



Swedish Society for Virology (SSV) Newsletter, May 2026

Words from the Chair of the SSV Board and the Secretary General of Virus- och pandemifonden

Dear SSV members,

We hope this message finds you well and that you have the opportunity to enjoy the signs of spring alongside your research and professional activities.

At the same time, recent events around the world remind us that the field of virology remains more important than ever. The recent Andes virus situation, together with the ongoing Ebola virus outbreak in Congo, highlights the constant threat posed by emerging and re-emerging viruses. WHO has now declared the Ebola outbreak to be of public health international concern. The ninth during the last 15 years, and the ninth caused by a virus. These events clearly demonstrate how essential our collective work, expertise, and preparedness are for public health, health care, and society.

Your research, collaborations, teaching, diagnostics, and public health efforts continue to play a critical role in strengthening our understanding of infectious diseases and improving our ability to respond to future outbreaks. The Swedish virology community has repeatedly shown remarkable commitment, scientific excellence, and willingness to collaborate across disciplines and institutions.

As we move forward, it is important that we continue to support one another, foster new collaborations, and inspire the next generation of virologists. Together, we contribute not only to scientific progress, but also to global health preparedness.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you about the upcoming SSV meeting in Smögen, taking place on 20–22 August 2026. The meeting will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss exciting new science, strengthen collaborations, and connect with each other in a stimulating and inspiring environment.

Virus- and pandemifonden are continuously engaging in events with the aim to share knowledge about virus-caused diseases, outbreaks, and potential pandemics. Since the latest newsletter we have participated in round table discussions at Folk och Forskning (People and Science in Uppsala), and seminars in the Swedish Parliament as well as the British Embassy with focus on medical research (in general, and where virology is important) and the need of a vaccine program for elderly, respectively.

We are also preparing for the Virus Report of 2025, which will also discuss outbreaks taking place during winter/spring 2026. The report will be free to download from Virus- och pandemifonden home page, thanks to all company partners for enabling this work!, but also shared and discussed at Almedalen in late June. We are also happy about Virus- och pandemifonden being invited to several seminars and round table discussions about virus-caused diseases and immunization/vaccination programs.

Please note 1) exciting courses being announced by [National Doctoral Program in Virus Infection and Pandemics](#) for PhD students and postdocs. NDP-VIP is organized by the Swedish Research Council's Virus- and pandemic program, which was initiated a few years

ago thanks to initiatives from our organization. This is a good example of how our organization contributes to support the future of Swedish virology.

Please note 2) below also two calls from our company partners 1) Pfizer regarding RSV diagnosis of patients and 2) Gilead, regarding Gilead Nordic Fellowship Program

All the best from Ali Mirazimi, Chair of the board, and Niklas Arnberg, Secretary General at Virus- och pandemifonden

1) **23rd Smögen Summer Symposium on Virology**

The [registration](#) for the **23rd Smögen Summer Symposium on Virology** is now open. The meeting takes place August 20-22, 2026 in Smögen, Sweden. Please note the **deadline** for abstracts for oral presentation is May 31.

The scientific program will include Keynote lectures from outstanding national and international experts in various fields of Virology. Another important part of the Symposium is the short oral presentations representing Scandinavian Virology research, ranging from basic to applied Virology to Clinical Virology.

We have succeeded in engaging three excellent **keynote lecturers**:

Dr. Raymond Schinazi, Professor at Emory University. His research focuses on antiviral treatment of virus infections such as HIV, HBV, HCV and emerging viruses.

Dr. Josef Penninger, Professor and Scientific Director at Helmholtz Center for Infection Research. He works with understanding the underlying mechanisms of infectious diseases. He works with developing a broad range of *in vitro* and *in vivo* tools to reveal the mechanisms of viral infections and diseases. **Dr. Anna Smed Sörensen**, Professor at Karolinska Institutet. Her research focuses on interactions between viral infections and the immune system, with particular emphasis on immune responses in respiratory tract infections and inflammation in humans.

