Svensk curatorförening

Annual Report

Swedish Curators' Association

2025

Organisationsnr: 802537-3054

Introduction

Throughout 2025, the Swedish Curators' Association (SCF) worked actively and strategically to strengthen the professional conditions of curators, foster international collaborations, and contribute to the long-term structures needed within the field of contemporary art.

A key priority during the year was the development of a framework agreement for curators, initiated by the association's Operational and Programme Development Team as a practical tool for establishing clearer standards regarding contracts, fees, and sustainable working conditions. The work continues to evolve through ongoing dialogue with curators, institutions, and legal expertise within the cultural sector, including lawyers from DIK. Discussions with institutions continue to shape and refine the content of the agreement.

SCF also expanded its international network and continued to develop peer-to-peer models for knowledge exchange and professional development through conversations, networking meetings, and project development in collaboration with Nordic and international partners.

Alongside these activities, the association continued its cultural policy work through consultation responses, public discussions, and international collaborations concerning curators' working conditions, the independence of cultural institutions, and the democratic role of culture.

Internally, the association has taken further steps towards a more sustainable organisational structure. Membership administration has been brought in-house in order to reduce costs and strengthen control over communications and internal operations. Looking ahead, SCF sees a need to intensify its efforts in membership recruitment and member engagement.

Vision and Mission

The Swedish Curators' Association is a politically independent non-profit organisation founded in 2021. The association's purpose is to represent curators and to strengthen professional, economic, and social conditions within the field of contemporary art.

Curators play a central role in how art is produced, communicated, and reaches its audiences, a role that must be recognised, valued, and supported through sustainable working conditions.

The association pursues this mission by:

– creating professional forums that contribute to public discourse on curatorial practice;

– supporting members in both practical and intellectual aspects of their work;

– facilitating national and international collaborations;

– promoting freedom of expression, democratic values, and equal opportunities;

– encouraging collegial exchange, knowledge-sharing, and sustainable working conditions.

SCF also actively engages in cultural policy through consultation responses, public discussions, and collaborations aimed at strengthening the independence of cultural institutions and the role of curators in public cultural life.

Cultural Policy and Advocacy

Throughout the year, SCF's cultural policy engagement centred on three key areas: curators' working conditions, the independence of cultural institutions, and the democratic role of culture.

The Board followed and participated in discussions surrounding the proposed mergers of the Public Art Agency Sweden, Moderna Museet and ArkDes, as well as the Swedish Arts Council and the Swedish Arts Grants Committee. These restructuring proposals generated considerable debate within the cultural sector and renewed discussions concerning the arm's length principle and institutional autonomy. The association's consultation responses and public statements are available on SCF's website.

A significant contribution to this discussion came from SCF's Vice Chair, Natasha Marie Llorens, whose article *At Arm's Length: Political Capture of the Arts in Sweden* was published in *e-flux*. The text examines how the arm's length principle is being weakened through increasing political influence and institutional centralisation, placing recent developments in Sweden within a broader European and geopolitical context.

Through seminars, public conversations, and international networks, SCF has continued to highlight issues relating to precarious working conditions, unpaid labour, and the need for sustainable structures within the curatorial field.

International Networks and Conferences

Throughout the year, SCF continued to develop international collaborations within the Nordic-Baltic art field, with a particular focus on knowledge exchange, methodological development, and long-term relationships between curators, institutions, and peer organisations.

In June, Marianna Garin, one of the association's Programme and Development Leads, participated in the conference *Circuits of Experiences, Research and Knowledge: How*

to Gather if the Structures to Gather Disappear? in Bergen. The conference was organised by Anne Szefer Karlsen through the University of Bergen in collaboration with OCA – Office for Contemporary Art Norway and the Norwegian Association of Curators. Participation was made possible through support from Region Skåne.

The conference provided a platform for in-depth discussions on curatorial practice and knowledge production and contributed to the development of new international connections. For several years, SCF has maintained an ongoing dialogue with Anne Szefer Karlsen, curator and Professor of Curatorial Practice at The Art Academy, Department of Contemporary Art, Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen, concerning contracts, working conditions, and curatorial discourse within the Nordic-Baltic region.

Participation in the conference also laid the foundation for new collaborations and further planning of international initiatives for 2026.

During the year, the association's Chair also presented the work of SCF to students in the Curating programmes at Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design and Stockholm University, as well as to FRAME Contemporary Art Finland in Helsinki.

Peer-to-Peer and Mentorship Programme

During the reporting year, SCF continued to develop a long-term international peer-to-peer and mentorship programme focused on knowledge exchange, professional development, and curatorial methodologies.

