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Seminar: From Big Data To Big Understanding

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On November 21, the Tällberg Foundation, the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA) and the SAS Institute hosted an evening conversation entitled “From Big Data to Big Understanding”.

Participants:

Björn O. Nilsson, IVA president

Gösta Lemne, IVA chairman

Anders Ynnerman, Norrköping Visualization Centre C director, and professor at Linköping University

Mikael Hagström, SAS Institute executive vice president

Alan Stoga, Zemi Communications president, Tällberg Foundation board member

Robert Kirkpatrick, UN Global Pulse director (via live link from New York)

Johan Kuylenstierna, Stockholm Environment Institute executive director

Bo Ekman, Tällberg Foundation founder and chairman

Palle Dahlstedt, composer and associate professor in IT/computer-aided creativity at Chalmers University of Technology.

Moderator was **Alexander Crawford**, Tällberg Foundation research director.

The seminar, held in Stockholm, brought together leaders in visualization research, business analytics, global affairs as well as environment and science for a three-hour long presentation and reflections on big data, with questions on how to manage the rapidly growing amount of information.

Today’s digitalized world urges for a move from simply storing data to utilizing it in new and innovative ways. A profound understanding of the phenomena’s characteristics and how to analyze it, is essential.

Following areas were discussed during the evening:

- The four characteristics of big data: size, speed, variety and veracity (data is 'messy'). Data is more than just 'big data', moving fast, emerging from variety of sources and contexts, occasionally uncertain.
- What role does big data play in today's connected world? Big data as a raw public good? The enormous quantity of data that exists can be described as an asset with a multitude of opportunities. How can data be used to improve our lives?
- Big understanding = big responsibility. The question of ownership. Who owns the information – is it the generators of data? If big data is an asset, who's asset is it, and who can we trust in the process of capitalizing on the data? Do we feel confident with governments and companies using the data generated by others?
- Analytics as key. To go "from big data to big understanding" in practice, the data needs to be analyzed to enable us to make smarter and better-informed decisions, and benefit from the opportunities that big data creates.

Reading tip from seminar: [The Fourth Paradigm \(http://www.amazon.com/The-Fourth-Paradigm-Data-Intensive-Scientific-ebook/dp/B00318D9Y2\)](http://www.amazon.com/The-Fourth-Paradigm-Data-Intensive-Scientific-ebook/dp/B00318D9Y2) by Tony Hey et al. (recommended by Anders Ynnerman)

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