This volume is based on the presentations and discussions at a symposium that was held at the Haga Forum in Stockholm on November 9–11, 2005. The symposium was sponsored by the Wenner-Gren Foundations.

The symposium was initiated by members of the Academia Europaea, whose aims are to improve our knowledge and understanding on the impact of policy and organization on the development of science and scholarship, and, in reverse, on the needs of science and scholarship to have suitable political and administrative conditions for improvement. Symposia have been organized over a number of years, each one addressing key issues relevant to the higher education sector in Europe. The Wenner-Gren Foundations have supported many of these events. The symposia have allowed experts to take stock of our systematic knowledge base and also to contribute to the formulation of concepts for future improvement. Higher education researchers, science researchers, senior scholars from various disciplines, key persons of academic associations, as well as policy actors in the domains of higher education and research, have been strongly represented among the speakers. The key presentations have been published and disseminated to a broad audience.


Similarly, the International Academy of Education, in co-operation with members of the Academia Europaea, arranged a symposium on Lifelong Learning: Policy and Research (edited by Albert Tuijnman and Tom Schuller. London: Portland Press, 1999). Frequent speakers in this series of conferences were Guy Neave (Twente University), Peter Scott (Kingston University), Ulrich Teichler (University of Kassel) and Martin Trow (University of California, Berkeley).

The Expert Group on Higher Education, Research and Culture in European Society (HERCULES) of the Academia Europaea have come to the conclusion that a regular series of symposia on the changing context of higher education and research, the role of research in higher education, international co-operation in higher education and research, the academic professions and similar topics is valuable, both for reflection within academia, as well for a dialogue between scholars and society. Hopefully these dialogues might contribute to improving the conditions for academic work and the contribution of academic work for society.
For this symposium, the HERCULES group asked a committee, comprised of Ulrich Teichler, Bertil Daneholt (Karolinska Institutet and Wenner-Gren Foundations) and Jens Erik Fenstad (University of Oslo), to prepare a symposium on the conditions and professional courses of academics during the career stages from first graduation to appointment into a senior position.

The members of the working party elaborated the concept of the symposium, invited speakers and took responsibilities in chairing sessions. Most of the presentations at the symposium are published in this volume. The preparatory committee is grateful to Lennart Philipson (Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm), John Smith (European University Association, Brussels), Paavo Uronen (Helsinki University of Technology) and Björn Wittrock (Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, Uppsala) for their oral presentations. Göran Melin (Swedish Institute for Studies in Education and Research, Stockholm) and Kerstin Janson (University of Kassel) agreed to write a final essay reflecting the various presentations and discussion. Last but not least this volume has benefited from the diligent editing work undertaken by Mike Cunningham and his colleagues at Portland Press. We, the organizers, would like to express our gratitude to the Wenner-Gren Foundations, the Academia Europaea and to all who have contributed.

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