



# ABOUT VA 2020

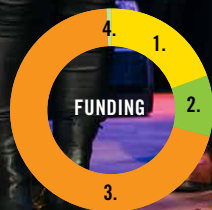


Vetenskap & Allmänhet

## WHAT DOES VA DO?

VA (Public & Science) is a non-profit Swedish organisation whose purpose is to promote openness and dialogue between researchers and the public. Since our foundation in 2002, we have been carrying out:

- **studies** and **surveys**
- **activities** in new formats for public engagement and dialogue
- **communication** of our own and others' knowledge and experiences
- **advocacy work** at national and European level.



1. Membership fees
2. Grant from the Swedish Ministry of Education and Research
3. Project grants
4. Other

## THE IMPORTANCE OF DIALOGUE

Increased dialogue between researchers and other parts of society and greater participation in science is a prerequisite for solving the large global challenges that society faces.

VA is an expert in dialogue, public engagement and science communication. Our **goals** are to enable:

- the public to understand how research works and its role in society, and to participate in these processes in various ways.
- researchers to understand the importance of dialogue and engagement with society and to provide them with effective methods for achieving this.
- decision makers to have access to science and recognise the value of dialogue and collaboration between researchers and society at large.

**VA's vision:** For science to be accessible to everyone.



**VA (Public & Science)** was founded in 2002 and its members consist of some 90 organisations, such as authorities, universities, businesses, adult education

associations and research funding bodies. In addition, it has a number of individual members. For information and a current membership list: [www.v-a.se/membership](http://www.v-a.se/membership)





## EXAMPLES OF VA'S PROJECTS

### Researchers' Night (ForskarFredag)

VA is the national coordinator of **ForskarFredag**, Sweden's most widespread science festival, run as part of European Researchers' Night. On the last weekend of September of each year, the public is invited to meet researchers and participate in hands-on activities, competitions, exhibitions, shows and much more. In some 30 cities across Sweden, **ForskarFredag** shows that research is exciting and relevant to our everyday lives.

### EU projects

In addition to European Researchers' Night, VA is a partner in **ORION Open Science**, seeking to help research performing and funding organisations in life sciences and biomedicine become more open towards society. **BLOOM** aims to raise public awareness and knowledge about the bioeconomy in Europe. **RETHINK** is working with different actors involved in science communication to map and develop best practices across Europe.

### Citizen science

In citizen science, members of the public participate in scientific research together with researchers. One example is our annual Researchers' Night mass experiment. The 2020 mass experiment is investigating how accessible houses and apartments are for the elderly and people with disabilities. VA is also helping to develop a Swedish national portal for citizen science – [medborgarforskning.se](https://medborgarforskning.se), and in **EU-Citizen.Science**, we are gathering knowledge about citizen science at both a national and European level.

### Perceptions of the humanities

In this study project, VA is investigating why many Swedes lack an opinion about the humanities as a scientific field, and what can be done to change this. The study is part of the national **Science in Society** project, in which, together with the SOM Institute at the University of Gothenburg, we have been measuring the Swedish public's attitudes to research since 2002.

## JOIN OUR NETWORK!

Do you also believe that science and research should be accessible to everyone? Please join us! **Organisations** as well as **individuals** are welcome to become members of VA. As a member, you are providing vital support to VA's work to promote access to, and confidence in knowledge, skills, education and research in society.

As a member you receive:

- **Knowledge** via VA's studies, as well as advice on designing activities and studies.
- **Access** to a broad network of members, and opportunities to collaborate with VA and other member organisations.
- **Influence** over the activities and studies that we undertake, the issues that we focus on and the future development of the association.

Read more at [v-a.se/membership](http://v-a.se/membership)

## CONTACT US

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“As an expert authority that conducts research, we want our knowledge to be disseminated and made understandable to the outside world. As a contingency planning authority, we know that openness and dialogue in "peacetime" are a necessity for building confidence in actions that may need to be taken in a crisis. We are a member of VA because our goals are very similar, and because we are stronger when we all work together.

**Ann Lindberg**, Director General of SVA, the Swedish National Veterinary Institute

# CALENDAR 2020

- 23 April **Forum for science communication** in Gothenburg
- 26–28 May **PCST** (Public Communication of Science and Technology) **2020 Conference**
- 25–26 September **European Researchers' Night**, *ForskarFredag* throughout Sweden
- 14 October **VA's annual conference** and annual general meeting
- November National final of the **Researchers' Grand Prix**, *Forskar Grand Prix*
- December Annual **VA Barometer** published
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”” *In an increasingly complex society, we need to make knowledge more accessible. VA is an important network for this. The Museum of Science and Technology is a place for science communication and increasing children's and young people's interest in technology, science and mathematics. Therefore, it is obvious for us to be a member of VA.*

**Peter Skogh**, Director, Swedish National Museum of Science and Technology