



## Application for travel and research activity funding for UID staff

For the UID policy for research related UID funding, please see <http://uid.umu.se/en/for-our-staff/documents-and-policies/>

Applications are sent by e-mail to the UID Research Council, through [helena.moliis@dh.umu.se](mailto:helena.moliis@dh.umu.se)

Applications for funding can be handed in three times a year (suggested dates: 15 September, 15 January and 15 May). In certain circumstances, applications can be handed in also at other times.

**Name: Søren Rosenbak**

**Employment title: PhD student**

### **Purpose of travel or research activity**

*For conference related application, please state form of participation/activity and attach eventual conference programme and/or letter of acceptance or invitation. For other activities, please state how these are related to your research.*

Main purpose: Attending PhD by Design 2015, 4-5 November at Goldsmiths, London. Participation included a short 5 min research presentation + questions & discussion as well as a one-page contribution to the PhD by Design Instant Journal Issue Two that was launched on the last day as part of a collective reflection session. The conference further consisted of practice-oriented workshops, lectures and social gatherings. Finally, in addition to the conference itself, there was a pre-event (Practice Research: Biographies, Beginnings and Futures) organised at Goldsmiths as part of the Design Star consortium, open to PhD by Design participants.

PhD by Design remains a network/event series/organiser of crucial importance to my research, as one of the only, if not THE only, truly dedicated forum for practice-based PhD researchers in design. I applied and got admitted already last autumn 2014, but eventually had to decline the invitation to participate, as I had no funding left on my personal expense account. Since then I have been following the PhD by Design events and their increasing momentum with great interest. As I was faced with a similar personal funding situation this year (no money left by November), I decided that it was too important to miss again and thus paid this year's attendance/research trip with my personal funds. I submitted two—unfortunately unsuccessful—funding applications to Åforsk and the Kempe Foundation.

Added Bonus: I also conducted an interview with Miraj Ahmed and Martin Jameson at AA, the Architectural Association School of Architecture. Miraj and Martin ran a unique one-year pataphysics course at AA in 2013-14, a main reference for my research on what has been done in-between design and pataphysics.

Extra Added Bonus: I also visited Bookartbookshop, a one-of-a-kind treasure trove of pataphysical literature. Had the pleasure of chatting with the owner of the bookshop, Her Magnificence Tanya Peixoto, Vice-Curatrice of the Collège de Pataphysique, amongst many other things.

All the added bonuses were nothing short of fantastic for my research and will contribute greatly to my dissertation.

**Please state how feed-back from the travel/activity will be shared at UID**

PhD by Design is now working towards its next instantiation, a full day pre-event integrated into DRS2016 in Brighton. I think it would be perfect to do some kind of activity in the spring to familiarize my fellow PhD students and researchers with the network, the conference format, and the discussions from autumn. This could perhaps be a research seminar that could act as leverage for submitting applications for attendance?

**Sum applied for: SEK7000**

**Specification of costs:**

Helsinki-London (flight): SEK683  
 London-Stockholm (flight): SEK1328  
 Stockholm-Umeå (train): SEK399  
 London Hotel: £351 (SEK4665)  
 PhD by Design conference fee: £55 (SEK717)

Total: SEK7792

**Applications from other sources of funding:**

*Please state other funding bodies you have sent applications to, and also any granted funding already received or decided upon from these. Please also state if funding has been denied, or if your application is not yet processed.*

Unsuccessful applications have been made to Åforsk and the Kempe Foundation in autumn 2015.

**Possibility to use PhD student expense account or external project funding:**

At the time of the conference, no funding was left in my personal expense account. External funding was pursued unsuccessfully.

**Motivation for application to UID (in relation to other possible sources)**

PhD by Design presents itself as “an opportunity to present work and discuss the diverse aspects of what it means to do a practice-based PhD in Design” (<http://www.phdbydesign.com/2015-goldsmiths/>). This is a rare raison d'être in a discipline where practice-based research only recently has gained a serious foothold as a more widely recognized, consolidated research practice. PhD by Design is an emerging two-year-old network/event series/organiser attracting an increasing international audience around its specific focus on practice-based PhD research within design. Furthermore, the conference format is unique in the sense that it has a strong focus on interaction, discussions, sharing, all around the “back end” of research, rather than shiny “front end” results. In

this sense PhD by Design aligns itself particularly well to the Prototyping Practices research program at UID, as well as the wider research profile of our studio. For the research at UID, PhD by Design presents itself as a great opportunity for presenting and discussing not only our research output, but also how and why we do things in the way we do. It also offers a “high resolution” snapshot of our immediate research context, namely in the particular and fast moving landscape of practice-based research.

Additionally, I believe it's worth considering how the vast majority of funding bodies for design research are not particularly geared towards experimental event formats such as PhD by Design. As a PhD student engaging in practice-based research in design, it is invaluable to meet a large international group of peers who are very much in the same situation as yourself. Further, as PhD by Design is initiated and run by these very peers, it is fantastic to see the event itself addressed as part of the larger discourse and the burning questions around how we make sense of our field. From this perspective it's highly possible to argue for more time spent on interaction between participants, practice-oriented workshops, and time for evaluation and re-iteration of the event itself, rather than the standardized 30 minutes paper presentations, panel discussions etc. (compare e.g. to the doctoral colloquium, a format also geared towards PhD students but with a much more “front end” focused setup, and as a consequence less time for “back end” discussions, although with considerably better opportunities for funding). Currently, there seems to be an emerging rift between what is needed for PhDs engaged in practice-based design research and what is supported by the more conservative funding structures.

Whether UID should extend its practice-based research profile into some kind of special priority for funding participation in practice-based research initiatives (perhaps in particularly those that, due to genuinely rethinking how we can meaningfully engage with the messy backend of practice-based research, might not automatically comply with the standard funding body requirements, e.g. paper presentations etc.) remains a larger question to be addressed by the Research Council and the school.

**Eventual additional information:**

Conference documentation: <http://www.phdbydesign.com/2015-goldsmiths/>

PhD by Design Instant Journal Issue Two: <http://www.phdbydesign.com/2015-goldsmiths-instant-journal/>