

# 2024 Annual Report

## Gothenburg Artificial Intelligence Alliance

### Our sixth year

2024 was the sixth year for GAIA as a non-profit organisation. This report describes the year passed and our outlook for the coming year.

### Board and Auditor

During the year, the GAIA board consisted of Jakob Andersson (chair), Josefin Scott (treasurer), Amanda Bowald (secretary), Danila Petrelli, and Niklas Antončić. Daniel Sääf was the auditor.

### Members and audience

One can join GAIA as a member by registering through our webpage and paying the membership fee. In the period between the last annual meeting (2023-11-02) – when the meeting set the price – until writing this report, 64 people joined as members.

Our audience on social media has continued to grow. On LinkedIn—our primary marketing channel—we now have 2,391 followers, up 65% from last year. Similarly, we have grown to 1,629 subscribers on YouTube, up 25% compared to the previous year. We had 22,000 views, corresponding to 1,600 hours watched during the year. Meetup.com, with 1,770 members, is only a place to facilitate our smaller events.

### New website and ticket system

We have historically had two websites: [gaia.fish](https://gaia.fish) built in Squarespace, and [conference.gaia.fish](https://conference.gaia.fish) built in WordPress. Squarespace is easy to use but very limiting. WordPress is more capable but terrible to use. During the summer, we began to replace both with a combined site built on the modern and capable Webflow platform. In September, we could replace both sites with the new one. We have focused on replacing the foundation rather than the content. We are now on a flexible and easy-to-use system that we can work with in the future.

During the autumn we have also replaced our ticket system for the conference. The previous system, Billeto, was not targeted for our type of events, and this caused us many limitations in managing our tickets. The new system, Checkin, is a Norwegian company that just launched its platform in Sweden. Checkin enables us to embed the ticket sales in our conference site for a more streamlined experience. It also gives us more flexibility to work with discounts and invoices for, e.g. group purchases.

Our new setup with Webflow and Checkin is comparable in cost to our previous solution.

## Our events

During the year, we had four smaller events beyond our conference. We collaborated with Sleep Cycle, Hopsworks & Neo4j, SAAB, and Modulai for the four meetups. They averaged 52 attendees. AI Sweden hosted our event with Hopsworks & Neo4j.

We tested a breakfast event with Hopsworks and Neo4j with good results. It takes more from us organisers to host daytime events, but it may fit a more mature community better or at least cater to a different segment of the community.

## The 2024 GAIA Conference

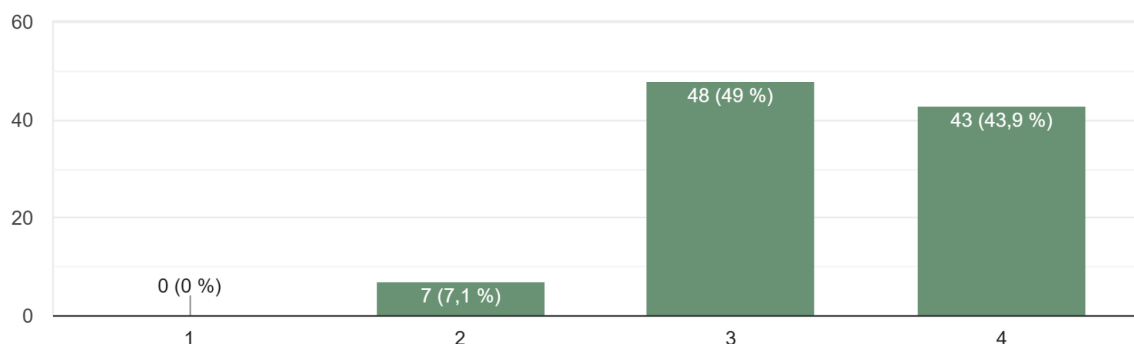
On March 27, we hosted our yearly main event. For the first time, we also hosted workshops in conjunction with the conference. We moved the conference to the Congress Hall at Svenska Mässan to allow expanding the number of attendees, as all our preceding conferences had sold out. The Congress Hall allows for 1,500 attendees, but our second stage only took 400 attendees, so we limited the event to 850 attendees. Despite expanding by 200 seats compared to 2023, the event again sold out, and we had a long queue of people wishing to attend. We had 25 speakers and 20 talks representing 23 companies spread over two tracks. The recordings are available on our YouTube channel.

