



# *PERSPECTIVES*

Organizing & innovating  
the next decade

**SPRING 2025**

Report by Innovation Pioneers



*“Organizing and innovating the next decade. That was the headline at SIME... where 800+ of the brightest minds gathered in the heart of one of the world’s most prolific unicorn factories.”*

Henrik Jarleskog, Head of Future of Work for Sodexo Europe, about the recent SIME Conference at Epicenter Stockholm

Thank you for being a part of SIME. What an extraordinary gathering we just shared. SIME Spring 2025 was a great example of what happens when curious minds and courageous leaders come together to explore how we organize and innovate in the next decade. Whether on stage, in the summits, or in the spontaneous campfire conversations that make SIME so unique, we witnessed the kind of momentum that only this village has created since 1996. You showed up not just to listen, but to contribute – to challenge assumptions, spark ideas, and make meaning together.

As Ola Ahlvarsson put it in his episode of our SIME Perspectives podcast: “SIME is for leaders, but it doesn’t have to be the highest person in the hierarchy. It’s the people that lead change, lead technology, and want to have a stake in the society that we’re creating for our kids.” That spirit was palpable throughout the day with so many great sessions that carried a sense of urgency, purpose, and optimism for the road ahead such as:

- Building Innovation Capacity**  
*Balance structure with rapid, disruptive innovation*
- Hyper-Personalized Health**  
*One-size-fits-all wellness has limits*
- Creative Tech**  
*Art and code merge for new realities*



- AI-Driven Talent**  
*Design for distribution and AI augmentation*
- Turning Complexity Into Breakthroughs**  
*Human-centered innovation brings clarity*
- AI-Powered Products**  
*AI can be helpful and human-centered*
- Cyber Warfare**  
*Cybersecurity is strategic and needs proactivity*
- International Growth**  
*Plan global strategy, get real help*
- Payments and Data**  
*Balance tech with unwavering consumer trust*

This year reaffirmed that our “village” is not only alive but evolving – more inclusive, more collaborative, and more focused than ever. Thank you for showing up with open minds, full hearts, and a willingness to think and act boldly. Feel free to reach out so we can carry this energy forward – through activating our companies, our networks, and conversations at Epicenter.

Warmly,

**Roland Williams**  
Innovation Pioneers  
May, 2025



Photo: Epicenter

*SIME is for leaders, but it doesn’t have to be the highest person in the hierarchy. It’s people that lead change, lead technology, and want to have a stake in the society we’re creating for our kids.”*

Ola Ahlvarsson, Moderator of SIME and serial entrepreneur, on the foundational philosophy of the SIME Conference and its offspring, Epicenter



Photo: Happy Kihlgren



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# Building Innovation Capacity

This year's SIME Leader Sessions featured the Innovation Capacity Summit, a crucial exploration of how organizations can effectively balance established operational structures with the urgent need for rapid, disruptive innovation. Led by Anne Wolf, Founder of Euro Academy Sweden and a leadership development expert with a strong global perspective, and Birgitte Stjärne, a renowned innovation management expert and author of *The Intrapreneur – The Key to Innovation*.

The conversation, moderated by Roland Williams of Innovation Pioneers, kicked off with an engaging fireside chat featuring Klas Bertilsson of Alfa Laval – a legendary intrapreneur known for driving transformative change within large organizations – and centered on a pivotal question:

"How do we balance structured business processes with the imperative for rapid, disruptive innovation?" Bertilsson emphasized the necessity of cultivating a culture grounded in trust, open communication, and the acceptance of learning from failure. He also stressed the importance of integrating innovative projects into core business operations to ensure their long-term success and scalability.



Photo: Epicenter

The summit then transitioned into focused group discussions led by innovation experts Anne Wolf and Birgitte Stjärne. Guided conversations on building innovation capacity. Birgitte Stjärne facilitated discussions on measuring innovation capability.

