



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

# **RESEARCH STRATEGY**

## **Politics of Gendered Exclusion and Inequality in a Global World**

*Cutting-Edge and Relevant Research*

**Department of Gender Studies/  
Genusvetenskapliga institutionen  
Lund University  
Sweden**

**Fall 2013**

## RESEARCH STRATEGY

### Politics of Gendered Exclusion and Inequality in a Global World

#### **This Document**

This document outlines *first*, the Department's research profile which it will strengthen, and *second*, the Department's research infrastructure which provides a framework for the conduction and assessment of the Department's research.

#### **RESEARCH STRATEGY: STRENGTHENING RESEARCH**

##### **Interdisciplinary Research**

The Department of Gender Studies at Lund University is situated within the social sciences and thus exceptional in the national gender studies landscape where gender studies tend to fall under the arts and humanities. As a social science studies unit, the Department of Gender Studies has played a critical role in moving the study of gender from the margin of social science research at Lund University to its fore. Within the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Department has become a meeting place, a cross-road, for gender and feminist research.

As the locus of interdisciplinary gender scholarship, the Department attracts scholars with a wide range of backgrounds including anthropology, cultural studies, development studies, family and child studies, education, history, medicine, political science, science and technology studies, sociology as well as area studies. By embracing, and allowing for, multiple research traditions, the Department avoids ideas about a united feminist view, or standpoint, and thus fertilizes a broad research horizon.

The Department is keen on bridging between academic research and society at large. The dynamic research community at the Department is created in dialogue with national and international partnerships including academic departments and scholars, governmental bodies, and civil society movements, agencies, and organizations.

##### **Research in/on a Globalized World**

The Department is not only interdisciplinary in scope but also global. In a postcolonial and increasingly global world, the local is shaped on a backdrop of transnational policies and economies. A global perspective on gender provides a key to understand conflicts, wars and their aftermath, risk, migration, sexualities (LGBTIQ), masculinities, femininities, identities, employment, exploitation, development, education, health, representation, media, and history.



The Department engages with scholars from well-known universities across the globe. In providing a platform for exchange of intellectual views, analyses, methods, and pedagogies, the Department is committed to co-construct knowledge with colleagues across the globe (e.g. through the Linnaeus-Palme Program). In collaboration with scholars from the Global North and the Global South, the Department studies how flows in goods, money, knowledge, and people constitute power relations, hierarchies, violences, insecurities, vulnerabilities, and visions for change in particular locations.

### **Research on Politics of Gendered Exclusion and Inequality**

The Department is distinct in its rigorous interdisciplinary commitment to provide a substantial critique of politics of gendered exclusion and inequalities in a global and postcolonial world. Research at the Department focuses on the ways in which gender relations are shaped through intersections with other relations of power such as sexuality, ethnicity/race, ages, class, and body abilities and how these power relations foster exclusion and inequality.

Politics of gendered exclusion and inequality are experienced in the most intimate as well as the most public spheres, in terms of distribution of goods and recognition/misrecognition. These politics are explored at the Department by situating postcolonial, queer, “crip”, antiracist, and transnational feminisms in contemporary and historical sites across the globe of peace, war, conflict, and post-conflict.

Departmental research offers critical knowledge about the junction between the discursive and material dimensions of exclusive, uneven, and transformative politics in Sweden and societies as different as Argentina, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Denmark, India, Italy, Iraqi Kurdistan, South Africa, Taiwan, Turkey, USA, and Vietnam.

The Department thus provides cutting-edge gender research of relevance for society at large.

### **Knowledge Production and Research Methods**

The ways in which knowledge is produced and generate markers of categorization in regard to gender, sexuality, ethnicity/race, body abilities, and class and how they are perpetuated in political discourses and interventions are central to the Department’s research. Taking such insights into account, scholars in gender studies are vigilant concerning the ways in which they themselves produce/use knowledge.

Research at the Department generally draws on data acquired through the use of an ethnographic method (broadly defined). The method is applied to capture complexities, ambiguities, and nuances of importance for the study of the distribution of power and production of injustice. A series of techniques including observations, interviews, focus group discussions, narratives, testimonies, and questionnaires are used.

