

ACTION PLAN

THE STOCKHOLM REGION'S
LIFE SCIENCE STRATEGY

Matching Between Companies and Region Stockholm's Organisations



Action Plan for Matching Between Companies
and Region Stockholm's Organisations
Reg. no.: RS 2024-1196

Action plan under Life Sciences Strategy
for the Stockholm region
Reg. no.: RS 2019-0751

Action plan: Matching Between Companies and Region Stockholm's Organisations

The action plan Matching Between Companies and Region Stockholm's Organisations is based on the Life Sciences Strategy for the Stockholm region, which is a sub-strategy of the Business and Growth Strategy. The Business and Growth Strategy is also the Stockholm region's Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation. Region Stockholm has four areas of smart specialisation that have been identified as strategically important for public research and innovation initiatives in the Stockholm region, and life science, care and health is one of them.¹

This action plan is focused on the work of strengthening the innovation capacity of Region Stockholm's organisations, and boosting collaboration between Region Stockholm and the business community to encourage innovation. This includes access to Region Stockholm's regional research and innovation infrastructures and healthcare bodies for testing new innovations. An effective matching process between companies and the region's organisations contributes both to **growth** in the Stockholm region and to the **sustainable development** of Region Stockholm's own organisations. In other words, there are *different purposes* for making the region's organisations and infrastructure available to businesses:

1. Contribute to business growth and thus to the growth of the Stockholm region.
2. Contribute to the development of Region Stockholm's organisations and thus to their ability to improve, be more effective and more competitive, and help the entire region become a world leader in line with Region Stockholm's ambitions and goals.

Focusing on boosting business collaboration – where there is a clear organisational and user benefit within Region Stockholm – increases the likelihood of a successful match for innovation development between the business community and Region Stockholm's organisations. Greater cooperation can stimulate both business development and growth within the Stockholm region. It will also contribute to effective harnessing of existing research and innovation infrastructure.



¹ Region Stockholm's smart specialisation areas: Life science, care and health; ICT, tech and digitalisation; Industrial transition through sustainable production; Climate and environmental initiatives for sustainable urban development.

The work of the action plan responds to the following sections of the strategies below

Life Sciences Strategy for the Stockholm region:

Health and social care bodies cooperate and are available for research, innovation and collaboration with the business community where there is a clear organisational and user benefit.

Channels of contact to the test environments are communicated clearly and coherently.

There must be a clear, well-communicated pathway for companies to access research and innovation infrastructure in the Stockholm region.

Business and Growth Strategy for the Stockholm region:

The region has access to research and innovation infrastructure within several areas. However, many SMEs find it hard to access them. Many companies also need quick access to testing facilities and clinical trials, but find it hard to navigate their way through the public structures, emphasising the importance of simplifying these structures. This is particularly true for the Stockholm region's ability to commercialise solutions, services and products that contribute to sustainable development.

Increase knowledge and use of innovation-promoting procurement and collaboration methods.

Innovation Strategy for Region Stockholm:

Region Stockholm should collaborate with external actors by offering high-quality test and demonstration environments where there is a clear organisational and user benefit. These test environments should also be available for employee innovations.

The Regional Management Office will clarify and simplify channels of contact for external actors regarding innovation issues.

Through innovation-friendly procurement, Region Stockholm will contribute to the development of innovative solutions. The possibility of stimulating innovation in procurement will be systematically explored.

The action plan is being developed by the Regional Management Office through the Programme Office for Life Sciences and Smart Specialisation. The work has been carried out in close dialogue with a working group consisting of representatives from the Innovation Unit at the Department of Research and Innovation at the Regional Management Office, the Flemingsberg Science Foundation, Karolinska Institutet Science Park and Preclinical Lab Karolinska, and in consultation with Strategic Procurement at the Regional Management Office, organisations within Karolinska University Hospital and KI Innovation. The action plan has been endorsed via Region Stockholm's managerial network for R&D and Innovation.

