

General information on the financing of graduate studies in Sweden

In the Swedish university system, graduate students are normally employed by the host department, with a full salary according to a non-negotiable pay scale. However, the faculty allocation to the department covers only a small part of the cost for this salary. Most of it has to come from external grants for research projects, and these grants are sought by the senior academics at the department, in stiff competition with the rest of the world. The lead time for such a grant is at least eight months, and often over a year. Swedish law requires the financing of a doctoral student to be plausibly secure for the full four years, before we are allowed to admit the student. An interesting catch is that most research grants are awarded for a period of three years or less.

Therefore, regrettably, it is rare that we have vacancies open for salaried doctoral students. Rather, when you have read all the online information, and you still are interested, you need to get in touch with one of our professors, who will make a preliminary assessment of your interests and abilities, and how they might align with research at the department. The usual response is that we have no vacancies. However, if you are admitted, the department undertakes to finance your salary for a maximum of 48 months. After that period, there is no guarantee of continued employment at KTH, regardless of whether or not you have graduated.

The tuition in graduate programmes is free (it is paid for by Swedish taxpayers). The TMH department, however, does request a bench fee from visiting researchers for office space and resources, computer services, library access etc. This fee is currently SEK 40.000 per year, for visits of 12 months or more. If you can finance your own subsistence and the bench fee through a substantial stipend from your home country, or from international exchange programmes, you can be admitted as a self-financed student who is not an employee. The amount of funds that you will need can be judged from the table below. The doctoral student pay scale currently starts at SEK 20500 per month, and increases annually, provided that the study goals are achieved. Taxes at this level are about 31%.

Some foundations require proof of admission before awarding grants, while KTH requires proof of grant before admission. This catch can usually be resolved by negotiation.

Doctoral students are expected to partake in the department's teaching, and possibly in other work such as web maintenance or other practical duties. A maximum of 20% of your time may be allocated to such extra duties, in which case the nominal duration of the study programme may be extended to five years rather than four. That extra time will be funded outside of the 48 months.

ESTIMATED COST OF LIVING in the Stockholm area

\$1 US is about SEK 7.30 (Oct 2006)

Per month	Swedish crowns SEK per month
Accommodation	
Very basic studio or student room, not central	4,500
(Reasonably comfortable studio, near central)	(6,500)
Food – one cooked canteen meal per working day plus home groceries etc	2,500
Public transport – monthly pass	700
Telephone, TV license, newspaper	700
Other (clothing, travel, leisure etc)	2,000

KTH-TMH department bench fee
for office, library and laboratory resources

	3,400
Total	<hr/> 13,800
	(15,800)