

Career Service

HANDBOOK

for postdoctoral fellows
at Karolinska Institutet



**Karolinska
Institutet**

”Your postdoc studies will give you:

- a strengthened CV
- a solid network
- a goal for your future career”

*Professor Francesca Chiodi,
Karolinska Institutet*

This handbook has been revised 2007 by Karolinska Institutet Career Service (KICS), a career service for researchers and postgraduate students. For more information, visit <http://ki.se/careerservice>

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Definition of a postdoc at Karolinska Institutet

Karolinska Institutet defines a postdoc as an individual who holds a PhD awarded within the last five years, possesses a source of funding or is financed by a department at Karolinska Institutet, and is being mentored by faculty for advanced training and skills development.

In exceptional cases, this five-year period can be extended by one year owing to circumstances such as parental leave, internship, illness or military service.

All postdocs at Karolinska Institutet, defined as above, are to be centrally registered. A registration form can be found at <http://ki.se/careerservice>

Welcome

to Karolinska Institutet. I trust this will be a most exciting time full of professional and social opportunities for you, and I hope that you will take advantage of the vast range of excellent research opportunities Karolinska Institutet and the neighbouring Karolinska University Hospital have to offer.

*Harriet Wallberg-Henriksson,
President*

Postdoctoral studies

at Karolinska Institutet are intended to give you the opportunity to develop skills and independence through advanced training and supervisor mentorship. This handbook has been written to facilitate your postdoctoral studies at KI and we hope that you will find it helpful during your stay here.

Karolinska Institutet Career Service (KICS) is a career development service for researchers at Karolinska Institutet, including postdocs, and will be at your service during your time at KI. Karolinska Institutet Career Service belongs to the Career and Recruitment Unit. Our aims are to help you make your time here productive and rewarding, and to give you the tools you need to establish a stable foundation for your future career. We hope that you will benefit from the services provided and will not hesitate to contact us with questions or suggestions.

*Anna Rennermalm, Postdoc Coordinator
Johanna Bäckström, Head of division*

Advice for Your Postdoctoral Studies

The first part of the handbook is a compilation of the advice and experiences of senior researchers and professors at Karolinska Institutet, and has been produced to give you the best support possible in your postdoc studies and future career.

... make sure that after the first weeks you're not only geo-graphically oriented, - but also socially ...

What to consider when joining a new group

Each research group and research institute has its own culture that is subtle and often baffling. When joining a new group, it is worthwhile taking your time to meet people, and by this we mean those in the neighbouring groups as well as your new colleagues. Learn what they are doing, and their expertise. Are there lunch seminars that you can attend? What meetings are relevant to you?

When arriving at Karolinska Institutet from another country, you might find yourself lost in the Swedish legislative and healthcare systems. Don't worry: the International Desk at KI might have the information you need and the KI Intranet, intra.ki.se can help you too. Other postdocs in your own or neighbouring groups might also be able to give you valuable tips on how to navigate Swedish society.

"KI's laboratory facilities are amazing compared to anywhere I've been"

*Dr. Ashley Miller,
Postdoc at KI*

Early in the transition process it is advisable to discuss practical matters, like how much space you will be allocated for your work and what equipment will need to be bought for your project. Think about what material resources you will need for your project: maybe a special centrifuge? Specific software? Discuss in advance with your group leader what you need to ease the transition into your new group.

You will also have to learn certain procedures, such as those for purchasing and chemical waste disposal. Some useful tips can be found by following the links presented at the back cover.

... remember that as a postdoc, it is your responsibility to ask for the support you need ...

Mentoring and being mentored

As a postdoctoral fellow you will be honing your practical and professional skills. The postdoctoral years are also intended to prepare you for a future career as an independent group leader. Your supervisor will be your primary advisor, and you might have the opportunity to supervise an undergraduate or postgraduate student yourself. As the need for support is very individual, the supervisor-postdoc agreement might be a useful tool to help you define your expectations before you start. You can find a possible agreement template at <http://ki.se/careerservice>.