Background and problem definition

In order to maintain and consolidate the Stockholm region's position in global competition and to equip the region's business community for change, a functioning ecosystem for research, innovation and growth must be ensured.

Meeting societal challenges requires collaboration and knowledge exchange between academia, the public sector, civil society and business community. To achieve this, we need to develop the innovation promotion system and improve access for small and medium-sized enterprises to the Stockholm Region's operating environments for research, innovation and business collaboration where there is a clear organisational and user benefit.

” *Research and needs-driven innovation in collaboration between Region Stockholm, academia and business can accelerate the development of future innovative solutions.*

Companies that want to connect with Region Stockholm's organisations often find the channels of contact unclear, and the system difficult to navigate. There are three main elements that need to be addressed:

1. The organisations in the region are not yet familiar with products, services and processes that are new to Region Stockholm and not covered by existing contracts.
2. New solutions where we need to collaborate with businesses to create the conditions for innovation development.
3. The ability and opportunities for our organisations to formulate and communicate their needs in line with Region Stockholm's mission and goals. The aim is to develop potential solutions, which can be achieved via both internal and external collaboration.

In order to make Region Stockholm's regional research and innovation infrastructures and healthcare bodies available for testing new innovations, there needs to be reciprocal capacity and collaborative approaches within the organisation, neither of which are currently readily available.

The organisations within Region Stockholm have limited knowledge of how to promote innovation in procurement, and this needs to be strengthened. The capability of organisations to define their needs and the time assigned for staff to participate in innovation processes are vital elements in facilitating collaboration with the business community to develop new solutions.

This action plan identifies measures that will be required for Region Stockholm to meet its strategic goals and to create a clear process for matching businesses with Region Stockholm's organisations.

The measures are determined based on identified needs. Needs and activities may need to be adjusted and added to over time; the action plan is not set in stone, but is a dynamic document that offers guidance in achieving the designated goals in Region Stockholm's Life Sciences Strategy, Business and Growth Strategy and Innovation Strategy.

Not all activities are resourced at present, and functions may be missing, but we are working together to jointly resolve obstacles along the way and clarify needs to ensure continual progress.

The activities in this action plan improve conditions for research and needs-driven innovation through increased collaboration between Stockholm Region's organisations, academia and the business sector.



Goals, subsidiary goals and proposed activities

The prioritised objectives, subsidiary goals and key actions for implementation are set out below. Some of the proposed actions below are relatively easy to achieve and require minimal input that Region Stockholm can itself control, while others are more complex and time-consuming.

It is important to take a holistic approach. This is partly achieved through the effect that arises when several easily managed measures are dealt with, but also needs to include working with more difficult measures that can have a significant impact on development in the long term.

Goal 1:

The pathway into Region Stockholm and the forms of collaboration between companies and Region Stockholm's organisations regarding innovation are clear and well known.

Goal 2:

Region Stockholm's research and innovation infrastructures are well prepared to offer services and collaborate with the business community where there is a clear organisational and user benefit.

Goal 3:

Region Stockholm has increased both knowledge and methodology to promote innovation and performance in procurement.

Each goal has subsidiary goals and details the actions that need to be implemented in order to achieve the goals. Several actions involve the implementation of pilot projects to test and evaluate individual practices and processes on a small scale before broader implementation is considered.





GOAL 1:

The pathway into Region Stockholm and the forms of collaboration between companies and Region Stockholm's organisations regarding innovation are clear and well known.

The pathway for new products, services and processes and for the desire for innovation collaboration with Region Stockholm tends to be random, for example via already established individual contacts within the organisation, or via Region Stockholm's website. Under the Research and Innovation section, there is a web application via which requests for collaboration can be sent to the region's innovation network. The innovation network includes innovation leaders at the region's innovation offices, and employees within the organisation who are interested in innovation. Businesses' and organisations' knowledge of the pathway into Region Stockholm needs to be clarified, evaluated and further developed. The solution should also include clear information about Region Stockholm's opportunities to collaborate with the business community, and what forms of collaboration may be relevant depending on what stage the company is at in the innovation process. Part of the challenge is that there is no overview of Region Stockholm's internal needs for products or services, and in many cases there are no established approaches for meeting such needs.