Key themes included developing ambidextrous leadership, establishing robust organizational support for intrapreneurship, and fostering a culture of collaboration and networking. Participants gained access to practical tools and frameworks, such as the 4C Growth Model and the Innovation Capacity Self-Assessment, designed to empower them to drive innovation within their respective organizations.

- 1. For Intrapreneurs – Learn to effectively navigate corporate structures, secure buy-in for your ideas, and scale innovations from initial concepts to core business solutions
- 2. For Business Developers – Discover how to cultivate an environment that empowers intrapreneurship, enabling you to leverage internal talent and drive organizational growth through innovation
- 3. For Tech Entrepreneurs – Dig into the challenges and opportunities of implementing your solutions within large enterprises, including the importance of timing, stakeholder management, and alignment with strategic objectives
- 4. For All – Actionable frameworks and strategies for building innovation capacity are necessary. Learn about the critical roles of leadership support and collaborative cultures where there is a willingness to embrace change

**R**elated episodes on SIME Perspectives podcast  
Albert Bengtson

# The Quest for Hyper-Personalized Health

The "Rewriting Health" session at SIME 2025 moderated by Per Sjögren addressed the growing need for more personalized and proactive approaches to healthcare, particularly within the workplace. Holistal's CEO Birgitta Thörn acknowledged that a one-size-fits-all approach to employee wellness often falls short, failing to address the diverse needs and challenges individuals face in adopting healthier lifestyles. Gary Fabbri and Anne Brydolf joined the panel to discuss the demand for models that adapt to each person's unique circumstances and motivations.

These perspectives highlight the importance of a strategic framework that enables companies to pinpoint the specific health needs of their employees and establish targeted goals. This involves understanding that factors like motivation, behavioral change, and the integration of healthy habits into daily routines are critical challenges. Furthermore, the program recognizes the need to demonstrate the tangible value of employee health to companies, moving beyond viewing it as a mere benefit to understanding its impact on productivity and overall business outcomes. To achieve this, Holistal uses methods like nudging, gamification, and reward systems based on behavioral science.



Photo: Epicenter

- 1. The Limits of One-Size-Fits-All: Traditional, generalized wellness programs often fail to engage employees and produce lasting results due to their lack of personalization
- 2. Understanding Individual Needs: Effectively addressing employee health requires a strategic approach to identify specific needs and tailor interventions accordingly
- 3. Behavioral Change is Key: Driving lasting improvements in employee health necessitates a focus on behavior change, leveraging techniques like nudging, gamification, and rewards
- 4. Quantifying the Value of Health: There's a growing need to demonstrate the clear ROI of employee health initiatives, linking them to productivity, reduced absenteeism, and a positive work environment

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Vincent Weir



# Shaping Reality in Our Phygital Future

The Creative Tech Summit focused on where technology and creative expression are meeting now, and where the gaming industry is leading the charge in redefining immersive entertainment. This isn't just about fancier graphics; it's a fundamental shift as art and code merge to forge entirely new digital experiences.

Hosted and moderated by Sofie Marin, founder of Arts Dynamics, and featuring Luke Savage, Education Advisor at Epic Games, the discussion was a dynamic exploration of how Epic Games and Unreal Engine are revolutionizing storytelling, education and gameplay across music, arts, culture, film, media, and entertainment. The core focus: how to leverage these breakthroughs to craft compelling, culturally relevant experiences while navigating the ethical minefield of user engagement. From Fortnite's evolution into a cultural platform to Disney's blended reality experiences, the audience also got to discover how storytelling has become the most powerful business tool in a physidigital world.

Picture a roadmap for the future of the cultural and creative industries: the power of generative design, the criticality of ethical innovation, the evolution of immersive storytelling, and the strategies for redefining player/audience engagement through collaborative creative processes. For freelancers, companies and organisations eyeing this space, the message was clear: understand these converging forces, and you're not just building games or experiences; you're shaping the future of how we connect, create, and consume culture.

