

Professor
Dr. Henrik Aronsson
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Dear Dr. Aronsson,

I have read the four documents about the Gothenburg herbarium that sent to me, and am here sending you my assessment.

Best regards,
Susanne

1) How are the criteria fulfilled for Research Infrastructure at the University of Gothenburg

- a) The herbarium is open to, and connected with, other ‘forskningsinfrastrukturen’, such as the botanical garden, but also other herbaria worldwide.
- b) The Gothenburg herbarium has a unique strength in Andean collections, and since many of the specimens are relatively recent, they are especially useful for DNA isolation. I can personally attest to the efficiency with which enquiries from researchers in other institutions are dealt with by the Gothenburg herbarium. Specific examples of the value of Gothenburg material for molecular-phylogenetic and ecological research that I am aware of include material of Campanulaceae and Rubiaceae.
- c) Access to the herbarium is easy and indeed exemplary. The collections are wellhoused and well-curated. The curators respond quickly and openly to requests for access to material.
- d) The herbarium has a detailed financial plan, which I was sent for this assessment.
- e) One cannot overstate the importance of collections. The Gothenburg herbarium specimens are not all duplicated elsewhere, and the duplicates that do exist in South America are not as easily accessed (or cannot be accessed efficiently because of forbidding paperwork).

2) How are the rules followed by the Research Infrastructure at the University of Gothenburg

Herbaria are THE essential basis for systematic research on plants. Without herbaria, systematic research cannot progress because we need to constantly evaluate, correct, and improve our systems of names at all ranks (species, genus, family etc.). Naming systems are not fixed structures comparable to library shelves onto which new entities (for example new species) are placed so they can be retrieved when needed. Instead, and as long as we want our names to reflect relationships among species, we keep modifying our genus and even family classification as new knowledge about species is gained. This is not 'empty' shuffling, but instead has led to continued improvements of plant classification that benefit all areas of biology.

The herbarium fully matches the university's "Vision 2020".

3) How is the infrastructure developing

The financial plan envisions that, "Idag finansieras Herbarium GB genom statsanslag som kanaliseras via projekt hos Artdatabanken, medfinansiering från Naturvetenskapliga fakultetens fakultetsanslag, samt från Institutionen för Biologi och miljövetenskap. Den medfinansiering som institutionen står för i dagsläget motsvarar ungefär den lokalkostnad som Herbariet har." As far as I can judge the numbers and plans in the financial outline, they all look good. However, clearly this is very difficult from someone from the outside.

Please let me know if there are further aspects that I should look at.

Sincerely yours,

Susanne Renner

Professor Dr. Susanne S. Renner
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