



Personally, I don't handle
the word 'no' very well.

Mia Norrman, Global Chief of Staff at EF Education First,
on how fostering a culture of saying 'yes' doesn't mean
ignoring different opinions or losing focus.

Leadership beyond borders - page 12.



ABOUT THE SWEDISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR THE UK

The Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the United Kingdom is the ultimate platform for entrepreneurs and businesses within the Swedish-British business community. Founded in 1906 – by business and for business – we have represented, inspired, and promoted our members, extended commercial relations between our countries, and delivered first-class services and events for over a century.

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DEAR MEMBER,

As we approach the end of 2024, it's natural to reflect on the work, connections, and progress made over the past few months. The latter part of autumn is always one of the busiest times for us here at SCC UK, with events and initiatives that emphasise the power of collaboration and our community.

One highlight of this season is our leadership summit, Outer Thinking, followed by our Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Landmark Hotel. The two days form a perfect blend: one focused on thought-provoking discussions around leadership, resilience, and innovation, accompanied by the chance to unwind and celebrate the day after at our biggest event of the year.

But as much as this time of year is about celebration, it's also a time for reflection and planning ahead. What have we learned, and what do we want to carry forward into 2025? Like many of you, it's time for us to realign our goals, embrace change, and prepare for the opportunities and challenges that come with the new year.

At SCC UK, we're ready to carry the momentum of this year into the next, building on the strength of our connections and our commitment to collaboration – a theme that continues to shape our work, as highlighted in the stories featured in this issue of LINK. Together, we stay adaptable and prepared for whatever comes next.

As always, thank you for being part of our community. We're excited about what 2025 holds and look forward to working together, creating even more opportunities for growth and success.

Wishing you a joyful Christmas season and a great start to the new year!

FREDRIK WARNERYD
Chief Executive
Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK

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MEET THE PATRONS

The patronship of the Chamber consists of a core group of Member businesses, all committed to the long-term support of the Swedish-British business community. The Patrons are advocates for the Members of the Chamber and in return, the patronship comes with a range of added benefits, exclusive access and invites as well as extended marketing and networking opportunities.

Founded in 1992, the patronship has grown steadily and consists today of a vast number of Member businesses that represent a wide range of industries, from the financial sector and manufacturing, to retail and tech. The Patrons reflect the strength of the Chamber's business platform and represent some of the largest brands in Swedish-British business.



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BREWING A NORDIC LEGACY AT BURTON ALBION FC

TEXT: EMMA SILVER | PHOTOS: BURTON ALBION FC, SCC UK

Burton Albion FC, known as "the Brewers," is a small yet sturdy English Football League (EFL) team with deep community roots. When the Nordic Football Group (NFG) became the majority owner of Burton Albion FC in June this year, it marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter for the club and its supporters. This acquisition by a group of Nordic investors promises to blend Scandinavian values and innovation with English football tradition, setting the stage for a unique journey.

The Nordic Football Group's choice to invest in Burton Albion FC was rooted in a shared passion for football and the long-standing popularity of English football in the Nordics. As one of the smallest clubs in the EFL, Burton embodies the underdog spirit. "This is a club of the community, family-oriented, and driven by a legacy of dedication," says Kevin Skabo, Co-owner, Board Member, and Commercial Director of NFG. The group was drawn to Burton's rich history under former Chairman, Ben Robinson, whose visionary leadership laid a strong foundation.

For NFG, the appeal wasn't just the club's heritage, but also its potential. With a vision to modernise operations while preserving Burton's local identity, NFG is set to transform the club into a sustainable, well-run organisation that resonates with fans both locally and internationally.

Nordic values in the English game

The Nordics are renowned for strong work ethics, sustainable business practices, and collaborative culture. Bringing these values to Burton Albion FC has been a key focus for NFG. The group envisions building a bridge between Nordic and English football, aiming to create new opportunities for collaboration and fan engagement.

One such initiative in the pipeline is the introduction of youth football camps in Burton, involving Nordic grassroots teams. "It's about building relationships

and introducing Burton to younger audiences in the Nordics now, making them potential fans of the future," says Kevin.

The Nordic Football Group is committed to ensuring that these initiatives benefit both the club and its local community. "We recognise the importance of listening to and involving fans, and that's why we've focused on enhancing fan engagement while staying true to the club's family-oriented atmosphere," Kevin adds, highlighting initiatives like affordable family tickets, youth clinics, and school visits.



**"Whether you support
Liverpool, Arsenal, or any other
Premier League team, Burton
can become a club that everyone
in the Nordics rallies behind."**

**KEVIN SKABO, CO-OWNER, BOARD MEMBER,
AND COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR OF NFG**





The introduction of Nordic values has already started to influence the club's operations and sponsorship approach, with a growing interest from Nordic companies eager to partner with a club that aligns with their values.

Challenges and opportunities

Transitioning the club into a new era has come with its share of challenges. "Taking over from a legacy like Ben Robinson's and modernising operations while respecting the club's traditions has been a balancing act," says Kevin. Additionally, integrating a new style of play and introducing 23 new players to the squad in a single season has tested the team's adaptability.

Despite these hurdles, Burton's loyal fan base has stood steadfast. "They're very thankful for what the Nordic Football Group is trying to implement in terms of new and better fan engagement. Even though we have only won one game yet this season, they keep believing. On behalf of NFG, I'm forever thankful for their unwavering support," Kevin exclaims.

Vision for the future

NFG's vision for Burton Albion FC centres on sustainability, collaboration, and community. They aim to build a club that fans not only support, but also feel deeply connected to. While immediate goals focus on stabilising operations and improving results, the long-term dream includes potential promotion, achieved in a measured, sustainable manner.

Additionally, the group aspires to position Burton Albion FC as the "second favourite club" for Nordic football fans. "Whether you support Liverpool, Arsenal, or any other Premier League team, Burton can become a club that everyone in the Nordics rallies behind," Kevin says.

Joining SCC UK

As new members of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK, NFG sees immense value in connecting with Swedish businesses and individuals. "Building partnerships and leveraging networks is crucial. By bringing great people together, we believe great results will follow," Kevin explains.

The group's engagement with the Chamber, including participation in events like the Swedish Business Footprint in the Midlands 2024, highlights their commitment to collaboration. Through these connections, NFG hopes to further integrate Burton Albion FC into the Nordic business ecosystem, creating shared value for all involved.



From the left: Tom Davidson, Kevin Skabo, & Ben Robinson speaking at SCC UK Swedish Business Footprint in the Midlands 2024

A new chapter for Burton Albion FC

Burton Albion FC's journey under Nordic Football Group's stewardship is just beginning. With a blend of Nordic values, English tradition, and a focus on sustainability and community, the future looks promising. As Kevin aptly puts it, "It's all about the right timing and building a solid foundation. The best is yet to come."



Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors are becoming increasingly important in the business world as companies strive to align their operations with sustainable, ethical governance, and social responsibility. Katherine David, Commercial Disputes Partner at commercial law firm and SCC UK Member Hamblins LLP, explains why ESG-related disputes are on the rise, and provides guidance on what businesses can do to help prevent them.

ESG regulation

The EU adopted the Regulation on the Transparency and Integrity of Environmental, Social, and Governance Rating Activities (the ESGR) in April 2024, making it the first jurisdiction in the world to regulate the ESG ratings space.

In the UK, Chancellor Rachel Reeves has set out her intention to implement a code of conduct for ESG ratings agencies in 2025, and has directed HM Treasury to respond quickly to a public consultation initiated by the former Conservative government into a future regulatory regime for ESG ratings providers.

There can be significant disparity between ratings awarded by agencies to the same or similar businesses or products, alongside a lack of transparency in how such ratings are determined. Improved regulation will help to mitigate against potential greenwashing by ESG agencies and ‘improve clarity and trust’ in the ratings themselves.

A growing focus on ESG commitments, twinned with new legislation on the horizon, means related disputes including litigation are on the rise. These disputes can lead to costly legal battles, damage to a company’s reputation, and long-term operational challenges. Understanding the nature of ESG disputes, why they are increasing, and how businesses can mitigate these risks is crucial in today’s corporate landscape.

What are ESG disputes?

ESG disputes arise when companies face challenges or legal actions stemming from their environmental, social, or governance-related commitments. As regulatory bodies, investors, and the general public demand more from businesses in terms of sustainable practices, ethical behaviour, and corporate transparency, companies are held to increasingly higher standards. When companies fail to meet these standards or breach their ESG commitments, disputes can arise. These disputes may take the form of litigation, regulatory actions, or reputational damage, all of which can have significant financial and operational consequences.

THE RISE OF ESG DISPUTES: **A GROWING CONCERN FOR BUSINESSES**

GUEST COLUMN: KATHERINE DAVID, PARTNER, HAMLINS

Examples of ESG disputes

1. Environmental disputes

Environmental issues are at the forefront of ESG disputes. These disputes often involve allegations that a company has failed to meet its climate-related goals, engaged in harmful pollution practices, or violated environmental laws and regulations. For example, a company might face litigation for not adhering to its publicly-stated climate targets, or for causing environmental harm through negligent practices such as improper waste disposal or deforestation.

2. Social disputes

Social issues in ESG can lead to disputes related to employment rights, human rights, and the impact of business operations on local communities. Companies that fail to ensure fair employment practices in their supply chains, for example, may face legal challenges. Similarly, disputes may arise if a company is perceived to have harmed a community by its operations, such as through the displacement of local populations or exploitation of natural resources.