A new beginning: the Summit marked the launch of the Arts Dynamics Creative Tech cluster at Epicenter Stockholm – a collaborative movement bringing together artists, developers, brands, and visionaries to define how creative technology will shape our physidigital future. Whether you're already working in creative technologies or seeking to understand how these profound shifts will impact your industry, this is your opportunity to join a community at the cutting edge of reality-bending innovation.



Photo: Taurai Valerie Mtake

1. the fusion of creative and technical skills to build groundbreaking experiences
2. AI, XR & Gaming Platforms are Game-Changers: Embrace emerging tools to revolutionize storytelling and engagement in your creative projects
3. Ethics Matter: User trust is paramount; build ethical considerations into your creative process from the start
4. Collaboration is Key: The future of creative tech is collaborative, bringing together diverse skills to redefine entertainment
5. Reality Architects: Leading brands are blending digital and physical to create new realities
6. Narrative Economics: Storytelling capability is becoming the ultimate competitive advantage
7. Cluster Formation: Connect with potential collaborators in the Creative Tech ecosystem
8. Future Visioning & Invitation: Don't just observe the future of creative technology – help create it as a member of the Arts Dynamics Creative Tech Cluster

**R**elated episodes on SIME Perspectives podcast  
Sofie Marin

# AI-Driven Talent and the Future of Work

How can businesses create a culture that fosters continuous upskilling to stay competitive in the AI era? The Talent Summit quickly established that the future of work isn't waiting to be built – it's already here, quietly rewriting the rules. Distributed by design, today's leading organizations are structured for autonomy and reach, not oversight. Time zones are no longer obstacles but assets, as asynchronous collaboration enables deeper focus and more intentional communication.

Meanwhile, a new archetype is on the rise: the superworker. These are individuals navigating multiple fractional roles, moving fluidly between projects, powered not by rigid hierarchy but by agility – and increasingly, by AI. Far from displacing talent, AI is becoming an invisible partner, expanding human capability and creating space for strategic, high-impact work.

Still, the most resonant insight might be this: when we do gather, it must matter. In-person time is now a ritual – designed for meaning, not maintenance. Whether it's a summit, an offsite, or a creative residency at Epicenter or Elements, the environments that host us are evolving too – toward what some are calling full-stack hospitality: spaces that nourish both output and belonging.



Photo: Epicenter

1. Design for Distribution: Organizations that embrace location-independent structures are more adaptive, resilient, and talent-rich
2. Work Across Time, Not Against It: Asynchronous workflows aren't just efficient – they cultivate deeper trust and autonomy across teams
3. AI as Amplifier: Human potential is expanding through AI augmentation, enabling fewer people to do exponentially more, with sharper focus
4. Gathering with Purpose: Intentional in-person experiences are now essential for connection, creativity, and cultural cohesion in distributed teams

**“AI is now a people-conversation.”**

**Nina Rapp**, AI @ Work | Future of Work lead at Microsoft, on how AI is rewriting the lines of how we work.

**R**elated episodes on SIME Perspectives podcast  
Natalie Mellin Poppelvik, Stephanie Darvill, Nina Rapp

# Six AI-Powered Products to Keep on Your Radar

What does it look like when AI actually works – and feels helpful, not just powerful? And what happens when you get to meet the people building it? Sweden’s hottest AI startups took the stage at SIME 2025 to demo real products solving real problems, with thoughtful design, strong ethics, and a human touch that made the tech come alive.



Charles Maddock

**01.** [Strawberry](#) clearly is one product to watch, the AI-powered browser designed to automate digital workflows without code. Charles Maddock and his growing team at Strawberry are rethinking productivity from the ground up – turning tasks like CRM syncing and meeting transcription into instant, no-code automation flows. It’s a sharp example of AI not just accelerating work, but quietly dissolving friction in the background. Which everyday online tasks would you want your browser to automate for you?



Erik Wikander

**02.** [Wilgot](#) put the spotlight on AIO – a next-gen version of SEO built for the AI era, where companies must become laser-focused in their messaging and content to stay visible and relevant. How do we adapt when the old rules of search no longer apply?



