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Fulbright Sweden

A brief overview

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Preface

In the following, a brief overview of the Fulbright programme in Sweden is presented. The overview has been commissioned by The Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU) as part of an investigation of the Fulbright programme in Norway. Information has been collected from the Fulbright Sweden website (www.fulbright.se) and the annual reports 2009–2013. Information has also been provided by Eric Jönsson, Executive Director at Fulbright Sweden.

Technopolis Group in Sweden (Faugert & Co Utvärdering) has conducted several evaluations and studies on the topic of internationalisation of research and education as well as actions aimed at supporting mobility for Swedish researchers and students. Thus, our knowledge and experiences from previous work have been valuable when conducting this overview of Fulbright Sweden.

Further sources of information that we have used are Swedish governmental research bills and documentation of the general political objectives regarding internationalisation and researcher mobility in Sweden.

The work has been undertaken during October 2014 by Miriam Terrell, Sandra Karlström and Göran Melin (project leader).

1. Background and context

1.1 Internationalisation and researcher mobility in Sweden

The importance of internationalisation within research and mobility of individual researchers has been emphasised in the previous research bill¹ (covering 2009–2012) as well as the latest research bill² (covering 2013–2016), presented by the Swedish government. The government also states that Swedish higher education institutions are in need of more transparent and functional career paths as this is identified as an obstacle towards independence and mobility of researchers (between institutions and between sectors). Researcher mobility is considered important for development of creative processes, knowledge transfer and for the higher education institutions' ability to collaborate.

Still, there is no national strategy for internationalisation. Some stakeholders are in favour of the development of such a strategy, for instance the student union SFS. Some organisations which work extensively with internationalisation issues on the academic sector have established a loose network for discussions. One key player in this context is the Swedish Foundation for Internationalisation of Research and Higher Education, STINT. Some policy studies can be found on its website.

STINT, together with the governmental agency The Swedish Institute provide funding for internationalisation, both targeting research and higher education, through the academic system. Several other organisations, often private foundations, provide funding for internationalisation of one or the other kind but typically on a significantly lesser scale than the two aforementioned ones. Fulbright Sweden should be regarded as one of the latter which rather top up the system with a few additional possibilities for exchange or internationalisation, sometimes targeting specific groups in the academic community.

The respective research councils also have programmes for exchange or internationalisation. One example of such a governmental instrument with the purpose to increase and support researcher mobility is the *Mobility for Growth* programme, managed by the Agency for innovation systems, VINNOVA. The programme aims at supporting the careers of experienced researchers through mobility and international collaborations. The target group is experienced researchers who have at least four years' full-time research experience and who are interested in mobility as a career development option.

The overall budget is EUR35m and the programme duration is 2012–2017 (at least). EUR10m is co-funding from Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (European Commission).

In general, national objectives on researcher mobility in Sweden and the other Nordic countries are closely related to those set by the European Commission.

2. Fulbright Sweden

Since 1952, when an executive agreement was signed by American Ambassador Walton Butterworth and by Dag Hammarskjöld for the Swedish Government, Sweden and the United States are participating in exchange of scholars and students through different grants provided by Fulbright. As far as the Executive Director at Fulbright Sweden can recall, there are no previous evaluations of Fulbright Sweden.

¹ *A Boost to Research and Innovation 2008/09:50*

² *Research and Innovation 2012/13:30*

2.1 Funding and expenditure

Fulbright Sweden is mainly funded by public funding and more specifically by the Swedish and American governments. In addition, there are other non-specified funding sources. Table 1 shows the annual funding per funding source and the average amount of funding, during 2009–2013, is SEK8.3m per year. Funding from the Swedish government has slightly increased between 2009 and 2013, from below SEK4.5m to SEK4.7m (an average increase of SEK63k per year). Funding from the American government, during the five-year period, has varied between just under SEK2m in 2013 and just over SEK2.3m in 2010. The annual amount from other funding sources has varied between approximately SEK0.9m and SEK2m.

