

Lund University RQ2020

Panel Report for the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts

Executive summary

Our review panel acknowledge from the outset that while the excellence we have seen in the work of individual academies is the result of outstanding vision and effort in each case, there are common issues that need to be addressed through the structures, dynamics and resources within which the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts operates. In particular, the limited numbers of researchers and the lack of a unifying strategy, fully implemented, inhibit the full realising of the substantial research potential that these academies represent. That unifying strategy should arise dialogically from and be regularly refined democratically by a group of research voices from all academies rather than voicing a single managerial viewpoint.

The above comments summarize our impression that the Faculty has the potential to rise to an international level of excellence and global leadership during the next decade and that its reputation could equal that of other leading centres of research in the fine and performing arts internationally. Our recommendations aim to assist the Faculty to achieve this goal.

Preliminary observations

The panel understands research activities and output in the humanities, arts, sciences, and in artistic fields all as relevant for this review of research potential based on the self-evaluations by the Units of Assessment. We note however, that artistic research is a term coined and institutionalised in and since the late 20th century for inquiries by means of artistic practice and reflection (with varying degrees of systematisation and rigour) around which a new research paradigm is forming. In recent years, the term has become established across many European countries as the umbrella term for research activities that centrally involve artistic practice as part of their methodology, such as practice as research in the arts, artistic performance as research, artistic practice-led research, practice-based research in the arts, arts based research, research creation.

While there is debate over the concept, consensus is that not all artistic practice is artistic research; the latter is marked by a search for, finding, and communicating of knowledge and understanding beyond the enhancement of personal practice. Art academies feature a variety of research activities and outputs, with a particular emphasis on artistic research, which has its own discourse that an evaluation must recognise, and a strong potential to contribute to inter- and even transdisciplinary research methodologies. It was our task to identify the whole spectrum of research strengths within the Faculty, and to recognise the particular potential for artistic research, and research more broadly, on a high international level that the academies offer.

Our questions, analyses, and conclusions were drawn with the quality of the self-evaluations in mind throughout, even where this is not referred to explicitly. While we take both international standards and our collective expertise as points of reference for our acknowledgements, judgements and recommendations, our conclusions aim to inform future self-evaluations on all structural levels, next to giving leadership concrete statements that, in our combined view, require careful attention and action. We are very impressed by the existing research culture and see excellent potential to fulfil the University research goals with the help of ongoing clarification processes related to the points noted.

Introduction

In late 2019, a panel of independent experts was appointed to review the research environments at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts (FFPA), Lund University. The review was undertaken in conjunction with (and as part of) the University's large research assessment. Lund University (LU) is undertaking an ongoing quality evaluation of research, named RQ20, Research Evaluation for Development. It is expected to be complete by the end of autumn 2020. The aim of RQ20 is to "provide a picture of how competitive the research of Lund University is in an international context" and the evaluation should "produce advisory documentation for the future, based on an analysis of the conditions within the University's different research environments".

The panel for FFPA included six members:

- Ingrid Elam, Professor and former Dean, Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts University of Gothenburg (chair)
- Jonathan Impett, Director of Research, Orpheus Institute, Ghent
- Gary McPherson, Ormond Professor of Music, University of Melbourne
- Deniz Peters, Professor for Artistic Research in Music, Kunstuniversität Graz
- Ville Sandqvist, Vice Dean Teaterhögskolan, Konstuniversitetet Helsingfors
- Lucy Steeds, Reader in Art Theory and Exhibition Histories, University of the Arts London

From January 31 the panel had access to self-evaluations and bibliometrics from the four Units of Assessment (UoAs), namely Music, Music Education, Theatre and Fine Art. In the week of the interviews the panel requested and gained access to additional documents, such as the organisation structure and the student staff ratio at the Faculty, as well as the "Strategic plan for research and research studies at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Lund University, 2019–2022".

The panel had Zoom meetings on March 5, April 15 and May 4. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the scheduled interviews with representatives from the units of assessment, the two deans and staff from the IAC, were also conducted on Zoom, from May 5 to May 8. The panel had an extensive number of highly productive Zoom meetings dedicated to the discussion and editing of the report.

The panel's final report is thus based on the self-evaluations undertaken by the UoAs, the bibliometrics and the above-mentioned documents, as well as interviews with the following people:

Music: Ann-Charlotte Carlén (Rector), Professor Karin Johansson, Professor Michael Edgerton
Hallá Steinunn Stefánsdóttir (doctoral student)

Music Education: Ann-Charlotte Carlén (Rector), Professor Eva Sæther, Senior Lecturer Anna Houmann
Lina Van Dooren, David Johnson, Adriana Di Lorenzo Tillborg (doctoral students)

Fine Art: Professor Gertrud Sandqvist (rector), Professor Sarat Maharaj, Professor Joachim Koester

Professor Matts Leiderstam (post doc), Pia Rönicke (doctoral student)