Yet, statistical overviews, genealogical archive studies as well as discourse analysis of texts and documents also are embraced by the Department’s ethnographically inspired method. Data gathered by the aid of cross-disciplinary feminist ethnographies provides a window for understanding how politics of gendered exclusion and inequalities are experienced in daily life by people living in the world’s remote villages, burgeoning cities, or in the spaces in-between.

## RESEARCH STRATEGY: STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE

### Impact of Research

The Department will take further into account the impact goals suggested by the European Union (i.e. Responsible Research and Innovation).<sup>1</sup> In amplifying the responsible and original dimensions of its research, the Department will pay special attention to societal needs as rendered meaningful for groups who are particularly susceptible to being subjected to the consequences of politics of gendered exclusion and inequalities. The Department will also in the future produce excellent research, and fortify its research impact further, by dedicating itself to:

- Identify and analyze politics of gendered exclusion and inequalities in a global world.
- Suggest socio-political and economic solutions for increased inclusion and equality.
- Facilitate the translation of suggested solutions into policies of transformation.
- Support the implementation of policies of transformation.
- Create public awareness of complex societal problems and phenomena.

### The Receiving End

The Department would even in the future be committed to produce responsible research for various agencies and bodies across the globe. As part of the Department's research strategy it will intensify its collaboration with the receiving end of its research, thus embracing:

- ✓ The public sector; education, health, etc. (local, national, international).
- ✓ Governmental bodies and agencies (local, national, international).
- ✓ International, bilateral, and non-governmental organizations (local/global).
- ✓ Civil society movements, organizations, and activists (local/global).
- ✓ Professional and practitioner groups (local, national, international).
- ✓ Media (local/global).

### Publishing Research Findings

Through their publications and commitment as referees for and/or editors of international and national journals and presses, scholars at the Department are engaged in vivid dialogue with other gender research environments in the Global North and the Global South. In this way, the Department takes active part in demarcating the research frontier of gender studies. Enriched with many students, the Department is challenged to balance teaching obligations with the undertaking of outstanding research. Yet, the Department has a strong record of publications covering:

- Articles in well-reputed and high-ranked international peer-reviewed journals and presses.
- Articles in national refereed journals and presses.
- Policy documents (national, international, transnational).
- Documents for relevant civil society organizations (national, international, transnational).
- Texts in media and popular science journals (national, international, transnational).

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<sup>1</sup> Directorate-General for Research and Innovation Science in Society (EUR25766 EN). 2013. *Options for Strengthening Responsible Research and Innovation: Report of the Expert Group on the State of Art in Europe on Responsible Research and Innovation.*



## Funding of Research

The Department is devoted to generate external funding for its unique, responsible, and relevant research on the politics of gendered exclusion and inequalities. The Department has an excellent record as regards attracting funding for its research from various sources including the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS; now *Forte*), The Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences (*Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*), Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), Swedish National Research Council (*Vetenskapsrådet*; VR), and other granting bodies such as the Embassy of Sweden in Vietnam and private foundations (i.e. “stiftelser”).

Together with faculties at Lund University as well as academic Departments in Sweden, the Global North, and the Global South, new research projects continuously are being developed at the Department. Scholars employed by the Department holding a Ph.D. are expected to apply for funding on a regular basis. Additionally, the Department’s professors and associate professors (i.e. “docenter”) hold particular responsibility for designing research projects which take junior colleagues on board (i.e. doctoral students and post-doctoral scholars). By generating funding not only for already employed staff but also for new recruitments, the Department envisions a significant expansion in the number of junior scholars and visiting professors.

## Human Resources Development

As a relatively small Department, already in 2010 the Department decided to begin implementing a recruitment plan which gives special priority to the employment of scholars in the beginning of their academic career. However, visiting professors will be welcomed as a critical source for the bolstering of Departmental research.

### 1. Post-Doctoral Research Fellows

Post-doctoral scholars have proven to be a particularly enriching source for the Department’s research environment. The Department wishes to continue its highly successful strategy of obtaining funding for post-doctoral scholars from Sweden and abroad in order to employ more post-doctoral research fellows or tenured lectures (i.e. “biträdande lektorer”). So far funding for post-doctoral research fellows has been provided by the Erasmus Mundus Mobility Program, Faculty of Social Sciences, LU, Marie Curie Program, Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS; now *Forte*), The Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences (*Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*), Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), and Swedish National Research Council (*Vetenskapsrådet*; VR).

