



Swedish Information Systems Academy

Recommendation regarding tenure and promotion in the information systems/informatics discipline in Sweden

Recruiting, developing, supporting, and retaining outstanding faculty in the discipline is a shared responsibility of all Swedish Information Systems/Informatics departments. There is a great need for guidelines that can facilitate efforts to hire and promote such faculty in the discipline. It is probably infeasible to establish detailed instructions for tenure appointments across the many academic units at a university. Although the fundamental criteria are clear – excellence in carrying out the responsibilities of the position – the requirements and standards evolve.

The responsibilities of a faculty member include teaching, research, outreach and other scholarly achievements. Research is a fundamental responsibility of faculty at all levels and constitutes the foundation for all other activities. Faculty members demonstrate their scholarly contributions through products such as books, articles, chapters, design artifacts, and other output evaluated by peers.

It is neither desirable nor possible to define an abstract and universal standard of measurement for tenure and promotion across departments and universities. Each case must be examined in detail by expert evaluators, by delineating particular strengths, and by acknowledging limitations or weaknesses. However, it is possible for the information systems/informatics discipline in Sweden to distinguish two complementary paths for publishing. These two paths represent our ambition to promote (a) high-quality publications, and (b) publications that help build our identity and thus facilitate “disciplinary congruence” (a term borrowed from the criteria for the Börje Langefors Award). It is in the interest of SISA to support high-quality research that displays and help build a strong sense of disciplinary belonging.

Regarding (a), there are differing opinions as to what constitutes a quality outlet, and many different rankings exist. Importantly, as the information systems/informatics

discipline has grown in importance, many journals traditionally seen as outside its core has become targets for our faculty. It is important to embrace such diversity, which can help increase our discipline's impact on other fields. Several Swedish universities have adopted the Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Series and Publishers as a benchmark (the NSD List, for short). There is also a Nordic collaboration, which includes VR, that aims to build on the NSD List to create a joint Nordic List. Thus, from a national point of view, it seems obvious to promote publication channels that have a Scientific Level of 2 in the NSD List (the highest level). Another factor to consider, however, is the Thompson Reuters' Journal Impact Factor, which is often used as a proxy for outlet quality.

Regarding (b), there is increasing consensus internationally that the AIS Senior Scholars' basket of 8 journals is important to our field. The journals currently in the list are, in alphabetical order: *European Journal of Information Systems*, *Information Systems Journal*, *Information Systems Research*, *Journal of the AIS*, *Journal of Information Technology*, *Journal of MIS*, *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, and *MIS Quarterly*. In a recent study performed by the AIS, 975 IS scholars (worldwide) responded to a survey on how they perceived the value of the Basket of Eight. 62% thought the basket had a positive impact on our field, only 21% thought it had had a negative impact. There were no significant differences among regions of the world. Thus, publishing in the AIS Basket of Eight contributes to disciplinary congruence.

With this backdrop, SISA recommends its members to encourage publication in:

- (a) Journals at Level 2 in the NSD List with an Impact Factor of at least 1.0.
- (b) Journals in the AIS Senior Scholars' Basket of Eight.

The recommendation is for the benefit and guidance of our current faculty, junior colleagues (PhD students and postdocs), and prospective job applicants for positions at all levels. With that in mind, the recommendation is aiming not only to help expert evaluators in their job, but also to steer all current faculty, junior colleagues and prospective job applicants towards publishing patterns in concert with national and international standards.