

**SVERKER ÅSTROM FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIP**

2020

REPORT

KARINA GRIGORYAN

Dear Representatives of the Sverker Åström Foundation,

I am very grateful for the Sverker Åström Foundation scholarship and the opportunity to conduct my research in Sweden (as well as explore Swedish culture and the peculiarities of corporate culture in a scientific environment and meet interesting people many of whom have become good friends to me).

I have a master's degree in Applied Social Psychology, and my main research interest is mental health and psychological well-being of young people. When I came to Sweden, I started research at the Center for Epidemiology and Community Medicine under the supervision of Prof. Anton Lager – Head of the Unit for health status and care needs analysis (CES, Region Stockholm) and Affiliated researcher at Karolinska Institutet. I was involved in two research projects in the field of public and mental health. The first project was related to the mental health of young people and aimed at discovering the vulnerability of young people (including NEETs - Not in Education, Employment or Training), difficulties at the labour market, and premature mortality in adult life. I participated in meetings of the research unit, wrote a literature review, discussed the analysis and further directions of research. The second project was related to interpersonal problems and glucose intolerance in Swedish community sample that was devoted to studying interpersonal distress among diabetes patients (based on the data from the population-based survey - Stockholm Diabetes Prevention Program; the cross-sectional study which comprised approximately 8000 respondents between the ages 35-56 from five municipalities of Stockholm County Council). I wrote a literature review on this topic and did an analysis in SPSS Statistics (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).



CES, Unit for health status and care needs analysis
(from left to right: Minhao Zhou, Mihretab Gebreslassie, Per Tynelius)



At the entrance to CES, Stockholm, Torsplan 2

During my internship, I met a lot of interesting people from different countries (such as the Netherlands, China, Jordan, Greece, Finland, Hungary, Estonia, and others) and various fields of work (medical sciences, psychology, epidemiology, sociology, social work and services, economics, politics etc.). I continue to communicate with many of them, and some have become close friends to me. I met many students from Karolinska Institutet, from whom I learned more about the features and benefits of studying in Sweden, the specifics of the health care system in Sweden and current research issues of concern to the scientific community. I communicated with current and graduated students, researchers, doctors and nurses, research team leaders and others. In general, I felt very comfortable in the scientific community in Sweden, and it was interesting for me to discuss some relevant and topical research topics with these people. Finally, I realized that I would like to become a part of this professional community. I was impressed by the friendly work atmosphere, professionalism, work-life balance, mutual respect, and progressiveness in the scientific community. For me, in general, the people in Sweden seemed open-minded and helpful and worried about each other's comfort both at work and in other aspects of daily life. During my internship, I decided that I would like to continue my research career in Sweden and started to apply for some PhD positions. My supervisor, Anton Lager, to whom I am very grateful, supported my initiative and wrote a letter of recommendation. After some attempts, I was offered a PhD position at Stockholm University, where I currently work on research with a focus on mental health of young people.



At Karolinska Institutet

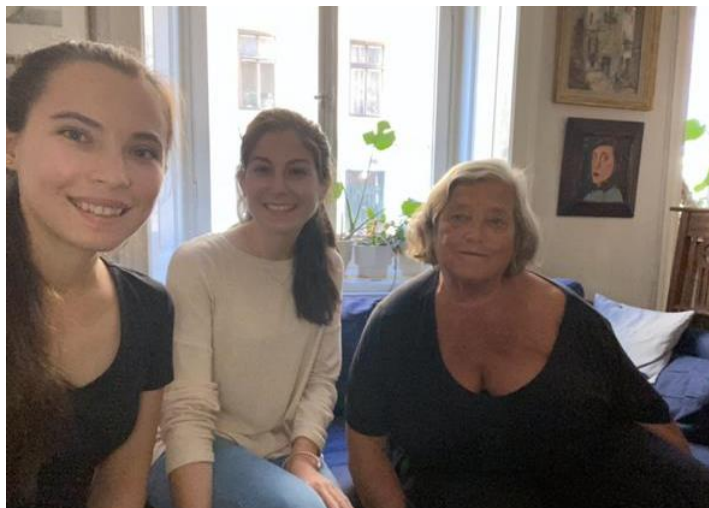
In addition to professional development, the Sverker Åström Foundation gave me a lot in terms of personal growth. This internship was an important milestone in my life that broadened my horizons in many areas and allowed me to learn and love Swedish culture. I think it is a huge success that despite the pandemic, this internship has given me not only experience in research in Sweden, but also good and incredibly interesting people. My friends and I visited beautiful cities in Sweden, such as Uppsala, Vaxholm, Nynäshamn, Västerås, and others. Even though many museums were closed last year, we managed to visit some lovely and famous places. In Stockholm, I was especially impressed by such places as Gamla Stan, Skansen, Museum of Natural History, and Nordic Museum.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity that has changed my life in many ways. I also want to express my deep gratitude to Disa Håstad (it was a great honour to meet her) for her valuable help and support, who very warmly welcomed all the scholars and thanks to whom the stay in Sweden was as comfortable and exciting as possible. It was also an honour to meet (outdoors) Michael Sohlman and Gunnar Johansson, whom I would like to thank for their hospitality. Also, I am grateful to Lotta Olsson for her help. I believe that this scholarship is a great initiative that helps young people gain a hugely rewarding experience of studying and working in Sweden, as well as learn more about the Swedish culture and the peculiarities of the local mentality.

With gratitude and best wishes,
Karina Grigoryan



At Ellen Keys park



With Disa Håstad and Svetlana Pavlova (the Sverker Åström Foundation scholar)