apply for the European Health Insurance Card from Sweden to be covered when you go back home for holidays or anything. For work travel cards, you should ask your advisor or the administration.

1.1.3. ID card

Getting the Swedish ID card is almost mandatory for Swedish Banks and for postoffice, etc...

To get your ID, you need to book an appointment here:

<https://ventus.enalog.se/Booking/Booking/Index/ID-kort?language=en-GB>

You can book your appointment without a personnummer, but you will need to be registered by the time of the appointment. However, I would recommend you to book the appointment on some days after the day you are supposed to get your personnummer, so you don't have to wait a lot for the other procedures. At any time, you can change the day of your appointment.

Again, you need to go back to Skatteverket. It is way faster than for the personnummer, as you will have a booked time. Only Kungsholmen Skatteverket can deliver ID cards (Green line, subway station: Thorildsplan).

You will need to bring these documents:

- Passport
- Residence permit
- Proof that you paid the application fee of 400 SEK. This is really important, you have to pay the fee before the appointment. Then you just need to print the webpage of your bank showing that the money has been sent. You must write your personnummer on the comments section when you pay via internet banking. Keep in mind that there is a delay when paying from oversea banks.

You can find all the information on how to pay on the link above. You will need to wait 10 days to get your ID. Skatteverket will send you a text on your phone, and you just need to go back to their office in Kungsholmen.

Your ID card is completely useless outside of Sweden.

1.1.4. Banks

First thing to know: Banks are not willing to co-operate if you don't have an ID card. Basically, they will ask you to wait something like 2 months, and most of the times you will only have a card to get cash at ATMs.

If you have an ID, you can easily open a bank account and get a credit card.

The following information are for **SEB only**, other banks should have similar regulations:

- If you are under 24, or can prove that you are a student, all the daily economy functions will be free. You will need a Student Union Card for that (see below)
- There is one office near Kungsholmen Skatteverket where you can open a bank account right after getting your ID.

Remind yourself that you lose something like 2% of your salary in currency conversion, maybe more for non-EU countries, so opening a bank account is a very good long term option.

1.2. Accommodation

Finding a good place to live can be extremely hard in Stockholm. Here are some ideas on how to find something:

- Facebook groups: There are several groups on Facebook but you shouldn't use them. They are mostly full of scammers who try to extort money from people who are not currently living in Stockholm. Avoid that.
- Students accommodations: As a student, you can apply for a corridor room or students accommodation on SSSB (Stockholms student bostäder) <https://www.ssb.se/en/?cl=963885186> but you will have to wait something like one year before getting any results. You can start accumulating queue time points long before working here, but at one point SSSB will have to check that you are indeed a PhD student,

otherwise your queue time points will be frozen until you send them your PhD contract.

- [blocket.se](https://www.blocket.se) A very useful website to find something decent. Unfortunately it is in Swedish but you should manage to find what you need with Google Translate.
Here is a direct link for renting apartments in Stockholm:
<https://www.blocket.se/bostad/uthyres/stockholm?f=p&f=c&f=b>
- MISU staff: You can ask your supervisor to send an email in intern. MISU is a moving department where a lot of people arrive and leave. You may end up in a previous PhD/Researcher's place.
- Hotel/AirBNB: They are both quite expensive in Stockholm, particularly in the city center so it is not the best idea for long term living. However, if you haven't found anything by the time you come here, renting an AirBNB for one or two weeks in the city center is not that expensive.

A good explanation of accommodation can be found on this blog:

<http://moving2stockholm.blogspot.com/2015/01/rent-apartment-in-stockholm.html>

It is quite well written, particularly for [blocket.se](https://www.blocket.se). One additional tip: When you write to a landlord, don't forget to say that you are a PhD student. It is very well seen.

1.3. Daily life

Stockholm and Sweden in general is quite expensive. However, as a PhD student, you have access to almost every student advantages and worker advantages.

1.3.1. Leisure

As a PhD student at MISU you have a yearly reimbursement of 1500 SEK for every sports you would like to practice, or sports gym you want to join. You can also use this money for massage or going to the Chiropractor.