Theatre: Professor Esa Kirkkopelto, Jörgen Dahlvist, Kent Sjöström, Sven Bjerstedt and Camilla Eeg-Tverbakk

John Hanse and Charlotte Østergaard (doctoral students)

Inter Arts Centre: Christian Skovbjerg Jensen (Director of IAC), Kent Olofsson (Manager of Studios)

Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts: Anna Lyrevik (Dean), Staffan Storm (Pro-Dean), Annika Michelsen (Administration)

A. Overarching observations

A.1. Strengths

- Individual academies (UoAs) have managed to build a good local foundation for (postgraduate) research qualifications, independent of the closure of the National Artistic Research School in 2015.
- There is evidence of many initiatives towards third party funding (though often unsuccessful when formal applications to awarding bodies are made).
- Established reputation of individual academies, especially for teaching and doctoral education.
- Some examples of innovation and best practice in research education and doctoral training.
- Many instances of excellence in research output.
- There is a wide range of views of artistic research, of modes of research and of kinds of output. This is a strength, precisely because there is no narrow normative narrative since artistic research itself is a complex developing field of practices.
- The Faculty is well positioned to take on a leadership role in research within their region, and internationally.
- High international reputation for specific projects.
- The initiative behind the Inter Arts Centre (IAC) was both vital and productive, and it continues to be supported by the Faculty. Recommendations regarding its evolving relationship with the academies will be covered below.

A.2. Weaknesses

- Insufficient critical research quantum (numbers of staff or outputs) or mass (environmental richness) in each academy.
- Whilst enriching the art fields, there is a lack of academic career progression (e.g. post-doctoral positions), restricting the development of both individual researchers and the research body within the University.
- While a plurality of views as to the nature of artistic research is to be celebrated, the necessary balance of unifying ethos on a general level is absent. This is reflected in uncoordinated – sometimes inconsistent, even riskily unstrategic – approaches to research and recruitment of both staff and doctoral students. For instance, there seems to have been an undue emphasis on fractional staff appointments. The Faculty as a whole therefore does not seem to fulfil its potential as a focused presence on the international stage.

- Research activity is largely restricted to those self-identifying as researchers, rather than informing the ethos of the academies as a whole.
- There is lack of clarity as to what might constitute research output.
- Inefficient relationship between the time and effort expended writing research grant applications and the reward obtained.
- Much research activity appears to be little visible to the wider University. This is partly a function of lack of appropriate granularity in LUCRIS with respect to how artistic research output is submitted and categorized.
- For various reasons (scheduling, equipping, physical distance) the IAC is under-exploited in terms of its potential contribution to research.

A.3. Opportunities

- The lively discourses within each academy provide ample scope for increased collaboration within the Faculty.
- It should be possible to maintain the individuality, diversity and excellence of individual projects while identifying and amplifying resonances across the academies – of topic, of methodology, of kinds of question or output.
- The breadth of interests within the academies and inter-disciplinary nature of artistic research suggest great potential for collaboration with faculties of sciences, humanities and education.
- There is an untapped body of research potential among the existing teaching staff.
- The development of research education within first and particularly second cycle provision.
- The IAC can become the focal point for research and collaboration across the academies, with other faculties and with other institutions. It can thus become a central window onto the work of the academies.

A.4. Threats

- Fragmentation of research groups and isolation of researchers.
- Competing restrictive understandings of the nature of artistic research.
- Lack of visibility across the wider University community.
- Losing touch institutionally with the wider development of discourse.
- Lack of a coherent Faculty strategy for succession planning.
- loss of IAC to artistic production and education events, diluting its role as the central site of research and research discourse

More practically, we should rather speak of factors that inhibit the realisation of research potential within and among the academies:

- The lack of a coherent and cohesive research strategy.
- Failure to make a continuously growing and cohesive international impact.

A.5. Proposed aspirations

- A pluralistic understanding of artistic research that provides common direction while accommodating the range of approaches reflected in the academies.
- A clear research strategy and roadmap at Faculty level, plus clear structures and patterns of work for collaboration between the academies, supported by consensus at academy level and resource at Faculty level.
- Robust structures and necessary means for career progression.
- An integrated, dialogical research vision including the IAC.

A.6. Faculty leadership

Neither the Faculty, nor the IAC are units of assessment, and have thus not presented self-evaluations. We note that while doctoral education is not stressed by Lund University for RQ2020, research is typically carried out by doctoral students at least as much as by senior staff within the FFPA. In a small research environment such as the FFPA, both the Faculty level and infrastructure like the IAC should play an integral role in developing and supporting research. We found that the power of the Faculty to influence and direct research activity is under-exploited.

In the self-evaluations from the UoAs as well as during interviews, a desire has been expressed for clear research leadership at Faculty level. Currently, the Dean is chairing a number of sub committees at the Faculty level and is also deeply involved in the time-consuming planning of the co-location of the Faculty in a new building. While the Pro-Dean is responsible for education, there is no position at the Faculty level with artistic research expertise and research leadership experience.