3. Governance disputes

Governance-related disputes often involve accusations of misconduct by directors, lack of transparency, or governance failures within the company. Shareholders may bring legal action if they believe the board of directors has failed to act in the best interests of the company, such as through poor decision-making or lack of oversight. Governance disputes can also arise from failures to comply with disclosure requirements, particularly as regulators increase the demand for transparency in ESG-related reporting.



Why are ESG disputes growing?

Several factors are contributing to the rise in ESG-related disputes, making it essential for companies to understand and manage these risks proactively.

1. Tighter regulations

Governments around the world are implementing stricter regulations related to ESG, such as mandatory climate risk disclosures and requirements for sustainable business practices. Failure to comply with these regulations can result in significant legal challenges, including fines, penalties, and regulatory enforcement actions.

2. Active investors

Investors are becoming more vocal in their expectations for companies to adhere to ESG commitments. When there is a gap between a company's stated ESG goals and its actual performance, investors may withdraw their support, engage in activist shareholder actions, or initiate legal disputes. This growing trend of investor scrutiny is driving companies to be more accountable for their ESG performance.

3. Public accountability

The rise of social media and the increased visibility of corporate actions have heightened public scrutiny of businesses' ESG practices. Environmental damage, poor employment practices, or governance failures can quickly escalate into reputational crises, leading to legal disputes and loss of consumer trust. Companies that fail to address public concerns regarding ESG issues may find themselves embroiled in costly litigation or regulatory investigations.

4. Contractual breaches

As ESG commitments are increasingly embedded in contracts, particularly in mergers, acquisitions, and supplier agreements, breaches of these commitments can lead to legal disputes. When a company fails to fulfil its contractual ESG obligations, the other party may file a breach of contract claim, resulting in potentially costly legal action and reputational harm.

Conclusion

As ESG factors become increasingly important in the business world, companies must be vigilant in managing the legal risks associated with their environmental, social, and governance commitments. The rise of ESG disputes underscores the need for businesses to integrate ESG considerations into their operations, strengthen compliance programmes, and maintain transparent communication with stakeholders. By doing so, companies can not only reduce the likelihood of costly disputes but also enhance their reputation as responsible corporate businesses.

Mitigating the risks of ESG disputes

Businesses must take proactive steps to mitigate their legal and reputational risks. The following strategies can help companies reduce the likelihood of ESG-related disputes:

1. Strengthen compliance

A robust ESG compliance programme is essential for mitigating dispute risks. Companies should ensure their ESG commitments are backed by clear policies, regular audits, and transparent reporting mechanisms. By identifying and addressing potential compliance issues early, companies can prevent disputes before they arise.

2. Conduct due diligence

When engaging in mergers, acquisitions, or supply chain management, conducting thorough ESG due diligence is critical. This process helps companies identify potential ESG risks and integrate them into their overall risk management strategies, minimising the likelihood of disputes.

3. Communicate transparently

Clear and consistent communication about ESG goals and progress is essential for managing expectations and preventing disputes. Companies should ensure that their public statements about ESG initiatives align with their actual performance, avoiding discrepancies that could lead to investor dissatisfaction or legal challenges.

4. Engage stakeholders

Regular engagement with stakeholders – including investors, employees, and local communities – can help companies address concerns early and prevent disputes. By fostering open dialogue and responding to stakeholder concerns in a timely manner, businesses can build trust and avoid litigation.

5. Prepare for litigation

Despite best efforts to mitigate risks, ESG disputes may still arise. Companies should have a plan in place to manage ESG-related litigation, including engaging legal experts with experience in ESG disputes and ensuring that their legal teams are prepared to handle these complex cases.



MEET MIA NORRMAN

LEADERSHIP BEYOND BORDERS

Meet Mia Norrman, to whom leadership is not confined to a single discipline or a well-trodden path. As SCC UK Board Member and Global Chief of Staff at Patron EF Education First, Mia has shaped her leadership style around adaptability, authenticity, and connecting people across cultures. We had the pleasure of chatting with Mia, as she shared some of the key lessons she's learned from leading at the world's biggest private education powerhouse, as well as her top tips for staying positive when the UK winter gets a little too grey.

TEXT: MAJA STENBERG | PHOTOS: EF EDUCATION FIRST



I grew up in Stockholm, Sweden,” Mia begins as she reflects on her professional journey. “After graduating from Stockholm School of Economics, I started my career as a Management Consultant with McKinsey & Company in London.” Mia’s career soon took her to Asia, where she worked in retail, and later pursued her entrepreneurial ambitions by founding a beauty product company. “Eventually, I returned to Europe and joined EF Education First, where I’ve been for over 10 years. Time flies.”

EF Education First, the world’s largest private education company, operates in over 100 countries and employs over 50,000 people. Beyond its impressive scale, EF is defined by its mission of ‘opening the world through education.’ Mia explains: “We believe the world gets better when we all make an effort to understand each other a little bit more.”

This ethos forms the foundation of EF’s company culture, where diversity, entrepreneurial spirit, and personal growth are celebrated. “We have team members representing over 100 nationalities, and we love working together with people we genuinely like,” she shares. “When you enjoy the people you spend your day with, work becomes something to look forward to.”

Leadership spanning across two worlds

Mia’s role at EF blends the traditional with the unconventional. As Global Chief of Staff, she oversees human resources, focusing on recruitment, and employee development. Simultaneously, she leads EF Pro Cycling, the company’s professional cycling teams, which compete at the sport’s highest level. EF owns three teams; one men’s, one women’s, and one development team.

“I knew very little about the world of professional cycling when I took on this role,” Mia admits candidly. “It’s been, and still is, a steep learning curve. But it has made me focus on leveraging what I think I’m reasonably good



at — identifying and empowering strong individuals to step up and then get the entire group to work very hard towards a shared vision with clear goals.” Her approach to leadership is refreshingly transparent. “I try very

hard to be an authentic leader— to be open about what I am good and not so good at, and surround myself with clever people who feel empowered to take real ownership.”

“Fostering a culture of saying ‘yes’ doesn’t mean ignoring differing opinions or losing focus.”

For Mia, EF’s cycling teams tie directly into the company’s broader mission. “Cycling encourages people to explore the world while bringing people closer together — just as we strive to do at EF,” she explains.

EF’s game-winning strategy: its people

When asked about the key to managing a global organisation, Mia doesn’t hesitate. “EF’s secret sauce is definitely our people. We have a very strong company culture, and I think that is a critical component of our success.”

Hiring the right talent is a cornerstone of EF’s approach. “The most important job of our managers is deciding who to hire, and it’s also one of the most challenging,” Mia shares. “We even have a global training programme called ‘License to Hire,’ which focuses on this crucial skill.”

Still, EF’s culture isn’t for everyone. “Sometimes people think they want an entrepreneurial culture because it ‘sounds good.’ But when it comes down to it, not everyone does. It’s often hard. Not everyone thrives in an ambiguous and ever-changing world.”



Lessons in leadership: thinking outside the box

Mia's entrepreneurial background has shaped her leadership philosophy, which she describes as always "thinking outside the box." This aligns closely with the themes explored at the recent Outer Thinking leadership conference hosted by the SCC UK, where leaders were encouraged to challenge conventional approaches.

Reflecting on what "thinking outside the box" means to her, Mia shares, "Personally, I don't handle the word 'no' very well. I much prefer 'yes, but...' or 'yes, but maybe a little differently.'" She elaborates: "Fostering a culture of saying 'yes' doesn't mean ignoring differing opinions or losing focus. It's about creating an environment where people work to make things happen and embrace a positive, 'can-do' mindset."

As a Board Member of the SCC UK since 2022, Mia has seen the value of networks in fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange. "In an increasingly uncertain world, it's even more important that businesses can come together to learn from each other," she says.

Connecting across generations

With Gen Z entering the workforce, Mia sees opportunities for leaders to adapt and grow. "EF naturally aligns with so much of what Gen Z values," she notes. "We're diverse, purpose-driven, and dedicated to creating a world with more empathy."

Leading this generation, however, requires authenticity. "This generation is quick to spot when a corporate culture doesn't match their real-life experiences. To earn their trust, we need to be open — about our challenges, decisions, and motivations. This honesty fosters trust and makes leadership more relatable."