You also have a lot of discounts for students on websites, museums, etc...

1.3.2. Language

Swedes are usually good in English but you may want to learn Swedish at some point. Since September 2018, PhD students at SU are considered as employees. If you want to attend Swedish courses, you will need to fulfil a document and send it to your supervisor or the head of administration. Swedish courses for international employees start in late September or late February, and you can earn a few credits with them (something like 3 or 4 credits).

Here is the link to get all the information: <https://www.su.se/svefler/english/education/courses-and-programmes/swedish-language-courses-for-international-employees>

1.3.3. Public transports

SL (Stockholms lokaltrafik) is the service for public transports in Stockholm. You can buy a card in different shops of the city who has a sign that they sell SL-travel cards as for instance Pressbyrån. If you have a Student Union Card, you will have access to discount prices (see ... to get the Student Union Card). The card gives you access to bus, subway, boat, commuter rail. If you have any problem regarding your card, you can go to the SL office at T-Centralen.

You can find all information on the SL website: <https://sl.se/en/>

There are several applications for the public transports, such as "SL: Journey planner and tickets" or "Stockholm Transit" (offline app).

2. Studying at SU

The campus is quite large and you can get lost easily. The map of the Frescati campus, where MISU is located, can be found here: <https://www.su.se/english/about/campus/maps>

You have two other campuses south of Frescati, which can be interesting as a student at MISU: KTH (Stockholm Royal Institute of Technology) and AlbaNova (Nordita, Department of Physics...)

2.1. Library

The main library is located in the building 14D of Frescati campus. You can find almost all books you need. You can also use the SU library website where you can read and download e-books when you are using SU wifi: <https://www.su.se/english/library/>

On your first day here at MISU, you will get the Stockholm University card. This card can be used to borrow books at the library. Keep in mind that this card is not the Student Union Card and can not be used to get student discounts.

2.2. Student Union

Once you get your personnummer you can apply for a get a real student card at the Student Union. You have to pay 240 SEK/year for this card, but it will save you a lot of money to have it, particularly for the public transports. To get the card, you have to register at: <https://sus.su.se/en/home/>

Note that, once registered, you will have to send your PhD contract by email to them so they will check that you are a full-time PhD student. Afterwards, you will get a code which you can use in the application for "Studentkortet" to have your digital card. You can also apply to get a plastic card.

Check if you have the "SL" logo on your card to get the student discounts for the public transports.

If you don't have a personnummer, you can also ask for a fake number, useless outside of SU, but which can allow you to get the card earlier.

2.3. Food

You will find different shops on the campus, and also university restaurants. There is also a kitchen at the Department where you can fix your food. You also have different food trucks that change everyday.

3. Studying at MISU

Soon upon your arrival at MISU the Director of studies for the PhD programme will give you a short presentation of what being a PhD student at MISU means. Here is a short summary of what you should know:

3.1. Requirements

Your PhD corresponds to 4 years of studies, with an additional time of departmental work up to one year (Teaching for example).

During this time, you have to:

- Write 4 papers, with most likely 2 published and 2 accepted.
- Get 75 credits, with one pedagogic course and one general course
- Present 4 research seminars and 4 discussion seminars

The Director of studies for the PhD programme will tell you more about what you have to accomplish in 2 years.

3.1.1. Courses

You can find all the basic information regarding PhD courses on the website:

<https://www.misu.su.se/education/phd-studies/phd-courses>

“General Circulation” is a mandatory course given on a regular basis. It is worth 15 credits. If you have a background in chemistry, you can choose “Biogeochemical cycles” instead, plus a course on the physics of the climate. All the other PhD courses are NOT given on a regular basis. On the website above, you can find a list of the PhD courses that are going to be given in the next months. Abdel is in charge of the schedule of these courses, and I think he asks once per year what course you would like to study based on what was available in the previous years.

For the PhD courses, you don’t need to register anywhere. You will just need to send an email to the coordinator of the course, which will probably send you an email some weeks before the course starts anyway.

