

Nordic friends cooperation in preschool/kindergarten 2026



Akureyri Lahti Randers Västerås Ålesund

Purpose

Since 2001, Nordic networking days have been arranged for the preschool every year. The network's task is to preserve the tradition of exchange of experience between educators and leaders who work in preschool activities in the Nordic friend cities.

The purpose of these relationships is basically to preserve and strengthen the peaceful bonds that exist between people. The relationships are also used to understand other cultures and exchange knowledge and experiences between preschools and systems.

The Nordic countries have a long tradition of cooperation based on shared history and culture, similarities in welfare systems and democratic forms of government. The countries share several basic values that characterize Nordic cooperation and bind us together. The present demands that we stand united to protect and defend our common values and that we stand up for them.

Goal

The goal is to develop and strengthen the Nordic preschool activities by focusing on current and future pedagogical focus and interest areas in the friend cities' preschools.

The educators and leaders are also encouraged to visit each other's preschools and through practical work contribute to exchanging experiences, knowledge and competence with each other. In this way, we get a common picture of preschool in the Nordic countries. This should lead to development and/or confirmation in the educators' and leaders' own preschools.

Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

"Each state must take responsibility for and use its resources to the full to fulfill children's rights. Where necessary, states must cooperate internationally."

[Läs barnkonventionen här | unicef.se](#)

[Conventions on the rights of the child | unicef.se](#)

About the cooperation

The Nordic collaboration is unique to the preschool. It unites the Nordic friend cities and gives a common image that the preschool is strong and proud in the Nordic countries. The networking days give the participants new experiences, knowledge, insights and ideas about preschool in general. We learn from each other and that creates an understanding of similarities and differences in preschools in Nordic countries. That the collaboration has been going on since 2000 shows that it is a successful concept.

We hope that teachers, managers, development leaders, strategists, administrative managers and politicians will continue to support Nordic friend cities cooperation in the future. That we can contribute with new thoughts and inspiration that can give courage, faith, hope and new perspectives on our work with children in the present and in the future. That we can all continue to enjoy sharing knowledge and be inspired through Nordic cooperation.

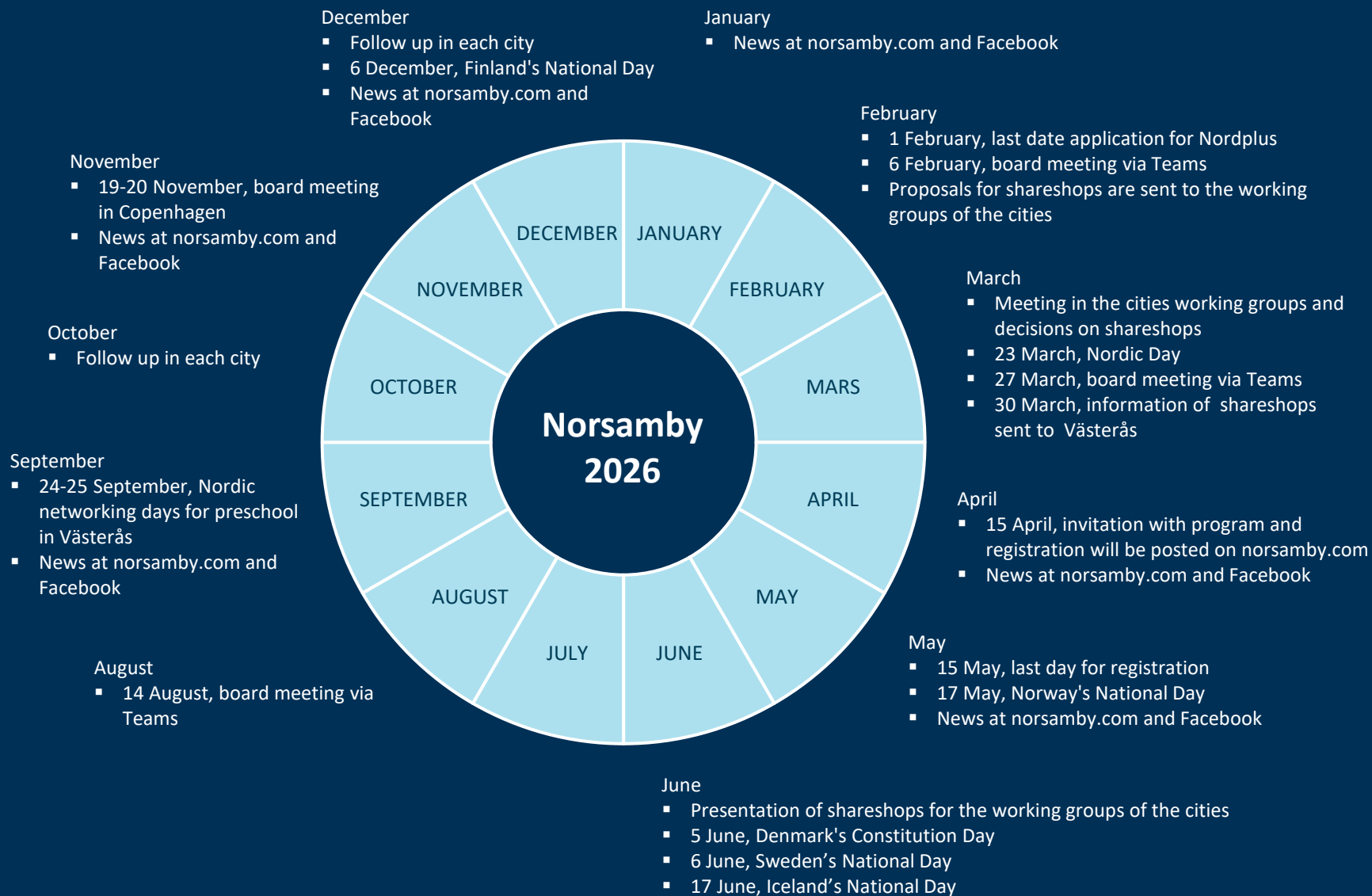
Plan and arrangement

The nordic networking days for preschool are based on three parts:

- Joint research-based keynote lecture.
- Sharesops where the friend cities contribute and lead.
- Study visits and exchange of experiences in our Nordic preschools.

