

SEK 22 Million in EU funding elevates the Life Science sector in Umeå

Two ongoing projects aiming to boost innovation and industry growth.

UMEÅ, VÄSTERBOTTEN, SVERIGE, June 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Umeå is strengthening its position as a life science hub thanks to two regional development projects receiving around €1.8 million (22 SEK million) in EU support. These projects aim to boost innovation, collaboration, and industry growth.

"This presents an opportunity to further elevate Umeå's standing as a life science leader," emphasizes Peter Jacobsson, Operations Coordinator at Umeå Biotech Incubator (UBI).



Peter Jacobsson, Umeå Biotech Incubator, and Mats Falck, the SOLH project.

UBI's "Life Science Engine 2.0" project significantly impacted Umeå from 2019 to 2023. The sector witnessed a 17% annual job increase, with total revenue tripling from €20 million to €60 million. Recognized as the best regional development project in Västerbotten in June 2023, the initiative aimed to cultivate a thriving life science industry.

"This project exemplifies how structural fund resources can be effectively utilized to develop an industry, serving as a valuable learning resource for others," remarked Regional Academy follow-up researchers Lena Hedman Rahm and Peter Hedman in June.

UBI launched its new three-year project, "Life Science City", which started this year. The EU and the Swedish Growth Agency support this endeavor to propel Umeå's life science industry further and foster innovation and collaboration. The long-term vision is to expand the sector's workforce from 1,200 to 2,000 by 2030.

"Umeå boasts significant expertise, yet remains relatively small on a national and international scale," explains Jacobsson. "At UBI, we firmly believe collaboration is paramount to the success of Life Science Umeå. Additionally, it is crucial to serve as a sounding board for Umeå municipality and Business Sweden in their efforts to attract external establishments."



The life science sector in Umeå boasts significant expertise, yet remains relatively small on a national and international scale and collaboration is the key to the success."

Peter Jacobsson, Operations Coordinator, Umeå Biotech Incubator

"Through this new project, we can empower Life Science Umeå to leverage collective knowledge and strengthen existing collaborations. In February, we kickstarted Life Science City with 'Open up for Innovation,' an event fostering new collaborations and stimulating innovation by bringing together 100 academic and industry representatives," Jacobsson adds.

UBI isn't the sole entity driving life science advancements in Umeå. The "Open up for Innovation" event, for instance, was conducted in collaboration with the "Support Office for Life Science & Health" ([SOLH](#)) project. SOLH addresses

the need for a more streamlined and unified innovation system within life sciences across northern Sweden.

"If your operations require specific solutions, you have ideas or research findings you wish to test and implement, or you seek partners or project funding, SOLH serves as your central access point for support in healthcare and welfare across Norrbotten and Västerbotten," explains Mats Falck, Project Manager for SOLH.

Besides the continuous support for individual researchers and projects and participation in events like the Baltic Sea Network or regional cancer days, the SOLH project has engaged in several other activities.

"For example, we conducted a workshop during the European Week of Cities and Regions in Brussels alongside Lower Austria and collaborated with Catalonia on mental health projects" states Mats Falck.

This project is also funded by the EU Regional Fund and the Swedish Growth Agency (with Region Västerbotten, and Region Norrbotten as co-funders) and will continue until fall 2026.

SOLH is a collaborative effort between Umeå University, Region Västerbotten, Region Norrbotten, Luleå University of Technology, Umeå University Holding, and the municipalities of Skellefteå and Umeå.

"We already possess a well-established collaborative foundation, and with these two projects combined, we, and hopefully the entire industry, will emerge even stronger," states Falck.

Total amount doubled with co-financing

UBI shares this enthusiasm for collaboration with the SOLH project. Around €1.8 Million (22 SEK Million) is invested in the projects from the EU Regional Fund.

"There's a real sense of collaboration between the projects, and it's exciting to see the investment in two new life science development projects in Umeå and the surrounding region. When you factor in co-financing, the total amount is more than doubled. This commitment will fuel progress on all fronts," concludes Peter Jacobsson.

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