On the contrary, you will need to register for Masters courses or Bachelors courses using this website:

<https://www.universityadmissions.se/intl/start>

Basically, if you have any lack of knowledge in something (Meteorology, Climate Dynamics or whatever), it is advised to take Masters courses. Normally, late admissions are not that problematic for SU, as long as you contact the coordinator of the course and you explain that you are a PhD Student. You will get the full credits for Masters courses, but I am not sure that you get any credits for Bachelors courses.

You can also build your own course. Self-study courses are agreements between some students and one researcher (which will be your examiner) to go through some chapters and help you to catch up with things that you haven’t learned before. You can get a few credits for this kind of course, and it is very useful if you need to work on something without attending Masters or Bachelors courses.

Every course should be discussed with your advisor or your committee. They will help you to choose which course is the most suited for you.

3.1.2. Seminars

There are two normal seminar times at MISU:

- For researchers at MISU and guest researchers: Tuesdays 11.15-12.15
- For MISU PhD students: Thursdays 14.15-15.15

Seminars that are given by researchers and PhD students at MISU are normally about 30 minutes, followed by a 2 minute discussion with the audience and 10-15 minutes of questions. Seminars given by guest researchers are 40-45 minutes, followed by 10-15 minutes of questions.

All the seminars are given in room C609 called Rossbysalen, with the exception of eventual double-bookings, which should be avoided. Seminars should in principle be given under normal working hours.

When you book a seminar you send an email to studentexp@misu.su.se. In this mail, you add:

- The desired date
- Name presenter
- Your institution (MISU)
- The title of your seminar
- Abstract

The responsible person checks if the time slot you desired is free and will send a confirmation via email. Note that you will have to send the title of your seminar preferably a month in advance and at the latest a week before.

When your title and abstract are available, your seminar will show on the MISU website. At the latest a week before your seminar, an announcement has to be sent also to internt@misu.su.se. Announcement can be sent as well to bolincetret-at-su.se@lists.su.se, if your seminar is also of interest to people outside MISU.

For PhD students, your seminar must be chaired by a senior researcher.

The rules above concern only research seminars. For discussion/review seminar, it is different. For discussion seminars, you will need to book a room on this website: <https://www.misu.su.se/internal/book-a-room>. Please do not book a discussion/review seminar on a time that is dedicated to research seminars (see above).

You can find all the information about attending other seminars or your own seminars on the website: <https://www.misu.su.se/education/phd-studies/phd-seminars>

You can also check the schedule of the Bolin Centre for Climate Research to know more about upcoming seminars outside of MISU:

<https://bolin.su.se/index.php/component/jevents/month.calendar/2018/11/02/-?Itemid=1>

3.1.3. PhD Committee meeting

Once a year, and for the first time in the 3 months following your arrival, you have to call for a committee meeting. You should see this with your advisor, and follow the guidelines which are very well detailed: https://www.misu.su.se/polopoly_fs/1.320768.1487327163!/menu/standard/file/PhD%20committee%20guidelines.pdf
https://www.misu.su.se/polopoly_fs/1.306270.1510143050!/menu/standard/file/Individual%20Study%20Plan.pdf

3.2. Working environment

MISU is a place where you should feel happy to work in. You have access to the kitchen, 1500 SEK per year for physical training, printers, computers, and other services. You will get more information about your rights in the document given by Abdel.

Every Tuesday at 14.30, the Department meets up in the kitchen to have fika (coffee break) and the Prefect (head of the department) will give information about MISU news of the week.

Once a year in the autumn the whole Department meets up for the "MISU Day", where working environment, and other stuff of this matter are discussed.

As a PhD, you will also have a meeting with the other PhD students, almost every month.

3.3. PhD Mentor

You will get a mentor, an older PhD student, which will help you go through your daily questions. One of the PhD students is appointed to help newcomers find you a mentor and give you a detailed document about their role.

Final comment: You will have to fulfil a document to be on the staff list. This document is given by the PhD communication group.

If you have any questions, feel free to ask the other PhD students. For questions regarding your salary, you should ask the personnel administrator: Questions about your contract are for the Head of administration. Questions about your computer, or softwares are for the IT-technician at MISU.

You should get a list of which questions to ask to whom on your first days here.