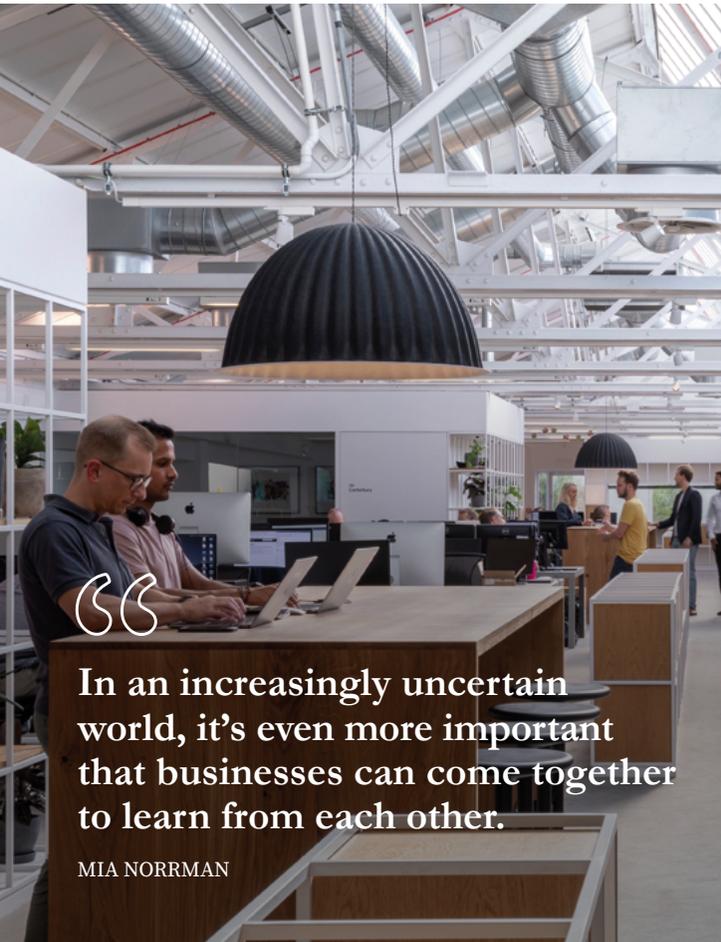
Mia also believes in being transparent about career development. "I firmly believe that over the span of a career, you can have it all. But in any given year, you will have to make some tough choices. Being clear about these trade-offs helps everyone plan forward and grow with intention."

Lessons for the future

As EF approaches its 60th anniversary, Mia reflects on the lessons that have shaped its journey. "The larger the business, the harder it is to remain nimble and retain an entrepreneurial spirit. But much thanks to our decentralised organisation, EF has managed to retain that spirit despite growing in size."

Mia is optimistic about the future of education and travel, sectors she believes are more meaningful than ever. "The core mission of EF — opening the world through education—has never felt more relevant."

Through her diverse roles, from leading global teams to managing a professional cycling team, Mia Norrman exemplifies a leadership style rooted in empathy, authenticity, and collaboration. As she continues to bridge cultures and inspire others, her journey shows no signs of slowing down.



In an increasingly uncertain world, it's even more important that businesses can come together to learn from each other.

MIA NORRMAN



5 QUICK QUESTIONS

Is there a particular country or culture that has left a lasting impression on you, and why?

I've lived and worked in five different countries and have loved them all. Each was an important part of where I was at that time in my life. I am not sure that I could re-create what was special if I go back to any of them now. I would rather look forward.

What's your go-to hobby or activity that helps you recharge?

I have played football since I was a little girl, and still love it. Although I am increasingly bad at it and my two boys (who are now 12 and 14) have no trouble beating me these days, to their great delight. I also have a wonderful group of friends — we love getting together over a glass of wine, on the football pitch, or for a bike ride (always with a good coffee break).

What's a fun fact or a memorable moment from your time at EF that always makes you smile?

At EF, we do fancy dress better than any other company. Going through hundreds of photographs with all of us in different costumes always makes me smile!

What's one thing you've always wanted to try or learn but haven't had the chance to yet?

Oh, so many things! I do speak French but I am still not fluent so I would love to improve.



My husband always says that I was dipped in a vat of positivity as a child.

The UK winter weather can be tough on motivation – do you have any go-to strategies for staying productive or keeping a positive mindset when it's cold and dreary outside?

My husband always says that I was dipped in a vat of positivity as a child. So, for that reason, I am pretty good at staying in a positive frame of mind. If all else fails, a good glass of wine with friends or family in the evening always helps!



THE LEGACY LIVES ON: SCC UK SCHOLAR ALUMNI - WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

For over a century, the Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK has been the heartbeat of a proud legacy, nurturing talent and creating opportunities for the next generation. This special feature celebrates the journeys of some of our Scholar Alumni from the past decade – who all helped steer the Chamber forward during their time. We've had the opportunity to speak with eight former scholars, each sharing their unique story and contributing to the evolving narrative of our community.



FREDRIK HAGENIUS
Anders Wall Foundation scholar,
2010-2011



ANNA LUNDIN
Anders Wall Foundation scholar,
2012-2013

How was your time at the Chamber?

What I really appreciated at SCC UK was particularly the blend of Swedish traditions with an international atmosphere. Being surrounded by prominent businesspeople and having regular opportunities to engage with them was incredibly rewarding and something I hadn't experienced before. As someone passionate about entrepreneurship, it was extra exciting and rewarding to be part of launching the Entrepreneurship Forum, a series of seminars.

What have you done since?

I moved back to Stockholm to pursue my dream of working full-time with Young Entrepreneurs Sweden, an organisation I co-founded a few years earlier. The Chamber gave me confidence and fresh ideas on how to turn my passion into a full-time profession. I worked on this project for two years before deciding to shift focus.

Back at university, I co-founded Campusbokhandeln. After a few years, I bought out my partner and managed to transform it from a small, local bookstore into a thriving e-commerce business. This ultimately led to its acquisition by Adlibris, and it became the largest seller of textbooks in Sweden.

FUN FACT

Fredrik co-founded Campusbokhandeln (now called Adlibris Campus), which grew into Sweden's largest seller of textbooks.

How was your time at the Chamber?

It was incredibly busy – truly non-stop. We were involved in a wide range of activities, and with only two scholars at the time, our responsibilities were diverse. We worked on editing LINK, managed the Young Professionals, and supported the broader organisation by maintaining strong relationships with partners and coordinating exchanges with Team Sweden as a whole.

What have you done since?

My scholarship year turned out to be a gap year between my Bachelor's and Master's degrees. In my final year, I received the 'Female Economist of the Year' award. This recognition led me on a long journey with Spotify, initially working closely with the founders. I became Chief of Staff, and later served as Head of Market Strategy and Operations for several years before launching a project called "Enable the World." Over just three days, we launched Spotify in 83 markets. During my maternity leave, I read a startling prediction: by 2027, we might not see fish in the sea. This opened my eyes to the realisation of the impact one single person can have on the environment, by where they place their money. So, I joined Norrsken VC, Europe's biggest impact fund, and now I'm investing in sustainable businesses.

Anna has also served as Chair of the Anders Wall Foundation, where she remains actively involved on the board. She received her SCC UK Scholarship from the foundation back in 2012. "A meaningful relationship was born between the foundation and myself," Anna reflects.





SOFIA WULFERT
Investor scholar,
2014-2015

How was your time at the Chamber?

A spontaneous pub visit in Uppsala exposed me to an ad, and a few months later I was in London. My time at the Chamber was eventful, and I was amazed of how the small team could execute so many large events annually, especially with a constantly changing team. It was impressive to see how the organisation works, how young talents are given an opportunity to take ownership, throw themselves into projects, and make a significant impact.

What have you done since?

Following an event with the Young Professionals, I grabbed a few pints with some members, where I met someone who introduced me to a role at the financial enterprise Bloomberg. After three years, my commercial journey continued at a cross-border payment startup called Thunes. With a newfound passion for payments and a cemented love for international business, I joined the Dutch fintech company Adyen, where I am today.

So, what do we learn from Sofia? That a couple of pub visits at different times can open the door to life-changing paths.



ANDRÉ VIKTORSSON
Sten A. Olsson Foundation scholar,
2018-2019

How was your time at the Chamber?

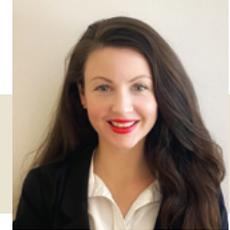
I was allocated to the Events Department and primarily managed the larger events. We had the freedom to shape the events as we saw fit, and I was fascinated by the level of responsibility and the opportunity to introduce new ideas. Outside of work, I got a football season ticket, met a lot of people, and embraced the London lifestyle.

What have you done since?

I returned to Sweden for studies and began working part-time at the Elof Hansson Trade in Gothenburg. Due to my French language skills, they needed someone to cover parts of the North and West African region. I quickly joined the sales

department. Four years later, I'm still with the company, now as an International Sales Manager. The international aspect of the job is crucial, as the core of the role involves international trade, travel to customers and suppliers, and to build relationships across borders.

Elof Hansson Foundation is today one of the donating funds to our Scholarship Programme — something André played a part in. The foundation focuses on enhancing international trade, which he saw as a perfect fit for SCC UK.



JOHANNA BJARSCH FOLLIN
Investor scholar,
2016-2017

How was your time at the Chamber?

The funny thing is, I was automatically placed in the Communications Department as an Investor scholar, regardless of whether it was a strength of mine. Suddenly, I was managing social media and editing LINK, even though I had limited experience. Taking on those responsibilities from day one was a steep learning curve, but it pushed me to expand my professional horizons in ways I never expected. The Chamber had the confidence in me to take on those roles and provided the support I needed.

What have you done since?

When my year came to an end, SCC UK Patron Goodwill happened to be looking for a Marketing Executive, and I got the role. Moving to a member company was the best decision, because it meant that I could continue attending Chamber events and be part of the community. Working at Goodwill, I continued to focus on marketing and business development into Sweden, which helped me realise that marketing was my passion. After Goodwill, I moved to Dublin to work with digital marketing and sales. Then, due to the pandemic, I moved back to Sweden, feeling like I had tried all different aspects of marketing. I was ready to take on a more holistic role and found a position at a tech startup. Now, I'm working for a nonprofit that aligns with my core values. It sounds cliché, but it's thanks to the Chamber — I probably wouldn't have considered a career in marketing otherwise.