Support is given in various ways, and one of the first things you should do is to specify your expectations for areas such as economic support, material support, personal support and career guidance. It could also prove valuable to extend your network and look for additional mentorship outside your lab. The mentor is then meant to be a complement to ongoing daily support, in the sense that he or she has no direct management responsibility over you. The mentor can help you assess employment opportunities and deal with social and cultural issues.

”No one is as capable in our lab as our postdocs!”
Prof. Hans-Gustaf Ljunggren

As a postdoc, you are a valuable technical and scientific asset to your group. In preparing for a future career as a group leader you might want to extend your supervising skills, and acting as an annotated assistant supervisor will earn you official credit for the lab supervision you do. However, to facilitate your shared supervision it is worth entering into an explicit agreement with the student’s main supervisor. It is also good to discuss the extent to which you want to guide the student and how much of the student’s time can be allocated to your project before you start, and to define your respective roles in mentoring the student.

”Constantly expose yourself to critique from

- yourself
- senior colleagues
- grant assessors

and after your postdoc studies you will have a fair idea of where you are going”
Prof. Francesca Chiodi

”The most important exercise for a postdoc is to write grant proposals”
Prof. Gerald DiBona

Goals and management

The following text has been written by the career counsellor at the Junior Faculty.

Where are you going?

And why?

In order to excel in your research career, it is important to set goals, long-term and short-term. The goals should not just be scientific, but also related to your personal development. The long-term goals are important in identifying the skills and tools you will need to acquire for your future career and the short-term goals are indicators of your individual development. Tools for designing an Individual Development Plan (IDP) are available at <http://opa.faseb.org/pdf/idp.pdf>. You should seek assistance with the assessment and evaluation of your IDP from your mentor or supervisor. Your goals might very well change over time, but still you need to work out where you are heading in order to gather the competence necessary to move up the career ladder.

Engagement in academic administration and teaching are important assignments for anyone opting for an academic career. The sooner you start, the better off you will be. Networking within the university as well as with the scientific community is essential for any career choice. An important network is the one including your peers, as the other postdocs will be accompanying you on your career path, where they can make good collaboration partners and provide great support in the years to come.

Specialise within your field and make sure that you use this time to learn advanced techniques. It is now that you should establish and develop your professional profile.

... a high quality study includes

- a relevant question
- extensive and advanced technology
- significant and conclusive results
- ...

"If you aim for excellence early in your work, you are more likely to achieve your goals."

Prof. Hans-Gustaf Ljunggren

"The needs of the project decide when to collaborate"

Prof. Karl Tryggvason

Getting published

The following text is based on the article "Getting Your Paper Into a High Impact Journal" by Stephen Simpson (4 April 2003 <http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org>).

For a future academic career, you will need a good balance of quantity and quality, and it is advisable to let colleagues read and suggest suitable journals. Some journals consider pre-inquiries, where the editor might offer feedback on whether your study might be of interest to the journal. Even when planning your project you should be thinking about the publication potential of your study. You might want to augment your project with new techniques, or invite colleagues with complementary expertise to join you.

When considering publication in a journal with a wider readership, you might want to include a colleague in an unrelated speciality in your review group. When writing your manuscript, always keep your reader in mind, and do not forget to express why your study offers a major advance in science. However, do not over-estimate the novelty of your data and moderate the language when interpreting your data. Follow the journal's instruction for authors and be careful to separate Methods, Results and Discussion.

You can find the full article from Stephen Simpson, the Associate Editor at *Science*, on the Science Nextwave website (<http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org>) along with a "Checklist for Writing the Publishable Paper", containing additional advice.