Subsidiary goals

1. Region Stockholm's organisations have the capability and the opportunity to formulate and communicate their development needs to achieve Region Stockholm's mission and goals.
2. There are clear processes in place for both internal and external collaboration, in which the legal prerequisites are clarified, to develop and evaluate potential solutions in line with Region Stockholm's communicated needs.
3. There are clear pathways for companies offering products, services and processes that are new to Region Stockholm and not covered by existing contracts, or that are not yet known to the organisations in the region.
4. There are clear pathways for companies wishing to connect with Region Stockholm's organisations to develop innovations.

Actions

- Gap analysis to identify innovation potential and needs at different organisational levels within Region Stockholm. Analysis of organisational needs, existing collaborative processes, ongoing research and innovation projects, skills at local level and key support functions of the procurement organisation (subsidiary goals 1, 2).
- Develop processes for prioritising internal initiatives. What should be pursued via internal and external partnerships, and what can the organisations manage on their own with the help of the structures that exist within the region (subsidiary goals 1, 2).
- Investigate how established innovation support (incubators and science parks) within the Stockholm region can contribute to the implementation of activities between the region's organisations and the business community (subsidiary goals 2, 3).
- Improving Region Stockholm's internal and external communication on innovative processes and solutions to create a resource-efficient match between the business community and the needs of Region Stockholm (subsidiary goals 2, 3, 4).
- Implementation of pilot projects to develop the process for a clear pathway (subsidiary goals 1, 2, 3, 4).
- Evaluation and further development of current technical applications for matching between the business community and Region Stockholm's organisations, and creating new solutions if necessary (subsidiary goals 3, 4).
- Adaptation of the developed process for the pathway for individual organisations within Region Stockholm and implementation in the organisation (subsidiary goals 1, 3, 4).

GOAL 2:

Region Stockholm's research and innovation infrastructures are well prepared to offer services and collaborate with the business community where there is a clear organisational and user benefit.

Region Stockholm has several research and innovation infrastructures with the potential to offer services to the business community. According to European Commission Regulation No 651/2014, research infrastructure means facilities, resources and related services that are used by the scientific community to conduct research. In order to increase business collaboration and optimise the use of resources in these infrastructures, the needs of both businesses and research and innovation infrastructures need to be identified and models for collaboration developed.

Subsidiary goals

1. The legal framework and conditions for collaboration between companies and research and innovation infrastructures are well known.
2. Region Stockholm's research and innovation infrastructures have processes and agreements to enable interaction with, and to offer services to the business community.
3. Region Stockholm's organisations are able to communicate the possibility of using test environments and research and innovation infrastructure to the business community simply and clearly.
4. There are clear and sustainable systems for disseminating knowledge on matching research and innovation infrastructures with the business community.

Actions

- Conduct external monitoring to learn from other regions (subsidiary goals 1, 2, 3, 4).
- Develop criteria for making research and innovation infrastructures available (subsidiary goals 1, 2).
- Take stock of which research and innovation infrastructures have the capacity and ability to make their infrastructure available (subsidiary goals 1, 2, 3).
- Evaluate the maturity and need for support for business development and organisational development of the research and innovation infrastructures that want to interact with and offer services to the business community (subsidiary goals 1, 2).
- Disseminate existing guides and make use of experiences from previously implemented projects such as Stockholm Life Tech, and further develop the learning material (subsidiary goals 1, 4).
- Implementation of pilot projects to test how the collaboration process between the business community and Region Stockholm's research and innovation infrastructures can be applied and adapted for different organisations (subsidiary goals 1, 2, 3).
- Identify suitable collaboration arenas and meeting formats, and stimulate and broaden these to also serve as a forum for research and innovation infrastructures and the business community (subsidiary goals 3, 4).
- Identify and develop targeted systems for the dissemination of knowledge and experience linked to collaboration between the business community and Region Stockholm's research and innovation infrastructures (subsidiary goal 4).