Table 1 Annual funding (million SEK) of Fulbright Sweden during 2009–2013. Data source: Fulbright Sweden Annual Reports 2009–2013.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Swedish government	4 483 000	4 552 000	4 616 000	4 676 000	4 734 000
American government	2 240 000	2 336 691	2 080 000	2 144 000	1 988 929
Other funding sources	1 420 442	880 651	2 051 494	1 932 649	1 529 792
TOTAL	8 143 442	7 769 342	8 747 494	8 752 649	8 252 721

As Figure 1 shows, the Swedish government contributed with a majority of the funding during 2009–2013. The American government has contributed with 30 per cent at the highest in 2010 and 24 per cent at the lowest in 2011 and 2013. Other funding sources varied from 11 to 23 per cent during the five-year period.

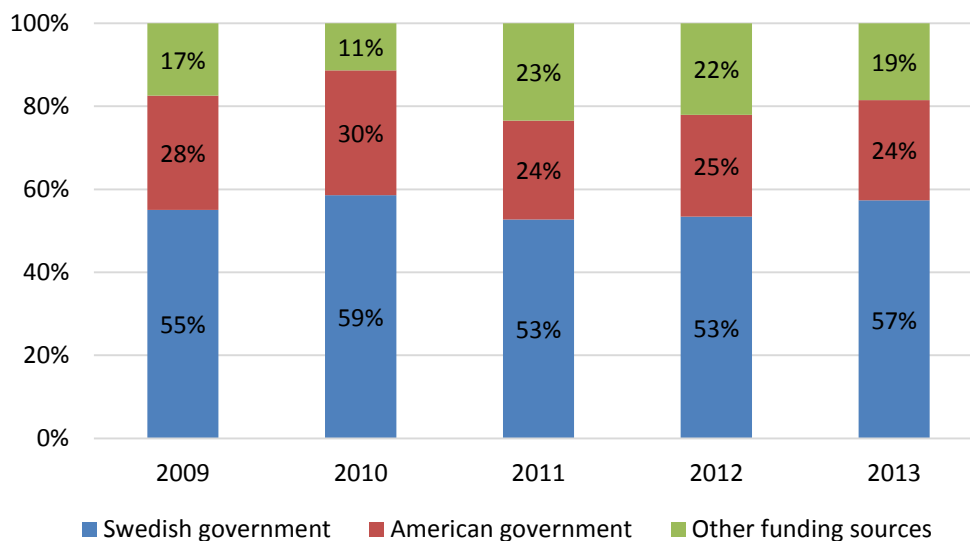


Figure 1 Share of funding of Fulbright Sweden per year 2009–2013. Data source: Fulbright Sweden Annual Reports 2009–2013.

As shown in Figure 2, the main part of the expenditure consists of granted scholarships (49-59 per cent). Administration is the second largest post with just over SEK2m per year. Between 12 and 20 per cent per year has been spent on information of education and research in the U.S, between 2009 and 2013. The smallest annual post during the five-year period is scholarship activities, lectures and other (non-specified) programme expenditures.

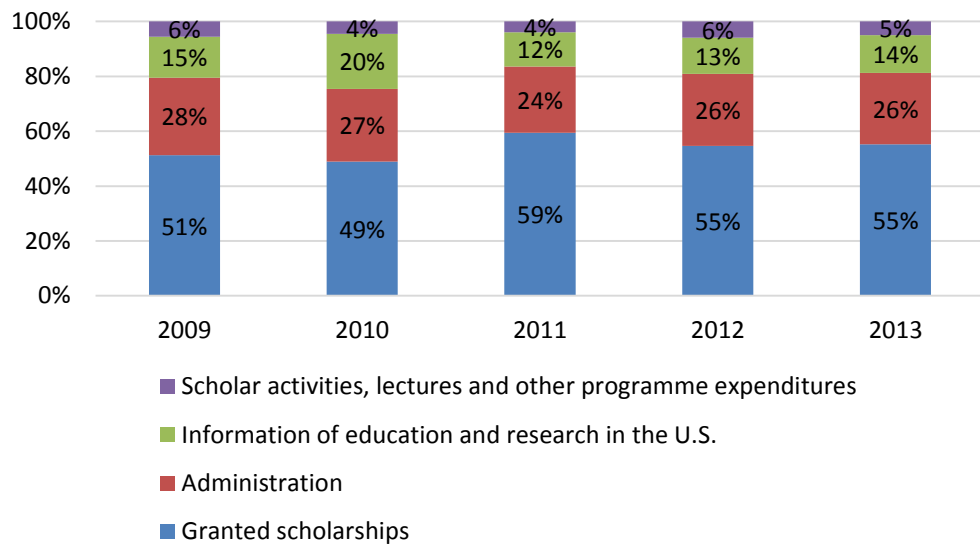


Figure 2 Expenditure Fulbright Sweden 2009–2013. Source: Fulbright Sweden Annual Reports 2009–2013.