Collaborations

Collaborations can provide your study with the expertise you need and may also prove useful when you establish yourself in a new lab. Having an ongoing collaboration might ensure a steady publication rate, even when you are between positions. When

”The general willingness and ability in Sweden to collaborate are tremendous and the international advantage of these characteristics should not be under-estimated”
Prof. Hans-Gustaf Ljunggren

identifying valuable collaboration partners, carefully consider what talent and resources you lack and who would best supply it. If it is a long-term collaboration, be flexible for the advantages might well lie in the long-term perspective. Discuss, or even write an agreement on your financial and practical responsibilities such as project costs and authorship. Make sure that you look for collaborators close to you before you go searching elsewhere. The closer they are to you, the more efficient the work is likely to be.

A large proportion of the employees at KI are active at Karolinska University Hospital and are valuable collaboration partners when closer contacts with clinical research are warranted.

Applications and how to obtain grants

Grants Office supports researchers at KI by helping them to apply for external funding of projects. The Grants Office provides information on possible sources of research funding, and advice and assistance for producing a successful and competitive application. In addition, KI has a subscription to ResearchResearch, a funding opportunity database and alert service for researchers. ResearchResearch also provides tips for writing a successful grant proposal. You can apply for research grants and travel grants from KI at <http://fonder.ki.se>. Applications are evaluated on the basis of the originality and quality of project plans and previous publications.

...teachers, researchers and postgraduate students at KI own the proprietary rights to their research results and inventions...

Intellectual Property Rights

The following text is taken from enterprise.ki.se, which contains a description of KI's innovation system. Teachers, researchers and postgraduate students at KI own the proprietary rights to their research results and inventions by virtue of what's known as the Teacher's Exemption. If your invention is based on your academic research at KI, the Teacher's Exemption means that you and your co-inventors own the rights to it. If your invention is the product of the joint efforts of several

research scientists, then a number of people might own the rights to it. The principle for research-based inventions is that an invention is owned by all who have contributed intellectually to its development. "Contributed intellectually" means that they have added either something other than pure routine work or some critical element of the innovation, without which it could not have been developed.

... the research behind an invention is often conducted as a joint project, which means that several people may own the rights to one and the same idea ...

The situation surrounding the identity of the inventor(s) is generally unique from case to case, and needs to be discussed amongst those who have taken part in the development process. There are, however, no general principles stipulating that a professor, supervisor or postgraduate student automatically owns the proprietary rights to inventions based on research conducted in collaboration with others. Proprietary rights to research results and inventions can, however, be transferred by contract or agreement.

Collaboration with industry and the commercialisation of research results are made much easier if the situation concerning the ownership of results and inventions is clarified as early as possible. Karolinska Institutet Innovations AB can professionally evaluate any project researchers choose to discuss and estimate an innovation's commercial possibilities. This disclosure is confidential.

Do you have an idea?

Do you have an idea of how your research data could be developed into new applications? Has your research led to an innovative product that you would like to patent? Are you interested in starting a company on your new business concept?

If so, contact Karolinska Institutet Innovations AB (<http://www.karolinskainnovations.ki.se/>)

Postdoc Resources at Karolinska Institutet

Courses

There is a variety of courses available to KI researchers. Information about courses available can be found at intra.ki.se/staff. The Department of Learning, Information, Management and Ethics also offers teacher training courses.

Karolinska Institutet Career Service

Karolinska Institutet Career Service assists researchers at KI. The objective is to provide tools for successful careers for researchers and teachers.

Karolinska Institutet Career Service is a service for researchers who wants to pursue a career within the academia as well as for those who wants to make the break into private enterprise or an alternative career. Karolinska Institutet Career Service offers career workshops with inspiring speakers from academia or industry, courses in career planning, CV-writing, interview-techniques, scientific writing, grant writing, mentoring support, networking facilities and more.

Karolinska Institutet Career Service publishes a Career Service newsletter with hot news and information about upcoming career-related events. Sign up to receive the newsletter at <http://ki.se/careerservice>. You are also welcome to send in suggestions of activities you would like Karolinska Institutet Career Service to organise.

