

Space to grow

Sweden has been a pioneer of innovation — now it's your turn.

The strategy for strengthening the image of Sweden abroad highlights the specific strengths of the Sweden brand. It helps us act and communicate in a unified direction to preserve and promote a fact-based and positive image of our country.

Sweden is one of the most innovative countries in the world. The foundation of our pioneering spirit is rooted in our strong democratic society. That's a promising position to start from. Innovation is something sought after. Empathy and compassion are strived for.

Strengthening the image of Sweden as a powerhouse of innovation requires us to be innovative in both large and small ways. And that creates exciting new opportunities!

The strategy is your tool. This workbook is to help and inspire you to use it. Feel free to go through these pages, on your

own or with colleagues, for a specific activity or communication effort. Choose the section from 'the Swedish peak' that is most relevant to your purpose and reflect on the corresponding questions to find interesting angles and new ideas.

Working together, we can give our target audiences space to grow and, thus, Sweden.



Madeleine Sjöstedt,
Director-General of the Swedish Institute

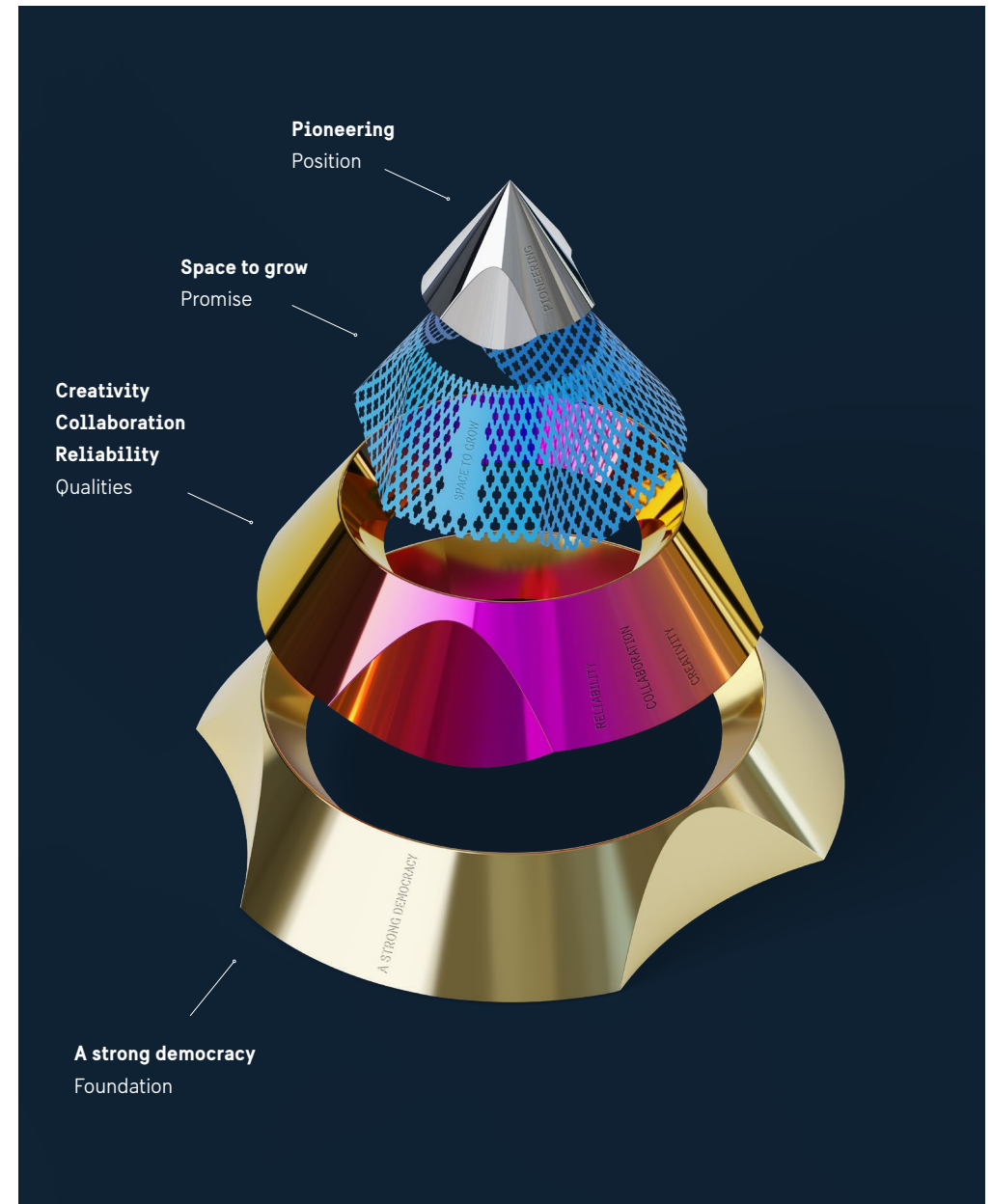
P.S. The strategy to strengthen the image of Sweden abroad and additional materials can be found at [sharingsweden.se](https://www.sharingsweden.se).