2.2 Fulbright scholarships in Sweden and criteria for funding

Fulbright Sweden distributes grants in four different categories:

- American graduate students
- American visiting scholars
- Swedish graduate students
- Swedish visiting scholars

For all grants, grantees are chosen based on their academic merit and leadership potential. The Swedish Fulbright Commission issues grants to outstanding American and Swedish students and scholars who embody the mission of the Fulbright programme. However, Fulbright grants differ from other programmes as a grantee is chosen not only due to his or her academic excellence and potential contribution to their field, but also because of how well the person can represent his or her country and research area. In the allocation of grants, the Commission follows its principle of providing grants to "the best and brightest" in the four different categories of grantees. Difficulties with the selection process due to a large number of highly qualified candidates is mentioned in the annual reports. Grants for graduate students have priority over those for established researchers. The criteria for funding differ depending on the grant, and the specific requirements are described further below under each respective grant.

Graduate student applicants are asked to prepare, among other documents, a Study Objectives essay and a Personal Statement for the application. The essays are one of the most essential and important aspects of the application. Finalists are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and depending on the field of study, either the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). Grantees in law are required to take the TOEFL test only. In addition, finalists are to be interviewed before decisions of funding are being made.

2.2.1 Swedish graduate students

The Fulbright graduate student grants are given to Swedish students with an excellent academic record and the eligibility requirements are Swedish citizenship, fluency in English, an excellent academic record and a completed university degree from Sweden or another European country before departure to the United States. Individuals who

are eligible to apply must also spend an entire academic year at an American university. Preference will be given to candidates who have not recently studied for an extended period of time at a university in the United States. Individuals are not eligible to apply for a Swedish Fulbright graduate student grant if they hold dual citizenships (Sweden and the United States), are residents in the United States or have a green card. Furthermore, the university degree must be completed prior to departure to the United States and by the time of applying the applicants cannot already have started their graduate studies in the United States. Applications will be accepted in all fields, except medicine (not including Public Health or medical research), dentistry, and veterinary medicine.

2.2.2 Swedish visiting scholars

The Fulbright visiting scholar grants are given to Swedish scholars who wish to conduct advanced research and/or lecture in the United States and who have an established affiliation with an American university or research centre. The period of stay in the United States should be a minimum of three months with visa sponsorship up to twelve months. Applications are welcome from recent post doctorate scholars to full professor level candidates. Scholars who have not yet completed their doctoral degree at the time of application will need to present evidence of completion of the degree prior to their departure to the United States. In addition, it is required that the scholar is fluent in English and has established affiliation with an American university or research centre.

Also, Swedish visiting scholars are able to apply for the Hildeman Fellowship, which was established in 1986 to promote Scandinavian language and area studies in the United States by awarding this grant to outstanding Swedish scholars to lecture at American universities for one semester. Each year a different host university is selected and interested applicants may then complete an application. The primary objectives of the Hildeman grant are to encourage students and faculty in Scandinavian studies, to strengthen contacts between Swedish and American academics, and to increase the interest in Sweden and Swedish area studies from American students and scholars in a variety of fields. This grant is unique to Fulbright Sweden. The basic eligibility criteria are Swedish citizenship and a doctoral degree, but the United States host department may specify other requirements.

Figure 3 shows the number of Swedes who, by receiving a Fulbright grant, have travelled to the United States during 2009–2014.