2) **24rd Smögen Summer Symposium on Virology (2027) – Keynote suggestions**

Even though this year's **Smögen Summer Symposium on Virology** has yet not taken place we are already planning for the meeting 2027! As this meeting is for all of you who are members of SSV we would like to receive **suggestions for Keynote lecturers** that you would like us to invite. If you have suggestions, you can send them to anne-lie.blomstrom@slu.se or to any other member of [the SSV board](#) (**deadline for suggestions: August 31**). You are also welcome to make your suggestions at the SSV member meeting at the end of this year's Smögen Summer Symposium on Virology.

3) **Message from NDP-VIP team: Open upcoming courses**

Are you a **PhD student or postdoc**, don't forget to become a member of the National Doctoral Programme in Virus Infections and Pandemics ([NDP-VIP](#)). NDP-VIP, yearly arranges several advanced courses with theoretical and technical relevance to virology and pandemic preparedness and will provide you with a national and international network of scientists at all levels that work within virology and pandemic preparedness.

Organoid Models in Infection Biology

This course provides an overview of organoid-based model systems and their application in infection biology to study host–pathogen interactions in different tissues.

-  **Course dates:** November 16-18, 2026
 **Location:** Stora Brännbo, Sigtuna, Sweden
 **Registration deadline:** August 28, 2026
 **[More info and registration](#)**

4) **Open positions in Virology**

Research position in [Plant Breeding and Virus Resistance in Protein Crops](#) at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden. **Deadline: June 3.**

Postdoc position in [Virome-wide Serology and Pandemic Preparedness](#), KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden. **Deadline: June 10.**

PhD position in [Chemistry, with a specialization in structural and molecular virology](#) at Umeå University, Sweden. **Deadline: July 13.**

Postdoc position in [Virus-initiated membrane remodelling](#) at Umeå University, Sweden. **Deadline: August 1.**

If you have an open position that you want to be included in the SSV Newsletter please send an email to anne-lie.blomstrom@slu.se

5) **Meetings**

Bunyavirus 2026 Conference, July 8-10, 2026, Bilbao, Spain. For more information: <https://bunyavirus-meeting.bnitm.de/>. **Abstract deadline closed.**

The 32nd International Symposium on Hepatitis C virus, Flavivirus, and Related Viruses (HCV-Flavi 2026) September 14-17, 2026 Copenhagen. For more information: www.hcv-flavi2026.org. **Extended abstract deadline May 31, 2026.**

The 28th Annual Conference of the European Society for Clinical Virology, September 16-19, 2026, Porto, Portugal. For more information: <https://www.escv2026.org/>. **Abstract deadline closed.**

The 24th workshop - Cell Biology of Viral Infections on Cellular Routes and Roadblocks in Viral Genome Trafficking, October 28-30, 2026, Kloster Schöntal, Germany. For more information: <https://cellviro.g-f-v.org/>. **Registration is open**

6) **Virology News**

The mosquito-borne Orthoflaviviruses include important clinical pathogens such as dengue virus (DENV), Zika virus, West Nile virus, Japanese encephalitis virus, and Yellow fever virus. Despite having a huge impact on global health, no registered antiviral drugs are available against these viruses. In this paper ([An orthoflavivirus inhibitor targeting multifunctional NS2A protein, a previously unidentified target](#)), as a result of a large collaborative effort involving several pharmaceutical companies and university-based research groups, a lead compound with broad-spectrum activity against several orthoflaviviruses is described. The compound, JNJ-1953 was identified after screening of 200.000 small molecules and targeted the non-structural protein NS2A of DENV-2, with impacts on viral RNA packaging. The paper has two merits: i/ identifying NS2A as a novel antiviral target in DENV; ii/ showing the possibilities of a broad antiviral approach to flaviviruses.

Anyone that has suggestions on **virology publications** that are of interest for Swedish virologist and should be **highlighted** under **Virology News**, please contact Tomas.Bergstrom@microbio.gu.se

- 7) **Viruspodden**
Please listen to and share **Viruspodden**, a podcast (in Swedish) where Lennart Svensson and Åke Lundkvist invites guests and discusses various virus related topics. Recent episodes discuss e.g., TBEV, VZV, HPV and HCV. You find the podcast on various platforms such as Spotify and Podcaster as well as here:
<https://viruspodden.podbean.com/>
- 8) **Pandemifonden and SSV Calls**
PhD students and junior postdocs (less than five year old PhD at the date of application), who are members of SSV, can apply for **travel grants** for participation in international meetings, including international meetings given in Sweden. SSV membership is automatically acquired through participation in the annual Smögen Summer Symposium on Virology and is valid for three consecutive years following meeting participation.
- 9) **National and International Calls**
At Swedish Research Council (VR), see <https://www.vr.se/english/applying-for-funding/calls-and-decisions.html>.