The strategic plan for research and research education at the Faculty states that, “by 2022, research and research studies at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts shall have a distinctive focus and visibility nationally and internationally, clearly feed back into first- and second-cycle studies, and have clearly improved financially.” In addition, the strategy plan mentions the need for interdisciplinary collaboration, coordination of research and research studies, creation of a funding strategy and a framework for research ethics, and development of research infrastructure such as Inter Arts Centre. All these are relevant goals; however, the strategy not being linked to action plans for recruitment and funding, and not articulating separate goals for the Faculty, the separate institutions, the staff, and the doctoral students, it is not driving action, but rather asking for more strategy documents.

The new building project presents a unique opportunity for generating collaboration and a sense of common cause among the academies. However, it is critically important that this project should not a) become the promised but deferred future solution to every issue that arises, and b) reduce the attention, resources and imagination that Faculty and University gives to research in the academies in the meantime.

B. Observations of the Units of Assessment and the Inter Arts Centre

B.1. Music

The Music Academy has a fine reputation for its excellence in teaching and the performing profiles of its staff. Over recent years it has produced some excellent research – projects that are innovative, collaborative and have international reach. The high number of applications for Doctoral positions along with its established international research partnerships reflects the Academy’s research reputation. The staff with whom we have talked are clearly committed to consolidating and developing research at the Academy. It must be noted that in the context of a large professional school - with all of the practical complexities of providing high quality music education - the nurturing of research from being a relatively minor activity to becoming an integral component of the institutional self-image is a non-trivial challenge.

There are promising signs of individual commitment to this challenge, but it requires support on all structural levels, and of the University as a whole.

We were very impressed with the doctoral candidate we were privileged to interview. However, the lack of critical mass in terms of research environment is clearly an issue. More attention could be paid to forming community among Doctoral researchers across the academies; Doctoral research fellows must surely have much in common. The impetus gathered by the prior Professor for Artistic Research should be cared for and raised further. Not only the number of Doctoral positions requires attention, but their careful scheduling to maintain a research community. The lack of opportunities for career progression is dispiriting and, in our opinion, needs to be rectified. If academy funding for regular post-doctoral positions is out of the question, two possibilities remain: either central University funding, or post-doc positions included as a priority in external funding applications; an ideal solution appears to be the combination.

The list of declared research outputs provided displays a wide range of types, and of likely impact. Some are international peer-reviewed outputs, others appear to be participation in an otherwise non-research-oriented performance. Approaches range from artistic research – through systematic musicology, performance studies and performance practice – to performances *per se*. A common strategy aimed at maximising impact is important.

The Music Academy boasts an extensive roster of internationally-recognised artists among its staff. Together they constitute a major source of research potential, and the cultivation of a thriving and inclusive research culture across the academy must be a priority. This is not only a good idea in and of itself – it also represents the best prospect for research growth, given the difficulty in obtaining funding for additional full-time research positions. To that end, a worthwhile and cost-effective intervention would be for the University to fund events and training (Continuous Professional Development) to encourage the emergence of research ideas. Academy practice and structures should then allow for the organic development and fostering of research projects. Recent developments in incorporating research training in cycles 1 and 2 are to be encouraged, and will contribute to the evolving sense of an academy-wide research ethos.

To date, much of the research output at the highest level has been instigated by the now-departed professor. This work included a high degree of collaboration across disciplines and between institutions. It is important that this activity be maintained and strengthened. The Academy is to be congratulated on the recent appointment of Professor Edgerton, but it is important for the Faculty to reflect on why the vacancy came about. The appointment of a new professor is an exciting opportunity for new focus and momentum. To maintain the international status, any emerging understanding of artistic research must not be narrow and normative but broader, in order to give voice and encouragement to the wide range of approaches and potential represented at the Academy and the Faculty, and to generate a sense of common purpose and open-mindedness.

A Music Academy research committee – in addition to the research education committee – should be instigated that includes the Vice Dean (Research), who we recommend be appointed (details below), and another member from outside the music academy. This additional member would have an important voice in terms of strategy, impact, and relationship and compatibility with other academies and faculties. It should also consider research potential within the Academy as a whole, prospects for collaboration, funding

applications and when to devote resource to their preparation, and the appropriate documenting and reporting of research activity.

The intense expertise and learning processes of a music academy – in many respects a conservatory – naturally generate a particular discourse. This can potentially become a form of exclusivity when thinking about collaboration. Greater consideration should be given to the vast range of possible partners, of intellectual exchange that Lund University presents (e.g. sciences, medicine, social sciences, the humanities or philosophy) as well as to possible collaborations with the other arts within the faculty. The colocation project and further integration of the IAC will doubtless encourage such movement, but it is essential that these collaboration initiatives should not be postponed pending these changes.

B.2. Music Education

The international landscape in the field of music education research has changed significantly across the past couple of decades. At the Malmö Academy of Music, the development of the music education research program has attracted interest, enthusiasm and recognition from colleagues internationally and has shown a steady, continuing development since the earliest days of the doctoral program in the late 1990s.