### 2. Doctoral Students

Doctoral students are vital for the Department’s research environment, and ultimately for its future. The Department, therefore, is eager to obtain funding for the recruitment of doctoral students. Funding for doctoral students until now has been provided by the Faculty of Social Sciences, LU and by external sources such as the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS; now *Forte*), Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), and Swedish National Research Council (*Vetenskapsrådet*; VR). In order to more promptly enlarge its petite group of doctoral students, the Department aims at becoming a national platform for doctoral research on gender by offering its Ph.D. course *Gendering the Classics* broadly to students at Swedish universities. In this regard, the Department even envisions collaboration with gender studies departments/centers in other Nordic countries.



### 3. Visiting Professors

Even though the Department gives special priority in its recruitment strategy to junior scholars, also in the future the Department would be keen on attracting visiting professors. Over the years, the Department's many visiting professors have inspired and energized the Department's research environment tremendously. The Department thus is committed to search for funding for visiting professors. Until now, visiting professors have been funded by the Erasmus Mundus Mobility Program, Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS; now Forte), and Swedish National Research Council (*Vetenskapsrådet*; VR).

### Research Forums

The multi-faceted academic qualities brought to the Department meet, enrich, and challenge one another in various research forums including:

#### 1. Research Seminars at the Department

The Department's seminar series is meant to be the hearth of the department's research community. The seminar series intends to create a forum for exchange of ideas for invited scholars and not least for the Department's academic staff. The Department is determined to invigorate the research seminars as a space for scholarly creativity, solidarity, and intellectual stimulation.

#### 2. Research Forums Organized by and at the Department

The Department organizes and hosts three high-profiled, interdisciplinary, and cross-faculty research forums, namely the *Critical Disability Studies Seminars*, *The Global Gender Matters Network*, and *The Queer Seminars*.

#### 3. Research Forums Co-organized by the Department

The Department co-organizes a number of distinct research forums that transgress borders of institutes, faculties, and universities. These forums are located elsewhere and include (in alphabetical order) the *Civil Society Network* (with the School of Social Work and the Faculty of Social Sciences, LU), *Gendering Asia Network* (with the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Denmark), *Nordic Southeast Asian Network* (with the Center for East and Southeast Asian Studies, LU and Copenhagen University and DIGNITY, Denmark), *Nordiska nettverket for humanistisk forskning om kjønn og migrasjon* (with the Norwegian Research Council), *The Social Science and Technology Initiative* (with the Pufendorf Institute, LU), and *Öresundsnetverket för genushistorisk forskning* (with the Department of History, LU).

### Evaluation of Research

As any Department, also the Department of Gender Studies operates in the context of a global market which is flooded with rankings and comparisons of qualities. The information is used as benchmarks for institutions and universities in a highly competitive international knowledge production sector. In this light, Lund University increasingly expects faculties and departments to set up internal systems to evaluate scholarly performance and quality at the individual and institutional level.



Taking such tendencies into account, the Department aims at evaluating its research annually. The Department would do so by establishing an evaluation group which will consist of a number of external advisors and the Department's most senior staff (i.e. full professors). Once a year, the evaluation group would consider the status of the research environment at the Department and the ways through which the research milieu could be improved. The group also would assess the research produced at the Department. Criteria for the evaluation of qualitative research, as conducted at the Department of Gender Studies could include parameters such as:<sup>2</sup>

(1) originality; (2) significance; (3) contribution; (4) rigor; and (5) credibility.

The goals defined in this research strategy document (i.e. Fall 2013) also would be considered by the evaluation group. Evaluation of the research produced at the Department and the conditions under which it is carried out will be used as a means to encourage the active participation of the Department's scholars in nurturing an excellent feminist research environment which, also in the future, will produce cutting-edge and relevant research on the politics of gendered exclusion and inequality in a global, postcolonial world.

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<sup>2</sup> See Northcote, Maria T. 2012. "Selecting Criteria to Evaluate Qualitative Research". *Education Papers and Journal Articles* (38). See also Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). 2014. "Research Excellence Framework; REF".