

Mandate of PhD Representatives at Fysikum

§1. Preamble

PhD representatives at Fysikum are elected to ensure that the interests and perspectives of doctoral candidates are meaningfully represented in the faculty and department's decision-making structures.

This mandate document seeks to clarify the scope of that responsibility, balancing democratic consultation with the practical realities of governance. It is intended to provide guidance to representatives, transparency to PhD students, and consistency in representation at departmental and faculty level.

This document is grounded in the outcomes of an open discussion within the PhD community (on 26 November 2025) and reflects a shared understanding that effective representation requires both consultation and informed judgment, exercised with accountability.

§2. Role of a PhD Representative

A PhD representative is an elected delegate entrusted to:

- Represent the collective interests, concerns, and perspectives of PhD students at Fysikum.
- Contribute constructively to decision-making processes in committees and boards.
- Act as a communication link between PhD students and governance bodies.

The representative is neither just a passive messenger nor an entirely independent actor. The role combines consultation, interpretation, and responsible judgment.

§3. Principles of Representation

PhD representatives shall be guided by the following principles:

- **Collective Interest:** Decisions, statements, and votes should primarily reflect the collective interests of PhD students rather than personal preferences.
- **Informed Judgment:** Representatives are expected to use their informed judgment when synthesizing diverse inputs, especially in complex or ambiguous matters.
- **Reasonable Autonomy with Accountability:** Representatives are granted reasonable autonomy to act, paired with a clear duty to report back and remain accountable to the PhD community.
- **Transparency:** The basis for positions taken, whether derived from consultation, prior policy, or informed judgment, should be communicated openly.

§4. Consultation

Representatives should make reasonable efforts to consult PhD students in their division(s). Consultation may take various forms, including:

- Division-level meetings
- Online surveys or polls
- Digital communication platforms (e.g., mailing lists, presidium's Email, Slack)

Consultation should be an ongoing process and not limited to biannual PhD Council meetings.

The extent of consultation should be proportional to the significance of the issue, its expected impact on PhD students, and the time available for decision-making.

Low-response consultations should not be treated as binding votes. Instead, they should be interpreted as indicators of sentiment, alongside contextual knowledge of the PhD community.

§5. Voting and Speaking on Behalf of PhD Students

When voting or speaking in committees, representatives should:

- Seek to align with previously expressed positions of the PhD Council or documented PhD input where available.
- Distinguish between established collective positions and personal judgment or interpretation when necessary.
- Avoid overstating mandates, particularly when consultation was limited.

§6. Urgent or Time-Sensitive Situations

In cases where decisions must be made rapidly (e.g., urgent university-level statements or policy responses):

- Representatives should attempt minimal but meaningful consultation where feasible (e.g., short online polls or rapid messages).
- If consultation is impractical or inconclusive, representatives may act based on their informed judgment.
- Such actions must be reported back to the PhD Council and/or PhD students at the earliest opportunity, with justification provided.

§7. Election and Accountability

Candidates for PhD representative positions are encouraged to clearly state their approach to representation during elections, including how they balance consultation and independent judgment.

§8. Reporting Back

Representatives are expected to report back regularly to the PhD Council through the Fysikum PhD Council board (either the presidium's Email: `presidium.phdcouncil@fysik.su.se` or the mailing list: `phdcouncil@fysik.su.se`) regarding discussions, decisions, and outcomes from committees and boards.

§9. Review and Amendment

This mandate should be considered a living document. It may be reviewed and amended by the PhD Council Board in consultation with the PhD Council at Fysikum as representation practices evolve or as required by changes at faculty or university level.

Version approved by the Fysikum PhD Council Board for review by the Fysikum PhD Council on 25 March 2026.

Signature page

This document has been electronically signed
using eduSign.

eduSign