Petter Wallberg

**03.** [AI-BOB](#) highlighted how errors in construction come at a highcost – and how AI can step in as a tireless quality monitor, reducing mistakes before they happen. What other industries could benefit from treating AI as a built-in control system?



Christian Landgren

**04.** [Klimatkollen](#) reminded us that real progress starts with measurement. By sharing aggregated climate data on Wikipedia and through their AI tool Garbo, they’re making environmental performance harder to ignore. What other kinds of shared data could accelerate awareness and action?



Edvin Tidevall

**05.** [LeapScribe](#) showed how smarter transcription tools are reshaping healthcare – saving time, improving job satisfaction, and raising care standards. So far this year, they’ve assisted in over 100,000 patient meetings. If doctors can reclaim an hour a day, where else could AI unlock similar gains?



Max Thormé

**06.** [Talendary](#) reimagined HR by shifting it from admin work to strategic impact. Their platform empowers teams with AI agents that transform traditional roles into influential “People Architects.” Which other roles are ready to evolve with the help of AI?

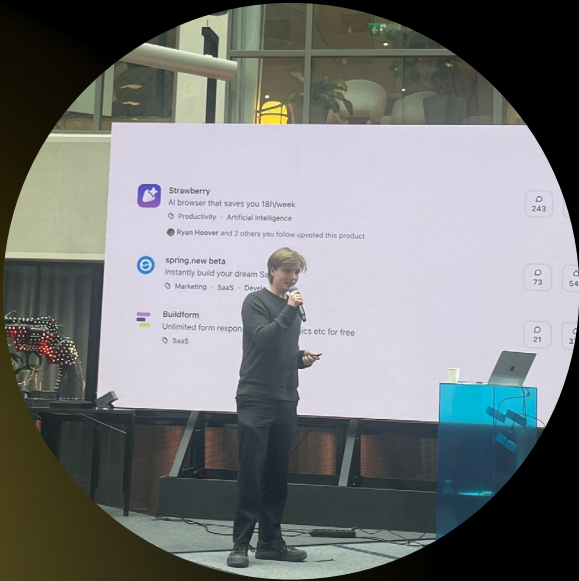


Photo: Roland Williams

*“The speed of things is only accelerating.”*

**Amir Elion**, former Innovation Lead at Amazon Web Services on the present-day call to action for every organization to supercharge productivity, create unparalleled customer experiences, and brace for industry-wide disruption.

**R**elated episodes on *SIME Perspectives* podcast  
[Amir Elion](#), [Patrick Couch](#)



# Turning Complexity Into Vital Breakthroughs

In a world flooded with noise, The Clarity Lab session hosted by Kyndryl was about turning complexity into clarity through human-centered innovation. Tom Rourke demonstrated how to strip down ambiguity, challenge assumptions, and co-create bold, human-centered solutions with speed, clarity, and purpose.

Kyndryl brought strategy and empathy into one room, encouraging participants to break assumptions and rebuild models that reflect real human needs. The Clarity Lab showed how new ideas come to life through active listening, relentless iteration, and systems thinking grounded in real human needs. Tom Rourke talked about the vital role of striving for innovativeness within organisations, not simply innovation – a significant distinction between the two approaches. Kyndryl Vital, presented at a recent summit, empowers customers and partners to define challenges and desired outcomes through collaborative envisioning. This process fosters holistic, human- and planet-centered solutions by aligning diverse expert teams to cross-pollinate ideas and drive maximum innovation.



Photo: Epicenter

- 1. Today's business problems don't come with clear instructions but are layered, fast-moving, and deeply human. Foster an optimistic culture
- 2. Maintain a designer-led approach that brings strategy, empathy, and technology into the same room
- 3. Learn how to surface the right problem leads to the most impactful solutions
- 4. Participate in the process of ideation, testing and iteration. Explore the full journey from insight to execution

*“...speaking about the ‘vital’ role of  
...striving for innovativeness within  
organisations, not simply innovation.  
There’s a big difference!*

Adrian McDonald, CEO Epicenter

**R**elated episodes on SIME Perspectives podcast  
Annelie Gullström

# On the Battlefield of Tomorrow

How can businesses and individuals navigate the digital world safely? This session with cybersecurity expert Hanna Linderstål took a clear-eyed look at the threats most businesses would rather not confront. Moderated by Johan Averstedt, the conversation sidestepped alarmism in favor of something more useful: clarity.