Pfizer Global Medical Grants (GMG) supports the global healthcare community's independent initiatives (e.g., research, quality improvement or education) to improve patient outcomes in areas of unmet medical need that are aligned with Pfizer's medical and/or scientific strategies. Pfizer's GMG competitive grant program involves a publicly posted **Request for Proposal (RFP)** that provides detail regarding a specific area of interest, sets timelines for review and approval.

[The current Quality Improvement \(QI\) program](#) invites proposals to implement sustainable, system-level changes that **improve timely and guideline-concordant RSV laboratory testing** in adult patients admitted to the Emergency Departments (ED) or hospitalized with respiratory symptoms. Projects should translate existing evidence on RSV diagnostics into local practice by **strengthening testing pathways, raising clinical awareness, and enhancing reporting mechanisms** to support improved patient management and surveillance. **Deadline June 22, 2026**

Gilead Sciences Nordic Fellowship Programme supports local innovation and best practices to ultimately **improve patient care** in our four therapy areas – **Inflammation (PBC) Virology (HIV, HDV), Cell Therapy, and Oncology**.

The aim of [Gilead Sciences Nordic Fellowship Programme](#) is to support healthcare organisations and/or academic institutions to develop innovative, high-impact projects that **deliver measurable benefits to patients, healthcare providers** and communities impacted by Gilead's therapeutic areas of expertise. **Deadline June 30, 2026**

- 10) **Opportunities together with Young GfV for early career researchers**
Young GfV regularly organizes workshops focusing on specific scientific topics. These workshops are intentionally kept small (around 20-40 participants) to provide a unique opportunity for students and early-career researchers. Further information about the workshops and preliminary programs can be found on [Young GfV homepage](#).

The 24th workshop of the study group „Cell Biology of Viral Infections“ on **“Cellular Routes and Roadblocks in Viral Genome Trafficking”** will be taking place at the Schöntal Monastery on October 28-30, 2026. **Registration is open**

- 11) **International Networks**
The Global Virus Network (GVN) engages in Pandemic Preparedness to Advance Global Surveillance and Early Detection of Viral Threats. See [GVN homepage](#) for more information about the network and upcoming events.

- 12) If you like to post news on our website, www.swedishvirology.se please email Annika.Karlsson@ki.se, or if you like to add news to the next Newsletter email anne-lie.blomstrom@slu.se
- 13) 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 Pandemifondens 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/>
- 14) Would you like to engage in Pandemifonden as a volunteer and join **Crew Pandemifonden**, together with us/others who share the vision and ambition of Pandemifonden? Contact Niklas.Arnberg@pandemifonden.se
Together we can make a difference, and, it will be fun!
- 15) **Reminder!** We kindly ask you to post, in your neighbourhood, the attached Pandemifonden poster, with information on how to donate money.
- 16) [Information](#) on Virus- och Pandemifonden – **Swedish Society for Virology membership:** Attending the Smögen Summer Symposium on Virology will make you, free of charge, member of SSV for the coming three years. If you want to opt out of the membership, do not want to receive Newsletters or have other suggestions, please contact anne-lie.blomstrom@slu.se

**Best wishes to all members (n=304)
from the SSV Pandemifonden Board**



På GSK förenar vi vetenskap, teknik och kompetens för att både förebygga och behandla sjukdomar.

Vi forskar fram, utvecklar och tillverkar innovativa vacciner och läkemedel. Vårt arbete bedrivs främst inom fyra stora forskningsområden: HIV, andningsvägar, immunologi och onkologi.

GSK tillhandahåller vacciner mot infektionssjukdomar i livets alla skeden.

Infektionssjukdomar drabbar alla, överallt, och sätter press på samhället samt hälso- och sjukvårdssystemet. Vår kombinerade expertis inom vacciner och läkemedel innebär att vi kan fokusera på både förebyggande och behandling av infektionssjukdomar.

