STRÖMSTAD ACADEMY
Nordic institute for advanced studies

News Forum Strömstad Interdisciplinary Academy

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Vice-Chancellor and Information System Scientist Per Flensburg and **Educator and Chairman of the Board Åsa Morberg** inform about Strömstad Academy news. Flensburg presents the program for the Strömstad Academy's Science Festival in Strömstad on 2-4 June.

I want to urge a previous call for all members to verify and complete their personal information on the Academy website. Also try to recruit new members to the Academy, not least young scholars. Please, send suggestions to Vice-Chancellor Per Flensburg at per.flensburg@stromstadakademi.se

I wish new contributions to the June issue of the Newsletter sent to my e-mail address with deadline on 26 June 2025: anders.gustavsson@ikos.uio.no . Send short articles, opinion articles and/or reviews of new scientific literature. Swedish contributions should have an English translation. Texts should be in Word- or Open Office format!

Please, also send contributions to the Academy´s publication series Acta Academia Strömstadiensis, AAS, to peter@wahrborg.se, the video series SAV to: gudmundbergqvist@hotmail.com and the Reprint Series and the Free Series to: per.flensburg@stromstadakademi.-se.

Report from chairman and Vice-Chancellor

May monthly report from Vice-Chancellor Per Flensburg and Chairman of the Board Åsa Morberg

Now we have arrived in the month of May. The most beautiful time! Time goes by so quickly. At the beginning of next month we finally have the Science Festival. Welcome to Strömstad and the Science Festival.

We in the management of Strömstad Academy welcome you all to Strömstad Academy's Science Festival 2025. The festival takes place, as you already know, between 25-06-02—2025-06-04. The main venue this year is Folkets Hus. It is a popular science festival for all interes-

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ted and curious individuals! The current program can be found on the website: https://www.stromstadakademi.org/vetenskapsfestival-2-4-juni-2025/

Strömstad Academy's science festival is a unique meeting place for us researchers and the surrounding community. All events within the framework of the science festival are free of charge for visiting guests. Strömstad Academy strives to ensure that the rich knowledge and experience of senior researchers is utilized and beneficial to Swedish society!

The lecture schedule is ready and can be found on the website: https://www.stromstadakademi.org/vetenskapsfestival-2-4-juni-2025/ There are currently 20 individuals registered for the festival, but there is room for more visitors. Let Per or Anders know if you are coming. We need to know this to provide enough food and drinks for the mingle and the sandwich buffet. Also let us know if you intend to go to the gala dinner so we can notify the hotel of the correct number of persons coming to the dinner. It costs 475 SEK plus drinks and is paid on site.

Travel to Strömstad is difficult

There is work on the western main line between Stockholm and Gothenburg. However, if you book a ticket on sj.se for the relevant days, there does not appear to be any problems. If you are going on Sunday, bus4you is also an alternative. However, several railway construction works are marked on the Swedish Transport Administration's website. So if you plan to take the train, check the times!

The members' meeting starts the Science Festival

We want to clarify the main purpose of the members' meeting. The purpose is to create a development plan for 2025/2026. We compile the discussions into a development plan that is first discussed in the working committee (AU) and then discussed and decided on by the board. The members of the working committee who are present at the meeting, get 5 minutes to express their opinion on what should be developed and how! We must try to be as concrete as possible! Then the floor is open to all present members. We go around the team. How do we see our association? What should be developed and, above all, how should we develop our association. To the extent that we know who is going to do what, we also accept such suggestions! Here we ask Marylou for help in taking notes. We are working on a development plan, not a brick but a couple of pages maximum! We will publish the development plan in the News Forum well in advance of the next board meeting. The plan must be evaluable, i.e. what we are going to do must be so concrete that we can evaluate it. After the discussions, we help each other summarize and thank all members for their views.

New brochure

We have had a brochure printed, really just a folder, describing the Academy. It is available on the website: https://stromstadakademi.se/Broschyr25.pdf and 1000 copies have been printed. The idea is that they will be distributed at the Science Festival and at the Gothenburg book fair.

