

REPORT

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Scholarship for research at UI (Stockholm, Sweden)

Instead of Introduction

First of all, I would like to encourage you to apply for the scholarship, even if your academic interests are not inextricably based on Sweden. The country provides a lot of strong research centers and institutes, you will enrich from staying in Sweden, in any case.

First steps

I did apply twice, first time, in 2012, I got a letter from Disa Hastad, the Head of the Foundation, that my application had been approved by the committee but there was no place for me to stay at SIPRI (one of my ‘dream teams’). Disa recommended me to find a contact person and apply for next year.

My first advice to you is searching for an adviser. To do it you need to get a clear view of what you are going to do in Sweden (field of research or a specific topic), then find an institute or research center and finally, look for a person who has similar scholarship interests and can share his or her academic experience with you. Don’t hesitate to send to him or her e-mail, explaining who you are and what goals you have.

Preparing a plan of preliminary study is a very crucial step. You need to answer, for yourself, what you want to study and then describe 1) background – what you have already done about the topic; 2) objectives – what issues you

would like to research; 3) the aim – what your primary goal is; 4) research tasks; 5) methods and empirical material; 6) implementation – timetable for the research and 7) expected research results.

When you get an invitation letter from Disa, you can start picking up documents for applying visa. I had to fly to Moscow to do it, and got visa at the same day. I got D visa, as it was written in my invitation.

What to bring to Sweden

If it is your first scholarship abroad you need to check weather forecast for the whole period you would like to be in Sweden. Bear in mind, Sweden is a northern country; take warm clothes whenever you are going to. You will need comfortable shoes: Sweden is a country for walking; it has a lot to explore and see: buildings, parks, woods in the city center. My favorite place in Sweden for walking was Soder Malarstrand. If you once get to there, you will understand why.

Disa Hastad will recommend you to live at a Finnish lady Kristiina's flat on Storgatan. It is the heart of Stockholm, Ostermalm district, high class area, near Djurgarden where almost all remarkable museums are located. You can take a free city map which you can find in almost all shops and tourist kiosks, look through it and check up what places you would like to visit.

During my staying in Stockholm I was working at UI, and have spare time on the weekend to travel and enjoy cultural life. I saw Vasa, the Nobel Museum, Fotografiska Museum, Thielska Galleriet, Moderna Museet, Waldemarsudde, Millesgarden, Skansen, Historical Museum, Nordic Museum, Museum of Ethnography, Strindberg Museum, and Botanic Garden.

I encourage you to cross Stockholm 'border' and look at Vaxholm, Goteborg, Kalmar, Norrkoping, Nunashamn, Sigtuna, Uppsala and Orebru. That was my choice; you can make your own list and experience Sweden.

What I have done at UI

I chose UI (Utrikespolitiska institutet) due to my scholarship interests: international politics, U.S. and Russian foreign policy. I arranged my staying from May until August, because it was the only time for me to leave for Sweden: teaching at Russian university has very strict rules and requirements. I visited some seminars organized by and at UI, took interviews with journalists and researchers, was working in libraries. Besides my academic work I was also in Sweden to write an article about Swedish journalism and journalists. Disa Hastad also helped me find contacts of some prominent Swedish correspondents, so I collected a plenty of information about media in Sweden what is also helpful for me as a teacher of journalism: I got first-hand material.

My primary goal in Sweden was working on an article ‘Go-to-war rhetoric’ that would be published as UI Occasional Paper. I worked in close cooperation with Lena Jonson, a senior research fellow. I had an idea seminar where I presented my paper and got feedback from UI researchers. I figured out that it is very important to set up a clear goal and have a plan of study. In that case you will avoid getting stalemated.

It was good experience to observe how research is going on in Sweden, especially in think tanks. Researchers usually work on a paper for three-six months. I can assure you: your staying in Sweden will be pretty busy and fruitful, it will be an academic break: being free from students and regular university routine at home will provide you a lot time to proceed and get benefits from this scholarship. You will see how it is, working on a paper, consisting usually of 25-30 pages, having more than ten references and including your own ideas and conclusions. You will need to read, review plenty of articles and books to get an idea of your original topic and come to authentic results.

In conclusion, I just would like to thank all of the people I met in Sweden and those who provided me that chance.

On picture – a view from Sodra Malarstrand