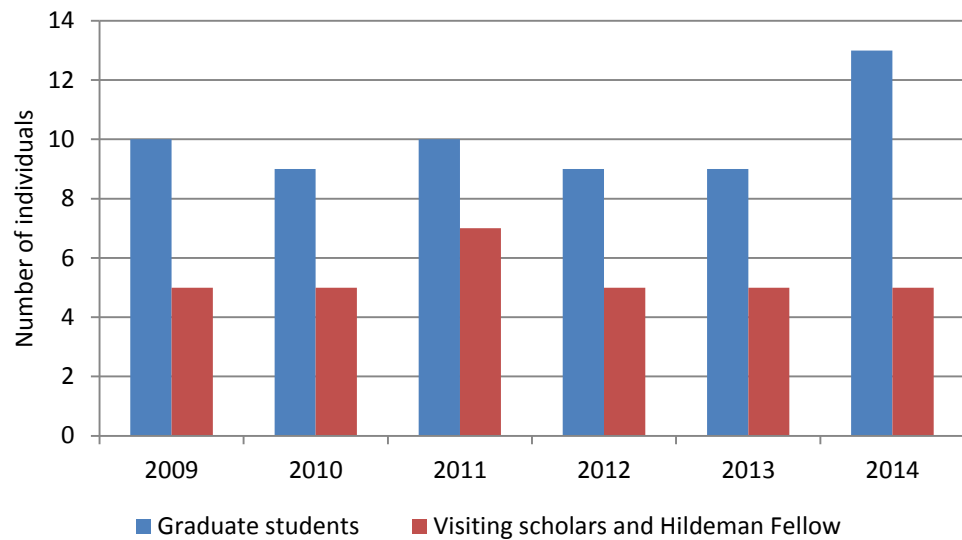


Figure 3 Number of Swedes who travelled to the United States during 2009–2014.

2.2.3 American graduate students

The Graduate Student Program is for American students wishing to study at graduate level and/or conduct independent research in Sweden. Applications are considered from well-qualified candidates in all fields. The grant provides a maintenance allowance for ten months and a travel allowance to cover round-trip travel to and from Sweden. Applicants must be American citizens at the time of the application. Preference is given to applicants whose higher education was received primarily at educational institutions in the United States and to candidates who have not resided or studied in Sweden for more than six months. Applicants must hold a B.A. degree or the equivalent before the starting date of the grant. Applicants may not hold a doctoral degree at the time of the application.

There are no restrictions regarding the research area, but priority is given to applications in fields related to Swedish culture or society, projects that require a stay in Sweden and applications in research areas where Sweden is prominent.

2.2.4 American visiting scholars

There are several grant programmes for visiting American scholars.

The Fulbright Specialist Program is designed to provide Swedish academic institutions the opportunity to invite American faculty and professionals to Sweden for a short-term visit (14-42 days). These grants are intended to provide American faculty and professionals an opportunity to collaborate with their counterparts at Swedish post-secondary academic institutions on curriculum and faculty development, institutional planning and a variety of other activities. This grant is given on a rolling basis throughout the academic year and is unique to Fulbright Sweden.

The Inter-Country Program is also unique to Fulbright Sweden, and gives Swedish universities and research institutes access to Fulbright American visiting lecturers and research scholars who are currently staying in Sweden or in other European countries. The programme enables American scholars to lecture or attend seminars in Sweden. The Fulbright Commission will pay round-trip travel for the American grantee between the host country in Europe and Sweden as well as domestic travel between Swedish universities. The Swedish institution is asked to set up a minimum of two days of programmed activities, preferably involving more than one department or one

other university in Sweden in order to maximise scholarly exchange. This programme is not intended to cover travel costs for grantees to attend conferences in Sweden.

The Fulbright Distinguished Chairs is a programme containing three awards given for lecturing and/or research for one academic semester or academic year at three host institutions in Sweden: Chalmers University of Technology, Lund University, and Uppsala University. These three grants are unique to Fulbright Sweden. Candidates from recent Ph.D. scholars to full professors will be considered. Preference is given to academic and professional excellence, feasibility and significance of planned work and host affiliation.

The Fulbright Chair in Alternative Energy Technology was established in 2008 in cooperation with Chalmers University of Technology. The grantee should for instance teach specialised courses at the graduate level in alternative energy technology; collaborate on teaching and/or research with department faculty; advise doctoral students on ongoing and new research projects; consult on curricula; and advise on establishing networking and exchange with the grantee's home university. The grantee is expected to give an inaugural lecture. It is possible for the grantee to give lectures at other Swedish universities and outside Sweden. The grantee's specialisation should be in car technology, transportation (biofuels, ethanol, biodiesel, battery technology, and lightweight carbon fibre technology), or power generation (conversion of wind power to kilowatts, solar energy into cost-effective energy, clean coal power plants, carbon sequestration). Candidates must have a Ph.D., a 5-10 year experience of lecturing and research on alternative energy, and preferably the rank of professor. Professionals and non-academics will be considered. The grant length is for nine months.