Evaluation of the Science Festival

The evaluation of the science festival this year will be in writing via email. It will be sent out to the members present at the beginning of the science festival. There are questions about each part of the science festival and there is also an additional point/item that can be used if there is something that the questions do not cover. It is important that everyone answers here. This is not an anonymous evaluation. We do not do that at Strömstad Academy. We all stand by our views. We compile all the evaluations and use them for planning next year's

Science Festival. When filling out the evaluation form, it is good if you can be as specific as possible!

Proposal for the establishment of two funds

At the last meeting of the Editorial Committee/Board, a proposal was made for establishing two funds in Strömstad. A scholarship fund and a development fund. This will eventually become a question for the Board. But only after a careful investigation by our treasurers and after bank contacts. Funding applications are extremely important for Strömstad Academy today. The budget is at its thinnest and we need to strengthen the economy. This will be investigated first and then the working committee will discuss the proposal with the proposer, Chairman of the Editorial Committee/Board Peter Währborg. The funds will of course be decided by the Board. An excellent proposal by Peter Währborg.

Report from the work of the Board

The Board has worked on the following under Åsa Morberg's chairmanship:

- Adopted a new statute for Strömstad Academy. Possibly needs to be reviewed in 2025.
- Adopted an ethics policy and formed an ethics council.
- Adopted an archiving policy for Strömstad Academy. This will be implemented.
- Adopted an IT policy for Strömstad Academy. Costs are in the budget.
- Decided to participate in the Gothenburg Book Fair 2025. Discussions began in 2017. The results of participation will be evaluated.
- Publishing costs for books cannot be ad hoc, but must be requested, i.e. planned. Digital publishing will be tested.
- We need to work more on member recruitment. We now apply the statute: if you do not pay, you will be removed from the register.
- Marketing of Strömstad Academy has been discussed continuously and the work will continue.

The treasurer issue and member register

John Fletcher continues as treasurer but is assisted by Per Flensburg, especially in budget and financial statements issues. Per takes over responsibility for the register and it is updated according to the guidelines in the statutes. Specifically, this means that those who have not paid their membership fee by May 15th are considered to have left the Academy. The website will be updated after the Science Festival. For those who need lists of members in theme groups, local groups or other specific groups, please contact Per.

Per Flensburg: Ideas for the development of Strömstad Academy

Vice-Chancellor Per Flensburg

Almost all problems in all organizations are due to not having sufficient resources or in any case it is believed that problems would disappear or at least be reduced if more resources were provided. This is the case with Strömstad Academy. We lack money and we lack people who are committed. It boils down to three questions:

1. How do we get permanent funding?
2. How do we get more of our members involved?
3. How do we get more members?

Fixed funding is related to our need for funds for an office. Roughly speaking, a full-time office staff costs SEK 650,000. Maybe we can settle for a part-time one?

As for other expenses, they amount to around SEK 63,000 in this year's meager budget. We should have at least SEK 100,000 in income to be able to run a sensible business. In addition to this, there are project-type funding that is obtained and budgeted for each occasion, such as advertising campaigns and a science festival. Then we should have at least 133 fully paying members.

If we take it a step further, we need about SEK1 million for an office and expenses per year. We can court the Minister of Education and ask for this money in a fixed allocation. We will then become a public organization and can apply for money from all the research councils. But the chance that we will get this money is small and we must have very good arguments for this. Together we could achieve this, but it requires input from many different sources and a well-shaped pen (read AI!). So our members need commitment.

Can we get a million per year in any other way than through a fixed government allocation? If we get 1667 members, that's fine. But that's unrealistic. Sponsorship from companies is another way, but then we must either help them develop or be so well-known that our name gives the companies a golden shine. But some members do not think we should engage in such nonsense but rather become known for the high quality of our activities. Under all circumstances, this requires increased commitment from the Academy's members.

Another way to raise reasonably stable funding is through tax deductions on project funds. Anyone who has had research funding knows this. The principle is that each activity should cover its overheads. At most universities/colleges these are set as a surcharge of 50-60% of direct salary. However, I have been involved in surcharges of 80%. But the research councils only allow 35% and the EU only allows 20%. If we are to have 1 million in tax deductions, we need about 3.8 million in granted research funds. This is not impossible, but it of course requires that we actually implement these projects. And it requires commitment from the members.

We conclude so far that question 1 and question 2 are linked and that sponsorship of companies (especially with regard to cross-border trade) and tax relief on research grants are the most promising, but that the best thing is of course grants from the government. And everything requires increased commitment from the members.