Beyond our five partnership tiers—platinum, gold, silver, bronze, and startup—we introduced a Barista Bar package. We had 20 partners, including two free collaborations with AI Sweden and HackHERHealth, but unfortunately, we had no platinum partner. All partners except the bronze tier had booths and attended the conference. Our partners were pleased with the event.

Our attendee survey shows that our guests remain pleased with the event. 93% of respondents gave a favourable overall verdict (the scale is 1–4). 87% say the event delivers a networking opportunity, and 91% see it as a learning opportunity. The verdict is more split—76% favourable responses—regarding whether the conference showcases what is happening in Gothenburg.

The overall impression of the conference

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We raised our ticket prices to 1,000 SEK (400 SEK for students) due to cost inflation, especially on food. We introduced cheaper early-bird tickets (800 SEK) to incentivise earlier

purchases. We aim to keep the event accessible to all, while we need to cover the direct costs. Our partners are essential for covering the rest and allowing us to raise the bar, e.g. by inviting international speakers. Ticket sales remain late, so we will continue to incentivise earlier purchases and improve our marketing in the future, as late sales are a considerable risk and limitation in our planning (we could have upgraded our second room and allowed everyone in the queue to come if we had known earlier).

The introduction of workshops the day before the conference showed promise but also had some startup glitches. We hosted three workshops, each together with a company. The workshops were two-hour small-group dives into one subject. The tickets cost 200 SEK, and the companies provided the venue. We expect to continue with the concept and consolidate it at Svenska Mässan for a more uniform experience.

Our partners show continued support and are vital to the conference as they cover most fixed costs, such as the venue. We kept our prices unchanged, except for the startup package. The platinum tier costs 100,000 SEK, the gold tier 60,000 SEK, the silver tier 30,000 SEK, the bronze tier 10,000 SEK, and the startup tier 1,500 SEK. Our add-on packages in the Barista Station and the AfterConference cost 40,000 SEK each. We sold five gold, five silver, six bronze, two startup packages and the Barista Station. In total, 598,000 SEK in partnership revenue. We offered free booths for AI Sweden and HackHERHealth.

The conference made a significant profit, mainly driven by great (although late) ticket sales and a positive margin per ticket. We remain dependent on our partners to keep the tickets affordable.

## Finance

The conference dominates our finances. This year, we made a significant profit that rebuilds our buffers after last year's loss. The conference revenue grew by 55% compared to 2023, mainly driven by the ticket revenue based on 200 more attendees and increased ticket prices. This time, we had a small but positive margin on the tickets (except for the student tickets). We enjoyed a discount on the venue as it was the first time in the Congress Hall.

As a result, we have grown our buffers to about 50% of the total yearly expenses. The buffer enables stability in our finances and confidence in investing in the event before we see good traction in ticket and partnership sales. That is important due to the lead time in the preparations and the general trend of later ticket sales (which has been confirmed by Svenska Mässan and other organisers). The board believes that a buffer of the size of the fixed costs for the conference is a suitable target; for 2025, we estimated that to be 0.7 MSEK.

The profit was 219,047.77 SEK, corresponding to a margin of 17.4%. Our buffer is now at about 0.5 MSEK. GAIA stands healthy for the future.

## Final Words

This year, we grew our conference by 200 attendees and moved to the Congress Hall at Svenska Mässan. We have grown every year—ignoring the pandemic—but this year was the first time we had the space to grow by more than 50 attendees. With the Congress Hall's max capacity of 1,500 attendees, further growth depends on available stages for the second track and the event logistics.

We continue to host meetups but focus most of our energy on the conference. We lack the time to pursue more meetups, but we are happy to facilitate them whenever a company wants to host one. We believe a great conference in Gothenburg is essential for a potent regional ecosystem that attracts and retains talent.

For next year, we will continue to expand the conference, aiming at 1,100 attendees, and we have booked a second room for 550 attendees to complement the Congress Hall. We need to work on logistics as the event grows to maximise the valuable time for talks and the exhibition and minimise time spent in queues and on transportation. We will also continue pushing for earlier sales as it significantly simplifies our preparations, e.g. adding a more expensive late-bird price.

The AI community of Gothenburg is strong, and we have a rising interest nationwide. A robust AI ecosystem is a Nordic interest as much as a regional and national interest. We continue our mission to strengthen the Gothenburg region in AI.

Gothenburg, 2024-11-17

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Jakob Andersson  
Chair

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Josefin Scott  
Treasurer

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Amanda Bowald  
Secretary

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Danila Petrelli  
Board Member

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Niklas Antončić  
Board Member