HENRIK BARKMAN
*Gull & Stellan Ljungbergs
Foundation scholar, 2019-2020*

How was your time at the Chamber?

My time at the Chamber was truly special, albeit marked by significant change as the pandemic struck nine months into my year. One of the most valuable lessons I take with me is witnessing how an organisation can pivot entirely to digital operations. The social aspects were particularly challenging, as networking is such a vital element for members, and everything had to be reimaged. That year taught me so much about adaptation and resilience. Before the pandemic, I especially appreciated the opportunity to build close relationships with member companies through events, forums, and Member visits.

What have you done since?

After the year, I felt like I wasn't done with London, and I joined Fisher Investments as a Wealth Manager, which was an exciting experience. However, with the city still in lockdown, the work environment was quite different from Sweden. After a year, I returned to Stockholm, and I began my career at Axfood. Today, I'm a Category Manager, and I can confidently say that my time at the Chamber laid the foundation for everything that followed.

On a personal note, another scholar and I started dating at the time. Fast forward to today, and we're about to get married! I even proposed to her in London on "our" bench during a visit a few months back.

ELIN HAMMENFORS
*Lund University scholar,
2016-2017*



How was your time at the Chamber?

It was an exciting period, especially being there around the Brexit vote. We hosted a lot of events discussing the potential impacts, which was a big eye-opener. I met top Swedish business leaders and saw firsthand the importance of the network we provide. It wasn't just about networking; but about understanding the value of connections and how they can drive opportunities. This experience made me realise the power of relationships in business, which is something I've carried into my career.

What have you done since?

As we approached the end of my year, I was deciding whether to go back and finish my studies or stay in London and make the most of all the great connections. Through my involvement with the Chamber, I met someone who was a great advocate for me and encouraged me to stay in touch. That connection led to a role with a Swedish business that lasted over five years, which was a fantastic experience. Now, even though I've moved on to a different company, we still work together – he recently hired me again for a new opportunity at Ingrid, where I'm currently Head of Sales. It's been a full-circle moment, staying connected with the Chamber's network and using it to advance my career. I still attend Chamber events, bringing my colleagues and clients along to share that sense of community and culture.



MAHMOUD HAJO
*Swedish Youth Abroad scholar,
2020-2021*

How was your time at the Chamber?

My time at the Chamber was shaped by the challenges of the pandemic, which taught me adaptability as events shifted online. Working closely with startups expanding internationally gave me valuable insights into market entry strategies, cultural differences, and operational hurdles – experience that proved invaluable when I later supported Swedish startups.

What have you done since?

I began by working at an incubator and a scale-up. However, I soon realised that I wanted to make a broader impact, particularly where economic growth intersects with public policy. That led me to pivot toward the public sector, focusing on economic development and export control. I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' diplomatic programme, which I recently completed. Now, I'm preparing for my first international posting, excited to bring together everything I've learned so far. Reflecting on my journey, one of the most significant benefits of my time with SCC UK was the invaluable access it provided to the Swedish startup ecosystem. Those opportunities and experiences laid a solid foundation for everything I've achieved since.



JAN OLSSON: THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEMBER AWARD

TEXT: ALEXANDER HÖGBERG | PHOTO: RADSKI PHOTOGRAPHY

It was a moment of celebration at the Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK's Annual Christmas Luncheon when Jan Olsson, Managing Director at Deutsche Bank, was announced this year's Extraordinary Member. Recognising his invaluable contributions to the Chamber and the wider Swedish-British business community, the accolade celebrates not just a distinguished career but also a profound commitment to fostering connections and growth across industries and borders.





Reflecting on the award, Jan says with a warming smile, “It feels wonderful. I loved working closely with the Chamber over the years, so I am very thankful for this recognition.”

For him, the path to achievement has been as much about navigating hurdles as it has been about celebrating victories. “It’s not how you handle success that’s important - it’s how you handle the issues on the way to success,” he explains.

A career spanning continents

Jan’s career in finance reads like a map of the world. Born into a family that valued education and global awareness, Jan credits his multilingual abilities and exposure to diverse cultures as foundational to his success. “Education was the first major milestone,” he shares. “It wasn’t just school or university - it included everything from languages to sports and culture. That opened doors for me, job-wise and a way to an international career.”

Jan joined Deutsche Bank early in his career, and quickly established himself in the field of corporate finance. “Deutsche Bank brought a lot of opportunities to me,” he says. From assisting the board to leading corporate finance initiatives, his

journey with the bank took him across continents, immersing him in the financial ecosystems of Asia, Europe, and Africa.

Despite a demanding schedule, Jan remained committed to his philosophy: work should feel like a passion, not a chore. “I’ve always loved working. For me, work is like a vacation,” he claims, highlighting an enthusiasm that came to fuel decades of global achievements.

A strong connection with the Chamber

Jan’s connection with the Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK began during his tenure as Deutsche Bank’s Managing Director in London. Attending events that aligned with his speciality, such as those focused on M&A and strategy, he quickly found synergy with the Chamber’s mission.

Shortly after, Jan was elected to the board, where he soon came to make a lasting impact, serving as Chair for six years. Reflecting on his time, he notes, “The Chamber was perfect for me. It complemented my work and was geographically aligned with me living in London, making it easier to dedicate myself fully.”



Under his leadership, the Chamber expanded its influence and outreach, hosting notable events, including a royal visit that brought media attention and bolstered the organisation's reputation. "Major events are vital because they help distribute the message and bring visibility to the Chamber," Jan emphasises.

The optimist

One of Jan's defining traits is his optimism, a quality that colleagues and peers often associate with him. Having lived in eleven countries around the world, Jan learned early on to see the good in people and circumstances. "I believe in the good of people. Growing up internationally, I saw that every culture and country has something positive to offer," he shares.

Even in the face of geopolitical challenges, Jan's outlook remains hopeful. "Yes, there are always issues, but history shows us that progress is possible. I've seen incredible development over my career - in Europe, Africa, and Asia. It's important to focus on opportunities rather than just problems," he says.

A legacy of connection

As Jan accepts the Extraordinary Member Award, his commitment to the Chamber and its community is far from over. "With this award, I hope to become an even greater ambassador for the Chamber," he shares. His vision for SCC UK's future is bold: "I believe that the Chamber can take a quantum leap. It has the potential to double its membership and continue being a vital platform for businesses of all sizes."

Whether through his professional achievements, his role at the Chamber, or his enduring positivity, Jan Olsson exemplifies what it means to lead with purpose and vision. Even after stepping down as Chair, Jan remains an active and valued Member of the community, continuing to support the Chamber's expansion - in London and beyond. For this, we thank Jan and congratulate him on becoming this year's Extraordinary Member.



“Yes, there are always issues, but history shows us that progress is possible.”



AI's game-changing role in SaaS

INSIGHTS FROM SWEDISH-BRITISH INNOVATORS



Sara
Landfors

Co-founder & CEO,
Normain

On 21 October 2024, innovation took centre stage at Fieldfisher in London, where we hosted not one, but two transformative events designed to foster Swedish-British collaboration.

The inaugural Swedish-British SaaS Connect brought together leading SaaS businesses to explore the cutting-edge role of AI in shaping work, law, and marketing. Keynote speaker Danilo McGarry set the scene and Master of Ceremonies Anisah Osman Britton MBE guided us through a thought-provoking programme that left participants inspired and equipped to navigate an ever-evolving technological landscape.

Meanwhile, the Ecosystem Exchange: SaaS Connect facilitated dynamic connections between Sweden's rising scaleups and the UK's thriving ecosystem of investors, entrepreneurs, and industry experts. This sector-specific initiative sparked invaluable knowledge sharing, paving the way for future growth and UK expansion.

Here you can read main takeaways of the day from some of the participants, and what they think are the most critical steps businesses should take to stay ahead in the AI-driven workplace.

Sara, what were your key takeaways from the Swedish-British SaaS Connect?

UK companies are prioritising AI and moving quickly to explore its potential for business transformation, starting with critical use cases. With fewer restrictions from the EU AI Act, they can bring advanced AI to market faster. This creates a great opportunity for Swedish SaaS companies to test new innovations in the UK, using EU/Swedish AI regulation knowledge as guidance.

What is the most critical step businesses should take to stay ahead in the AI-driven workplace?

Avoid getting stuck in over-analysing AI use cases or the technology itself. Dive in with high-impact, high-value applications. The best AI ideas often don't come from the C-suite but from employees working hands-on, using AI to solve problems they had before AI became available.





Rasmus Adler Wahlberg

Co-founder & CEO,
Multiply



Alex Harbin

Senior Associate,
Fieldfisher

Nikhil Shah

Director (Legal),
Technology, and Data,
Fieldfisher

Rasmus, what were your key takeaways from the Swedish-British SaaS Connect?

We truly have some amazing AI innovation happening in Sweden, that the UK market is very positive to Swedish products, and that the openness to adopt AI in organisations is very high in the UK. I believe that the scale of UK companies and the depth of UK capital markets make the UK an ideal second market for Swedish AI startups.

What is the most critical step businesses should take to stay ahead in the AI-driven workplace?

Forget what you know about generative AI and start experimenting with using agents for whatever you can in your business. The agentic AI revolution has at least 10x the potential of the generative AI shift, as it can accelerate any type of knowledge work - not just content creation. Allow your team to try new tools, learn by doing, and get excited about being at the forefront of AI.

Alex and Nikhil, what were your key takeaways from the Swedish-British SaaS Connect?