GlaxoSmithKline AB, 08-638 93 00
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Today, we continue to invest in research that will prepare us for emerging pandemic threats, enable elimination of hepatitis and we work tirelessly toward our vision to end the HIV epidemic for everyone, everywhere.

Gilead Sciences Sweden AB
Hemvärmgatan 9, 171 54 Solna
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SE-UNB-0347 April 2025



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danaher.

RSV burden *is broader* than hospitalizations

Current management of *RSV infections* in young children requires *substantial healthcare resource utilization* in both inpatient & outpatient settings.^{1,2,3}



To read the latest RSV report, scan the QR-code or click the link:
<https://qrco.de/bfqz18>



sanofi

1. Hall CB. The burgeoning burden of respiratory syncytial virus among children. *Infect Disord Drug Targets*. 2012;12(2):92-97.
2. Cromer D, van Hoek AJ, Newall AT, Pollard AJ, Jit M. Burden of pediatric respiratory syncytial virus disease and potential effect of different immunization strategies: a modelling and cost-effectiveness analysis for England. *The Lancet Public health*. 2017;2(8):e367-e374.
3. Santé Publique France. Bronchiolite: Bilan de la surveillance 2018-19. (2019)

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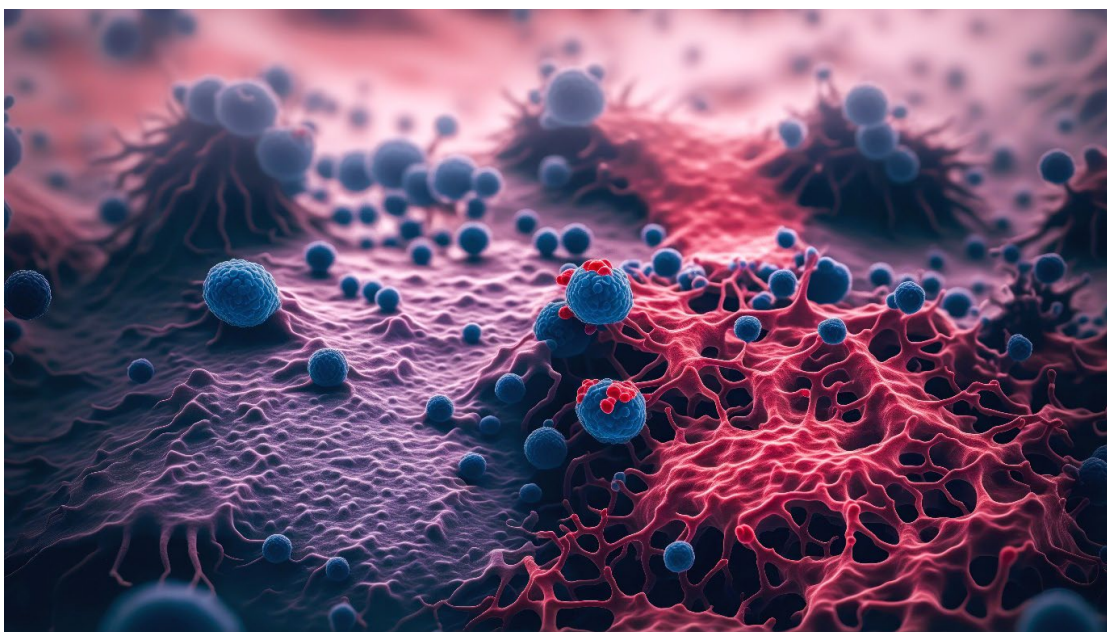


Foto: Getty Images

Vi är övertygade om att banbrytande forskning och multidisciplinärt samarbete mellan akademi, industri och hälsosektorn är avgörande för att utveckla nästa generations behandlingar och vacciner mot virussjukdomar. Genom att kombinera avancerad virologisk forskning, innovativa bioteknologiska lösningar och datadriven läkemedelsutveckling kan vi möta nuvarande och framtida pandemiska hot.

Pfizer i Sverige samarbetar med Pandemifonden för att stödja svensk virusforskning, stärka den vetenskapliga infrastrukturen och att bidra till kunskapsspridning om virus, immunrespons och antivirala behandlingsstrategier. Tillsammans bygger vi en mer motståndskraftig samtid och framtid mot infektionssjukdomar.

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