

Minutes from NordForsk 64th Board meeting Zoom-meeting, 11 December 2020, 11:00 – 14:00 CET

Present:

Board Members:

Björck, Jonas	The Swedish Research Council Forte (Chair)
Danielsen, Kristin	The Research Council of Norway (until 13:00)
Haanes, Vidar	Nordic University Cooperation (NUS)
Helgadóttir, Ragnhildur	Science and Technology Policy Council of Iceland (from 12:00)
Mogensen, Johnny	Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Sciences
Vauhkonen, Jussi	Academy of Finland

Observers and guests:

Begtrup, Jens	NordForsk Administration (staff representative)
Waller, Jonas	Nordic Council of Ministers
Sølvará, Annika	The Faroese Research Council

Not present:

Springfeldt, Christina	Nordic Council of Ministers
Mattila, Johanna	Åland University of applied sciences
Adler Reimer, Gitte	University of Greenland

Present from the NordForsk Administration:

Flåøyen, Arne
Aanes, Guttorm
Heimonen, Mikael
Minge, Marianne Aastebøl (Minutes)
Bjarnar, Siri

01 BM 20/1020 Approval of the Agenda. Any conflict of interest to be announced

The Chair opened the meeting and the meeting participants presented themselves. No conflicts of interest were noted.

Action:

The agenda was approved.

02 BM 20/1021 Quorum

The Board has quorum when at least 50% of the board members, i.e. minimum three members, are present.

Action:

The Board noted quorum with five board members present for item 1-4 and 10-16, and six board members present for item 5-9.

03 BM 20/1022

Approval of the minutes from the Board meetings on 19 October 2020

The Board has had the chance before the meeting to make corrections and changes to the minutes. No further modifications were suggested.

Action:

The minutes were approved.

04 BM 20/1023

Accounts per October 2020

Arne Flåøyen presented the accounts.

Action:

The Board was notified.

05 BM 20/1024

Budget 2021 and Action plan 2021

Arne Flåøyen presented the budget and action plan for 2021.

Action:

The Board approved the NordForsk budget and action plan 2021.

06 BM 20/1025

Funding decision: Nordic Programme for Interdisciplinary Research

Arne Flåøyen presented the call process and recommendations from the Programme Committee regarding funding of projects under the call for Nordic Programme for Interdisciplinary Research.

Action:

The Board decides to fund nine research projects under the Nordic Programme on Interdisciplinary Research, each with up to 15 MNOK:

- 105121: Graphene-based drug delivery systems for treating MRSA infections
- 105053: Narwhal tusks: a tale with a twist
- 103893: Technology-enhanced foreign and second-language learning of Nordic languages
- 104910: Pathogens, Pandemics and the Development of Nordic Societies
- 105204: The timing and ecology of the human occupation of Central Asia
- 103894: Nordic network on smart light-conversion textiles beyond electric circuits
- 105081: Facilitation Robotics for Teams Foundational Research on Group Processes in Human-Robot Ensembles with Social Robots (S-FACTOR)
- 105061: Grappling with Uncertainty in Environments Signaling Spurious Experiential Decisions
- 105147: The Network Dynamics of Ethnic Integration

The following three projects will be funded by national funders:

- By DFF
 - 105178: Nordic Refugee Determination: Advancing Data Science in Migration Law (NoRDASiL)

- **By Formas:**
 - **103443: Green forests policies: a comparative assessment of outcomes and trade-offs across Fenno-Scandinavia**
 - **105116: Unconventional methods to inform sustainable design: Mediating the needs of people and nature in Nordic after-dark environments**

07 BM 20/1026

Funding decision: Nordic Research and Innovation Programme for Sustainable Aquaculture

Arne Flåøyen presented the recommendations from the Programme Committee regarding funding of projects under the call for the Nordic Research and Innovation Programme for Sustainable Aquaculture. Eight projects are recommended for funding. The Programme Committee will also try to find national funding for the project ranked as number 9 on the list. This was later confirmed, Formas, RCN and Innovation fund Denmark allocated additional national funding for project no. 105020.