The energy in the room was infectious! Optimism about using products to drive meaningful change was palpable. However, sustainable growth must balance ambition with legal and risk considerations. For AI-enabled products, the message was clear: prioritise security and implement practical guardrails, including questioning whether AI is truly necessary to achieve specific outcomes. Thoughtful progress ensures lasting impact.

What is the most critical step businesses should take to stay ahead in the AI-driven workplace?

Good governance is key to thriving in an AI-driven workplace. It ensures that AI is used responsibly, aligns with your values, and avoids legal risks. By improving policies, record-keeping, and upskilling staff, businesses can enhance AI development, procurement, and oversight, while maximising value sustainably. Thoughtful governance fosters safer, and smarter AI integration for long-term success.

SEE PHOTOS FROM THE EVENT



THE UNSUNG HEROES: ATLAS COPCO GROUP'S TECHNOLOGIES BEHIND EVERYDAY LIFE

TEXT: MAJA STENBERG | PHOTO: ATLAS COPCO

With over 150 years of innovation, Atlas Copco Group has become a cornerstone of industries as diverse as medical research, food production, and renewable energy. But what is the secret behind this enduring success? We spoke to Alex Bongaerts, Vice President of the UK & Ireland Holding Region, to find out how this Swedish-born powerhouse continues to flourish and shape the future of a changing world.

You might not realise it,

but Atlas Copco Group is everywhere. From that popcorn machine at the cinema to the satellite orbiting Earth right now – Atlas Copco Group's technologies make it all possible. As their new brand video boldly states, they enable the things that shape our lives.

© HAVE A LOOK



Innovating for a better tomorrow

“Innovation has remained at the core of everything we do,” explains Alex. “The world has evolved, and we’ve evolved with it, without letting go of our core values. Since 1873, we’ve worked closely with our customers and always looked for the better way.”

That mindset has led Atlas Copco Group to develop cutting-edge solutions across four major business areas: Compressor-, Vacuum-, Power-, and Industrial Technique. These divisions span everything from air compressors to vacuum pumps, power tools, and assembly systems.

Their innovation doesn't stop at products, it extends in to how they run the business. “We have a decentralised leadership model - that's key to our agility and speed,” says Alex, and continues, “our divisions are the highest

operating entities. Each one is led by a president, ensuring that we stay close to our customers while maintaining a unified vision globally.”

Building for the future

Sustainability is at the core of Atlas Copco Group's operations, and their newly refurbished UK headquarters, Technology House, in Hemel Hempstead embodies their commitment to a low carbon transition.

“Technology House is a shining example of how an outdated, energy-inefficient office can be transformed into a stunning, modern working environment,” Alex remarks with pride. “It doesn't use fossil fuels and has very low CO2 emissions.”

The facility features a solar PV system that provides 40 per cent of its energy, rainwater harvesting for toilets and plants, and LED lighting with motion and daylight sensors. Even the furniture is a testament to their green ambitions – 80 per cent was reused from the previous office, and excess items were donated to local offices.

It doesn't stop there. “We installed 16 electric vehicle charging stations to support commuting with electrical or hybrid vehicles,” Alex adds, “everything from the building materials to the daily operations was designed with the climate in mind.”

When considering sustainability more broadly, Alex highlights its integral role in Atlas Copco Group's mission to contribute to a better tomorrow.





The world keeps changing, and we've never been afraid to change with it.

ALEX BONGAERTS, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UK & IRELAND HOLDING REGION

“By taking accountability for our impact and by acting in an ethical way in our business relationships, we strive to bring value to both our customers and society as a whole,” he states.

A legacy of endurance

Since opening its first office outside Sweden in London year 1919, Atlas Copco Group has been deeply intertwined with the UK's industrial landscape. Today, the UK & Ireland region boasts 15 customer centres and six designated product companies, as well as being home to the global headquarters of their Vacuum Technique business area.

But what has sustained the company for over a century? “Our ability to adapt,” says Alex, and continues: “The world keeps changing, and we've never been afraid to change with it. But as we have done this, we've also stayed true to our core values of sustainability, innovation, and collaboration.”

That spirit of collaboration is evident in Atlas Copco's new group identity, launched in 2023. “It's an umbrella for all our brands, allowing them to maintain their uniqueness while highlighting what brings us together,” Alex explains. “It better reflects who we are and how we bring value to customers, employees, and society at large.”

The unsung heroes

The beauty of Atlas Copco Group's work lies in its invisibility. “We're often the unsung heroes,” Alex admits and continues: “but our products power the machines that power the world.” Whilst it might be easy to overlook, their impact is essential.

“Our innovations are key to a wide range of industries, from infrastructure to medical research and renewable energy,” Alex explains, highlighting the crucial role their technology plays in shaping the modern world.



What's next?

As Atlas Copco Group looks to the future, the focus remains firmly on sustainability and innovation. “We're committed to being part of the solution for a better tomorrow,” says Alex. “Our R&D is focused on improving product performance and energy efficiency to help our customers achieve their own sustainability goals.”

From vacuum solutions to industrial smart tools, the company's technologies will continue to shape future industries. “We're engineering the building blocks for the next generation of transport, connectivity, and industrial automation,” Alex concludes.

Whether it's helping factories become greener, enabling cutting-edge medical research, or even making popcorn machines work a little smoother, Atlas Copco Group proves that the most important work often happens behind the scenes. And as the company likes to remind us, it's these unsung heroes that truly shape our world.

[DIVE INTO ATLAS COPCO'S 105 YEARS IN THE UK](#) →



A TIMELINE

ATLAS COPCO GROUP'S JOURNEY IN THE UK

1959

Atlas Copco had grown significantly and the decision was made to amalgamate the operations it had in London and Glasgow into a large factory and head office in Hemel Hempstead.

1975

His Majesty King Karl XVI Gustav of Sweden visited the Atlas Copco UK headquarters in Hemel Hempstead, causing much excitement as he arrived by helicopter.

1982 →

Throughout the following years, the growth through acquisition in the region has seen the introduction of Atlas Copco Rental, Medical Gas, and a multi-brand approach to marketing.

2014

The Group acquired Edwards Vacuum which alongside the acquisition of Leybold in 2016 led to the introduction of a new Business Area for the Group. The global headquarters of this business area is located in Burgess Hill, England.



1919

Atlas Copco, or Atlas Diesel as it was then known, opened its first office outside of Sweden in London. Starting out as a small operation selling diesel engines to the shipping industry, it has now grown to a large operation employing over 3 300 people in over 15 sales centres and 6 manufacturing plants all over the UK & Ireland.

1965

The Dublin branch opened to cover the sales and service of mining, quarrying, compressed air equipment, and tools throughout the whole of Ireland.

1982

Atlas Copco air compressors were used in an archaeological project to raise the wreck of King Henry VIII's flagship, The Mary Rose from the bottom of the Solent.

2008

The Construction and Mining part of the business won the Queen's Award, the UK's most prestigious award, for business performance.

2019

Atlas Copco Group celebrated 100 years in the UK.

Julen i Svenska kyrkan

Julbord Christmas Smorgasbord



Fredag 20 december kl 19

Svenska kyrkan bjuder in till julbord, med traditionell svensk julmat, såsom julsinka, köttbullar, sill, Janssons frestelse, lax mm.

Köp biljett på www.eventbrite.com

Biljetter £30-£50
Barn under 6 år gratis.

Julafton



Tisdag 24 december

kl 11.00 Samling vid krubban
kl 11.30 Danslekar
Jullunch
kl 14.00 Kalle Ankas jul
kl 15.00 Pyssel- och rimstuga
kl 17.00 Julbön

Jullunch £10
Barn upp till 12 år gratis.

Juldagen



Onsdag 25 december

kl 11 Julmässa i Ulrika Eleonora kyrka
Präster: Håkan E Wilhelmsson
Magdalena Sjöholm
Organist: Fredrik Karlsson

Gudstjänsten livestreamas via
facebook.com/svenskakyrkanlondon



Svenska kyrkan

London

DON'T MISS OUT ON ANY ACTIVITIES
SCAN FOR FULL CALENDAR



IN OTHER NEWS

SWEDISH LIFE SCIENCES:

*DRIVING INNOVATION
AND EXPORT GROWTH*



Sweden's life sciences sector is thriving, with significant export growth and advancements in biotechnology, medtech, and diagnostics, according to a report from Vinnova. These innovations, often driven by technologies like AI and nanotechnology, offer exciting opportunities for UK-Sweden collaboration. With a shared focus on healthcare and precision medicine, the sector sets the stage for transformative partnerships and future breakthroughs in clinical care.



THE IMPORTANCE OF DESK BREAKS: NEW FINDINGS FROM AJ PRODUCTS



A survey conducted by AJ Products reveals that over half of UK workers skip essential desk breaks, with nearly a third sitting for three or more hours without moving. This neglect impacts mental health, increasing stress levels by 18 per cent after four hours. Experts emphasise the urgent need for workplace wellbeing initiatives to counter the harmful effects of prolonged desk time.



AN SCC UK STORY

A LEGAL PARTNER ROOTED IN COLLABORATION

TEXT: ALEXANDER HÖGBERG | PHOTO: EMMA SILVER

In today's interconnected world, success often hinges on meaningful relationships and well-timed opportunities. For a law firm like Freeths – ranked amongst the UK's top 50 – a membership with SCC UK has proved to be a valuable gateway to collaboration, growth, and impactful connections. Freeths' active engagement with the Chamber has highlighted a series of success stories, demonstrating how an involved membership can open doors for businesses to thrive.