Among the most visible strengths of the music education program are its close ties with the teacher education program, and connections with colleagues in Gothenburg and other Swedish institutions offering music education. Staff are clearly passionate about their research and that of their doctoral students. They have been able to carve out a distinctive style of research that connects admirably with teacher education and local and national schools as well as community music education teaching practice. Particularly noteworthy is their emphasis on research that focuses on aspects of folk music pedagogy, intercultural pedagogic competence and creativity, cultural diversity, inclusivity, intercultural education, social sustainability, and creativities. This emphasis is evident in various productive collaborations between music education and the teacher education programs but also between the music education and music research units within the Malmö Academy of Music. Interviews we undertook during our review process provided the impression that Music Education works closely with Music and that there is a sense of cohesiveness across both Music Education and Music. In various ways, the research environment is built on mutual respect and support for differences and similarities in ways that now distinguish the Malmö Academy of Music as quite different from other European music schools that undertake research in music education.

Music Education research outputs include a small number of published books, journal articles, and conference publications. These traditional outputs are complimented by other forms of research dissemination such as organizing international conferences and regional symposia. Members of staff achieve quite a lot given the size of their discipline. There is also an appropriate balance between their international outlook and focus on research that will improve Swedish music education both within the community and within the local school systems.

Importantly also, music education researchers have been able to build connections with their colleagues in artistic research, and more broadly between the Academy and the University. Research topics extend productively beyond the conventional boundaries for music education typical of other institutions. Innovative examples include Senior Lecturer Anna Houmann's work in educational sciences focused on micro moments in music teaching, pedagogical

creativities and participatory formats, and involvement in international research projects such as *Creativities – Transcending Boundaries in Higher Music Education*. She is actively involved in the European *Association for Music in School* (EAS) and in the SIDA project *Linneaus Palme* that aims to build a Music Education Department at the Vietnam National Academy of Music in Hanoi. Anna Houmann is also an initiator of a U21 project concerned with *Innovation in Education* that involves teacher training programs at the University of Hong Kong, University of Auckland, University of Johannesburg and Malmö Academy of Music at Lund University who cooperate with the purpose of enhancing international perspectives at each university. Professor Eva Saether has undertaken pioneering research on interculturality in musical learning, and other forms of folk music, as well as research concerned with social sustainability and collaborative learning. She continues to be an active member of international societies with close connections with other Swedish institutions including collaborative supervision of students in Helsinki and elsewhere. Dr Ylva Hofvander Trulsson has undertaken valuable work in the area of migration and holds an impressive list of postdoctoral awards and membership of research projects within Sweden and internationally.

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Exemplary research is also undertaken by Professor Karin Johansson through her involvement in the Swedish-Norwegian-German research project *Discourses of Professionalisation and Academisation in Higher Music Education* (DAPHME), funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond. She has also helped with organizing the international choral research network *Choir in Focus* 2009–2012 and the transdisciplinary Pufendorf project *Artistic Vocal and Choral Orders* (AVaCO) 2014–2015, and participates as a member of the Lund University academic think tank LU Futura. Professors Håkan Lundström and Göran Folkestad remain connected with the music education program despite having retired from the institution.

Whilst most of the research undertaken within the Faculty focuses on artistic research in the fine and performing arts, research within the music education unit plays an important part in broadening this base to include methodologies drawn from the social sciences. Their work deserves to be recognized within the Faculty and also the University. Consequently, we see enormous potential for research in music education to become even more visible through efforts by the Faculty to showcase their work to the local community and within the University, but also through more proactive efforts by the music education researchers to collaborate with researchers in other parts of the University with successful track-records in funding in order to maximise their potential for drawing on wider sources for support and financing. Appropriate disciplinary framing is crucial for funding applications for such innovative research to be successful.

Because of its size, the review committee sensed a fragility of the Music Education program and the need for it to be constantly replenished through careful recruitment of doctoral students and strategic staff appointments who can further the reputation of music education research. In this regard, future staffing needs are not clear, with no real sense of what the academic profile might look like in 5 to 10 years from now. We were particularly concerned about what would happen when a professor or senior member of staff moves or retires. Would the person be replaced with someone at the same level? This is a particularly pertinent given that two of the staff seem to take on much of the supervision and research work, with one of the staff (a professor) moving to a part-time and planning for her retirement at some point in the future.

The Music Education doctoral program attracts high quality candidates who appear to be capable of continuing on with their research beyond the doctoral level. Traditional pathways to research through undergraduate music education and teacher education degrees seem appropriate.

Staff and doctoral students are highly active internationally within the profession, with doctoral students attending and participating in international forums and conferences right from their earliest weeks in the doctoral program. The Malmö Academy of Music organised the 2019 EAS conference which was a huge success and further developed their reputation in music education research. A book has been produced from this conference. Emphasis on publications seems to be appropriately linked to practice in Swedish schools and improving music education within Sweden. Their researchers have a distinctive 'voice' within the music education community and peers in other institutions know about and understand what Malmö represents through its music education program.