The Fulbright Chair in International Human Rights was established in 2008 in cooperation between Lund University and Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. The grantee is expected to lecture in the human rights master's programmes on international law, international organisations, civil and political rights, regional systems like the OAS, humanitarian law, refugee law, minority and indigenous rights, intellectual property rights or international labour standards. The grantee is also expected to teach in human rights training courses in Lund and abroad on topics such as civil and political rights, good governance and anti-corruption efforts, or human rights of women. The grantee will supervise master's students in their thesis research and writing. The grantee may also participate in collaborative research and teach at the faculty of law. A Ph.D. in law or in a closely related field and 5-10 years of experience is required. The grants is designed as a one- or two-semester award beginning in either September or January.

The Fulbright Uppsala Chair in American Studies has been provided to researchers since 1996. The grantee is normally expected to teach one introductory course for undergraduates as well as a more specialised course for senior and/or graduate students in the grantee's area of expertise. The grantee is also expected to give one inaugural lecture during the year. Opportunities to give lectures at other Swedish universities and outside Sweden could also be given. The grantee may participate in collaborative research with department faculty. Eligible candidates should be specialised in American history, American literature, American politics or media studies and have several years of teaching experience at undergraduate and graduate level and a solid scholarly publication record. The grant is usually 9 months long, starting in September.

Figure 4 shows the number of Americans who, by receiving a Fulbright grant, have travelled to Sweden during 2009–2014.

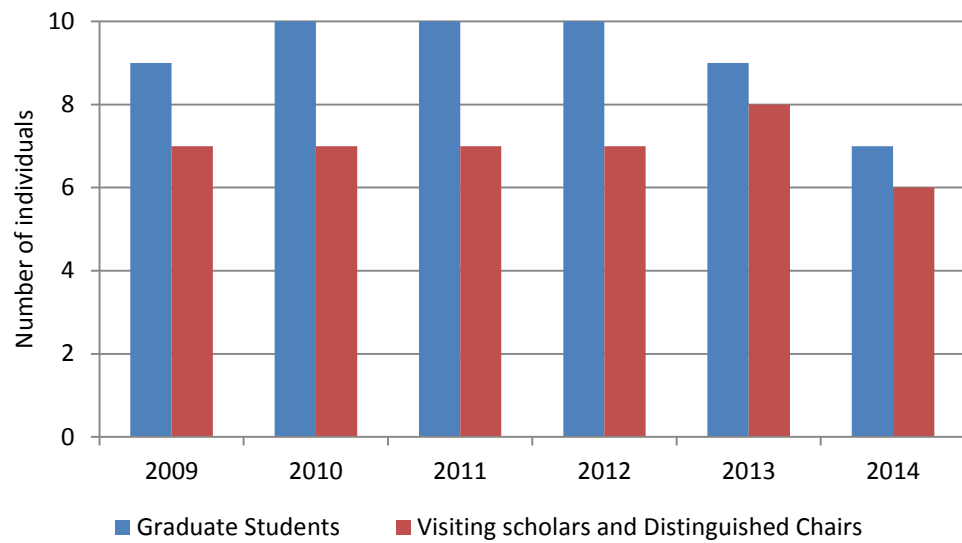


Figure 4 Number of Americans who travelled to Sweden during 2009–2014.

2.3 Overlaps with other instruments provided in Sweden

The Fulbright Sweden’s support to international exchange merely complement the governmental agencies’ and research councils’ programmes and instruments for internationalisation and mobility. There is not much organised cooperation or even dialogue between the various organisations, if any. A loose network of internationalisation organisations, mostly foundations, does occasionally meet, but to our understanding more for the sake of information exchange than actual cooperation.

In 2013, Technopolis Group Stockholm (Faugert & Co Utvärdering) completed a mapping of support programmes and actions to promote internationalisation of Swedish research and higher education, on behalf of the Swedish Foundation for Internationalisation of Research and Higher Education (STINT).³ The programmes or activities in the mapping include students from master level, PhD students, researchers and academic teachers, at Swedish higher education institutions (HEI), or individuals coming from or going to them. The instruments listed below were identified in the mapping, and provide support for mobility between Sweden and North America.

