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## Stockholm Business School strategy 2024-2026<sup>1</sup>

### Background

This strategy sets out the overall operational goals and development areas for Stockholm Business School (SBS). It should be viewed as a guiding direction for the next three years and is intended to serve as a starting point for recurring dialogues within the department board, the management group, with students, and within the sections. The strategy aligns with the overarching strategies of the university, the area, and the faculty<sup>2</sup>. These strategies emphasize the collegial decision-making process at the University and highlight the fundamental academic values of autonomy and academic freedom, as well as several core values that the University has upheld for a long time: knowledge, enlightenment, and the pursuit of truth.

The strategy takes into account that the University's mission, according to the Higher Education Act, is to offer education based on a scientific or artistic foundation as well as proven experience. This mission also includes conducting research and collaborating with society for mutual exchange, as well as ensuring that the knowledge and expertise possessed by the University benefit society. In addition to these principles, it is crucial for the University to address current societal challenges, such as climate change, inequality, polarization, and technological transformation. The activities must contribute to societal development that meets today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This is primarily achieved through research and education, but also by reducing the environmental and climate footprint from the University's own operations. We also commit to the state's core values, which include principles such as democracy, legality, objectivity, freedom of opinion, respect, efficiency, and good service<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This document is an automatically translated English version of the original Swedish document approved by the Department Board (IS).

<sup>2</sup> Strategies for Stockholm University 2023-2026, Humanities Strategies 2023-2026 and the Faculty of Social Sciences' strategic plan 2023-2025

<sup>3</sup> <https://medarbetare.su.se/stod-och-service/juridik/forvaltningsratt>

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### Department of Business Administration



Business administration is a multifaceted subject area that deals with how companies and organizations function, their role in society, and how they achieve their goals in a responsible and sustainable way. The core activities at SBS, namely teaching, research, and collaboration, are carried out within the framework of four academic sections, each responsible for a sub-discipline in business administration: finance, management, marketing, and accounting. These sections are supported by the administrative section. In addition to business administration and its sub-disciplines, our educational and postgraduate programs also encompass the adjacent fields of advertising and public relations, as well as financial economics.

The department board is responsible for deciding on and following up on the strategy and operational plan, while the head of department and the management team are responsible for continuously planning and monitoring the activities within their respective areas of responsibility, with this strategy serving as overall guidance.

## Purpose and vision

SBS has an inclusive view of business administration, where different perspectives on the subject are welcomed and respected. This view enriches our community and strengthens our scientific work. To clarify SBS's long-term ambition and role, a vision and a mission have been formulated. The vision is intended to provide a long-term goal for SBS's endeavours and development and reads as follows:

- SBS's vision is to be a driving force and a respected source of knowledge and inspiration in addressing current societal challenges in a changing world

This vision emphasises SBS's ambition to be a relevant and responsible force in society through its research and education within the framework of SBS's subject areas. The vision is complemented by a mission that aims to define the organization's purpose, and reads as follows:

- SBS's mission is to conduct outstanding research and provide engaging, research-driven teaching that develops students' ability to create responsible and sustainable solutions, and to collaborate with various societal actors to address current societal challenges together.

Research-driven teaching is based on current research and is carried out by teachers who actively conduct research or continuously keep up to date in the subject area of each course. Responsible and sustainable solutions are those that support social justice, efficient use of resources, and economic well-being, while protecting the environment for future generations. In addition to developing the students' knowledge and abilities in the subject areas of business administration, we will prepare them to deal with complex societal challenges that include social, environmental, ethical, and technological aspects. This mission also underlines our



endeavor not only to develop research and research-related teaching, but also to deepen the interaction between SBS and the surrounding society, where flows of ideas, issues, knowledge, and resources lead to mutual development.<sup>4</sup>

## Strategic goals and areas of development

As a capital university and one of the country's largest business administration departments, we must have access to academic expertise and conduct relevant research as well as research-driven education of internationally high quality in SBS's subject areas. This means not only focusing on the depth of narrow parts of each subject area, but also maintaining a broad and diverse education and research portfolio that reflects the dynamic and interdisciplinary nature of today's business landscape, i.e., the changing environment in which economic, ecological, technological, social, and political factors develop and interact.