The third question is at least as important and essential for the survival of the Academy. In order to recruit new members, it is required:

1. That Strömstad Academy is well known
2. That it can offer something attractive that a regular university/college does not have

How can we make the Academy better known? Some members say that we do it through high-quality publications. That is the traditional way, but it requires that we have access to academically ranked publication sources such as DiVA or Swepub. We do not have that, but the idea of a journal on www.publicera.kb.se would be such an opportunity. However, it falls short of the fact that we cannot fill such a journal with our thin trickle of qualified publications. Again, activating and engaging the members is a prerequisite.

One way to get into DiVA is to ally ourselves with a university/college that publishes our publications or allows us to publish them ourselves. Högskolan Väst did this before, but now they do not think they have the time for it. I have been assigned to contact the University of Borås and see if they might be interested.

There is a “law of nature” called the Pareto distribution (named after the Italian economist Wilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) which, in simple terms, means that 20 percent of the causes account for 80 percent of the effects. It is therefore often called the 80-20 rule. We are currently about 100 people in the Academy and about 20 of them are active in the sense that they have published something in some of our series of publications or are holding a board position. Many, including Bodil Frisdal, have complained about this. I suggested last year that we should organize ourselves into different themes and this has happily resulted in much more activity. This is shown at the Science Festival and perhaps it can inspire more people to join or start new themes. Each theme can organize itself however it wants, set whatever goals it wants and is basically a self-governing group within the Strömstad Academy system.

In recent years, we have delved deeply into issues of an administrative nature and, unfortunately, there have been members who have said no to all forms of streamlining, citing that there is too much administration. A lot of effort and energy has been spent on “getting things in order”. The motivation has been that we must show that we have sustainable administrative routines for applications for research funding. But some members think this is just pointless fuss and have left the Academy. Understandable and regrettable. Almost all the members have many years of experience from other academies and have held significant positions with extensive power. Now we are suddenly in a completely different situation, we have total freedom, can decide what we want and this freedom is paradoxically sometimes paralyzing. But freedom is one of our most important strengths and we must protect and market it.

Today we have a reasonable amount of order in the administration, now we must ensure that the core activity, the academic activity, takes off, becomes known and noticed. Our theme organization is a platform from which we can act. Each theme group is self-governing and chooses what they want to do. This means that more members are involved and the Academy's productivity increases. Our experience and our expertise guarantee that our products are of high quality. Sooner or later this will be noticed by the outside world and contribute to the Academy becoming known. In the theme groups we can create a genuine and prestige-free academic discussion, free from demands for publications, deadlines and politically correct references. In addition, we establish collaborations between different scientific disciplines and can create synergy effects through this. This does not mean that we publish just any nonsense.

We should therefore make ourselves known in society through our publications. These should be published so that they reach as many individuals as possible, partly in the form of debate articles and partly in the form of publications in well-known journals. We should also appear on radio and TV, for example in popular science programs such as UR, filosofiska rummet, vetenskapens värld etc. We should also be more active on social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn and perhaps X. A suitable strategy is to focus on places where journalists are present. And of course establish contacts with selected ones.

Finally: What can we offer that a regular university/college does not have? As I see it, there are mainly two things: Academic freedom and interdisciplinary collaboration. I asked Gemini (Google's chatbot) to write an advertising text and this is what it turned out like:

Are you a researcher looking for an environment where academic freedom is at the center and interdisciplinary collaboration is a matter of course? Then Strömstad Academy could be the place for you!

We offer a unique platform where you as a researcher have the opportunity to delve into your areas of interest without unnecessary restrictions. With us, you are encouraged to explore new thoughts and ideas, and to conduct research that really makes a difference.

At Strömstad Academy, we believe in the power of transcending traditional subject boundaries. We promote a dynamic climate where researchers from different disciplines meet, share knowledge and create innovative solutions together. By collaborating with other researchers, you gain new perspectives and can contribute to research that is both broader and deeper.

Welcome to Strömstad Academy – where your research takes wing!

Does this sound interesting? Contact us to learn more about how you can become part of our research community.

The text comes directly from the chatbot and is templated in the way an advertising agency would write. It doesn't say much, but something along those lines could be an introduction to a longer text that more concretely describes how we achieve and realize the opportunities described in the first text.