

JONATHAN ELEBJÖRK WAHLSTRÖM

HARD OF HEARING
DISABILITY ADVOCATE



PROFILE

Jonathan Elebjörk Wahlström (29) is a Swedish lawyer and disability advocate specializing in the intersection of legal frameworks and international disability policy. With extensive experience across Swedish, European, and global settings, Jonathan brings a sophisticated understanding of non-profit governance and government structures to the board.

As a board member of the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations (LSU), Jonathan is an expert in organizational oversight. Their commitment to the movement is lifelong; as a co-founder of the Swedish Youth with Disabilities Federation, Jonathan has a proven track record in cross-disability coalition building. They are dedicated to using social policy as a lever for systemic change, ensuring that the next generation of Europeans with disabilities is protected by robust, inclusive legislation. As an advocate, they are carefully diplomatic yet uncompromising on the fundamental principles of human rights.

WHAT JONATHAN BRINGS TO THE TABLE

1. Executive Leadership & Strategic Governance

As the former President of The Swedish Organisation for Hard of Hearing Young People, Jonathan bring proven experience in leading a national federation. They understand how to manage a board, oversee complex budgets, and maintain organizational stability during periods of political change.

2. A Legal & Policy Lens

With their background as a lawyer, Jonathan doesn't just advocate for change. They understand the legal mechanisms required to achieve it and offer the board an ability to analyze EU Directives and ensure our demands are translated into enforceable rights.

3. A Bridge to the Next Generation

Jonathan's dual experience in the disability and the youth movements allows me to bridge the gap between sectors. They offer a roadmap for making the EDF more accessible and attractive to young activists across Europe. They also believe that they are fit for this thanks to the knowledge about the organization I've gathered during my 4 years in the Youth Committee.

THE "INVISIBLE DISABILITY" PERSPECTIVE IS CRITICAL FOR A TRULY INCLUSIVE EDF BOARD

1. Broadening the Accessibility

Ensuring that "accessibility" moves beyond physical accessibility to include digital and acoustic environments, such as high-quality hearing loops, AI-driven captioning, inclusive meeting forms and web accessibility .

2. Addressing Communication Barriers

Representing the millions of Europeans who navigate the world between the hearing and the signing communities, ensuring that policy covers the nuances of hearing technology and inclusive communication.

3. Deepening Cross-Disability Solidarity

Using my lived experience and hard of hearing background and within cross-disability collaborations to foster better collaboration between all disability groups, ensuring our collective voice is amplified in Brussels.

MY PRIORITIES IN THE BOARD

1. Member-Led Accountability: Ensuring the EDF remains an organization "of and by" its members through authentic, professional, and accessible representation.
2. Inclusive Intersectionality: Prioritizing the voices of LGBTQ+ and young people to ensure no one is left behind in the European disability movement.
3. Youth Sector Synergy: Strengthening the strategic link between the disability movement and the broader European youth sector to build a sustainable leadership pipeline and well as ensuring representation within the movement.

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Secretary General

Unga Hörselskadade, The Swedish Organisation for Hard of Hearing Young People | January 2021 - present

- Has the main responsibility for coordinating the policy work of the organisation.
- Is responsible for management and human resources administration within the organisation.
- Represented Sweden as one of the Delegates to the conference of state parties of the CRPD 2022.

Youth Committee member and co-chair

European Disability Forum | 2022 - 2026

- Represented the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People in the Youth committee.
- As one of the co-chairs coordinated the meetings of the Youth Committee during the period.
- Represented the Youth Committee as co-opted member of the Executive committee of the EDF.
- Represented EDF and the Youth Committee as a speaker at the seminar A Union of Equality – Disability Rights and Strategies during the Swedish Presidency.

Board member

The Swedish National Council of Youth Organisations | 2024 - ongoing

- Represented the youth movement in multiple policy processes related to the conditions for young persons' mobilization in Sweden.
- Acted as the Council's representative in multiple European Dialogues.

President

Unga Hörselskadade, The Swedish Organisation for Hard of Hearing Young People | January 2016 - December 2021

- Lead the board and national operations, overseeing organizational governance, financial health, and long-term vision.
- Acted as the main -spokesperson, negotiating directly with policy-makers to secure better accessibility and rights for hard-of-hearing young people.

STUDIES

Master of Laws

Uppsala Universitet | August 2016 - ongoing

Master of laws with a specialisation in international corporate taxation. Expected to graduate in the fall of 2026.