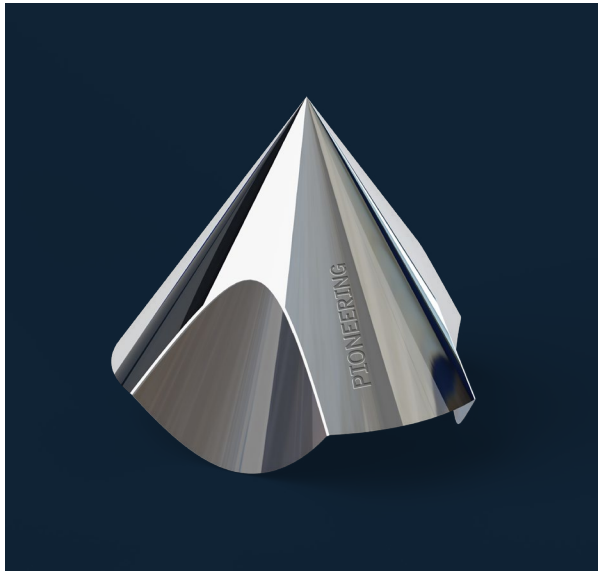
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The Swedish peak – giving focus and guiding the way forward.

The “Swedish peak” diagram showcases the main strengths of the Sweden brand: The foundation of a strong democratic society, where qualities such as reliability, collaboration and creativity are realised, supporting the promise that Sweden gives people, companies and communities space to grow, and – with courage and collective strength – reaches a pioneering position to achieve what’s never been done before. This is how Sweden remains innovative, both today and tomorrow.

The Swedish peak was designed utilising industrial origami. A Swedish manufacturing technique that uses folding and curved lines to reduce weight, minimise waste and optimise the strength of the material. Innovative, beautiful and robust, just like the Sweden brand.





PIONEERING

Be bold and innovative – just like Sweden.

Sweden has gone against the grain, helping push progress forward, many times throughout history. We'll continue to stand out and surprise the global community. By being innovative, we strengthen the image of Sweden and inspire others who dare to try new paths forward.

What would your audience perceive as pioneering, which is connected to your subject and relevant for strengthening the image of Sweden abroad?

Most importantly, don't say Sweden is innovative – show it. How can you communicate innovation through words and actions? Through the content you create? The channels you use? The format, timing or the tone of voice? Or any other ways?

How can you approach a familiar topic in a new and unexpected way?

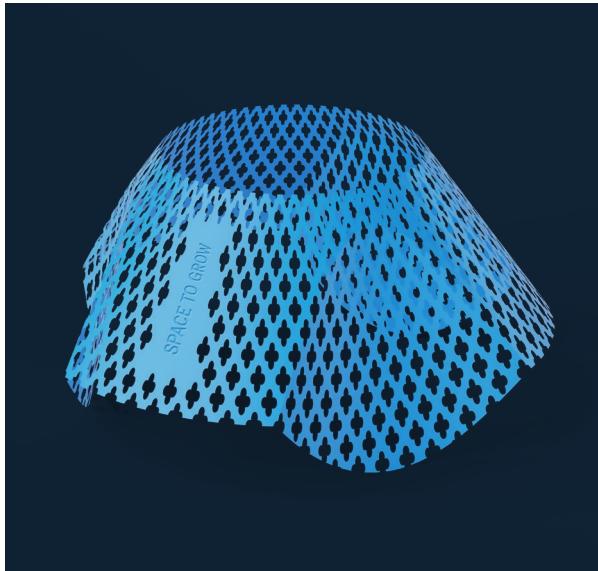
Audiences often first encounter Sweden through culture. Are there any aspects of Swedish culture that could spark interest in your target audience or deepen the conversation?

"New ideas come when you dare to let go of logic and think freely. If you seek logic, you tend to get stuck in ideas you already have."

– Anna Rudels, Director,
Department for Sweden
communication and promotion,
The Swedish Institute

"From the Nobel Prize and ball bearings to universal parental leave and tech unicorns – innovation seems to be built into the Swedish way of life. But such pioneering initiatives don't start with big breakthroughs. They start with the little things – those moments of curiosity, willingness to see other possibilities, and courage to do something differently – wherever you are."

