

The Swedish-French Association for Research (AFSR) is a bilateral association which receives grants from the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning (FORMAS), the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (VINNOVA), the Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV), the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA), and from the French ministries for foreign affairs (MAEE) and for education and research (DREIC). The activities are also supported by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA) and French research councils. AFSR aims at strengthening R&D and technology co-operation between Sweden and France. The Association's activities include seminars, study tours and information in both countries. The aims of these activities are to develop contacts and networks and enable possible co-operations. The exchange of ideas and experiences is therefore very important.

AFSR's programme in 2008 included activities on the following themes:

1. R&D-questions, Clusters, higher education, Co-operation between university and industry, etc.

- An information meeting on "Foresight Activities and Evaluation Policies" (Group ERA+) was organized on 22 May, in collaboration with the Swedish and the French ministries for education and research.
- A member of the AFSR's board participated in the seminar on "Clusters" which was organized by the agency UbiFrance on 8 October in Paris.
- The president of the AFSR's foundation participated in the first European meeting "Assises européennes de l'Innovation" on 9 December in Paris. The Swedish delegation – under the leadership of the minister for higher education and research, Lars Leijonborg, comprised about 15 participants.
- A study tour in the south of France for Swedish students, with visits of scientific interest (nuclear energy, perfume-industry, cluster etc) was organized by the French embassy in co-operation with the AFSR.

2. Environment & sustainable development

- A seminar on "Climate Change Subpolar Perspectives" was organised on 22-23 October by the French embassy and the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat in co-operation with the AFSR.
- Organization of study tours in Stockholm (most of them to the eco area of Hammarby Sjöstad).
- AFSR informed on the meeting (which was organised by the French Chamber of Commerce in Sweden) on "Sustainable France", with the participation of Måns Lönnroth on "The EU and the Management of Sustainable Development".

3. Neurobiology

AFSR organized a programme for Professor Alain Prochiantz (Collège de France), who was invited to give lectures and to meet colleagues in Stockholm and in Lund, within the "Wenner-Gren Foundations' Distinguished Lecturers" programme (28-31 October).

4. Information on events associated with the Nobel Prize

- an exhibition at Palais de la Découverte in Paris (13 November),
- a seminar (8 December) organized by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) in co-operation with the Karolinska Institute on "Challenges in Prevention and the Fight against HIV/AIDS".

Due to its extensive network of contacts, AFSR has been of assistance to the Swedish embassy in Paris and to the French embassy in Stockholm in various areas. AFSR is an important source of information for its members and for organizations in both countries. In 2008, AFSR has also published 16 letters "ST-Suède", e-reviews in French of scientific and technological articles.

AFSR's annual report 2008 (in French and in Swedish) is available on http://www.afsr.se/RA2008_FrSv.pdf
(See also <http://www.afsr.se/projets.html>).