Action:

The Board decides to fund eight projects under the Nordic Research and Innovation Programme for Sustainable Aquaculture with total of 26.1 MNOK:

- **103385: Machine learning applied to predicting and preventing production loss in aquaculture**
- **104804: Facilitating detection, understanding production, and improving mitigation of undesired taste and Odour compounds in aquaculture**
- **102761: Bio-conversion of non-food bio-resources to novel feeds for salmonids - a Nordic approach**
- **104310: Non-Food Organic Resources-based feeds optimised for salmon until post-smolt stages**
- **103506: Sustainable aquaculture feed based on novel biomass from wood by-products**
- **102714: RAS-TOOLS: A microbial toolbox for RAS production and innovation**
- **104492: Physiology shapes the happy salmon – a systems approach to sustainable feeds for stimulation of growth, welfare and survival**
- **104876: Intelligent farming and health control in landbased recirculating aquaculture systems**

The following project will be funded by national funders:

- **105020: Mitigating off-flavour compounds geosmin and 2-methylisoborneol by applying capacitive deionisation and nanotechnology in RAS**

08 BM 20/1027

Funding decision: Nordic Neutron Science Programme

Arne Flåøyen presented the recommendations from the Programme Committee regarding funding of projects under the call for the Nordic Neutron Science Programme.

Action:

The Board decides to fund four projects under the Nordic Neutron Science Programme:

- **106768: Can bees help to treat cancer? Elucidating the anticancer mechanism of melittin from honey bee venom by cell membrane deuteration and neutron reflection/SANS with up to 1.5 MNOK**
- **106881: A multi-compartment solid/liquid cell to increase throughput of neutron studies of Langmuir interfaces with up to 1.5 MNOK**
- **106874: Fast cooling and heating for diffraction and beyond with up to 1,5 MNOK**

- **106876: Design of a Fundamental Physics Beamline for the ESS with up to 1.47 MNOK**

09 BM 20/1028

Status for Open invitation

Arne Flåøyen gave an introduction to the discussion. The members of the Board gave their input, emphasising that open invitation will continue to be the main mechanism for new programmes and calls, but the mechanism should continue to be developed through strategic discussions in 2021. They also underscored that new activities need to have a clear description of the Nordic added value before approval by the Board.

Action:

The Board decided to continue the discussion on how to further develop the mechanism Open invitation as a part of the initial discussions on a new NordForsk strategy in March 2021.

10 BM 20/1029

Appointment of Chair, Programme Committee for Bioeconomy

Arne Flåøyen presented the nomination of Reid Hole as the new Chair for the Nordic Programme for Bioeconomy.

Action:

The Board appointed Reid Hole as new Chair of the Programme Committee for the Nordic Bioeconomy Programme

11 BM 20/1030

Collaboration between NordForsk and Japan Agency for Medical Research and Innovation (AMED)

Arne Flåøyen presented the status for the collaboration between NordForsk and AMED. To this date, the Academy of Finland, Research Council of Norway, the Swedish Research Council and AMED has agreed to co-fund the call with approximately 25 MNOK in total. The budget will allow funding of three projects between 2022-2024. If all interested parties are able to secure funding and sign the MoU according to plan, a joint call could open in Q1 2021. Projects could be selected for funding before the end of 2021.

Action:

The Board decided that NordForsk acts as facilitator of the cooperation with the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Innovation (AMED) by administering the proposed joint call "Japan-Nordic Frontier Research Projects for Healthy Longevity". The NordForsk contribution includes administration of the call and follow-up of projects but no financial contribution to the call budget.

12 BM 20/1031

Information from the Nordic Council of Ministers

Jonas Waller is the new senior adviser responsible for NordForsk in the Nordic Council of Ministers. He informed that the NordForsk Beviljningsbrev for 2021 will be sent the following week. He also informed that the agreement with the Nordic-Russian cooperation will continue.

Action:

The Board was notified.

13 BM 20/1032

Information about Director's Decisions

The information was presented in writing in the documentation to the Board meeting.

Action:

The Board was notified.

14 BM 20/1033

Information from the Administration

The information was presented in writing in the documentation to the Board meeting.

Action:

The Board was notified.

15 BM 20/1034

Information from Board members and observers

The Board members gave a short update from their respective country/organisation.

Action:

The Board was notified.

16 BM 20/1035

Any other business

No other business was brought up at the meeting.