



ABOUT VA 2021



Vetenskap & Allmänhet och Martin Bergman

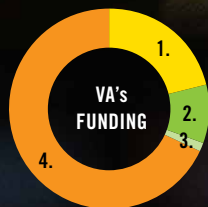


WHAT DOES VA DO?

VA (Public & Science) is a non-profit Swedish organisation whose purpose is to promote openness and dialogue between researchers and the public.

We are experts in dialogue, public engagement and science communication. 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. Other
4. Project grants

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIALOGUE

Increased dialogue between researchers and other parts of society and greater participation in science are prerequisites for finding sustainable solutions to local and global challenges.

VA's **goals** are to enable:

- **the public** to understand how research works and its role in society, and to participate in the scientific process;
- **researchers** to understand the importance of dialogue and engagement with society, and have the skills, methods and conditions for undertaking this;
- **decision makers** to have access to science and recognise the value of dialogue and collaboration between researchers and society at large.

Our vision: Science accessible to everyone!



VA (Public & Science) was founded in 2002 and its members consist of some 100 organisations, such as authorities, universities, businesses, education associations and

research funding bodies. In addition, we have a number of individual members. For information on how to join and a current membership list, please see: 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 each year, the public is invited to meet researchers and participate in hands-on activities, competitions, exhibitions, shows and much more. Held in some 30 cities across Sweden, **ForskarFredag** shows that research is exciting and relevant to our everyday lives, and that researchers are ordinary people with extraordinary jobs.

Citizen science

In citizen science, members of the public participate in scientific research together with researchers. VA promotes citizen science in a number of ways, one example being our annual Researchers' Night mass experiment. Thousands of young people have helped contribute new knowledge about e.g. digital source criticism, light pollution and food waste. The 2021 'Housing Experiment' is investigating the accessibility of housing for senior citizens.



EU projects

VA is a partner in a number of EU-funded projects. In addition to **European Researchers' Night**, we are involved in, e.g. **EU-Citizen.Science** developing a European portal for citizen science; **YOUCOUNT** working with young people to find ways to increase their participation in society; **ORION Open Science** helping research and funding organisations within life sciences and biomedicine better collaborate with society.

Communication and trust during the Covid-19 pandemic

During 2020–2021 we are conducting a study with researchers at the Karolinska Institute and Södertörn University to understand how people are receiving and interpreting information about the ongoing pandemic. Recurrent surveys are investigating questions such as which channels the Swedish public are using to get information about the coronavirus, how information is being perceived, and confidence in different actors who comment on the pandemic. The study includes a content analysis of reporting on the coronavirus in the Swedish media.

CALENDAR 2021

- 15 April **Forum for Science Communication**
- 24–27 May **PCST2020+1** (Public Communication of Science and Technology) Conference)
- 24–25 September **European Researchers' Night**,
ForskarFredag throughout Sweden
- 13 October **VA's annual conference** and **annual general meeting**
- December Annual **VA Barometer** published

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there is some uncertainty around which events may take place. For the latest information, please see: v-a.se/arrangemang

” *University West has an ambition to disseminate research-based knowledge to more people, in ongoing collaboration with society. In this way, we are contributing to a better and more sustainable world. Being members of VA is a very important part of this work.*

Martin Hellström, Vice-Chancellor of University West