Doctoral students need to be continually encouraged to publish their doctoral work beyond their thesis, such as by publishing more than one journal article from their dissertation. Such an emphasis needs to be thought through from the beginning of the doctoral journey. We were impressed however, to learn that doctoral students receive a broad education from a number of differing research perspectives even though the two senior researchers are highly focused on their own research philosophies and topics.

Current staff are, for good reason, devoted to their own strategy but this also needs to be balanced with a commitment to continually evaluate this strategy and how it can be fully enacted. Staff expressed the desire to help create a shared vision of research within the Faculty but were unclear how this might be achieved. The Faculty should therefore aim to foster more active involvement with the various research environments within the Academies in order to develop strategies for promoting each discipline's research at the University level.

B.3. Fine Arts

A broad yet particular understanding of artistic research has been rigorously developed over the past two decades by Gertrud Sandqvist and Sarat Maharaj for the Academy of Fine Arts. This is powerfully shared between them and generously encompasses the work of their fine arts/visual arts colleagues. The 'expanded' research field envisaged (as articulated in the self-assessment) does not essentialise academic, i.e. doctoral/postdoctoral, practice but is more widely responsive to and inclusive of that demonstrated at large in art museums, galleries and konsthalls internationally, where external funding has been reliably secured by research-active staff to date. At the same time, it is notable that the hailed breadth of understanding or expanded field is limited to the fine arts/visual arts, without extending to modes and models of artistic research recognisable in other academies within the wider Faculty. Also, while we understand that the research of staff and students is flourishing within this environment, their contributions have not been articulated beyond individual artistic concerns, in institutional and academic terms that might be strategic internally and encourage external grant funding. Into the future, both the University and the Academy would profit from greater integration of the radical knowledge-producing potential of research in Fine Arts into the broader fabric and ethos of LU.

The current staff who are notably research-active – Professor Joachim Koester, Professor Matts Leiderstam, Professor Fredrik Vørslev, Professor Emily Wardill and Senior Lecturer

Maj Hasager – are internationally established, as are the doctoral students, who all have high-profile practices (with the two most recent candidates selected from a remarkable 275 applicants). Leiderstam, an alumnus of the doctoral program, holds a post-doc position brought to the Academy with Swedish Research Council funding (the second post-doc he has held at the institution). Hasager is an alumna of the MFA program. The stable and attractive research culture at the institution is a tribute Sandqvist and Maharaj, who – it might be noted – have supervised all doctoral candidates to date between themselves. Both the members of this longstanding leadership team on artistic research are likely to retire within the next few years and subsequent appointments need to be based on careful attention to research practice and strategic development.

Extensive entries into the LUCRIS system demonstrate peer esteem (within the art field) rather than peer review (in a conventional academic sense). Yet peer review, in the form of group critiques or seminars among the doctoral cohort, is productively core to the doctoral training program, which typically runs concurrent with ongoing exhibition ('publication') commitments – on the part of the students – to galleries, museums, konsthalls and so forth. Publications on 'Nytt vetande från konstnärens perspektiv' (2015) and 'Några reflektioner kring konstnärlig forskning' (2017) are notable by Professor Gertrud Sandqvist and more along these lines, in other languages for international dissemination, and from Professor Sarat Maharaj, would secure the highly acclaimed word-of-mouth reputation of the Academy in this domain.

International engagement in the research of the department is clear in the public exhibitions logged in LUCRIS and more in the way of local audience development, as worthy of commendation, is described in the self-evaluation and was reported in Academy interviews. The teaching commitments by research-active staff span first and second-cycle education, with a new MFA specialised in artistic research (and associated addition to the staff team) thoroughly welcome as a strategic move. It is conspicuous that the doctoral students, who are practice-based, are exclusively supervised and examined by theorists/academics and a forum that connects them additionally to exemplary individuals who straddle this divide at the University – e.g. Esa Kirkkopelto as the new professor of artistic research in the Theatre Academy – could prove enriching.

The new MFA currently under development will productively nurture original and independent research at the second cycle of education. The newly appointed leader of this program might well bridge the practice-based teaching staff within the Academy and the doctoral community. All the doctoral candidates are already highly experienced researchers in the art field – and the current postdoc position is held by a senior researcher – yet all are drawn to the Academy for the opportunity to elaborate and hone their work. The absence of a conventional doctoral-training program – with sessions on (e.g.) methodology, ethics, concepts of artistic research and academic writing – is noticeable and ways of opening up work in this area offered by other academies within the Faculty, without disrupting the unique structure conjoining the fine/visual arts students (i.e. a limited number of effective dialogic seminars in Malmö per year) might prove promising. Likewise, a forum that opens the distinguished work of the doctoral community to their peers in music and theatre – and to students at first and second cycle within fine/visual arts – (while observing the articulated importance of *not* making conventional teaching demands) could enrich the collegiate culture simultaneously at Academy and Faculty level.