Real-world case studies grounded the discussion, showing how even well-resourced organizations stumble when threats evolve faster than internal awareness. Questions like “Do you have an exit plan?” or “What happens if the CloudAct is enacted?” were not theoretical but rather provocations meant to expose the soft underbelly of digital dependence. At the center of it all was the role of AI, not as a distant disruptor, but as an active player in both defense and offense.



Photo: Epicenter

- 1. Cybersecurity is no longer just a technical function – it's a strategic one, tightly interwoven with policy, trust, and the pace of AI
- 2. Shift from Reactive to Predictive Cybersecurity, where data isn't just a trail – it's a map. Used well, data can anticipate risk, not just document it
- 3. Defense isn't enough. Organizations need to be on the offensive to anticipate, disrupt, and outpace threats before they materialize
- 4. Collaboration is underrated. Don't panic, just get prepared. Find a strategy for new habits of thinking

**R**elated episodes on SIME Perspectives podcast  
Hanna Linderstål



# Hacks for International Growth

Ambitious startups don't just scale – they leap, pivot, and adapt fast. The Accelerator Summit, powered by Epicenter and moderated by Naureen Nayyar, unpacked what it really takes to go global. Straight talk about navigating the often treacherous path of global expansion, dissecting the toxic misconceptions that can nuke a startup's dreams of going international, and – most importantly – charting the real pathways to dodge those startup-killing mistakes.

Underpinning it all was the undeniable advantage of plugging into high-octane networks like Epicenter – an ecosystem designed for hyper-growth. Epicenter's CEO Adrian McDonald stressed that achieving warp-speed scaling demands more than just seizing opportunities; it requires a meticulously structured and strategic roadmap. Jack Melcher-Claësson from Epicenter Accelerate shared how the program transforms promising startups into global contenders, positioning Stockholm as a strategic springboard. Startups navigating the complexities of internationalization need not just enthusiastic cheerleaders, but pragmatic guidance and a robust framework to prioritize ruthlessly and execute flawlessly.



Photo: Epicenter

The conventional wisdom of the USA as the automatic first port of call for global expansion was also challenged, advocating instead for a more nuanced, advisor-led strategic approach. Ultimately, the collective wisdom echoed the invaluable lessons gleaned from both triumphant scaling stories and hard-won failures – a knowledge base that Epicenter Accelerate aims to impart, helping the next generation of startups sidestep common pitfalls and accelerate their journey to global impact.

- 1. Plan for Global, Don't Just React: Going global needs a solid strategy, not just jumping on any opportunity that pops up.
- 2. Get Real Help, Not Just Hype: You need experienced advisors and a clear plan to make scaling work, not just people cheering you on.
- 3. Think Beyond Silicon Valley: The US isn't the only place to expand. Pick the right market for your startup.
- 4. Learn from Wins & Losses: Understand what worked and what didn't – those lessons are gold for avoiding mistakes and growing faster.

**R**elated episodes on SIME Perspectives podcast  
[Ola Ahlvarsson](#), [Shaena Harrison](#), [Roland Williams](#)

# Payments, Data and Future of Retail Trust

The beating heart of modern commerce: the digital checkout. More than just the final click, it's the nexus where payments, banking, and the sacred trust of consumer data collide. Guiding this crucial conversation, moderator Gary Fabbri steered insights from Moon-Suck Song of Panagora and Bengt Wessborg of Ghostar Agency, as they tackled the central question: How do businesses not only streamline this critical moment but also forge an unshakeable bond of confidence in an increasingly digitised marketplace?

