



## UK Science & Innovation Network Summary

# Sweden

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### 1. Science and Innovation Landscape

Sweden, despite a population of just 10.5 million, is recognised as a world leader in scientific research, development, and innovation (RD&I). Sweden is widely recognised for its excellent higher education system and open, excellent, and attractive research system. Sweden is home to five of the world's top 200 universities in 2023 according to the Time Higher Education university rankings, with Karolinska Institute, Lund, and Uppsala universities at the forefront.

The country's excellence in industrial research has been developed in parallel through leading technical institutes with strong industry-links such as Chalmers Technical University and KTH Royal Institute of Technology. Sweden has also been progressive as an early technology adopter and has defined itself as a test-bed for new and disruptive innovations. Sweden is ranked as one of the EU's most innovative countries with several globally known "unicorn" start-ups such as Spotify, iZettle, Skype and Voi. Over the last decade, Sweden has ranked among the world's leading countries in term of RD&I. The country has a high level of research and development (R&D) spending in the business sector, which at 6.4% of GDP is twice the EU average. This is largely a result of significant government investment to R&D and strong private sector R&D investment from several large international corporates (e.g. Volvo Group, SAAB and Ericsson).

Sweden's innovation strategy is set out every four years in its Research & Innovation Bill, which provides the framework for RD&I priorities/activities; and outlines the overall budget. The science and innovation strategy is implemented by the Sweden's RD&I funding bodies and research agencies. These include the Swedish Research Council, Swedish Government Funding Agency for Innovation System, Vinnova for applied research, alongside a host of other public/private institutes such as the Wallenberg Foundation.



## Health & Life Science

Sweden has Northern-Europe's most dynamic life science market. Sweden is a life-science hub for innovation with over 1000 companies in the sector. These include leading market players such as AstraZeneca, Swedish Orphan Biovitrum (SOBI) and Elekta.

Sweden is also home to the internationally renowned medical research university; Karolinska Institute, the synchrotron radiation source at the MAX IV Laboratory.

Sweden hosts the [European Spallation Source](#) and the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#), which have attracted some of the leading life science researchers and experts to the country.

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## 2. UK partnership with Sweden on ST&I

### UK-Sweden Memorandum of Understanding in Life Sciences

In May 2022, the UK and Sweden signed an MOU in Life Sciences, to promote cooperation across local, regional, and national healthcare, research, and innovation systems. This supports the development of attractive life sciences ecosystems. Areas of cooperation include early diagnostics, genomics, clinical trials, implementation of innovation, sustainability in the life science sector, advanced therapeutic medicinal products (ATMPs) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

### Strategic Partnership between the UK and Sweden

The Strategic Partnership, signed in October 2023, deepens UK-Swedish cooperation across the bilateral relationship, including on security and defence, innovation, science, energy and climate, people to people and trade and investment. Examples of science and innovation (S&I) includes.

- Cooperation to innovate and commercialise new technology,
- Promote sustainable and safe development,
- Use of new and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technologies, 6G/Future Telecom technologies, engineering biology, and blockchain.



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Sweden also supports research exchanges on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), including a 'One Health Approach' and promotes a closer collaboration in close cooperation between British and Swedish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and research communities.

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### 3. SIN contacts

SIN Sweden

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