The Fine Arts Academy mostly makes use of the Faculty's Inter Arts Centre to host teaching, although the doctoral students additionally use the video-editing studios and on occasion, for examination, exhibition spaces. As such it provides only a minimal basis for research and this lack should prompt critical reflection as the major development of a Faculty campus is underway.

A relatively long and deeply established research culture at the Academy – and concomitant international respect – might now be renewed, within the Malmö Faculty and Lund University, also reciprocally with external institutions across Europe, to nurture (and keep diverse) the still young but now blossoming field of artistic research.

B.4. Theatre

As stated in the self-evaluation, the research unit in the Theatre Academy at Malmö Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts is young. The first doctoral student was appointed some twenty years ago and graduated in 2007. The doctoral program started in close relationship with the research unit at the Helsinki Theatre Academy. Helsinki, among others, is still mentioned as one key partners. All together five doctorates have been awarded from the program since it commenced. Currently, there are five students enrolled in the doctorate. The progress and growth of the program has been slow, and the relative smallness makes the research environment vulnerable. This is acknowledged in the self-evaluation. A slim critical mass of staff and students is reflected in the relatively small amount of peer reviewed publications.

Despite being small, the research environment at the Theatre Academy is vibrant, striving to develop research both within the performing arts and jointly with the entire field of artistic research. Consistent with other Theatre Academies, staff actively collaborate, which, with the newly appointed professor, appears to be a strengthening priority. Unified strategic planning, implementation, and activity in artistic research between the academies, is a core vehicle to highlight, increase and improve the status of artistic research within the University. In addition, collaborative action requests strategic leadership with an open and constructive dialogue with all parties. However, there is evidence that the Faculty lacks an overarching research community with a unified identity, even though diversity and different strands of research are essential and need to be maintained.

Our impression is that the staff and the doctoral students at the Academy are highly motivated and committed. The teaching and the studies are designed in a functional and individual way. The course appears to us to be demanding and rewarding for the students. The self-evaluation mentions, as a very positive factor, a strength, that “all teachers in postgraduate education and all doctoral students are teaching or will be teaching within undergraduate education”. This situation, though, is contradictory. To have the opportunity to teach and work in practice with students and topics concerning one's research question, or at least tangentially related, is beneficial. Yet, a complication is that there is no MA-program that can act as a pathway into the program from the undergraduate program, and as a possible teaching environment for active researchers. The relatively heavy workload in teaching is, to some extent, apparently pointless in relation to research. This is also disproportionate when compared with the other research units at the Faculty.

The self-evaluation emphasizes collaboration with the established theatre field in research projects and that this collaboration is the main source of external funding for practice theatre research. The self-evaluation states that “there is no contradiction between these two”, i.e.

research practice and established theatre. This co-operation, while certainly valuable and beneficial, provokes some reflection. Even though the research undertaken at the Academy has influence in a wider context, it seems that the core co-operation happens in quite a narrow professional theatre environment. This can, in addition to being enriching, narrow down and prescribe the research content of the program. Further means to develop, when appropriate, the external partners and funding, should be investigated. The claim that “there is no contradiction” between the established theatre field and research, is not convincing and seems to work against the aims of the research program. The concept of the “established theatre” is indefinite and excessively wide. When this refers to mainstream theatre, research should perhaps have a questioning, proposing and even opposing stand, instead of claiming “no contradiction”. In this sense, every collaboration with the extensive professional, applied, and interdisciplinary performing arts field is to be encouraged.

Theatre research inevitably requires post-doctoral research positions and funding to further develop artistic research as such, and interdisciplinary research within the University. There are substantial possibilities within the multi- and transdisciplinary research environment of Lund University; theatre, as a common gatherer of assemblies of different forms, is an appropriate platform for this. Collaborative projects offer an important opportunity for funding links with external organisations. The discourse and practices of artistic research tend to differ from those in scientific settings, and there is a growing interest within both the humanities and the natural sciences to find joint platforms for fruitful and encouraging discoveries and outcomes. The IAC could be used for managing a wider spectrum of research topics, and as a forum for discussion, experimentation and post-doctoral research projects.

National and international collaboration is probably at its peak in relation to the capacity of the program. “The main objective so far has been to establish a sustainable research environment at the Academy”, as is stated in the self-evaluation. Collaboration takes place within the Nordic sphere and with some partners across Europe. The Theatre Academy aspires to increase its size and status. Nationally the Theatre Academy at Malmö is valued and influential. It is also important to mention the Academy’s participation, along with other researchers in the Faculty, in Agenda 2030. This is one instance of collaboration between art and science, and questions of ecology and environment are truly of common interest and not solved solely by artistic or scientific means.

B.5. Inter Arts Centre

The IAC can become the focal point for research and collaboration across the academies, with other faculties and with other institutions. Currently, however, its role and purpose are unclear, as is the role of the research expertise attached to the centre (a mere 25% “technician” position). The IAC’s policies, priorities and strategies seem to be unclear, not only to Faculty staff, but also to staff employed at the IAC.

