

The Foreign Policy Academy

The Foreign Policy Academy is the Stockholm Free World Forum's educational program for young opinion-builders. Launched in 2014, the Foreign Policy Academy's yearly education program consists of lectures, study tours, scholarships and internships. The students are highly qualified with experience in politics, government agencies, NGOs and high-profile universities.

Each full-day lecture series relates to a relevant and current theme, e.g. foreign and security policy, trade and free movement, the future of Europe, and contemporary ideas. The lecturers are some of Sweden's most prominent in their field, including former Prime Minister Carl Bildt, Major General Karlis Neretnieks and Aftonbladet's chief political editor Anders Lindberg.

At least two field trips are arranged each year. Previous classes have travelled to London, Brussels, Berlin and Riga to visit think tanks, newspapers, political party headquarters, and museums. The Foreign Policy Academy was started by Mats Johansson and is currently led by Katarina Tracz, Director of the Stockholm Free World Forum.

Students of the 2018 Foreign Policy Academy:



Emanuel Örtengren is a Program Coordinator at the Swedish free market think tank Timbro, where he oversees projects related to economic policy. Prior to joining Timbro, he was a Visiting Fellow and Research Assistant analyzing security policy in the Baltic Sea Region at the Center for Transatlantic Relations in Washington, DC. Previously, he worked at the Antonia Ax:son Johnson Foundation for Sustainable Development (Axfoundation) on a project aimed at facilitating refugee labor market integration, and conducted research for Timbro's Authoritarian Populism Index. Originally from Sweden, Emanuel holds a BA in Social Science from Sciences Po Paris, and has also completed coursework at the University of Toronto and Stockholm University. He speaks Swedish, English and French, and some Spanish and Mandarin.



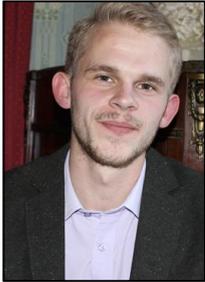
Markus Konow works as a political advisor for the Moderate Party in the Region of Östergötland, and performs freelance work in design, photography and communication. He is an alumnus of the think tank Timbro's Sture Academy. Markus has a background in the Moderate Youth League and the Confederation of Swedish Conservative and Liberal Students (FMSF). He is the editor for the Confederation's magazine Svensk Linje. He is also active in the student organization EPP – European Democrat Students.



Jeanette Widén is a Political Advisor at the Swedish Parliament. She studied Military History at Swedish Defense University and Political Science at the University of Stockholm. With a penchant for defense and security issues linked to international democracy promotion and veteran affairs, she was one of the driving forces paving the way for making Swedish Veterans Day a general flag day. She is the first and only board member of The Peace Berets of Stockholm who does not have overseas military service.



Christoffer Håål is employed in the Swedish defense community, with interests in security, intelligence and strategic analysis. He has a Master's Degree in Geography. Christopher occasionally writes editorials for Swedish local press.



Axel Östling is currently a student of political science at Uppsala University. He was awarded the University's oldest scholarship in 2016. That same year he participated in the Ax:son Johnson Foundation's research course on geopolitics, and last year he was a student in Sweden's premier liberal think tank Timbro's "Sture Academy". He holds a BA in Philosophy from King's College London (of which he was elected an Associate upon graduation) and is interested in international political theory, conservatism and the realist tradition of political thought.



Axel Hellman is a Policy Fellow at the European Leadership Network (ELN). At the ELN, his work primarily centres on economic statecraft, U.S. foreign policy, and Russia-West relations. Prior to joining the ELN, Axel worked in management consulting in Stockholm, Sweden, and as an external adviser to Oxford Analytica and a London-based political risk start-up. He has previously held positions at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), the Hudson Institute, and Freedom House. Axel completed a Master's Degree at St Antony's College, Oxford, and holds a B.A. in International Relations from King's College London's Department of War Studies. He has also studied at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, and MGIMO-University in Moscow. He is currently a member of Stockholm Free World Forum's Foreign Policy Academy and a former Emerging Scholar Fellow at the Milton Wolf seminar at the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna. Axel speaks English, German, and Swedish, and his analysis and commentary on international affairs have appeared in venues such as The National Interest, RealClearDefense, and Svenska Dagbladet.



Souad Abid is a strategic analyst for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency. Prior to her work with the Agency, Souad worked for the World Bank Group on Justice Sector Reform in Ukraine and Moldova and served as Law Clerk at Nacka District Court in Stockholm. Souad earned her Bachelor's degree in Security Policy from the National Defense University in Stockholm, and received her LLM in International Law from Stockholm University. She also holds a Master of Science in Foreign Service (MSFS) from the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, where she was a Fulbright Scholar.