Freeths is no stranger to fostering strong relationships. With 13 offices across the UK and expertise spanning across corporate law, real estate, employment, and private client services, the firm prides itself on offering pragmatic and personable legal advice. “We aim for the long run,” says Claus Andersen, Partner at Freeths. “It's not just about providing legal services, but truly understanding what drives our clients and helping them achieve their goals.”

This ethos extends to Freeths' approach to innovation and social impact. The firm gained widespread recognition for its role in the Post Office Horizon case, securing justice in what Claus describes as a testament to Freeths' “entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to doing the right thing.”

A partnership that delivers results

Freeths' membership with SCC UK has been a vital part in broadening reach and deepening expertise in sectors such as life sciences. Chamber collaborations provide targeted opportunities for the firm to engage with Swedish companies exploring UK expansion. Claus explains that through SCC UK, Freeths leverages their

“Nordic edge” to connect with Nordic businesses seeking to enter the UK market. He uses the analogy of meeting someone from Sweden in a remote location – despite the distance, a natural bond and understanding would arise from the shared background. This connection is vital for Freeths' approach to building relationships with Nordic clients, as it sets them apart from other firms without the same cultural familiarity. “It's about finding elegant ways to connect with the right people,” says Claus. “Through SCC UK, we've met businesses that align perfectly with our expertise, allowing us to offer tailored advice and support.”

These interactions have translated into tangible outcomes. Freeths has leveraged the Chamber's network to host joint initiatives, such as Ecosystem Exchange programmes and Business Breakfasts with prominent institutions, and secured introductions that would have been challenging to achieve independently. “The Chamber's way to bring different actors into the same room has been invaluable,” Claus notes. “These connections not only strengthen our industry presence but also open doors to future collaborations.”





A membership
with SCC UK is
an investment
in relationships
that matter.

Life sciences: a shared vision for the future

As life sciences continue to evolve, the sector offers fertile ground for innovation and partnerships. Freeths sees significant opportunities in aligning with academic institutions, industry leaders, and ambitious startups - a synergy that SCC UK has been instrumental in fostering. "Our extensive network of regional offices places us at the heart of the UK's innovation hubs," Claus shares. "When you help bring a product to market that genuinely improves lives, it's incredibly fulfilling."

The firm's dedication to sustainable practices further underscores its alignment with forward-thinking businesses. Having achieved B-Corp certification, Freeths exemplifies a commitment to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles - a value shared by many within SCC UK's community.

Looking ahead: collaboration as the key to success

For Freeths, the future lies in harnessing the power of collaboration. Whether through deepening ties in the life sciences sector, exploring renewable energy opportunities, or forging new relationships, the Chamber remains a vital platform. "A membership with SCC UK is an investment in relationships that matter," says Claus. "It's about being part of something larger - a community where businesses and ideas thrive together."

To businesses considering a membership or perhaps not utilising their existing one, the message is clear: engage actively, and the rewards will follow. Through SCC UK, companies can find not just partners, but collaborators who share their vision for success. And, as Freeths' journey illustrates, the right partnership can make all the difference - and is likely to be found within our network.

Freeths is a prime example of how aligning your business with the Swedish-British community through SCC UK creates a strong foundation for collaboration. The Chamber serves as the common ground where, by becoming part of the network, you're not just opening doors - you're building bridges to a future of innovation and growth.



PREVIOUS EVENTS

Over the year, the SCC UK hosts a wide range of different events, such as Forums, Flagships, Business Breakfasts, Roundtable Discussions, and Business Insights for our Young Professionals' community. Here are some of the events hosted in the recent months.



See more photos:
scc.org.uk/events/gallery



From top left to right:

- 1) Nordic Private Equity Forum. 13.11.24
- 2) Business Breakfast: Swedish Arbitration. 30.10.24
- 3) Young Professionals: Business Insight with Readly, hosted at Löfbergs. 8.10.24
- 4) Impact at Ham Yard Hotel. 3.10.2024
- 5) The Swedish-British SaaS Connect: AI in Work, Law & Marketing. 21.10.24
- 6) Swedish Business Footprint in the Midlands. 23.10.24
- 7) Outer Thinking. 28.11.24
- 7) Business Breakfast: Women in Business. 5.11.24
- 8) Next Generation Leaders 23/24 - Fourth and Final Meetup. 19.11.24
- 9) Transformational Tech Meetup at the British Embassy in Stockholm. 16.10.24
- 10) Annual Christmas Luncheon. 29.11.24
- 11) The Swedish-British SaaS Connect: AI in Work, Law & Marketing. 21.10.24
- 12) Swedish Footprint in Scotland. 6.11.24
- 13) Business Breakfast on Life Sciences. 20.11.24







THE GUIDING STAR IN ELECTRIC MOBILITY

TEXT: MAJA STENBERG | PHOTO: POLESTAR

As the UK accelerates towards an all-electric future, the demand for sustainable, innovative vehicles has never been greater. At the forefront of this shift is SCC UK Member Polestar, a Swedish brand named after the guiding star – leading the way in electric mobility with bold ambitions.

Since its arrival in the UK in 2019, Polestar has made a name for itself with electric vehicles that not only promise a commitment to sustainability and performance but deliver it with style. The Polestar 2 fastback hit UK roads in August 2020, marking the start of the brand's expansion to the British isles. This was soon followed by the Polestar 3 luxury SUV and the Polestar 4 SUV coupé - each model showcasing the brand's focus on innovative design and high-performance electric mobility.

"We're the car brand for people with a conscience," says Matt Galvin, Managing Director of Polestar UK & Ireland. "For people to want to buy our cars, they have to look good, perform well, have the latest technology, but they also want to feel good about their purchase," he explains.

Transparency is central to Polestar's ethos. Matt highlights how the brand isn't just focused on delivering electric vehicles but on pushing the industry towards more sustainable solutions overall. "We're not perfect, but we're pushing both ourselves and the rest of the industry to do better when it

comes to more sustainable, personal transportation," he says. Polestar's commitment to innovation is driving the brand forward, exemplified by the Polestar 3's Vehicle to Grid (V2G) technology. This cutting-edge feature allows the car to not only charge itself, but also potentially power homes. In Sweden, Polestar is a key player in the PAVE project, one of Europe's largest V2G pilot schemes. It's another example of how the brand is using its technology to lead by example, demonstrating a clear commitment to the future of mobility.

This project is part of Polestar's broader vision for sustainability, which includes partnerships with academia, charging providers, and Sweden's electrical grid infrastructure to create meaningful societal change.



We're minimalist,
but recognisable

Where design meets performance

Polestar's Scandinavian roots go beyond sustainability and innovation. With clean lines and functional beauty, Polestar's cars are a salute to the Nordic principle of simplicity.



“The UK loves its cars, and we’ve got the right fit here with our long-range electric vehicles that can go over 400 miles on a single charge”

MATT GALVIN, MANAGING DIRECTOR
POLESTAR UK & IRELAND

“We’re minimalist, but recognisable,” Matt claims. “We want to be the most driver-focused electric car brand globally.” This emphasis on the driving experience has resonated with UK car enthusiasts, earning Polestar rave reviews. One UK critic described Polestar vehicles as being “built for drivers who demand more than just a car – they want an experience.”

Polestar’s design aesthetic also reflects the brand’s Nordic origins, capturing the essence of a crisp winter day – striking, refined, and functional.

The Swedish connection

Scandi-design isn’t the only Swedish influence on Polestar; the brand’s engineering is also shaped by the country’s driving culture. Known for their love of winter sports and challenging conditions, Swedes bring that same approach to their vehicles. Every Polestar is built to perform in all terrains, making it well-suited for the UK’s varied landscape.

“The UK loves its cars, and we’ve got the right fit here with our long-range electric vehicles that can go over 400 miles on a single charge,” says Matt. Whether it’s city streets or rural lanes, Polestar is designed to meet the needs of drivers across the UK.

