



Swedish Society for Virology (SSV) Newsletter, December 2022

Dear fellow virologists,

This will be the eight and the last newsletter from the society this year. As this is also the last newsletter from me (Niklas) I also invited Sigvard Olofsson – founder of the Smögen Summer Symposium on virology, Lennart Svensson – the first chairman of the society board, and Ali Mirazimi, our next chairman of the board, to coauthor the newsletter with some perspectives from the past and to highlight the development of the society. Initiated by Sigvard Olofsson, the first meeting of what is now formally registered as *Virus- and pandemifonden – Svenska Sällskapet för Virologi*, took place 2005, nearly twenty years ago and with some 40 participants (see photo below).



The meeting expanded rapidly and in 2006 we had to move out from Sjösportsgården and move into Smögen Hafvsbad. Roger I Glass and Ari Helenius were invited as the first external keynote speakers 2006, on the topics of rotavirus epidemiology and vaccinology, and virus cell entry, respectively. Thanks to the beautiful environment and relaxed atmosphere, the meeting obtained a reputation and has been much appreciated by our guests, who include Nobel Laureates Charles Rice (2008) and Stanley Prusiner (2018). The society was initiated by Sigvard, Lennart Svensson, and Tomas Bergström, and formally registered as a non-profit organization in 2009 with Lennart as the first chairman of the board, who led the society until 2016. Kristina Nyström is doing a fantastic job as the organizer of the meeting.

In 2020 we initiated Virus- och pandemifonden (Pandemifonden) and updated our statutes with the aims to strengthen and support Swedish virology, and to share knowledge about viruses and virus-caused diseases. Supported by donations from e.g., private and corporate sources, we are happy to announce 2022 year awardee of Pandemifonden's Sigvard Olofsson Award to Dr Annasara Lenman, Umeå University for her research about virus-host interactions, and Pandemifonden's prize, with the generous support from Professor emerita Eva-Maria Fenyo, to Dr Leo Hanke, Karolinska Institute for his research about emerging and re-emerging viruses. Each awardee receives 100 000 SEK for research. The need for new knowledge and

tools to discover, understand, treat, and prevent virus-caused diseases is increasing. It is our intention that we – via Pandemifonden – can and will fill an important function also in future.

Many activities are ongoing and we expect further developments, which is likely to require an extra annual meeting for the members in early 2023 (zoom). More info to come and we look forward to seeing you there and in Smögen 2023!

Ali Mirazimi, chairman of the board 2023 -.

Niklas Arnberg, chairman of the board 2017-2022.

Lennart Svensson, chairman of the board, 2009-2016.

Sigvard Olofsson, founder of the Smögen Summer Symposium of virology and chairman of the first symposium organizing committee.

1) **New SSV Board constellation 2023**

- A big hand and thanks to Niklas Arnberg, for six years our dedicated and passionate chairman, who, among other things, fiercely has advocated Swedish virus research support at various levels, including the launch of the "Virus- och pandemifonden.
- Welcome Ali Mirazimi, as our new chairman.
- Many thanks also to Michael Lindberg and Kristina Broliden for many years as board members and for all dedicated work in support of Swedish virology.
- Welcome Emmi Andersson, Folkhälsomyndigheten, and Linn Persson Berg, Göteborg University, as new board members.

2) **Open positions**

- **Postdoc position** in virology research at Statens Serum institute (SSI) Copenhagen, Denmark. Deadline Jan 6. For more information see [link](#)
- **PhD student position** in immunovirology at Linköping University. See attached announcement.

3) **Awards and Grants:**

PhD students and postdocs are welcome to apply for the **SSV travel grants**. See guidelines and how to apply on our [website](#), or if you have questions contact Ali.Mirazimi@ki.se

4) **Meetings:**

- Save the Date: **2nd ScanVir meeting**, Tromsø, Norway, March 22-24, 2023, see [link](#). More information soon.
- **8th European Congress of Virology**, Gdansk, Poland, May 4-7, 2023. See [link](#) for abstract submission (deadline Feb 6) and registration
- Save the Date: **20th Smögen Symposium** on Virology, August 24-26, 2023
Two keynote speakers already assigned: **Emma Thomson**, Glasgow, on hepatitis with unknown aetiology in children and **Hugo Zeberg**, Karolinska institutet, on gene flow from Neandertals impacting viral diseases.

5) **Pandemifonden activities:**

- Thanks to all who accepted to write for **Viruskollen.se**! Many of you have already sent back texts about your favorite virus (or family). Viruskollen.se will be a useful tool for sharing knowledge and for learning about viruses and virus-caused diseases. Besides Viruskollen.se, we plan to update our homepage in early 2023.
- We have interviewed most members of Pandemifonden's Society Advisory Board and will share their experiences in a report next year, which will be a cross section of the effects of the pandemic in our society.
- We recently joined forces with Svenska Covidföreningen in a knowledge sharing and fund-raising campaign about covid and postcovid. Read more at Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/pandemifonden/> or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Pandemifonden/>.
- We note that more and more companies and organizations note about us, and want to collaborate in different projects, which we are happy about.

6) **"What's flying in the air?"**, help Folkhälsomyndigheten to recruit more sentinel study sites, i.e. primary care centers and children clinics, for the purpose to enlarge number of sentinel samplings of respiratory viral infections. For more information contact Emmi.Andersson@folkhalsomyndigheten.se

7) **Stay updated** with the **virus podcast** by Lennart Svensson and guests (in Swedish). www.viruspodden.se

8) Anyone that has suggestions on **virology publications** that should be **highlighted**, and are of interest for Swedish virologist, please send this information to Tomas.Bergstrom@microbio.gu.se

9) For those of you that are active at **social media**, it would also be a great help to increase awareness – and donations – if you follow/share Pandemifonden's messages. If you feel comfortable, recommend your network to follow Pandemifonden:

- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/pandemifonden/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Pandemifonden>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/pandemifonden>

10) **Reminder!** We kindly ask you to post, in your neighborhood, the attached Pandemifonden poster, with information on how to donate money.

**Best wishes to all members this Holiday season
from SSV**