There is, within the IAC, a desire to identify strong areas and then concentrate on these, thus giving more space to research projects. While the IAC staff would like to see the centre as a meeting place for artists and researchers, they acknowledge that it is today mainly used by external artists who apply through open calls and come with their own funding. We also understood that doctoral students are hardly present at the centre, while the Theatre Academy, physically close to the IAC, uses it for interdisciplinary activities, and other departments find the technical equipment too outdated for their needs.

The IAC staff expressed a frustration at the lack of a strategy specifying roles, purposes and resourcing of the IAC. There are great hopes for the future collocation in a new building, potentially developing the IAC from a facility mainly used for education and art projects into a centre for interdisciplinary research and research discussion. On the other hand, the collocation risks deferring necessary actions to a distant future.

C. Recommendations

From the outset, we emphasize two points:

Faculty

Within the structures and hierarchies of the University, the potential of the Faculty to serve as an overarching structure and circle of experts in dialogue to influence and direct research activity is under-exploited. It should be more proactive and supportive in establishing strategy and priorities, constantly searching for potential and guiding in terms of funding and applications. An appropriately funded Vice Dean (Research) will be important in addressing this issue, but active and engaged support from the Faculty as a whole is vital if the academics' research potential is to be realised.

Colocation

The new building project presents a unique opportunity for generating collaboration and a sense of common cause among the academics. However, it is important that this project should not a) become the promised but deferred future solution to every issue that arises, and b) reduce the attention, resources and imagination that Faculty and University gives to research in the academics in the meantime.

In finer detail, our recommendations are as follows.

C.1. Research leadership

A continuing position with at least a 0.5 workload should be created at the Faculty level for a Vice Dean (Research) or other appropriately designated title. The duties of the Vice Dean (Research) would be to take responsibility for the oversight of the Faculty's research direction and implementation by work with colleagues to develop policies on research and research education, to identify and set the strategic direction for all research that is undertaken across the Faculty, including that associated with a reconceptualised IAC (as detailed below), and to represent the Faculty on University forums and discussions regarding research. The incumbent would also prepare budget submissions for approval by the Dean and might be delegated with the authority to oversee research expenditure across the Faculty's academics. The incumbent should possess managerial and administrative experience and be an established, active researcher whose mindset is sympathetic to the plurality of research undertaken across the Faculty. See Appendix for recommended responsibilities of the Vice Dean.

We strongly advise the University, in partnership with the Faculty, to make it a priority to invest in a full-time research professor who possesses interdisciplinary expertise. Alongside pursuing their research, this appointee would fulfil the role of Vice Dean (Research) and work with research professors in each of the academics. The role of Vice Dean (Research) should go proactively well beyond coordinating and into creating a collaborative research environment and culture.

C.2. Research environment and culture

The Faculty should encourage the academies to arrive at a consensus regarding artistic research – one that accommodates their current plurality while allowing them to present a unified strategy and negotiate common collaborative projects. This must develop alongside continued encouragement and support for all other modes of research that are prominent within the Faculty.

With such an agreed self-image in place, the Faculty should support the development of the wider role of the academies in the University as an epistemological avant-garde, in exploring kinds of knowledge and modes of knowledge production in conversation with other disciplines (beginning, perhaps, with philosophy of science and cultural anthropology).

An inter-academy platform for unorthodox/practice-based research should be developed that encourages researchers to articulate their work to each other, perhaps expanding an existing model – the practicum, for example. It should be financially well-supported by the University and the Faculty (shared responsibility: academies get *extra* funding *if* they participate in this). An internal, pan-academy peer-review process should be initiated, both to encourage quality of work and to facilitate an evolving sense of common values, parameters and goals.

The Faculty must take responsibility for clear communication to the University as a whole, not only of particular research projects and outcomes, but of the aggregate value, impact, potential and implications of work across the academies.

C.3. Research funding

The Faculty should reconsider the process for distributing the research budget across the academies, to ensure that the model in the near future is visibly equitable, fair and transparent, while allowing for strategic funding of commonly agreed initiatives in research. Upcoming retirements and other dynamism currently in play offer opportunities for revision.

A funding mechanism must be found to address the professional vacuum between doctoral researchers and professors. This is vital to offer career progression, to build the base of skill and experience, to develop research capacity and to increase the number of realistic applications for external funding. Next to funding rotating postdoctoral positions, a proven tool is seed money for grant-application writing by externals with doctoral degrees towards generating their own Government funded postdoctoral projects hosted by the academies.

To promote interaction with other faculties – with both the sciences and humanities - and the emergence of new multi-disciplinary initiatives, resource should be allocated to seed initial research and enable the preparation of new funding applications.

C.4. Research output (metrics)

LUCRIS should be further adapted to suit the needs of the Faculty and ownership of the system should be promoted among staff, in order to capture more appropriately the full range of research carried out in the academies. This should be an integral part of the Faculty research strategy.

