



Subject area: Communication and media

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Annex to: Vice-chancellor's decision from 16 June 2014, Section 131/14.

SLU COMMUNICATION POLICY

SLU's vision is to be a world-leading university within life and environmental sciences. The vision will be met by developing knowledge of natural resources and the sustainable use and management of these.

1. Introduction

Communication is an important tool for the university to meet its objectives and vision. Communication and collaboration with society and interested parties is characteristic of SLU's operations. It is a prerequisite for the university's ability to attract research funding as well as recruit researchers and other staff, doctoral students and students. Communication should also portray the university as a successful research partner and creative collaboration partner.

Within each context, SLU should be viewed as an innovative, professional and research-intensive university with high-quality education and environmental monitoring and assessment (EMA). The fact that the university consists of several sites is a competitive advantage. Our special skills profile and regional presence should be utilised when the university communicates externally.

External communication measures should be preceded by internal communication as much as possible. Communication operations should also pay regard to the need for international marketing and dialogues.

1.1 Communication operations are characterised by the following key words:

- Factual. SLU information must be scientifically founded, correct and nuanced.
- Credible. Information must be of high quality. It must also be possible to review the information.

- Available. Information measures must be characterised by sensitivity in regard to the outside world and its needs.
- Current. Through competitive intelligence, SLU must identify and react to needs for information.
- Qualitative. Communication measures must be efficient, utilise the most context-appropriate channels and be adjusted to the needs of the target groups.
- Responsible. As an expert authority, SLU is particularly responsible to supply information from its fields of expertise. SLU must also be characterised by transparency and openness.

2. Target groups:

Long-term, coordinated communication work requires clearly defined and prioritised target groups. The following target groups are especially important to SLU:

2.1 Employees and students

Motivated, committed and skilled employees and students are a condition for high-quality operations and activities. An open, internal dialogue promotes participation, collaboration and innovative thinking.

2.2 Future students

One of the university's most important tasks is reaching motivated young people who, after completing their SLU studies, bring new knowledge to society and businesses, or stay and revitalise research, teaching and EMA.

2.3 Alumni

Contact with previous students is valuable for e.g. education, but also to get input on the state of the world in regard to important issues and research domains.

2.4 Funding bodies

Research is increasingly funded through grants, and competition for these grants can be national as well as international. Clarifying research needs and SLU's participation in successful research therefore has high priority when contacting potential research funding bodies.

2.5 International collaboration partners and universities

International exchanges are important prerequisites to develop our operations. In order to ensure global relevance in regard to research and education, SLU wants to

strengthen collaboration with high-class universities as well as with universities and research networks in developing countries.

2.6 Business and public authorities

SLU operations concern the large societal issues. It is important to spread new knowledge and use it in business and social decision-making. Businesses and public bodies should know about SLU and request our expert knowledge and students.

2.7 Media

Journalists are an important target group, and media is a prioritised channel when reaching out to the public and other target groups. The media requires high availability and service in order to e.g. contact experts and access new scientific discoveries.

3. Responsibilities

SLU has delegated communication responsibilities. Each individual and unit is part of our communication work.

- All **managers** are responsible to ensure that external and internal communication work in their operations. This is clarified in the policy for manager assignments (only available in Swedish).
- All **employees and students** are responsible to search for information (necessary to their work) and to communicate conditions important to operations to their colleagues and managers.
- All **researchers** are responsible for communicating their research.
- All **citizens** have the right to freely express their opinions on various issues. However, those who are authorised to express SLU's views are responsible for representing the university.
- The **head of communications** has an overall responsibility to coordinate communication operations within SLU in accordance with the policy and within the established frameworks. The responsibilities include:
 - Profiling and brand management.
 - Coordinating university-wide communication efforts relating to e.g. student recruitment and contact with the media.
 - Advising and supporting various units.
 - Developing and evaluating information channels and initiatives.
 - Developing the university's web platform.

Faculty communication officers are responsible to ensure that regional and faculty needs are met and coordinated with other communication operations.

4. Channels

SLU must communicate through the most context-efficient channels in relation to the needs of the target groups and the effort objective. The following channels are especially important to SLU:

- The web is the most important channel when reaching out to wide target groups, both domestically and internationally.
- Primarily, media channels that allow interactivity and dialogue must be used.
- Conversations and meetings are important internal communication forms.

5. Supplements and legal provisions

This communication policy is supplemented by the communication strategy and plans such as the university administration's annual operational plan. There are sometimes special guidelines and instructions for web and social media publication. In addition, communication operations at SLU include SLU-specific policies and decisions. Among these, the most important are the delegations of authority (they establish the managers' responsibilities), core values, staff and management values, environmental policy, sponsorship regulations, etc.

Some of the laws and ordinances that apply to communication operations at public authorities:

- The Instrument of Government and the Freedom of the Press Act regulate everyone's freedom of opinion, speech and information.
- The Administrative Procedure Act regulates service obligations towards citizens.
- The Higher Education Act states higher education institutions' and universities' responsibility to collaborate with society and to provide information on their operations.
- The Higher Education Ordinance regulates the right to information about education.
- The Language Act regulates the statuses of the Swedish language, national minority languages and sign language.