The initiative responds to a growing need for continuing education and support structures for curators at a time when resources for curatorial education in the Nordic countries are diminishing and working conditions within the arts sector are becoming increasingly precarious. The programme aims to create non-hierarchical forms of learning and exchange between curators at different stages of their professional careers, both nationally and internationally.

In October, SCF organised a conversation and networking event with the Mexican curator and writer Lorena Moreno Vera in collaboration with Bonniers Konsthall, CurExRes, and SWAN. The programme focused on international exchange and contemporary curatorial practices.

Throughout the year, the work primarily involved research, network-building, and the development of collaborations with Nordic and international partner organisations. As part of this process, SCF initiated the project *Curatorial Imaginaries: Practices of Access and Inclusion*, planned in connection with GIBCA Extended in Gothenburg.

The project was developed as a broad collaboration between curators, institutions, and cultural actors in the Gothenburg region and sought to explore curatorial methodologies,

accessibility, and knowledge production through symposia, conversations, and mentorship. During the year, SCF applied for support from the City of Gothenburg, the Västra Götaland Region, Kulturbryggan, and other regional and Nordic funding bodies to enable the implementation and long-term development of the project.

As funding was not secured during the reporting year, parts of the programme have been postponed to the coming year. Nevertheless, the preparatory work contributed to the establishment of new partnerships and helped strengthen the project's international network and conceptual direction. SCF regards this as a long-term initiative and continues to develop the project through new collaborations and funding opportunities, including ongoing dialogue with UKK – Organisation for Artists, Curators and Art Mediators in Denmark and partners in Region Skåne.

Communication and Membership Development

During the reporting year, SCF continued to strengthen its digital presence and member communications. The association's website and visual identity remain important platforms for sharing information and increasing the visibility of curatorial practice, while social media channels are used to communicate activities and highlight the work and projects of members.

During the year, membership registration and administration were brought in-house after previously being managed by an external provider. This transition was undertaken in order to reduce administrative costs and strengthen the association's control over its internal structures and communications.

The association experienced a decline in membership during the year, making member recruitment and member engagement key priorities for the coming year. Particular focus will be placed on strengthening relationships with both existing and prospective members.

Communication, visibility, and member engagement remain central components of SCF's ongoing efforts to strengthen the professional network and long-term sustainability of the curatorial field in Sweden.

Collaborative Projects and Portfolio Reviews

In 2025, SCF was commissioned for a second time by Regionsamverkan Sydsverige to develop and deliver a digital portfolio review programme for professional visual artists based in the regions of Blekinge, Halland, Jönköping, Kalmar, Kronoberg, and Skåne. The project was led by SCF's Programme and Development Leads, Karin Bähler Lavér and Marianna Garin.

The initiative was designed to create meaningful professional encounters between artists in southern Sweden and international curators, with a particular emphasis on increasing the visibility of artistic practices beyond the major metropolitan centres. For the first time, the open call was directed to both curators and visual artists.

As part of the programme, SCF organised an online seminar ahead of the portfolio reviews, focusing on the relationship between curators and artists, different forms of curatorial collaboration, and professional development within the field.

Invited speakers included Alessio Antoniolli, curator and Director of Triangle Network and former Director of Gasworks, London, and Stephanie Wruck, curator and co-founder of Coletivo Amarelo in Lisbon and São Paulo. The seminar provided an opportunity to discuss international working methods, professional networks, and contemporary curatorial processes.

Building on SCF's established international network, the project responded to a concrete need for stronger professional connections between artists in southern Sweden and curators working internationally. The commission also included the production of a report outlining recommendations and reflections for the future development of the model.

Residency Programmes and Advisory Work

As a supporting organisation for curators and curatorial processes, SCF continued its advisory work within regional initiatives connecting art, research, and societal development through its involvement in the residency programme HULT in Kronoberg.

The programme is developed in collaboration with Region Kronoberg's Department of Visual Arts and Design, Linnaeus University's Centre for Intermedial and Multimodal Studies (IMS), and Växjö Art Hall.

SCF's role includes curatorial process support, the development of the long-term pilot programme, and participation in jury and selection processes. The collaboration aims to strengthen interdisciplinary exchange between art, research, and society, while contributing to sustainable frameworks for artistic and curatorial practice in a regional context.

Members

During the reporting year, SCF had 54 registered members active across Sweden. The membership includes freelance and institution-based curators, a smaller number of students, and Swedish curators working internationally. This geographical and professional diversity is also reflected in the composition of the Board.

Throughout the year, the association continued to strengthen its communication with members and further develop sustainable administrative structures for membership registration and internal organisation.

At the same time, membership recruitment and member engagement remain important priorities. SCF will continue to focus on strengthening its network and expanding its membership base in order to support a vibrant and sustainable professional community for curators in Sweden and beyond.