*“We must work quite hard, not less. And that’s also maybe the main problem.”*

**Moon-Suck Song**, CEO and co-founder of Panagora, on the notion of Europe being at a critical juncture in the global technological arms race, particularly concerning AI and its foundational infrastructure.

Retail innovation – from AI-powered fraud detection to hyper-personalized payment options – is re-shaping the final, critical moments of the customer journey. The vital collaboration between fintech disruptors and financial institutions emerged as key to a future e-commerce ecosystem built on shared expertise and a unified goal: a secure and seamless experience that earns, not erodes, consumer trust.

However, a stark reality check highlighted Europe's potential vulnerability in the global tech race due to infrastructure dependencies. Technology must also be woven into a human-centric narrative to build lasting trust. There are a number of critical questions facing retailers and innovators, such as underestimated checkout pain points, seamless fraud detection integration, the evolving roles of banks, and ethical AI-driven personalization.

In short, the future of retail hinges on balancing cutting-edge technology with unwavering consumer trust, creating a “fearless” journey from browsing to final purchase.



Photo: Epicenter

- 1. Europe needs its own data centers and tech infrastructure to stay competitive.
- 2. Working harder and smarter is crucial for Europe to avoid falling behind the US, China, and India.
- 3. Despite political tensions, there are deep economic ties between Europe, the US, and Asia.
- 4. European consumers are rapidly adopting Asian apps and services.
- 5. The key question is whether AI and tech development will make humans happier in the long run.

**R**elated episodes on SIME Perspectives podcast  
[Bengt Wessborg](#), [Moon-Suck Song](#)



*Everyone who contributed to and participated  
in our work with the report—thank you.*

On behalf of Ola, Linus Kaasik, Albert Bengtson and the entire team who lit the campfire for SIME this year, we are immensely grateful to all of the partners—Kyndryl, Talent Venture Group, Innovation Pioneers, Holistal, the Non-Violence Project, Selma, Panagora, Earhart Protection, Arts Dynamics, Epic Games, and Epicenter, among others—for standing beside us in building this experience. Together with the teams from Epicenter and SIME, we co-created environments where inspiration sparked ideas into action, paving the way for new collaborations.

We also thank the incredible lineup of speakers and moderators who brought their expertise, generosity, and edge to the stage—people like Beda Grahm, Tom Rourke, Rupert Schäfer, Li Karlsén, James Appathurai, Adrian McDonald, Tommy Palm, Ingrid af Sandeberg, Per Sjögren, Gary Fabbri, Naureen Nayyar, Moon-Suck Song, Johan Siwers, Rasmus Lian, Anne Brydolf, Jack Melcher-Claësson, Johan Averstedt, Hanna Linderstål, Rolf Skjöldebrand, Sofie Marin, Luke Savage, Jahongir Mirzoev, Bengt Wessborg, Kristian Rönn, Anne Wolf, Birgitte Stjärne, Charlie Caper, Martin Sondéll, Henrik Jarleskog.

To everyone who contributed to and participated in our work with the report—thank you. Your voices, questions, and insights shaped one of the most dynamic conversations on innovation and human progress yet. Special thanks to Ana Mrdjanov, Niklas Wolkert, Albert Bengtson, Birgitte Stjärne, Linus Kaasik, Matias Pakarinen, Gary Fabbri, and Ola Ahlvarsson.

Art Direction & Graphic Design by Ana Mrdjanov  
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Support for SIME Perspectives podcast comes from [Innovation Pioneers](#), the collective learning network for innovation capabilities, [Epicenter](#), the power of community scaling ideas into impact, and [SIME](#), exploring tech, business, and humanity—together.



Photo: Happy Kihlgren

*“The future feels thrilling and urgent.”*

Antonella Strömberg, referring to the mix of groundbreaking tech and preceding global issues explored at SIME 2025

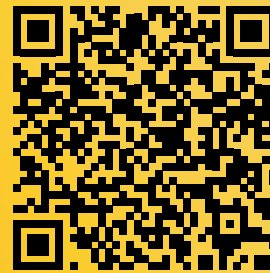


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