– Daniella Waldfogel, CEO,
Stockholm Chamber of Commerce



SPACE TO GROW

Give your audience what they need to grow.

Sweden gives people, companies and communities space to grow. Be curious and get to know the driving forces of your target audience. When Swedish strengths or solutions meet a real need, Sweden becomes interesting and relevant in a way that's authentic.

Communication promoting Sweden should also benefit others. What does your target audience need in order to grow, personally or professionally?

How can you meet the needs and desires of your target audience in a way connected to your topic? What can you offer, provide or tell them that enriches and inspires them here and now?

Is there an issue in your market that stifles people's personal development and companies' growth? How does Sweden think and behave in relation to it? Can you share our experiences with that issue or even help address it?

"How can we understand people's needs and dreams related to their home? This is a commercial opportunity, of course, but also significant for our role as a member of society. In what contexts can we be relevant and contribute?"

– Linda Vikström Nielsen,
Country Communication Manager,
IKEA Sweden

"If people are happy and content, a company gets more impact from each individual. It's simply rational for every organisation to care."

– Oscar Stege Unger,
Founder & CEO, Canucci



CREATIVITY
COLLABORATION
RELIABILITY

Embody Sweden’s sought-after qualities.

Our democratic society fosters specific desirable qualities. Use these strengths to build trust, establish new partnerships and generate interest in Sweden, Swedish stakeholders and Swedish solutions.

Reliability means behaving honestly and consistently, as well as delivering on our promises. Trust also comes from genuine goodwill. How can you show that you truly care about your target audience?

Partnership is the new leadership. The more partnerships, the greater the influence. What collaborative partnerships can you initiate that are relevant to your topic or mission and also affect your stakeholders? Think win-win-win!

Creativity is about adding value to something, increasing its attractiveness. It’s about originality and playfulness, as well as a balance between imagination and structure. Seeing things from new perspectives and taking risks are also part of it. How can you creatively enhance your communication efforts in terms of ideas or aesthetics?

“People who live and work here come from all over the world. They bring with them experiences and stories that often have unexpected connections to our own history and culture. Highlighting these connections and shared history through personal stories is a powerful way to strengthen the global community and ties between countries.”

– Ahmed Abdirahman, Founder & CEO, The Järvaveckan Foundation

“When initiating partnerships, it is important to adapt locally. A shared story where the other side is already involved and feels included is crucial for success.”

– Magnus Schöldtz, Senior Advisor, Wallenberg Investments

“We talk a lot about programming, engineering and technology. We don’t talk enough about creative expression, artistic ambition and coming together. Creativity is an inexhaustible raw material that does not take any of the planet’s limited resources.”

– Per Strömbäck, Managing Director Swedish Games Industry



A STRONG DEMOCRACY

Take our democratic values as a starting point.

Sweden's global competitiveness comes from its strong democratic values. Our support for every individual citizen is why we're such an innovative country. It makes us interesting. It strengthens us. It gives us resiliency.

How can you practice democratic values in your project or interactions with the target audience?

Can you deepen the message or topic by showing that Sweden is a strong democracy? Can you connect innovation, entrepreneurship or revolutionary ideas to individual freedoms and rights in Sweden?

Can you put what you are going to highlight or talk about in a larger context and demonstrate its importance for people and society?

How can you use Swedish democratic values – such as our independent judiciary or our legally protected freedom of speech and expression – to counter misleading information and misunderstandings about Sweden? What facts are relevant and fair to highlight?

"It is extremely important that Sweden does not allow external forces to limit our freedoms. We must not compromise on our fundamental democratic values."

– Dr Mouna Esmaeilzadeh,
Co-founder and Executive Vice
Chairman, Esmaeilzadeh Holding

"The beauty of democracy is that it assumes that people are mature and rational beings who do not need to be led by despots and dictators."

Our democracy – worth protecting every day, Statens offentliga utredning (Swedish Government Official Report) 2022:28

"We are present in 190 countries, so unexpected events happen all the time. We are, therefore, accustomed to crisis management. But that does not mean we are abandoning our core values or our long-term narrative."

– Kina Wileke, Executive Vice President,
Group Communication, Volvo Group

Together, we can achieve what's never been done before.

Reaching out and making an impression with an international audience is a challenge. And, like all challenges, it requires cooperation. Discussing the strategy with others and comparing experiences and what's been effective is crucial to our shared success.

Additional material and examples of communication to promote Sweden can be found on the Swedish Institute's website, sharingsweden.se. Feel free to send successful initiatives from your organisation that can help inspire others to our email address: brandsweden@si.se.

Your willingness to share is highly valuable. Many thanks in advance!