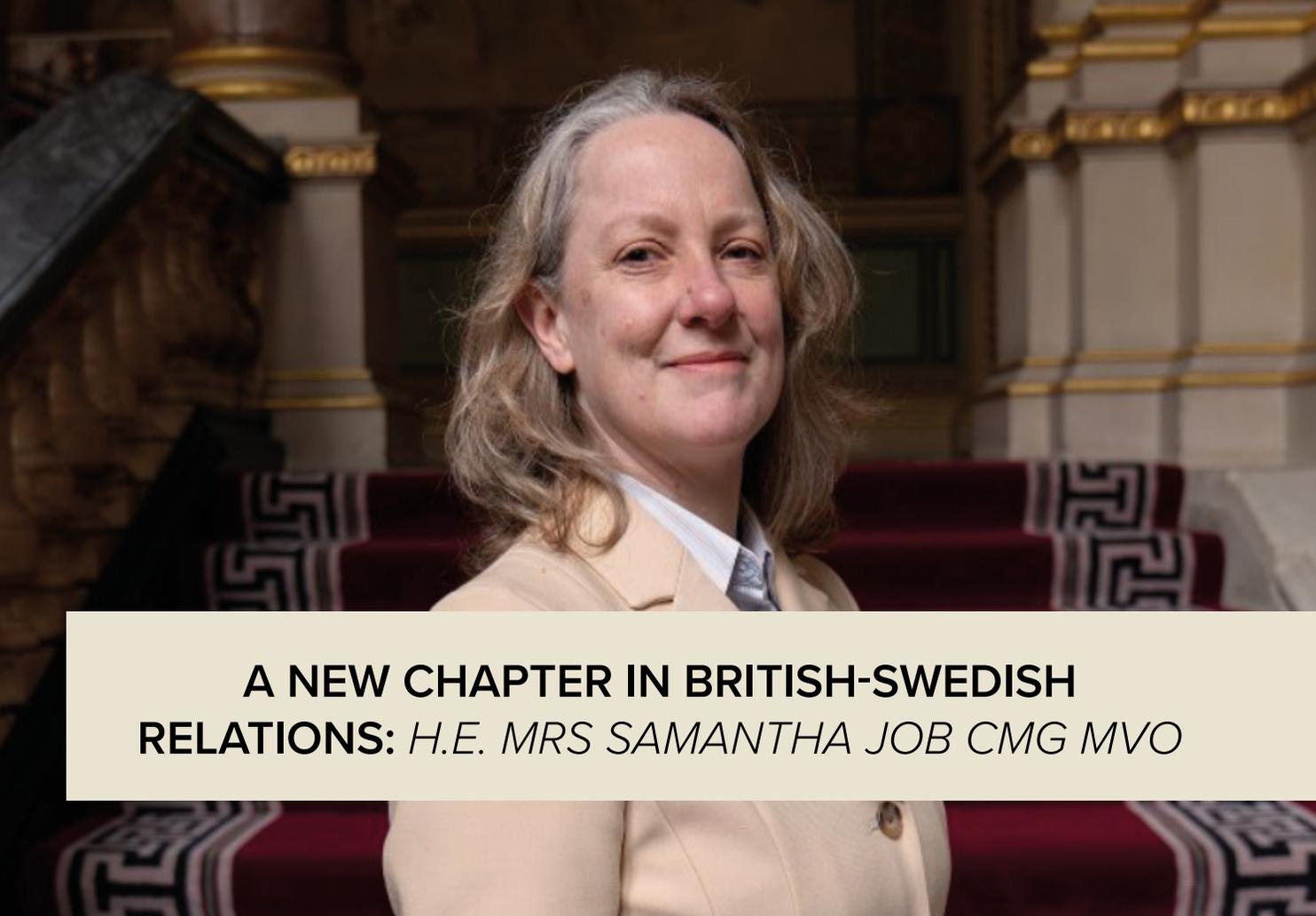


SCC UK membership

Now a proud Member of the SCC UK network, Polestar is strengthening its ties with the Swedish-British business community. “As a Swedish brand with a UK presence, it makes perfect sense to be a member of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK. We’re really looking forward to working with the best businesses and entrepreneurs in the country to fly the flag for Sweden here,” says Matt.

And with a guiding star such as Polestar leading the way, the path ahead sure looks bright for electric mobility in the UK – proving that a more sustainable future can be as stylish as it is innovative.





A NEW CHAPTER IN BRITISH-SWEDISH RELATIONS: *H.E. MRS SAMANTHA JOB CMG MVO*

TEXT: ALEXANDER HÖGBERG | PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY STOCKHOLM

In September 2024, Samantha Job CMG MVO took up the role of His Majesty’s Ambassador to Sweden, bringing with her a wealth of experience in diplomacy and a clear ambition for deepening the bond between the United Kingdom and Sweden. In this exclusive feature, the Ambassador shares insights into her previous career, thoughts on her new role, and reflections on the enduring relationship between our two nations.

Ambassador Job’s journey into diplomacy began with a childhood shaped by international experience and a sense of duty. “My parents met in the Royal Air Force. I was born outside the UK and had lived in three different countries by the time I was six,” she reflects. “I grew up with a sense of public service and that the world was big and exciting. I liked the idea of working internationally and helping to make the world a safer place.”

These early influences eventually led to a distinguished career in foreign policy, specialising in security and

defence. Now, her deep understanding of these fields plays a crucial role in strengthening UK-Sweden relations.

Strengthening security ties

Sweden and the UK have collaborated for a long time on security and defence, a bond that has only grown stronger with Sweden’s NATO membership. “We work together as NATO partners and regional partners through the Joint Expeditionary Force,” she explains. “In every area of defence - air, sea, land, cyber, space - our troops train together and exercise together.”





*If there aren't
diplomats like you,
maybe there
should be!*

Ambassador Job also highlights the broader scope of cooperation in the sphere: “On security more broadly, we work together right across government - economic security, climate security, national security, terrorism. Defence industry collaboration is as close as it has ever been.” Central to this partnership is their shared support for Ukraine, a key focus for both nations.

Building on strategic foundations

The UK-Sweden Strategic Partnership, signed in 2023, has already achieved significant milestones. Reflecting on its progress, Ambassador Job says, “It was really striking that we have achieved so much, in such depth, across the partnership. But also that both sides are already expanding the partnership into new areas.”

These areas include recent cutting-edge collaborations on space, life sciences, and the green energy transition. She believes that the partnership’s strength lies in its breadth and potential for further growth. “You get the idea - it’s really broad and deep,” she adds.

The power of people

Beyond policies and agreements, Ambassador Job emphasises the importance of personal connections in sustaining the UK-Sweden relationship. “All relationships come down to people. The more we get to know each other, the more we understand each other. Then we can build new areas for collaboration or tackle problems together.”

She hopes to see increased exchange between the two countries, whether through tourism, education, business, or government initiatives. “I would like to see more Swedish visitors to the UK, and the same in return,” she says.

Embracing Sweden

Since her arrival in Sweden, Ambassador Job has immersed herself in the country’s culture and history. “I studied history at university, so I was blown away by the Vasa Museum,” she shares. Highlights of her time include exploring Visby while learning Swedish and visiting cities such as Gothenburg, Karlskrona, and Malmö. Looking ahead, she looks forward to head to Sälen and Kiruna.

Yet, her most memorable moment so far has a royal touch to it: “Hands down, the most memorable day was presenting my credentials to His Majesty the King,” she says with a smile.

On being asked what has surprised her the most during this first period in Sweden, she shares: “It was when I went to the Governor’s crayfish party at Uppsala Castle, and I was one of five people brought on stage and serenaded in front of 500 other guests.” She also adds what might surprise her Swedish hosts - or dare we say, spark some controversy in a coffee-loving nation like Sweden: “I don’t drink coffee.”

Advice for future diplomats

For people considering a career in diplomacy, Ambassador Job offers practical and encouraging advice: “To succeed in diplomacy, you need to be interested in people, be resilient, and have a sense of humour - because things often go wrong.” She stresses the value of diverse academic backgrounds and individuality, adding, “Be yourself - the really skilled senior leaders are comfortable in their own skin. Don’t rule yourself out or think that there aren’t diplomats like you. While we are a pretty diverse bunch, we could definitely do with more diversity.” And encourage “If there aren’t diplomats like you, maybe there should be!”

As Ambassador Job settles into her role, her vision for the UK-Sweden relationship is both pragmatic and forward-thinking. Whether navigating high-level security discussions or celebrating cultural traditions at a Swedish crayfish party, H.E. Mrs Samantha Job CMG MVO exemplifies the enduring spirit of collaboration between the United Kingdom and Sweden.



PREVIOUS EVENTS





See more photos:
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From left to right:

- 1) Link Up Drinks at Hästens. 21.11.2024
- 2) Business Breakfast: Unleashing the Growth Potential in Women's Football. 22.10.2024
- 3) Link Up Drinks with Aira. 26.09.2024
- 4) Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Landmark hotel. 29.11.24
- 5) Outer Thinking at the Royal Institution. 28.11.24
- 6) The Young Professionals Annual Christmas Dinner. 4.12.24
- 7) Nordic Private Equity Forum. 13.11.24
- 8) Outer Thinking at the Royal Institution. 28.11.24
- 9) Impact at Ham Yard Hotel. 3.10.24
- 10) Executive Forum and Dinner at the Swedish Ambassador's Residence in London. 12.11.24
- 11) Business Breakfast: New UK Tax Paradigm - Practical Analysis for Non-Doms. 4.11.24
- 12) The Annual Christmas Luncheon - Lucia Procession by LondonSwedes choir. 29.11.24



'DON'T LIE': HOW TO NAVIGATE A CRISIS THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

TEXT: MAJA STENBERG | PHOTO: KREAB

Imagine a scenario where your company's survival hangs by a thread. It feels like the whole world is watching you teeter on the edge; a difficult newspaper article, a critical social media post, challenging emails from the Board and legitimate Executive concerns that if the market finds out what's going on, shareholders will be spooked. One wrong move, one misstep, and it could spell disaster. This is where crisis communications experts, such as Chris Philipsborn, Managing Partner at Kreab London, come into play.

Armed with strategies to manage communications through turbulent times, these experts are the helping hands working to turn the tide and guide the ship safely back to shore. We sat down with Chris to talk about the dos and don'ts of crisis communications, and how to remain resilient in the constantly shifting media and social media landscape where modern business takes place.

"Perception matters much more than reality. Managing a communications crisis depends on shaping what different audiences believe to be true, whether or not this reflects reality. Working with narratives can be tough – it takes discipline to operate within a landscape which is constantly in flux and infinitely up for debate. It can be really, really difficult for an organisation to adapt to an hourly evolving news cycle and accompanying social media commentary. That's where we come in," says Chris.