Sakari Teerikoski is an engineer who currently works for the EU Commission in Brussels. He is fascinated about topics that link technology and foreign policy, and where technical solutions can be applied to foreign policy problems. Through his active engagement in the Swedish Association of International Affairs (SAIA), Sakari has a long record of spreading knowledge about foreign affairs as well as initiating discussion and debate on foreign policy topics. Sakari currently serves on the board of SAIA and is active in the work of Eurooppaouret (JEF Finland). During his studies at Uppsala University, he was active in several student organisations.



Linnea Hylén is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in political science with a specialization in crisis management and security at the Swedish Defense University. In addition to her studies, she works as a political secretary for the Swedish Center Party in Järfälla municipality as well as as an editorial writer at Södermanlands Newspaper and the Center Press Bureau. She also serves as the international secretary for the Swedish Center Party Youth. Hylén is especially interested in questions regarding defense and security.



Thomas Hermansson has a bachelor's degree in theology from Uppsala University, and is currently pursuing a master's degree in the interdisciplinary program The Religious Roots of Europe at Lund University. He is a member of the board of the Christian Democratic Student League, as well as the Foreign Policy Working Group of the Confederation of Swedish Conservative and Liberal Students. He serves on the local parish council in Lund. He has previously worked as an editorial writer for the conservative newspaper Barometern-OT, and recently completed an internship at the European Council in Brussels.



Lina Elfvin has a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Stockholm University. She has previously interned at the British political party Liberal Democrats in London, and is currently the Secretary General of the European Youth Parliament. Her duties include inter alia international contacts, financial management and business development. Her major interests are German political history and contemporary domestic politics as well as the EU's development and future, mobility, exchange and diversity. She has previously served as a board member of the Swedish Development Partner Assistance Organization, where she worked with issues related to integration and equal treatment.



Hanna Engblom has an M.Sc. in Commercial Law and a Diploma in Innovation and Communications Law from Finland. She works as a consultant within higher education, research and innovation at Technopolis Group in Sweden. She has previously worked with exports and trade at Finpro at the Finnish Embassy in Stockholm and with international relations at the Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University SAIS, Washington D.C. She is especially interested in transatlantic and Nordic matters, as well as cyber security.



Dana Pourkomeylian is 24 years old and in her final year at Gothenburg Law Masters program. She has been politically engaged for many years, having founded Sweden's largest political party independent organisation for young people, sat on the board of the Swedish Youth Council, and been Sweden's Youth Representative to the EU as well as chairman of Gothenburg Law School's organisation. Today she is the president of Swedish Center Party Youth (Region West), a liberal party with green core values. Her main fields of knowledge are international law, international criminal law, foreign policy and equality, on which she frequently lectures throughout Sweden.



Eric Bäcklund is studying political science at the Swedish Defense University. Bäcklund spent his last semester as an intern at the Embassy of Sweden in Riga as a part of the academic programme. Bäcklund is also a member of the political party Moderaterna and is currently President for the local organization at the Swedish Defense University. Bäcklund has served for many years as a soldier in the Swedish Armed Forces. Bäcklund is especially interested in defense and security issues.



Amelie Rausing is an analyst at Consilio International, an advisory firm based in Stockholm, Sweden. Before joining Consilio in October 2017, Amelie interned at the US Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (also known as the Helsinki Commission) in Washington DC, where she primarily conducted research and planned congressional briefings on human rights, press freedom and corruption in the former Soviet Union. Prior to this, Amelie interned at the Atlantic Council's Future Europe Program as well as the Global Business and Economics Program where she served as a research assistant for Dr. Anders Åslund. She obtained a BA in International Relations from Northeastern University in Boston in 2016.



Gustaf Fritz has a bachelor's degree in political science with a focus on global issues. He finished his studies with an internship at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs working with export and investment promotion. During his studies he was engaged in the Swedish Association of International Affairs, and left his post as vice-president in the autumn 2017. Gustaf has a wide interest in defence and security policy and has previously studied at the Defence and Security Academy. Nowadays, he works as a political secretary for the Swedish Centre Party.



Martin Lilja is a postgraduate student at the Swedish Defence University, currently studying for an MA in War Studies. Martin has gained professional experience from the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia, and the Combined Joint Staff Exercise held in Sweden by the Swedish Armed Forces and the Swedish Defence University. Martin's academic and professional interests revolve primarily around mis- and disinformation.



Björn Wegner started the podcast "I Krig och Fred" (In War and Peace) in January 2016, which since then has grown to be one of Swedens largest podcasts focusing on national security and crisis management. Björn's main area of interests within the fields of foreign policy and national security is military special forces, counter-terrorism and the impact of climate change on global security. Björn has previously been active at the Foreign Policy Association at Umeå University and is currently a member of Allmänna Försvarsföreningen (AFF).