GOAL 3:

Region Stockholm has increased both knowledge and methodology to promote innovation and performance in procurement.

Region Stockholm has introduced the approach of category management to work more strategically with procurement throughout the group. In addition to reducing procurement costs and releasing money for core activities, the work will contribute to greater innovation and increased sustainability. Region Stockholm's procurement policy and guidelines state that procurement work should promote new solutions and innovation to develop quality and economic efficiency in the organisation, for example by using functional procurement and innovation procurement where applicable and commercially appropriate. Innovation procurement is defined in the Swedish Innovation Strategy as procurement that promotes the development and introduction of pioneering and viable solutions and innovations.

Region Stockholm's organisations need improved conditions to promote research and needs-driven innovation in collaboration with the business community and the procurement organisation to achieve the region's goals. The incentives, drivers and roles of the organisations in the innovation process need to be clarified and strengthened in close collaboration with the procurement organisation. Innovation is made possible by creating a culture in which employees are empowered to articulate their needs, and where their ideas and willingness to change are recognised.

Subsidiary goals

1. The conditions and support for Region Stockholm's organisations to participate in procurement work to promote needs-driven innovation have improved.
2. The process for promoting innovation in procurement, when this is beneficial for Region Stockholm's organisations, has become clearer.
3. Region Stockholm's organisations are well placed to become customers within the framework of the Swedish Public Procurement Act (LOU) in order to evaluate new innovative solutions developed in the Stockholm region.

Actions

- Conduct external monitoring and learn from other regions in Sweden (subsidiary goals 1, 2, 3).
- Conduct a gap analysis in collaboration with strategic procurement and relevant target groups within the procurement organisation. The gap analysis should include a survey of organisational needs and key support functions around innovation-promoting procurement, such as legal. The gap analysis should also include the skills and capabilities of expert groups to participate in the procurement process (subsidiary goal 1).
- Develop the support processes for intellectual property rights, legal and procurement for Region Stockholm's organisations (subsidiary goal 1).
- Determine needs and gaps, in terms of knowledge and the process for innovation-promoting procurement for prioritised areas, in line with category management. Reference groups from the business community and Region Stockholm's organisations can describe needs and problems relating to procurement and collaboration between the business community and the public sector (subsidiary goals 1, 2).



Strategies for the Stockholm region

In 2018, Region Stockholm decided to develop a comprehensive Business and Growth Strategy for the Stockholm Region. It was a task that was carried out with broad regional cooperation. The Business and Growth Strategy for the Stockholm Region was adopted in June 2021 (RS 2020-0780), and is:

- A guiding strategic basis for prioritising regional business and growth work.
- The Stockholm Region's Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation, which is a condition for funding initiatives for research, innovation and technological development via the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).
- A document that aims to facilitate cooperation, dialogue and consensus between regional and local stakeholders within academia, public, private and voluntary sectors.

Smart specialisation is a concept introduced by the European Commission to drive innovation and growth in areas with the greatest potential. Based on regional areas of strength in business, research and the public sector, Region Stockholm began a regional analysis and buy-in process in 2015, through which four areas of

smart specialisation were identified as strategically important for public research and innovation initiatives in the Stockholm region. These areas are interconnected, dependent on each other, and take account of the entire Stockholm region.

” The strategic focus areas shall contribute towards strengthening the Stockholm region's international competitiveness and sustainable growth through joint gathering of forces and coordination.

The focuses relate to areas that the region's actors have prioritised, and highlight what needs to be done to create the right conditions for a competitive business sector and sustainable growth.

