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HALOS - Health @ Work



Aim

We aim to create a practical, data-driven model for workplace health promotion that connects the individual, the organization, and society. The workplace may serve as a resource for employees' health and wellbeing, but we still know too little about how to make health promotion work in the long run. HALOS tackles this through four objectives:

1. Co-produce a research-based model for workplace health promotion in real-life sittings together with business partners.
2. Test how lifestyle-related behavior change interventions work as part of that model.
3. Use large epidemiological datasets to explore how lifestyle, health, and working conditions are linked across society.
4. Develop research-based guidelines for information and communication that support implementation.

Our vision is a fresh start for workplace health promotion, improving employees' health during working hours through physical activity, food habits, social needs, recovery, and time outdoors (which supports circadian rhythm and sleep). Healthy habits lower the risk of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers, as well as musculoskeletal disorders and pain. Ill health is hard on individuals, costly for businesses, and a heavy burden on society. According to Skandia, long-term sick leave compensation (>14 days) in Sweden cost around 10 billion Euro in 2025.

At the heart of HALOS is a **Systematic Health Action loop (SHA loop)**. Health initiatives and their effects are tracked in a feedback loop against health-related key performance indicators, so we can see what works over time. We will also test lifestyle interventions from external providers and build a catalogue of proven actions.

Why Mälardalen University?

HALOS brings together Health Science, Working Life, and Innovation and Design. Mälardalen University (MDU) near Stockholm is the only university in Sweden offering education at all levels, plus research, in all these fields. Each discipline adds something: public health brings the population perspective, behavioral physiotherapy the individual level, working Life

science organization and leadership, and communication design the shared understanding between all levels. HALOS will be part of the Knowledge Environment for Sustainable Working Life and the Department of Health Science, Innovation and Design.

Benefits for business partners
Healthy employees perform better, are absent less, and help build a sustainable business. Yet health promotion is often short-term, isolated, and disconnected from the core business. In HALOS, large companies act as test environments, while small and mid-sized businesses contribute health services, equipment, or facilities. Our health and wellbeing indicators also support companies in meeting new EU requirements on social sustainability reporting.

Benefits for education
Co-creating with companies grounds teaching in real needs, gives students practical experience and better job prospects, and gives companies access to new research and future talent. HALOS will be linked to programs in Public Health, Physiotherapy, Working Life Science, and Innovation and Design.

Goals

- **Research:** 11 sub-projects over 8 years, publications in leading journals, international conferences, spin-off projects, external funding, and a leading role for MDU in workplace health promotion.
- **Education:** thesis projects and courses at all levels, and a KK Foundation application for a PhD school with business partners.
- **Operations:** a Center of Excellence for Workplace Health Promotion, more researchers on academic career paths, and attracting top talent.
- **Business:** co-produced knowledge, joint thesis projects, easier mobility between academia and industry, a systematic health promotion model, and evidence-based interventions.

International partners
We are now looking for international collaborators within SUNRISE. Please contact:



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