Clarification/policy for researchers at the Department for Applied Physics, KTH

Researchers are an important employment category for our Department. Researchers contribute enormously to our research activities in different ways and might also teach in our courses. This document intends to clarify how the Department sees the roles of researchers we employ and how it is expected that a researcher position is financed.

From KTHs anställningsordning, the duties for a researcher at KTH are described as[*]:

"2.1.1 Forskare
Arbetsuppgifter En forskare vid KTH bidrar till forskning inom ett vetenskapsområde som har en eller flera etablerade forskningsmiljöer på KTH. Rekrytering av forskare vid KTH ska alltid göras med primär utgångspunkt i behov som identifierats i forskningsverksamheten. Arbetsuppgifter inom forskning kan inbegripa självständig forskning, ledning av eller deltagande i forskningsprojekt eller forskargrupp. Arbetsuppgifter kan också inbegripa olika specialistkunskaper, t.ex. utveckling och hantering av avancerad utrustning, verksamhet av utvecklingskaraktär eller avancerat administrativt forskningsstöd. Arbetsuppgifter inom utbildning kan inbegripa handledning av studenter, undervisning av moment i kurser, samt för forskare antagna som docenter huvudhandledarskap på forskarnivå. Arbetsuppgifter inom utbildning ska inte omfatta mer än högst 20 % av anställningen. Arbetsuppgifter inom ledarskap och samverkan kan inbegripa ledning eller koordinering av forskargrupp, laborativ verksamhet, centrumbildning eller motsvarande."

We distinguish between three main categories of researchers.

Researchers without own external funding

These researchers are normally funded by larger external project grants (KAW, SSF, ERC etc.). They do mainly research in these projects or take care of some of our experimental infrastructure.
They might also help with teaching.

They are employed on a permanent contract if the employment period is longer than one year.
The employment is subject to the availability of external project funding.

Researchers with own external funding

These researchers have their own research grants and can be considered PIs. They mainly do research in their own initiated projects.
They might also help with teaching.

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[*]*The document exists only in Swedish*

Most of these researchers are young researchers at the beginning of their career and seek a faculty position worldwide (including KTH if available).

They are employed on a permanent contract if the employment period is longer than one year.
The employment is subject to the availability of external project funding.

Research engineers without own external funding (with a permanent position)†

These researchers take care of some of our experimental infrastructure.
They might also help with teaching.
They are employed on a permanent contract if the employment period is longer than one year.
The employment is subject to the needs and budget of the infrastructure.

Clarification regarding teaching activities for researchers
At KTH, a researcher should not have teaching activities exceeding 20% of the employment. Whereas this has not been the praxis at our department until now, we will now enforce this policy.
The Department wants to support the researchers that are seeking an academic career worldwide (including KTH). Career development opportunities should be offered to them, in terms of supervision and teaching courses, for instance. The department will also offer teaching activities at the undergraduate level to those researchers in need of teaching experience for a prospective faculty position elsewhere. Teaching activities should mainly be related to supervision of students (KEX, MEX and PhD levels), and course activities at the third level.

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† Note that most of our research engineers do not have a permanent position and are PhD students that are waiting to be enrolled in the PhD program or that have consumed all the available time for a doctoral student position. Sometimes, this role is also used for short-term projects, for which a PhD degree is not necessary.