The Swedish Research Council – international postdoc promotes international mobility of researchers who have recently been awarded a Swedish doctorate. The young researcher will have the opportunity to do research at a foreign university or research institute. The United States is the most popular country to locate the postdoctoral stay in. Applications are accepted within the following areas: Humanities and Social Sciences, Medicine and Health, Natural and Engineering Sciences, Educational Sciences, Artistic Research. The grant is individual-oriented.

AFA Insurance – Two year postdoctoral studies abroad is granted within the areas of work environment or public health. The scholarship applies to those who have defended their doctoral thesis within the last five years. The grant is individual-oriented.

Forte – FAS Fellowship enables researchers (active within the council’s areas of interest: Work and health, Work organisation, Labour market, Public health, Welfare, Social services and social relations) to stay at a research institution abroad to perform

³ Mapping of internationalisation support programmes, Faugert & Co Utvärdering AB, September 2013

research and obtain further qualifications. The grants are primarily intended for recently graduated researchers and doctoral students finishing their thesis (maximum two years left to graduation). The grant is individual-oriented.

Forte – Forte Incoming International Postdoc Fellowship (FIIP) is primarily open to recently graduated researchers at institutions in any country outside Sweden. The research will be conducted in Sweden. Applicants from any country outside Sweden are able to apply. The grant is individual-oriented.

Forte – Forte Outgoing International Postdoc Fellowship (FOIP) grants are primarily intended for recently graduated researchers who should spend the mobility period at a research institution abroad. Grants are available to post-docs within Forte's areas: Work and health, Work organisation, Labour market, Public health, Welfare, Social services and social relations. The grant is individual-oriented.

Forte – Visiting researchers grants are given to foreign researchers who add qualified knowledge and competence to the Swedish research community within the council's areas of responsibility (Work and health, Work organisation, Labour market, Public health, Welfare, Social services and social relations). The research needs to be conducted in Sweden. Applicants from any country outside Sweden are eligible to apply. The grant is individual-oriented.

The Foundation BLANCEFLOR Boncompagni-Ludovisi, née Bildt – Grants for studies abroad applies to post-graduates or students with an advanced level degree. The grant is preferably given to people studying for or holding doctorates, of Swedish or Italian nationality. Research may be in physics (including geophysics and astrophysics), chemistry (including geochemistry), dentistry, medicine, engineering, computer science or similar disciplines where international exchange might be of special value. The grant is individual-oriented.

The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation – Programme in Mathematics for researchers with a Swedish doctoral degree is a scholarship programme for postdoctoral studies abroad. The applicants should have a doctoral degree from a Swedish university at the time when the postdoctoral period starts. The grant is individual-oriented.

The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation – The Max IV Scholarship is a scholarship programme with the purpose to allow outstanding young Swedish scientists to carry out one to two years postdoctoral studies at world-class synchrotron radiation or free electron facilities. The hosts are three facilities, one of which is located in the United States. The grant is individual-oriented.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences – The Hans Werthén Fund provides an annual scholarship to young graduates (between 25-35 years of age) for one year of academic work at postdoctoral or postgraduate level, or MBA or LLM studies in a qualified foreign environment. The scientific areas of focus are technology, science, economics, law, or behavioural sciences. The grant is individual-oriented as well as oriented towards HEI institutions.

The STINT teaching sabbatical is directed towards Swedish university teachers. Swedish establishments are invited to nominate two candidates each; the largest universities according to research and teaching staff may nominate three. The foundation collaborates with selected universities around the world, some of which are located in the United States, not least Liberal Arts Colleges. The grant is individual-oriented as well as oriented towards HEI institutions.

The Sweden-America Foundation – Scholarship for higher education studies in the United States and Canada is given for master's, doctoral and post-doctoral studies in the United States and Canada. The scholarship aims to fund studies or research stays and can be applied for within all academic fields (not for internships, short conference travel, study part-time or distance learning). The grant is individual-oriented as well as oriented towards HEI institutions.

The Wenner-Gren Foundation – Sabbatical scholarships enables Swedish postdoctoral researchers to work at a foreign research institution. The grant is individual-oriented.

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