Visiting research service

The Visting research service at Karolinska Institutet is a support service that can help you with general

inquiries regarding your stay in Sweden and social security. You can contact them at: internationaldesk@admin.ki.se. The visiting research service website also contains useful information and tips for visitors to KI. You'll find the website at <http://ki.se/vrs>.

The Library

Karolinska Institutet University Library (KIB) is the largest medical library in Sweden, and a national resource library for medicine, including dental science, nursing science and healthcare. You can find information about opening hours, access databases and download electronic copies of journals on the library website.

Health Promotion

As an employee of Karolinska Institutet you are entitled to one hour's paid health and fitness session each week. Health Promotion at KI offers access to lectures, individual guidance, events, courses and discounts on training equipment and venues. As a postdoc, you are entitled to discount at Friskis&Svettis Campus Solna.

Core Facilities

KI Core Facilities (CF) is an umbrella term for the service laboratories, resources and centres of excellence whose activities are coordinated, supervised and partly financed by the Board of Research and operated in collaboration with the local committees for Research and Education of the associated hospitals. Access to CF is open to all researchers at KI. Service Laboratories and Resources operate on a fee-per-service basis, while the centres of excellence aim to disseminate specific technologies and know-how through collaborations. Go to ki.se/corefacility for more information.

Rules and Regulations at Karolinska Institutet

Registration

All postdocs at Karolinska Institutet are to be centrally registered. A registration form can be downloaded from <http://ki.se/careerservice>. Once you have completed it, print it out, have it signed by your supervisor and the Head of Department, sign it yourself, and send it to the recipient listed on the form.

Please note that this registration does not replace scholarship agreements or employment agreements.

Diploma

After you have completed your postdoctoral studies, you will be awarded a diploma, provided that at least 50% of your study time was taken up with research conducted independently of your PhD supervisor and lasting between one and three years. An application form can be downloaded from <http://ki.se/careerservice>.

Agreements

Karolinska Institutet strongly recommends postdocs to sign an agreement with their supervisor regarding the estimated duration of the project, allocated resources and expected teaching hours. A template for a postdoc-supervisor agreement can be downloa-

Employment rules and regulations

Detailed information regarding your employment at Karolinska Institutet is available in both Swedish and English at intra.ki.se.

Ethical guidelines

Everyone associated with Karolinska Institutet is expected to comply with KI's ethical guidelines and common values for how we relate to each other and the outside world. Guidelines for planning, conducting and documenting experimental research, along with guidelines on publication ethics, can be found at http://intra.ki.se/organization/committees/Ethical_Committee/index_en.html

Scholarships

A scholarship for the pursuit of postdoc studies may be awarded to a foreign citizen who has obtained a doctorate or the equivalent outside Sweden. The head of the department decides whether the academic and scientific qualifications in question can be regarded as equivalent to at least those of a Swedish doctorate. A scholarship for the pursuit of postdoc studies may be awarded for up to two years in the five years following the public defence (or equivalent) of a doctoral thesis.



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ded from <http://ki.se/careerservice>. For information regarding intellectual property issues, contact the legal advisers at Karolinska Institutet.

Useful Links

Karolinska Institutet Career Service	ki.se/careerservice
Website for employees at KI	intra.ki.se
Grants Office at KI	http://intra.ki.se/finances/funding/grants_office_se.html
Research grants at KI	fonder.ki.se
Library at KI	http://ki.se/ub
Dept. of Learning, Informatics, Management & Ethics	lime.ki.se
Core facilities at KI	ki.se/corefacilities
Ethical guidelines at KI	http://intra.ki.se/organization/committees/Ethical_Committee/index_en.html
Karolinska Innovations	ki.se/innovatios
FASEB individual plan for Postdocs	http://opa.faseb.org/pdf/idp.pdf
ResearchResearch website	www.researchresearch.com
EU career portal for researchers	http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/index_en.cfm

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