

Minutes from NordForsk 67th Board meeting Online Zoom meeting 7 December 2021, 12:00 – 14:30

Present:

Board Members:

Björck, Jonas	The Swedish Research Council Forte (Chair)
Helgadóttir, Ragnhildur	Science and Technology Policy Council of Iceland (Item 1-9)
Risom, Jesper	Independent Research Fund Denmark
Vauhkonen, Jussi	Academy of Finland

Observers and guests:

Mattila, Johanna	Åland University of applied sciences
Sølvará, Annika	The Faroese Research Council (Item 1-9)
Waller, Jonas	Nordic Council of Ministers
Knudsen, Marianne	NordForsk Administration (staff representative)
Vistad, Rune	The Research Council of Norway

Not present:

Springfeldt, Christina	Nordic Council of Ministers
Danielsen, Kristin	The Research Council of Norway
Haanes, Vidar	Nordic University Cooperation (NUS)
Adler Reimer, Gitte	University of Greenland

Present from the NordForsk Administration:

Flåøyen, Arne
Aanes, Guttorm
Heimonen, Mikael
Minge, Marianne Aastebøl
Bjarnar, Siri (Minutes)
Herou, Anna
Nilsson, Maria (Item 8 and 9)

01 BM 21/1073 Approval of the agenda. Any conflict of interest to be announced

The Chair opened the meeting. No conflicts of interest were noted. Item 15, decision on the instructions for the Director, was suggested to be moved prior to item 4.

Action:

The agenda was approved. The Board agreed to move item 15, decision on the instructions for the Director, prior to item 4.

02 BM 21/1074 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 4 of 6 board members present for item 1-9 and 3 of 6 board members present for item 9-20.

03 BM 21/1075

Approval of the minutes from the Board meeting on 13 October 2021

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

Action:

The minutes were approved.

04 BM 21/1076

Accounts per October 2021

Mikael Heimonen informed the Board of the accounts per 31.10.2021. Most activities are carried out according to plan. The accounts show a negative result of 20 629 904 NOK, since NordForsk has not yet received the basic funding from the NCM for the last quarter of the year. Jonas Waller informed that the funding will be transferred by the end of the week (week 49).

Action:

The Board was notified.

05 BM 21/1077

Budget 2022 and Action plan 2022

Arne Flåøyen presented the budget and action plan for 2022.

Arne Flåøyen informed the board about the budget and action plan for 2022. The basic funding from the NCM has been reduced with MNOK 4 compared to 2021 and amounts to MNOK 150 for 2022. The funding to the cooperation bodies will therefore be reduced with MNOK 1,5 and there will be MNOK 2,5 less for new programmes.

MNOK 1 in the budget is reserved as additional funding for the university hub Reimagining Norden in an Evolving World (ReNEW) for a sub-project studying the term Nordic added value. This sub-project was initiated by NordForsk as it will provide important input to the development of the new strategy.

The action plan does not include any major changes but incorporates new initiatives such as Sustainable agriculture and climate change, and Future working life. It also includes actions towards further streamlining of the administration, implementing the new systems for human resources, electronic signatures, and public procurement.

Action:

The Board approved the budget for 2022 and Action plan for 2022.

o6 BM 21/1078

Status for Open Invitation

Arne Flåøyen informed the Board about the initiatives in pipeline. In 2022 NordForsk expects to receive Expressions of Interest for a Nordic research programme on Welfare among Children and Young People in the Post-Pandemic Nordics and a new call under NOS-HS. There are also ongoing discussions concerning an initiative on Green Transition, as well as a new call under the Nordic Programme for Interdisciplinary Research.

Furthermore, Flåøyen informed the Board of planned activities under the Arctic Science Summit Week 2022, where representatives from the NCoEs under the Responsible Development of the Arctic programme will present results. Flåøyen will send a tentative invitation to the national research funding agencies for a funders' meeting on 28 March to discuss the possibilities for new Nordic initiatives on Arctic research.

Action:

The Board was notified.

o7 BM 21/1079

Funding decision: Nordic-Russian call for networks for risk and crisis management

Awaiting formal confirmation on the case, Arne Flåøyen informed the Board that the funding decision should be postponed.

