



# ABOUT VA 2022



Vetenskap & Allmänhet



# SCIENCE FOR EVERYONE

VA (Public & Science) is a non-profit Swedish organisation whose purpose is to promote openness and dialogue between researchers and the public. We believe that greater communication and collaboration in research is needed to find sustainable solutions to societal challenges.

## OUR GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS

- **The public** to understand what science is and to have the opportunity to participate in research.
- **Researchers** to have knowledge of attitudes to science, access to different communication methods and incentives for undertaking dialogue and collaboration.
- **Decision-makers** to make use of science and recognise the value of dialogue between researchers and other parts of society.

## WAYS TO REACH OUR GOALS

- **Studies and attitude 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.

## 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](http://v-a.se/membership)







## EXAMPLES OF VA'S PROJECTS

### Researchers' Night (ForskarFredag)

The science festival **ForskarFredag** takes place on the last Friday in September in around 30 cities across Sweden as well as online. VA coordinates the Swedish events, run as part of European Researchers' Night. This year's theme "A healthier and better world" will be reflected in hands-on activities, shows, competitions, exhibitions, discussions and experiments. All are designed to showcase that researchers are ordinary people with extraordinary jobs.

### 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**, where children and young people are helping researchers to create new knowledge. In the EU YouCount project, VA is working with young people in the Stockholm suburb of Botkyrka to find ways to increase their participation in society. We have also been involved in developing citizen science portals – [medborgarforskning.se](http://medborgarforskning.se) and [eu-citizen.science](http://eu-citizen.science).

### TeaTales

Since 2015, people around the world have been burying tea bags to help researchers investigate how the climate affects the decomposition of plant material. In **TeaTales**, the results are being used to create a global, interactive map of soil health and use. The map will be used, for example, by schools, researchers, farmers, gardeners and decision-makers. The project is a continuation of our 2015 ForskarFredag mass experiment – *The Tea Bag Experiment*.

### Shedding light on the public's views of the humanities

Why do many people lack an opinion about the humanities and how can this be changed? This is what VA is investigating in the **Science in Society** project. We are exploring the factors that affect confidence in the humanities through a cross-sectional study and experimental part. Findings will then be communicated widely.

## JOIN OUR NETWORK!

VA is a non-profit association that provides an open arena for dialogue, innovation and skills development.

We test new concepts, develop new knowledge and work in a flexible and evidence-based way, in response to the needs of our members.

Both organisations and individuals can become members of VA. As a member, you can help contribute to VA's work to promote access to, and confidence in, knowledge, skills, education and research in society.

Members also gain:

- **Knowledge** via VA's studies, plus advice on how to design activities and studies.
- **Access** to a broad network of members, and opportunities to collaborate with VA and other member organisations.
- **Influence** over the issues that VA focuses on and the activities and studies that are undertaken.

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

## CONTACT US

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“*The Swedish Museum of Natural History is a research museum. A place where world-class research meets young and old to together explore our planet and help create solutions for a sustainable future. Dialogue between the research community and the public, which VA advocates, is central. This is why we are members of VA!*”

**Lisa Månsson**, Director General of the Swedish Museum of Natural History



# CALENDAR 2022

20–21 April	<b>European Science Engagement Conference</b> in Cork
3–7 July	<b>Almedalen Week</b> in Visby
13–16 July	<b>EuroScience Open Forum</b> in Leiden
September	<b>European Researchers' Night</b> , <i>ForskarFredag</i> throughout Sweden
12 October	<b>VA celebrates its 20th anniversary</b> <b>VA's annual conference</b> and <b>annual general meeting</b> in Stockholm
November	<b>Researchers' Grand Prix</b> final
December	Annual <b>VA Barometer</b> published

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

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**”** *University West is a societal actor with the 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. Our membership in VA is a very important and obvious part of this work.*

**Martin Hellström**, Vice-Chancellor of University West