Kreab is a Swedish-founded and Stockholm-headquartered strategic communications advisory operating worldwide. With a team of 500 consultants in over 25 locations globally, their mission is to guide corporations, individuals, governments, and organisations facing complex communications challenges.

"We are very much rooted in our Swedish heritage. Carl Bildt is our joint Vice Chairman with Peje Emilsson, our Founder, who is still very much involved in the business. Peje only recently handed

over the Executive Chair role to Charlotte Erksammar. As a result, we are different to our competitors. We have a network of offices throughout Latin America, and our four largest offices are in Brussels, Tokyo, Stockholm and Madrid."

In London, Kreab has a specialist crisis communications and reputation management team, as well as a global media hub and expert support across public affairs, corporate communications and financial communications. Chris elaborates: "We represent clients from a wide range of sectors, from international sporting bodies to governments; multi-site corporates to law firms; HNWI individuals to industry. For instance, we have just signed a global deal with the Republic of Cyprus to reposition and promote the country's international brand."

The cornerstone of crisis communications: controlling the narrative

Any businesses, regardless of size or sector, exists because it has successfully convinced a wide range of audiences – regulators, local government, the general public, etc. – of its value. When a crisis strikes, these hard-earned narratives are threatened and material business continuity issues follow suit unless the organisation is appropriately defended.

Managing a communications crisis is a decidedly human endeavour. It may sound obvious, but the people behind the response team often make or break the recovery effort. This is all down to who or what is in control of the narrative:





Perception matters much more than reality.

CHRIS PHILIPSBORN, MANAGING PARTNER
AT KREAB LONDON

“A crisis can either control you and your firm, or you can control it. If it controls you – it makes the day to day running of your organisation incredibly difficult. Retaining operational delivery in a crisis can become almost impossible. That’s partly where we come in. We handle the issues in real time alongside the client and free the operational or delivery side of the organisation so it can continue to function and trade.”

After 30 years in the field of crisis communications and reputation management, both in-house and through consultancy, Chris has identified some common mistakes when it comes to preventing and managing crises effectively.

“The issue often originates in a disconnect between what is happening on the ground and senior management. An organisation can have best practice, cutting edge governance and compliance procedures, but these are worthless if they are not implemented day to day throughout the management chain. That can be a management issue, or it can be a growth issue. Rapidly growing start-ups and relatively immature organisations can experience rapid growth and find that their governance and compliance structures simply haven’t kept up. I often see this in adolescent entities, which are making the transition to adulthood.”

Chris continues: “When we get called in to advise, usually it’s a little like observing a slow-motion train wreck. Even though the client can see the crisis looming, there is paralysis within the organisation which prevents the leadership team from taking action in time. In these situations, we employ techniques to enable senior management to look at their organisation as the outside world might do, to consider the perceptions as opposed to the realities as they understand them, and to ask questions that insiders may feel unable to articulate out loud.”



Knowing your audience

It’s not possible to control the narrative if you don’t understand who you’re trying to convince. That’s why Chris emphasises identifying who the key audiences really are:

“Who really matters? Is it your customers, the government, regulators, the media, or a combination of all of these? And don’t forget your internal audience: from Board members to blue collar workers, or customer-facing staff to middle and senior managers. Always ask yourself: “Who are the people that hold the power to approve or reject our position in this situation?”

He elaborates: “What you say to people internally will inevitably leak externally, and what you say to your external audience is seen and read by the internal. So, you need to tailor and align your messaging between the two to fit the concerns of each. If these two worlds are seen to clash, the Executive looks inauthentic and dishonest, a real risk in any crisis handling.”



When tailoring the message, choosing the right communications channel plays another important role. While Chris and his team employ the full range of channels, when it comes to internal communications, his view is to tailor the method to the audience.

“Sometimes, particularly in industrial environments, low-tech can be best. I have found that reaching blue collar staff tends to be most effective when we target them in places where they spend free time, such as workplace canteens. Face to face briefings, town halls, and even very low-tech options such as pre-recorded briefings on a dedicated phone line, are also effective. That said, many entities get into unnecessary difficulties by being too impersonal and using poorly worded texts or emails. Effective communications is about connecting with people, so we advise clients to use the right tone as well as an appropriate channel.”

Building trust through communication

Providing clear, honest information, even if it involves bad news, helps maintain trust and credibility once the crisis hits.

“Don’t lie. Don’t lie to your advisors, don’t lie to yourself, don’t lie to your main audiences, and most important of all - don’t lie to the general public. The issue is not just that this is the right thing to do – it is. It is also that you may be found out, and if that happens, another vital component in crisis communications gets lost: trust.”

Chris emphasises that organisations must ensure their crisis communications is robust, unified, and as honest and transparent as possible, even when certain information cannot be disclosed fully due to legal or strategic reasons, which is often the case. This applies not only to external audiences and shaping public perceptions, but also internally.

“There’s one thing that employees hate above anything else – and that’s uncertainty. So, when it comes to internal communications, it’s crucial to tell people what is going to happen as honestly and openly as you possibly can.”

Transparency builds trust within organisations, and Chris sees a correlation between consistent relationship-building and effective communication efforts:

“The more respected a leader and leadership is by the workforce in any given entity, whether that’s a government, corporate, start-up, or financial institution, the more effective their communications. What all good leaders have in common is the ability to communicate effectively or to surround themselves with others who can, as well as the willingness to take the time to establish key relationships with internal and external stakeholders.”

Fail to prepare, or prepare to fail

Companies are naturally better off avoiding crises in the first place. So, what’s the secret to securing the organisation’s resilience and avoiding potential future crises? Preparedness of course. That could be with the aid of scenario planning, media training, or regular crisis simulations. Because as the old saying goes: you’re either failing to prepare or preparing to fail.

“Don’t just rely on your risk register, your governance or compliance structures,” says Chris. By their nature, crises often seem to come from nowhere. The media and social media landscape are constantly shifting and re-shaping the corporate field of play. Don’t wait until it’s too late, call in people like us to help you do the preparatory work, establish chains of command, and train key spokespeople so you’re ready to respond at what is almost always short notice.”

When it comes to reputation management, Kreab are experts: helping organisations identify potential dangers through stakeholder audits, crafting and executing tailored crisis communication plans, providing real-time evaluation of sentiment across social media, and conducting hands-on practice through simulations – their ambition is to be the ears to the ground, as well as equipping their clients with the tools allowing them to bounce back swiftly once the crisis hits.

“There is no such thing as a business without flaws. No business is perfect. If you were to put a magnifying lens on any entity, public or private, you will find something that’s gone wrong or about to. The key is to control external and internal perceptions of your activities so you can concentrate on delivery and success.”





A NEW CHAPTER AT THE SWEDISH SCHOOL

The new alumni campaign for the Swedish School in London, *The World is Our Oyster*, is opening a new chapter for the school. The campaign, which celebrates the journeys of former students over the past 40 years, is resonating deeply with the Swedish community in London. Since its launch, the stories of the 17 alumni have gained a lot of attention in both social media and the press.

With its impressive academic track record, including 14 years of Ofsted Outstanding ratings, and a strong ethos to provide its students with a springboard to an international future, the school has a unique offering for resident families with a Swedish connection, offering schooling from the age of three through to Sixth Form.

Anna Pennock, parent at the school says: “My husband, who is British and attended boarding school, and I consulted with a school advisor before deciding where to enrol our sons. After visiting several English and international schools, we both agreed that the Swedish School was the best fit for our family. We’ve never regretted that decision.”



LEARN MORE



Meeting the evolving needs of London-based families

Responding to the demands of today’s working parents, the school will introduce extended wraparound care, starting in January next year. This new service will make it easier for parents to balance work and family life.

Jenny Abrahamsson, Principal at the school says: “As a small school, we have the unique flexibility to adapt quickly to the needs of our families. With many employers encouraging a return to the office, we recognise the increased demand for extended care. We’re thrilled to introduce this service, where English-speaking staff will complement our Swedish teachers, ensuring a truly bi-cultural environment. Providing a setting that embraces both cultures is essential to us, and we hope it brings added convenience and appeal for our parents.”



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WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MEMBERSHIP?
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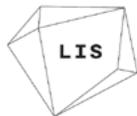
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On 27 November 2025, *Outer Thinking* will bring together over 200 business leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators from Sweden and the UK for a full-day exploration of contemporary leadership. This event

is designed to challenge conventional thinking and inspire new approaches to leadership in today's world.

The following day, **28 November 2025, our Annual Christmas Luncheon** will unite the Swedish-British business community for an iconic celebration at the Landmark London. Enjoy a day of exceptional networking, top-tier entertainment, a traditional Lucia procession, and more, all while connecting with peers and marking the close of the year in a festive style.

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As we wrap up the year, we want to shine a spotlight on the incredible Partners who've made it all possible. With over 60 events hosted in 2024, your support has been the driving force behind creating meaningful forums, lively discussions, and countless new connections within the Swedish-British business community.

From tackling sustainability challenges to exploring the latest innovations, you've helped us turn ideas into impactful moments – and for that, we're truly grateful.

As we look ahead to 2025, we're excited to build on this year's successes. If you're keen to partner with us and shape another extraordinary year of events, don't hesitate to reach out.

Contact: heledd.redondo@scc.org.uk

Here's to another fantastic year of collaboration and making great things happen – together!

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