Based on our vision and mission, and considering the current situation at SBS and the special strategic initiatives decided by the department board, *the overall strategic goal for the period is to improve quality by developing and systematizing the work of evaluating, improving, and following up on our operations*. In broad terms, quality means that the results of SBS's research, teaching, and collaboration must be of the highest possible level, as well as the processes and resources that support these activities. Achieving this goal requires mindful consideration of existing resources, including personnel, funding, equipment, and facilities, as well as opportunities and limitations that arise from the state's core values. To maintain a balanced economy, we must continuously adapt to new conditions and work proactively to manage these changes.

More specifically, the following *strategic development areas* have been formulated to achieve the overall strategic goal:

- SBS will conduct diverse research focused on current societal challenges
- SBS will provide engaging, research-driven education in interaction with a changing world
- SBS will act as a constructive collaboration partner in addressing current societal challenges
- SBS will maintain a supportive and inclusive work environment

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<sup>4</sup> The concept of collaboration does not include contacts that take place with other higher education institutions and other researchers.



An overview of each development area is given below, while concrete proposals for measures and methods for follow-up will be presented in a separate action plan.

### **Diverse research focusing on current societal challenges**

Research at SBS will be characterised by both breadth and depth, with a clear foundation in areas of business administration. Breadth is crucial to ensure a robust research environment that can support our broad education portfolio. Through depth, we intend to break new ground and create new insights and knowledge, both through individual researchers and within the framework of existing and new research groups. SBS supports decentralised, organic growth in research, such as the ongoing investment in school research, and encourages research collaborations with the surrounding society to strengthen the relevance and practical applicability of the research. Through different types of collaborations, researchers and practitioners from different disciplines can contribute with their unique perspectives and expertise to gain a more diverse understanding of current societal challenges. To further strengthen our research capacity and the relevance of our research, researchers are expected to apply for external funding so that the proportion of externally funded research increases. To enable this, the conditions and incentives for applying for external funding and conducting research will be reviewed.

Our goal is to strengthen our presence in the research community by publishing our research in recognized scientific journals or in books by recognized publishers. At the same time, we strive to ensure that our research has an impact on society. For example, it can be about its contribution to innovation, societal change, and educational development. Doctoral education at SBS is a fundamental part of our efforts to maintain our dynamic and curiosity-driven research environment. By developing innovative research questions and conducting empirical studies that explore new areas of business administration, our doctoral students play a central role in our academic development. We aim to attract highly qualified PhD students who enrich our research activities and strengthen our ability to explore both existing and new research areas.

The Subject Representative Council, with a professor representative from each section, bears a special responsibility for stimulating and coordinating research collaborations within the framework of a respectful and collegial academic environment. The subject representatives must also initiate and pursue interdisciplinary issues, create forums for scientific and socially relevant debate, and participate in recruitment and promotion. It is important that SBS continues to attract and recruit qualified and research-active people when there is a need for new teachers, both on a temporary and permanent basis. With regard to research collaborations, SBS will work to ensure a clear and warm welcome to incoming visiting researchers and doctoral students. The ambition is that their stay will contribute to a broad collaboration and collaboration with SBS's teachers, researchers and students, although this must be adapted depending on the length of the stay and circumstances.



In order to maintain and strengthen SBS's position as a leading institution in business administration, we will promote good research conditions and provide appropriate support structures and procedures for e.g. research applications. In addition, we will improve our routines regarding data security, storage and access to research data, to ensure a safe, ethical and reliable academic environment.

### **Engaging and research-driven education in interaction with a changing world**

SBS's education portfolio shall be characterised by a breadth within the department's main fields of study with specialisations corresponding to the department's sub-disciplines, supplemented by specialised interdisciplinary programmes offered in collaboration with other departments. Based on the research conducted at SBS, this broader education aims to provide SBS's students with tools and perspectives to understand and contribute to solutions for current societal challenges.

