

## 216. Research Communication in a Young University: Cooperation between the University Library and the Information Office

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**Abstract.** This paper describes the role of the university and the information office at one of Sweden's young universities. How can the university library and the information office cooperate to support and communicate the research activities? Examples of cooperation are given and new ideas presented.

**Keywords:** Research communication, Shift lectures, Library as a village, Research hub, Research gallery, Research slam sessions

### Introduction

Malmö University is very young and has had a strong student focus since it started in 1998. In recent years the research focus at the university has become bigger. Parallel to this, the national governmental research funding has gone through a transition process from broad general funding towards more specific and profiled funding.

These changes have encouraged Malmö University to take a serious and close look at its research activities. Some of the principal parameters measuring research activities are the number of scientific, peer-reviewed articles and citations, and the university's ability and willingness to share and spread research results to the public.

### Research Profile Malmö University

Research and postgraduate education is carried out throughout the whole University, often as partnerships between different fields. The strategy of research at Malmö University is collected in eight profiles, some of them multi-disciplinary:

- New Media
- Migration
- Urban Studies
- Sports in Transition
- Science of Education
- Oral Health
- Biological Interfaces
- Health and Social Conditions in Terms of a Life Cycle

### Malmö University's Multi-Disciplinary Research Institutes

- Biofilms–Research Centre for Biointerfaces
- Research by Profession
- Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare
- Centre for Applied Worklife Science
- MEDEA Collaborative Media Initiative

### Short Facts about Research at Malmö University (2009)

- Turnover: 28,5 million \$/year
- 65 full professors
- 218 PHD-students
- 238 articles in peer-reviewed international journals

**Film:** <http://vimeo.com/15022964>

The role of the University Library and the Information Office

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The key role for a University Library and for an Information Office is – of course – to support and serve the core activities of education and research. Any university library and any information office must reflect the university in which they operate.

How do we—the University Library and the Information Office—reflect Malmö University, a 12-year old hybrid university in Sweden’s third largest city?

### **The Library as a Village**

The university library is open to the public and quite a few citizens of Malmö are registered as users of the library and have acquired a library card.

Malmö University Library has for several years worked within the frame “The Library as a Village”.

Every village has exhibition areas, advertising pillars, billboards, open lectures with comfortable seating facilities, squares, open areas, silent areas, noisy areas, a school, a church, a café, a gallery, a graffiti wall, a playground, studios, trees, concerts, parties, receptions, dinners—and so does Malmö University Library.

Together with the Information Office at the university we try to get as much as possible out of the library. The space, the exhibition areas, the advertising pillars, the billboards and the open lectures – called Shift Lectures – all in order to spread and to share research at the university.

An example: Every month we have a public audience of appr 100-200 citizens listening to research findings and debates on current issues at open and renowned lectures in the library. The lectures are broadcast on our main webpage in real time – a very effective way to reach out.

### **The Research Hub**

Another interesting new feature at the university is The Research Hub. The Hub was created in a common project between the university library and the information office. It allows you to find descriptions of the university’s research and researchers at a glance in one location. Originally made for the media, it is also very useful for anyone interested in finding out more about research at the university. The hub automatically gathers data from the Staff registry, from the Institutional Repository MUEP (Malmö University Electronic Publishing), from the description of research programmes and profiles, and from social networks like Twitter and Facebook if wanted.

*Coming up <http://forskarnav.mah.se>*

In the pipeline we have several ideas on how to develop our cooperation and the library as a village concept. Some of these ideas we are working with right now, some of them will be realised soon. The sky is the limit!

- Monitor and photos (portraits) at the entrance of the library, exposing Malmö University’s research profiles. The descriptions of the profiles is made by the Information Department and these descriptions may alternate with an RSS-flow from our institutional repository currently showing the most recent theses
- Establishing a “Research Gallery” equipped with monitors, headsets, poster area and projectors to present current research and results and combine it with small presentations by the researchers themselves
- Research Slam sessions. Inspired by Poetry Slam, at Research Slam sessions the researchers are asked to make their own free interpretation of a topic, and the audience puts their vote to the best performance
- Cooperating with the Information Office and the regional TV channel, offering the library as an arena for TV spots and interviews about current research at the university
- Together with the Information Department establishing a mobile hotspot Xpo Malmö University. The hotspot makes it easy to move the research communication out of the university buildings

We are happy to receive your input and comments on our ideas about the library as a village and the cooperation between the University Library and the Information Office. Please don’t hesitate to contact us.