The theme is a common thread through all three parts.

The networking days are evaluated jointly each time, and also in each city, therefore ensuring a constant developement of the concept. Through this we ensure quality and make the networking days better.



Theme and shareshops in Västerås 2026

More than words – language and communication as keys to social belonging and play

Each friend city contributes two shareshops based on the theme.
A total of 10 shareshops.

Keynote lectures

Keynote lectures are not fully planned at the moment.

We will provide additional information about the research-based keynote lectures later.

Leaders of lectures bring the presentation on a memory stick, a USB stick.

When and where

When: Thursday and Friday September 24–25, 2026

Where: Västerås, Sweden

Location: Steam Hotel, Ångkraftsvägen 14, Västerås

[Hotell, spa & konferens - Västerås nya hotellupplevelse | The Steam Hotel](#)

Participation fee: SEK 3 200 per person

Registration open from: April 15, 2026

Last day for registration: May 15, 2026

Language at the networking days

It must be stated in the invitation that we speak Scandinavian languages on the networking days, with the support of English or with an interpreter.

It must be stated in the description of the shareshop which language is spoken.

Before the main lecture and shareshops, a short summary must be available in English for those who wish.

Leaders of lectures/shareshops must bear in mind that the participants come from all Nordic countries, and therefore speak slowly and clearly.

Part of the exchange is listening to other languages, learning to understand and saying a few words.

Possibilities to apply for grants

Nordplus – application open till February 1, 2026

Denmark <https://www.ufm.dk/uddannelse-og-institutioner/tilskud-til-udveksling-og-internationale-projekter/programoversigt/nordplus>

Finland <https://www.oph.fi/fi/kehittaminen-ja-kansainvalisyys/tietoa-kansainvalistymisrahoituksesta/nordplus>

Iceland <https://www.rannis.is/sjodir/menntun/nordplus/nordplus-junior/>

Norway <https://nordic.nordplusonline.org/>

Sweden <https://www.utbyten.se/program/nordplus-junior/>

Additional possibilities

- Nordplus Junior
- Jobshadowing
- Studyvisit

Themes of previous networking days

2025 Ålesund	Strong foundation for the next generation – teachers and children.
2024 Lahtis	The future of early childhood education and care in the changing world of society.
2023 Akureyri	Preschool for everyone.
2022 Randers	Parent involvement in Nordic day care – How can collaboration with parents on the development and learning of 0-6 year old children contribute to a good childhood?
2019 Västerås	The best interests of the child – How do the Nordic preschools work with the main principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child?
2018 Ålesund	The strength of the Nordic kindergarten tradition – What makes it so unique?
2017 Lahti	The child's versatile skills in preschool.
2016 Akureyri	The child's last year in preschool – on the way to elementary school.
2015 Västerås	Modern technology in children's play and learning.
2014 Randers	Health, movement and outdoor life, the role of the educator.
2013 Ålesund	Life and learning in the earliest years – with a focus on the youngest children.
2012 Lahti	The world is changing – how are the children in the Nordic preschools doing?
2011 Akureyri	Play for life.
2010 Västerås	Mathematics has many languages, language and mathematics development in preschool.
2009 Randers	Socially disadvantaged children in Nordic kindergartens.

Themes of previous networking days

2008 Ålesund	Children's participation in preschool.
2007 Akureyri	Cultural forms of expression.
2006 Västerås	Different – Same – Equal – With a gender perspective in preschool.
2005 Randers	Relationship competence – from fault finding to recognition.
2004 Ålesund	The reflective teacher – a resource that cannot be dispensed with in the future.
2003 Akureyri	The modern childhood as a challenge – to meet the modern child.
2002 Västerås	Quality and/or service development in today's preschool?
2001 Randers	The Nordic child perspective and pedagogical documentation.

Budget

Each city contributes financially to enable the annual networking days to take place. The fee that each city pays for its participants must cover costs for premises, joint lecturer, transport, joint dinner and other refreshments.

The networking days have an average of around 150 participants and a budget of around SEK 400 000 to cover the above costs.

Participation fee: SEK 3 200 per participant.

The host country can in some cases have the highest number of participants because they are in home country. Other countries contribute 10–25 participants each, for the networking days to work out financially.

150 participants is a good number considering premises and transport as well as school visits, lectures and shashops.

Nordic board

The Nordic board group plans, implements, follows up and evaluates the networking days.

The board includes two or three people from each city, a total of around ten people.

Planning meetings are held for two days each year in November. The meeting takes place in the capital of the country that will be the next host municipality. This means that Randers plans for the board meeting in Copenhagen November 19–20, 2026, ahead of the networking days in Randers 2027 or 2028.

Representatives in the board

Akureyri city

Anna Lilja Sævarsdóttir
Leader Leikskólinn Iðavöllur
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Inda Björk Gunnarsdóttir
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Lahti city

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Suvi Ruusunen
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Randers city

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Västerås city

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Ålesund city

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