SBS's education at undergraduate and graduate levels shall utilise modern educational environments for interactive forms of teaching on campus, supplemented with digital learning where pedagogically justified. Courses and programmes should be developed and renewed when necessary, based on their relevance to current societal challenges and the development of the subject specialisation. The structure of the programmes must be adapted so that SBS students have the opportunity for exchange studies, and so that SBS can offer relevant courses for students from our partner universities. Student exchange partnerships are established based on the partner university's high quality of education, course offerings, and research relevant to our mission, as well as its geographical location. We shall also strengthen our study administration processes to ensure continuity, equal treatment, and high quality.

SBS shall also conduct executive education to meet society's need for lifelong learning, based on a high-quality course and education portfolio that is regularly developed. This portfolio includes an EMBA programme, where we strive to maintain the current volume as well as the good quality and accreditation. In addition to the EMBA programme led by SBS, we also participate in other executive education, especially the Headmaster's Programme coordinated by the Department of Education. These courses can contribute to increasing business administration skills in business and the public sector and position us as an institution recognised for its ability to develop new and relevant knowledge for these actors. They can also act as a bridge between SBS and our stakeholders in public and private organisations. The programmes shall be linked to SBS's mission and to other activities at SBS, and they can also contribute to bringing more of the challenges of professional life into the academic environment, thereby creating a basis for the development of other education and research at SBS.

## **A constructive collaboration partner on current societal challenges**

An overall goal is for SBS to strengthen its position as a constructive collaboration partner for companies and organizations around SBS's research topics, with a focus on jointly addressing current and future societal challenges. This aims to increase SBS's relevance and impact, as well as to create mutual benefits through knowledge exchange, innovation, and collaboration. To achieve this, SBS shall continue to support and develop existing collaboration initiatives (including the School of Management Accounting in the State) and encourage further initiatives on an individual basis as well as by various research groups conducting empirical and interactive research and involving guest lecturers from industry and public organisations in teaching for mutual learning and knowledge exchange. Another opportunity to strengthen SBS's role in community development is to leverage our Advisory Board's expertise and network to launch new collaboration initiatives. Executive education is part of SBS's collaboration and shall continue to be developed, with the ambition that it will be an integrated part of the activities that enables mutual exchange between academia and practice.

Various forms of outreach are also encouraged, in order to disseminate information about research results and increase interest in SBS. This may involve hosting seminars, attending public appearances, producing digital content such as videos and podcasts, as well as writing popular science reports and reviews. Active use of social media platforms to share these efforts is also part of our visibility.

An ambition is also to develop alumni activities at different levels. This can enhance SBS's reputation through alumni who act as ambassadors for SBS in business and society, provide access to guest lecturers, partners in research projects, as well as donations and other contributions.

## **A supportive and inclusive work environment**

The work at SBS shall be characterised by cooperation and responsiveness among all staff, which can significantly contribute to both well-being and improving the quality of our operations. We strive to create a workplace where both employees and students experience SBS as an attractive workplace, with a climate characterised by openness, equality, support, and curiosity towards each other. We also strive for well-functioning internal communication and good cooperation among all staff to promote a continuous exchange of information and ideas across all parts of SBS. It should be a positive and inclusive work environment that promotes personal development, collaboration, and a healthy work-life balance. The Local Council for Work



Environment and Equal Opportunities ("RALV") is an important support in the work on work environment and equal opportunities at SBS.

SBS has previously invested in activities aimed at women's academic careers, such as a mentorship programme for women, and has also conducted workshops intended to increase teachers' understanding of gender and diversity issues. In the coming period, the intention is to carry out further workshops, courses, and measures to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for all within SBS. Concrete support for this work can be found in SBS's project group for "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion," which in the coming years will actively pursue and implement various initiatives aimed at developing the organisation's knowledge of and commitment to gender equality and equal opportunities. This will be coordinated with the advisory work within the local RALV.

We also intend to continue working to ensure that sustainability efforts become an integral part of our operations, for example by annually revising and communicating SBS's environmental action plan so that it reflects SBS's mission and vision as well as the university's overall goals, which include reducing the climate footprint of our operations.

SBS shall also develop its work with management information, such as follow-ups and forecasts, to ensure that reliable information is available for strategic planning and decision-making, for example in terms of finances, personnel, and information about education and research. This is fundamental to enabling our vision, mission, and strategic goals in research, education, and collaboration.

As part of our investment in quality development, we shall also strengthen all staff's skills in AI, in order to better meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.