The Faculty might consider benchmarking with other Fine and Performing Arts Faculties elsewhere, to ensure that research active staff can use the most appropriate categories and indicators when they input their research outputs into the LUCRIS system.

C.5. Enhancing research potential among academy staff

Given the large number of comments made to the review committee about workloads and insufficient time to carry out research, the Faculty might consider evolving its current model so that it more adequately takes into account the full range of activities of its staff. Research time as a percentage of workload needs to be calculated, documented, specified in contractual arrangements and ring-fenced to ensure future output of new knowledge, creative work, publications and the fostering of local, national and international research activity.

Policies should be formulated to develop the research potential across the widest range of staff within the Faculty. Elements might include:

- initiatives aimed at enabling early career researchers to receive support from the Faculty and mentoring from more established research active staff within the Faculty;
- guidelines for reviewing the research activity of all staff who undertake research, as built on transparent and agreed parameters for yearly professional development reports;
- models for defining staff workloads in research, and for rewarding highly active research staff and exemplary research initiatives;
- encouragement to see research as an integral, normal and generative part of teaching at an academy and to reflect on personal practice to explore its potential;
- a clear structure of Continuing Professional Development in research skills and topics for all academic staff.

C.6. Research infrastructure

The IAC has proved an excellent initiative as a research resource, for documentation and performance, and in encouraging and facilitating collaboration. It could be an important agent in the search for common purpose among the four areas. Each research area is highly appreciative of the IAC, yet expresses different frustrations, to which we respond:

- The existing Centre should be renamed to highlight the role of research (e.g. CIAR Centre for Inter Arts Research, or ARC Arts Research Centre).
- Given that the Centre is funded from research budgets, its priorities should be strategically aligned with research across the Faculty, with its head reporting to the Vice Dean (Research).
- Responding to researchers at the academies, their research projects must be prioritised above artist-in-residence programmes. Proposed artist-in-residence projects should therefore be evaluated in terms of their contribution to arts research in the academies.
- A scheduling mechanism needs to be designed to allow for the long-term planning necessary for major events, festivals or teaching, together with a flexibility that creates the necessary responsiveness to research needs as they arise.
- The need to update equipment is, of course, constant; however, if artistic researchers at Lund University are to position themselves at the cutting-edge, there must be a way of addressing this. As particular requirements emerge with strong inter-academy consensus, this should justify access to special University funds beyond the annual budget.
- The design of the new building project provides an opportunity to ensure that there is infrastructure that will allow the Centre to realise its potential as a productive hub, enabling the flowering of the most exciting and important developments in artistic research.

Appendix

Key responsibilities for the Vice Dean (Research)

Some or all of the following:

1. Maintain active research status and profile within the Faculty.
2. Chair the Faculty Research Committee.
3. Oversee the strategic remodelling of the IAC.
4. Evaluate research activity and focus resources towards consolidating strengths and supporting emerging areas.
5. Provide high-level analysis of the external environment and identify new opportunities for research development and funding.
6. Articulate the vision, establishing a rolling five-year agenda for research within the Faculty and developing strategies to achieve these goals.
7. Through focused selection, phasing and mentoring of doctoral students, continue building a quality graduate research cohort.
8. Together with other relevant colleagues, co-ordinate the development and implementation of the Faculty's strategic plan for research and research education, with a focus on improving the quantity and quality of research outputs including presentations, publications, products and services.
9. Develop and implement a strategy for securing funding for scholarships, teaching assistantships and internships to enhance graduate research accessibility and outcomes.
10. Benchmark with other Fine and Performing Arts institutions in order to continually refine how the Faculty's research can be input into LUCRIS and other reporting systems, in ways that are appropriate for the discipline and that adequately detail individual and collaborative research outputs.
11. Monitor and report research achievements in terms of inputs, outputs and citations, as well as public events.
12. Develop strategies for creating a nexus between research and teaching.
13. Coordinate programs for early-career researchers, including doctoral students.
14. Facilitate the development of a research environment that fosters high achievement, collaboration and continuous improvement.
15. Work with relevant colleagues within the University to ensure, through available systems and support, that research training is properly conducted, grant applicants are sufficiently guided and ethics matters handled appropriately.
16. Engage with relevant industries and translate research for the public to broaden and enrich understanding.
17. Develop relationships with government, research and educational organizations in Sweden and overseas to explore opportunities and secure funding to support research related to the Faculty's priority research themes.
18. Liaise with the appropriate University staff, committees and processes to ensure consistency with legislative and University requirements, and synchronicity between Faculty and University goals.
19. Develop strategic alliances with appropriate organizations to plan collaborative research programs.
20. Provide strategic advice and guidance regarding University and Faculty policies and procedures with respect to areas under portfolio.
21. Develop and maintain effective relationships with Faculty and wider University staff to achieve Faculty strategic imperatives and ensure communication on matters related to this role.