

Administrator: The Board

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Membership of Scholars at Risk

Proposition 6

Draft decision

The Board proposes to SFS General Assembly

that SFS applies for membership of Scholars at Risk.

Covering letter

The student movement is international, transcending nations' borders. As an organisation, SFS believes that the right to study is a human right, and that this right requires that individuals can live freely, without the risk of oppression and war. As with many previous years, the 2020/21 financial year witnessed how repressive forces are threatening individuals' lives and futures. This financial year, we have seen a takeover in Afghanistan, repression of demonstrations in Belarus and the war in Ukraine. In previous financial years, we have seen demonstrations at the university in Hong Kong, researchers imprisoned in Iran and the closure of the Central European University in Budapest.

As a symbolic position, the Board proposes that SFS joins Scholars at Risk, SAR, through Komit. The organisation, members of which include the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions and the European Students' Union, safeguards and promotes academic freedom and provides protection for academic staff and students who are under threat, persecuted or at risk of censure.

Every year, over one hundred researchers receive protection at higher education institutions in other countries. SFS joining Scholars at Risk is not a new discussion, but has arisen on previous occasions, particularly within Komit. A membership of Scholars at Risk is symbolic and contributes to strengthening SFS's legitimacy as well as solidarity in issues. Komit already interacts with SAR and a membership would consolidate that. The risk of increased workload for the Presidium is negligible, and any participation can be delegated within, for example, the Secretariat.

The organisation's membership fee is voluntary, though there is a recommendation of USD 5,000 per annum. Given that SFS's participation is primarily symbolic and that the proposal has been presented at a late stage in the process for SFSFUM 2022, the Board proposes that no fee is paid during the 2022/23 financial year. In addition, it is recommended that the fee remains at a low amount for subsequent financial years.

For further information about the organisation in question, refer to [Scholars at Risk's website](#).