

Higher education international cooperation in the current geopolitical climate

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Strategies for Stockholm University 2023-2026

state the overall vision and direction for the university's operations and priorities.

- Stockholm University's research shall be **internationally leading** and a driving force in the development of new knowledge.
- Stockholm University's education shall be broad, research-based and of **high international quality** for the development of individuals and society.
- Stockholm University shall be a force in society that contributes to democracy and sustainable development.



Broad research-based education of high international quality for individual and societal development

- education at the university shall be of high **international quality** in content and performance.
- education should convey **international perspectives** and provide opportunities for **international experiences**. In this way, students will be well prepared for a national and global labour market.
- the university shall attract the best students, regardless of their background. A broad student base contributes positively to the study environment by providing a forum for more perspectives and experiences to be expressed.



Mission of the International Office: Increase the number of outgoing students

How?

- Work closely with the departments
- Minor Field Studies (development agency funding)
- European University Alliance
- Erasmus+, Nordplus, north2north and other programmes
- Central, university wide agreements to complement departmental agreements
- Support projects and collaboration in education
- Research connections – education and exchange/projects/internships

→ Expand or deepen?



Bild: Kwan Fung/Unsplash

At the same time...

Geopolitical uncertainty increases

Conflicts in the world

Democracies on the decline

Restrictions in academic freedom

Increasing pressure on individuals

Governments in advanced economies and research nations highlight the need to bolster national competitiveness and defence capabilities





Values and opportunities

For students - International student mobility, joint study programmes, placements, and fieldwork in other countries create significant added value for the individual student, and the higher education institution.

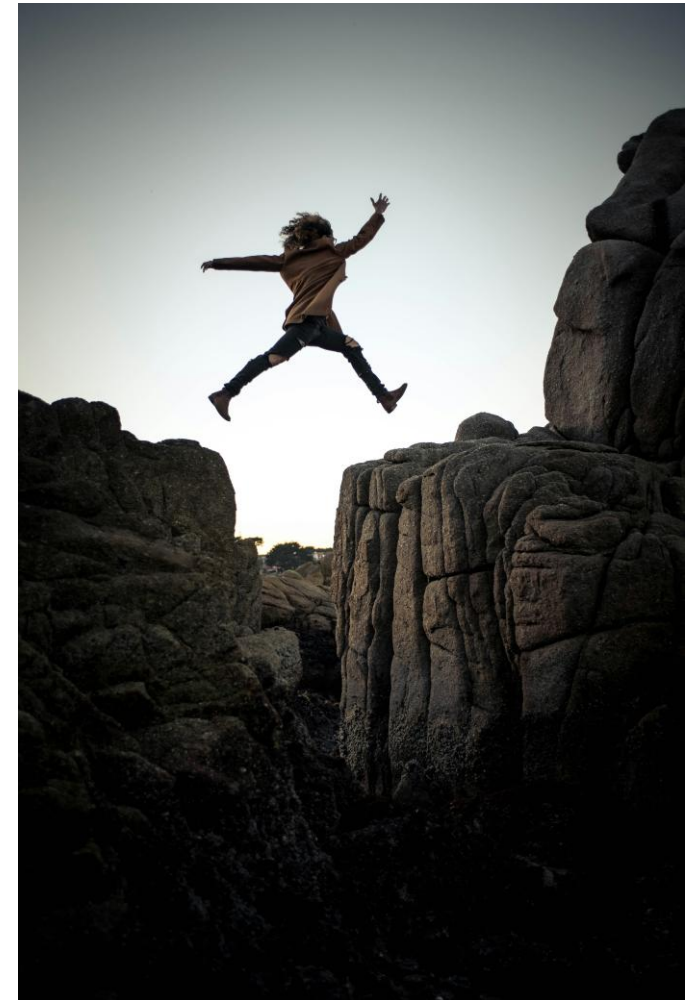
For higher education institutions - increased attractiveness, widening participation, and deeper partnerships.

Indirect value:

- Possibility to address global challenges
- deepen cross-cultural understanding
- strengthen international relations

→ **Identify and describe such values of a cooperation**

→ **Identify what is important to us**



Increased awareness in HEIs

- Knowledge about legislation in the other country
- Minimize and deal with risks
- Assessment before entering into new partnerships/collaborations
- Know your partner
- Clarity in agreements
- Continuous assessment and evaluation of partnerships/collaborations

Risks may arise at the individual (e.g. students doing fieldwork in a high risk country) or system level (e.g. dependence on technological platforms or funding).



Bild: Jan Kopriva/Unsplash

Risk vs value

We often accept risks to gain something valuable such as scientific renewal, international networks, or benefits to society.

Necessary to accept incomplete information and documentation.

→ *Should we enter into a collaboration fully and openly?*

→ *Should we collaborate somewhat restricted?*

→ *Should we not collaborate?*

What do we risk if we decide not to collaborate?



Bild: Steven Wright/Unsplash

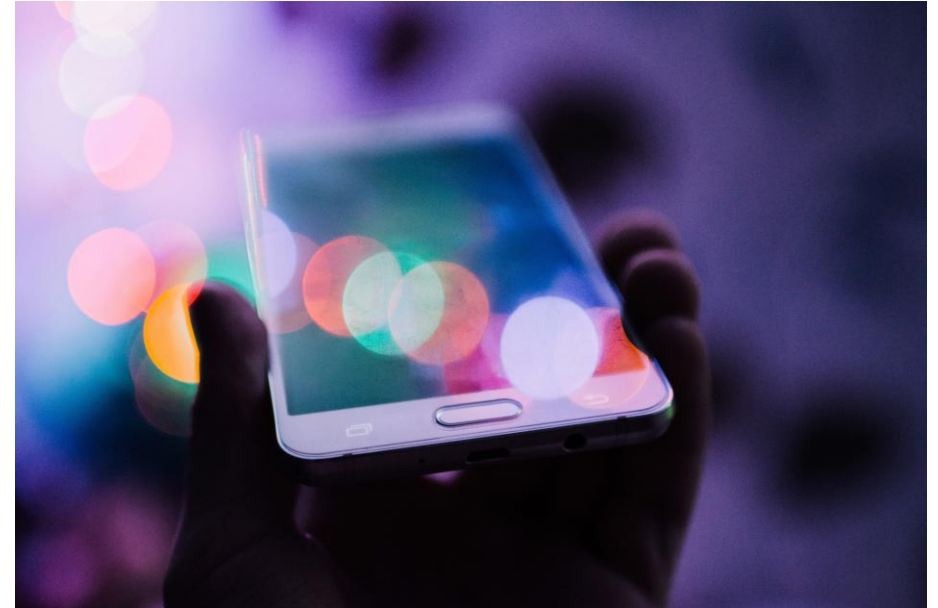


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Risks for students (ex.)

Students' participation in international contexts may involve particular risks

- Physical security in the host country
- digital security in the host country
- legal uncertainty
- surveillance
- ideological pressure
- restrictions to academic freedom
- Restrictions to students' possibilities to express themselves freely (especially in environments where certain topics or opinions may be sensitive or politically controversial)



Student mobility

High-risk destinations – pro's and con's?

Assessments need to be adapted to both the individual's situation and the mobility context.

Clear information, adequate support, and preventative measures, preparatory support

Insurance coverage, legal protection, access to support structures, feedback routines

→ Students need to take responsibility for their own choices.





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