One of the areas of smart specialisation is life science, care and health. Life sciences is one of the region's most important and fastest-growing sectors, uniquely positioned with a top-rated hospital, universities conducting world-leading research, and a strong business community that includes everything from start-ups, to global companies. As a sub-strategy of the Business and Growth Strategy, a regional life sciences strategy has therefore been drawn up with the aim of working systematically with the industry and other actors in a structured way to identify opportunities for, and obstacles to, the continued growth and development of the sector. The Life Sciences Strategy was adopted in spring 2021 (RS 2019-0751). The strategy has ambitious objectives, aiming to make Stockholm one of the world's leading life sciences regions.

The strategy highlights five strategic development areas:

1. World-leading access to structured health and care process data.
2. Health and social care systems available for interaction with research and innovation and collaboration with business.
3. Precision medicine gives patients and residents access to high-resolution diagnostics and personalised prevention and treatment.
4. Interdisciplinary collaboration creates solutions to complex challenges.
5. Life science companies research, develop and grow in the Stockholm region.

Region Stockholm has also developed an innovation strategy following a decision by the Regional Council in 2020. The Innovation Strategy aims to strengthen the innovation capability of all organisations owned by, or carried out with funding from Region Stockholm, so that new solutions are used, disseminated and integrated in the long term. Residents, patients, relatives, public transport users and visitors are the starting point in endeavours to develop Region Stockholm's organisations in the short and long term.

The aim is for the Innovation Strategy to help ensure that innovation work moves away from a siloed approach, and has clear conditions for innovation procurement, management of intellectual property rights and collaboration with external partners. Enabling innovation requires a culture that recognises employees' ideas and encourages their willingness to change and develop.



Implementation of action plans

” To achieve the visions in the strategies, several actors will need to implement measures both within their own organisation and together.

The strategies should therefore be complemented by joint and active work, specified, organised and followed up via joint action plans.

The working groups appointed to work on the action plans will set goals, subsidiary goals and indicators for the work, identify specific measures in different areas where action is required, and also identify who is responsible for which action. Those responsible for the action plans are to regularly report progress on the action plans to the region's management, as well as in other relevant forums.

A working group responsible for an action plan is not part of the line organisation as such, but is the collaborative arena in which concrete coordination and work towards shared goals takes place. The working group therefore has no decision-making function. Members of the working group represent their own organisations and act as the interface between them and the work of the action plan.

In this role, members of the working group are expected to gain endorsement for the action plan in their own organisation. One important task is to identify the extent to which joint work is consistent with, or deviates from the mission and goals of each party. If the working group identifies conflicts of interest, these should be raised both within the working group and within the respective line organisation. The success of the work within the action plan is based on all participating actors taking responsibility for their role, and on a willingness to cooperate that leads to continuous improvement.

The structure of the action plans is based on the following steps:

1. Identify activities already in place in the Stockholm region and nationally that target the identified goals.
2. Identify the gaps that are not being addressed.
3. Initiate activities to close the gaps.
4. Communicate actions and goals.
5. Follow up each goal and evaluate the activities.
6. Align strategic objectives with activities.

The work of individual action plans should take account of the goals and subsidiary goals set out in the strategies relevant to the focus of the action plan. For action plans linked to the Life Sciences Strategy, these are:

Strategies for the Stockholm region:

- Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region, RUFS 2050 (TRN 2015-0015)
- Business and Growth Strategy for the Stockholm Region (RS 2020-0780)
- Life Sciences Strategy for the Stockholm Region (RS 2019-0751)

Internal strategies for Region Stockholm:

- Research, Education and Development Strategy (RS 2019- 0750)
- Innovation Strategy for Region Stockholm (RS 2019-0672)
- Sustainability Strategy for Region Stockholm (RS 2020-0779)

The work must also follow Region Stockholm's policies that are relevant to the focus of the action plan, for example Procurement policy and guidelines (RS 2023-0758).