Action:

The funding decision was postponed and will be taken by the Board per capsulam.

o8 BM 21/1080

Funding decision: Japan-Nordic Frontier Research Projects for Healthy Longevity

Special Adviser Maria Nilsson presented the background for the call, the call process and the recommendation from the Call-Specific Committee to fund three projects under the call for Japan-Nordic Frontier Research Projects for Healthy Longevity.

Action:

The Board decided to fund three research projects under the Japan-Nordic Frontier Research Projects for Healthy Longevity call, each with up to 6 MNOK:

- **119986: Unveiling the risk factors of ageing to promote healthy longevity**
- **119886: Nordic-Japan multidomain interventions for healthy aging and prevention of dementia and disability**
- **116406: Molecular and structural biomarkers for personalised care in osteoarthritis**

The decision is dependent on a decision from AMED to fund the Japanese project partners in each of the projects.

09 BM 21/1081

Nordic Commons

Special Adviser Maria Nilsson informed the Board of status for the initiative, which is currently being set up. It has a budget of 22 MDKK for 2021-2024 (MR-SAM, EK-S). NordForsk will provide administrative support to the Policy Board and have a coordinating function. Norway and Finland will be the “lead countries”.

Arne Flåøyen raised the importance of clarifying the role of and expectations to NordForsk.

Action:

The Board was notified.

10 BM 21/1082

Appointment of Chair of the Programme Committee for the Future Working Life programme

Arne Flåøyen presented the nomination of Susanna Stymne Airey as the chair of the new research programme for Future Working Life.

Action:

The Board appointed of Susanna Stymne Airey as the chair of the Programme Committee for the Future Working Life programme.

11 BM 21/1083

Appointment of Chair of the Programme Committee for the Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change programme

Arne Flåøyen presented the nomination of Per Hansson as the chair of the new research programme on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change.

Action:

The Board appointed Per Hansson as the chair of the Programme Committee for the Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change programme.

12 BM 21/1084

Societal security beyond COVID-19

Arne Flåøyen informed the Board about the current status. On 16 November, NordForsk was informed in e-mail that the Research Council of Norway (RCN) would withdraw from funding the call if the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) decides to pass the proposed national budget. Based on that information, the NordForsk director proposed to the Board to withdraw its support to the call. The situation has however changed since then.

The Director contacted the national funders in Denmark and the RCN and encouraged them to contribute with funding to the call. As a result, the Innovation Fund Denmark will contribute with EUR 500 000 and the Research Council of Norway will contribute with MNOK 5.

Jussi Vauhkonen informed that the Academy of Finland, being so close to the end of the fiscal year, had acted rapidly and relocated the funding set aside for this call. There is thus currently no available funding from the Academy of Finland.

Action:

The Board was notified. The formal decision from the previous meeting to launch the call stands.

- 13 BM 21/1085** **Evaluation of Nordic Call for Interdisciplinary Research 2019-2020**
- Senior Adviser Anna Herou presented the evaluation.
- Action:**
The Board was notified.
- 14 BM 21/1086** **Information from the Nordic Council's Session**
- Arne Flåøyen informed the Board of NordForsk's attendance at the Nordic Council's session in Copenhagen 1-4 November, where the Director met with the Committee for a Sustainable Nordic Region and the Committee for Growth and Development in the Nordic Region.
- Action:**
The Board was notified.
- 15 BM 21/1087** **Instructions for the NordForsk Director**
- Jonas Björck presented the case.
- Action:**
The Board approved the instructions for the NordForsk Director and the annual evaluation form.
- 16 BM 21/1088** **Information from the Nordic Council of Ministers**
- Jonas Waller informed that the budget was approved on 2 November. The Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers is currently under re-organisation and the new model will be implemented during Spring 2022. Concerning the evaluation of NordForsk, Waller informed that the task has been assigned to the Danish Technological Institute (including additional expertise from Faugert Technopolis) who will submit a final report by end of April 2022.
- Action:**
The Board was notified.
- 17 BM 21/1089** **Information about Director's decisions**
- The information was presented in writing in the documentation to the Board meeting.
- Action:**
The Board was notified.
- 18 BM 21/1090** **Information from the Administration**
- The information was presented in writing in the documentation to the Board meeting.
- Action:**
The Board was notified.

19 BM 21/1091

Information from Board members and observers

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

Action:

The Board was notified.

20 BM 21/1092

Any other business

Arne Flåøyen suggested that the next Board meeting is held in Iceland on 31 March, back-to-back with the NORDHORCS meeting the same day. The Board agreed.