Board and Board Meetings

The Board for the 2025–2026 term consisted of curators working across institutional, freelance, and international contexts.

The Board's work focused on the overall development of the association, cultural policy issues, and long-term strategic planning. During the year, Board members also engaged in a number of strategic meetings and exchanges with representatives of cultural agencies, professional organisations, and colleagues across the arts sector, addressing topics such as internationalisation, professional conditions, and the role of curators within public cultural institutions.

In addition to the inaugural Board meeting held on 24 June 2025, five minuted Board meetings took place during the reporting year:

First Board Meeting: **24 September 2025**
Second Board Meeting: **25 October 2025**
Third Board Meeting: **15 December 2025**
Fourth Board Meeting: **21 January 2026**
Fifth Board Meeting: **14 April 2026**

Board 2025–2026

Jonatan Habib Engqvist – Chair, freelance curator

Natasha Marie Llorens – Vice Chair, curator and Professor of Art Theory, Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm

Anneli Bäckman – Curator, Gaaltije Saemien Museume

Joa Ljungberg – Curator, Moderna Museet Malmö

Jarì Malta – Curator, Fuxia2, Malmö

Ceridwen Grady – Student Representative, International Master's Programme in Curating, Stockholm University; Secretary

Amila Puzić – Curator, Röda Sten Konsthall, Gothenburg; Alternate Member

Anca Rujoiu – Curator, Bildmuseet, Umeå; Alternate Member

Operational and Programme Development Team

Throughout the year, SCF's activities were sustained to a large extent through voluntary labour and close collaboration between the Operational and Programme Development Team and the Board.

The team was responsible for administration, project development, funding applications, communications, membership administration, network-building, and the coordination of the association's programmes and collaborative initiatives.

During the reporting year, the Operational and Programme Development Team consisted of Marianna Garin, Karin Bähler Lavér, and Sona Stepanyan.

The association's activities continued to develop despite limited financial resources, requiring careful prioritisation, internal coordination, and long-term planning. At the same time, this work enabled the continued growth of SCF's networks, partnerships, and public-facing activities.

During the year, the team also participated in a working residency at the Nordic Watercolour Museum, focusing on organisational development, strategic planning, and the development of future collaborative projects.

Nomination Committee 2025–2026

Asrin Haidari – Curator of Contemporary Art, Moderna Museet

Olivia Berkowitz – Curator

Collaborating Organisations, Supporting Partners and Funders

Throughout the year, SCF collaborated with a wide range of institutions, organisations, and international networks across the contemporary art field. These included Bonniers Konsthall, Regionsamverkan Sydsverige, the Nordic Watercolour Museum, Region Kronoberg's Department of Visual Arts and Design, Växjö konsthall, Linnaeus University

– Centre for Intermedial and Multimodal Studies (IMS), IASPIS, The Art Academy in Bergen, UKK Denmark, CurExRes, SWAN, and DIK.

The association would like to acknowledge the support of its collaborating organisations, supporting partners, and professional networks, whose contributions have been essential to the development of SCF's activities throughout the year.

SCF's activities during 2025 were made possible primarily through funding from the Swedish Arts Council and the Swedish-Danish Cultural Foundation.

Finance

SCF has no employees. The association's activities are carried out primarily through voluntary work, supplemented by remunerated contributions related to project implementation and organisational development.

During the reporting year, SCF applied for support from a number of public and regional funding bodies to further develop international networks, peer-to-peer initiatives, and cultural policy activities.

Grants and Funding

The following grants were awarded during the reporting year:

– Swedish Arts Council (support for promotional organisations): SEK 350,000

– Swedish-Danish Cultural Foundation: SEK 30,000

Income from Grants and Membership Fees

The association's income consists primarily of public funding and membership fees, which contribute to covering administrative costs and organisational development.

The annual membership fee is SEK 250 for regular members, SEK 150 for students, and a minimum of SEK 250 for supporting members.

Number of registered members during the reporting year: 54.

Auditor for the 2025 financial year: Max Göransson.

Authorised Signatories and Registered Address

The association's authorised signatories, effective from 5 April 2024, are:

– Marianna Garin

– Karin Bähler Lavér

– Sona Stepanyan

As of 28 August 2024, the Swedish Curators' Association is registered at the following address:

Swedish Curators' Association
c/o Anca Rujoiu
Kemigränd 10
SE-907 31 Umeå
Sweden

Marianna Garin
SCF Programme and Development Lead
Berlin, 23 May 2026

Jonatan Habib Engqvist
Chair, Swedish Curators' Association
Stockholm, 25 May 2026

Reviewed and approved by:

Karin Bähler Lavér
SCF Programme and Development Lead
Malmö, 26 May 2026