

Letter of Intent: Mid Sweden University – a university in Saepmie

Introduction

It is Mid Sweden University's intention to develop research and education for Sami issues and in this way also strengthen the university's role as a university in the middle of a Sámi area and at the same time contribute to strengthening the position of the Southern Sámi community both in Sweden and in Saepmie.

An important point of departure is a clear distancing from the racist and objectifying research on the Sami that previously took place both in Sweden and the Nordic countries. A prerequisite is also that the activities conducted at the university, both research and education, which directly affect the Sami must be anchored or carried out in collaboration with the Sami community in such a way that the abuses of previous generations are not repeated.

Background in the region

Several processes to strengthen the Saami community are ongoing in the area where the university is located: In Östersund, the Saami Parliament building is planned, along with a Saami museum in the South Saami area. The regions' municipalities are requesting education in schools and care facilities with elements of Saami culture. Jämtland-Härjedalen and Västernorrland are traditional Saami land.

Mid Sweden University is located in the regions Jämtland-Härjedalen and Västernorrland. These county councils and eight of the municipalities situated here are part of the administrative area for the Saami languages. Therefore, the authorities have several obligations that require competence in Saami matters and languages. Mid Sweden University wants to be part of the authorities' competence provision.

What do we want to do?

Identify

In cooperation with Sámi organizations and municipal operations, we want to identify the role of Mid Sweden University in the Saami area and contribute to increased knowledge about and for the Saami society.

We also want to build skills that can function as an arena for contacts and a starting point for new projects.

Finally, we intend to take an active part in the international network of collaborations between indigenous peoples and universities that has emerged in recent decades.

Educate

We want to increase the knowledge of the Sámi society in the university's existing courses in order to strengthen the future competence about Saepmie in both the public and private sector. We want to investigate the conditions for, and develop courses and trainings that have a specific Saami focus.

Research

We want to contribute to research relevant to the Saami and Saepmie. It is already underway. Such research is already conducted at Mid Sweden University, but it needs to increase and be coordinated internally and to a greater extent done in collaboration with Sámi organizations.

Highlight

We want to highlight Saami issues and Mid Sweden University as a Saami university in the South Sámi area. There is already a lot of research that needs to be brought out to the rest of the research world, the school world and the general public. In this way, the university can also be made visible as a clear educational option in indigenous affairs and a place for Saami knowledge.

The goal

The goal in the longer term is for Mid Sweden University to be a university with an obvious research connection to Saami society and Saami organizations. In the long run, research will become an obvious part of the global indigenous research and together with other academic actors within Saami studies in the Nordic countries be at the forefront of an academic decolonization of the universities of Saepmie.

Unofficial translation.