

**Minutes from NordForsk 66th Board meeting**  
**Grand Central Hotel, Helsinki, 13 October 2021, 08:30 – 13:00**

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

Björck, Jonas	The Swedish Research Council Forte (Chair)
Danielsen, Kristin	The Research Council of Norway
Haanes, Vidar	Nordic University Cooperation (NUS)
Helgadóttir, Ragnhildur	Science and Technology Policy Council of Iceland
Risom, Jesper	Independent Research Fund Denmark
Vauhkonen, Jussi	Academy of Finland

**Observers and guests:**

Herou, Anna	NordForsk Administration (staff representative)
Mattila, Johanna	Åland University of applied sciences
Sølvará, Annika	The Faroese Research Council
Waller, Jonas	Nordic Council of Ministers
Von Wright, Moira	NUS (Item 4)
Risikko, Tanja	NUS (Item 4)

**Not present:**

Springfeldt, Christina	Nordic Council of Ministers
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 21/1054 Approval of the Agenda. Any conflict of interest to be announced**

The Chair opened the meeting. No conflicts of interest were noted. Item 12 was decided to be discussed as the last item of the meeting without the presence of the NordForsk administration.

**Action:**

**The agenda was approved. Item 12 was moved to be discussed as the last item of the meeting.**

**02 BM 21/1055 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 all members present.**

03 BM 21/1056

#### **Approval of the minutes from the Board meetings on 25 March 2021**

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 21/1057

#### **The Nordic research policy, the expectations of the universities, and the role of NordForsk to enhance research capacity and collaboration in the Nordic countries**

Professor Moira von Wright (Chair of NUS and rector of Åbo Akademi University) and Dr Tanja Risikko (executive director, Universities Finland) and the Board discussed the ongoing cooperation and how to further develop this. NUS and the Board underlined that they are pleased with the current cooperation and wish to continue this to further promote Nordic added value.

**Action:**

**The Board and NUS discussed the Nordic research policy, the expectations of the universities, and the role of NordForsk to enhance research capacity and collaboration in the Nordic countries.**

05 BM 21/1058

#### **New instrument for University Cooperation**

NordForsk has been given the task to develop a call or programme for university cooperation from 2024, if funding is made available from the NCM. The instrument should be relevant to the co-operation bodies (NORDITA, NIAS, Nordvulk and NifS). The co-operation bodies and NUS has been given the chance to give their comments to a new instrument in a hearing sent to them in May with deadline for input 15 September. Arne Flåøyen introduced the input from this hearing and presented a set of suggested principles for a new instrument and call to be discussed by the board. The board discussed the overarching aim and structure of the new instrument, and thereafter discussed the suggested principles. They decided to adjust the following:

- For principle 2, the board decided to restrict the partners eligible for funding to universities, university colleges, and universities of applied sciences in the Nordic region. Other public and/or private institutions can be partners, but not receive funding from NordForsk.
- For principle 3, the board decided to use alternative B with an adjustment: Networks consisting of at least three institutions located in three different countries/autonomous regions can receive funding. (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Åland).

The NordForsk administration will create an addendum with the adjusted principles for the call that will be circulated between the Board in November for approval, and thereafter further develop the instrument based on the approved principles.

**Action:**

**The NordForsk Board decided to establish a new instrument and call for university cooperation. The call should be based on the principles to be in an addendum circulated and approved by the Board in writing in November 2021. The total NordForsk funding that will be allocated to the call is 100 MNOK in the period 2024-2028. NordForsk will fund up to 1/3 of the budget. The remaining 2/3 will be provided by the research consortia themselves.**

06 BM 21/1059

**Report to the NCM for the first half of the year including accounts per June 2021**

Arne Flåøyen and Jonas Björck presented the half year report submitted to the Nordic Council of Ministers. The report consists of two parts: accounts and comments to deviations from the plan. No major deviations are reported. The report was discussed at a dialogue meeting with the NCM in September this year.

**Action:**

**The Board was notified.**

07 BM 21/1060

**Expression of Interest: Societal security beyond COVID-19**

Anna Herou presented the Expression of Interest for a Nordic call on Societal security beyond COVID-19, submitted by the Nordic council of ministers with support from the Academy of Finland, the Finland Ministry of Interior, Icelandic Centre for Research, Rannís, Research Council of Norway, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, and the Swedish Research Council.

**Action:**

**The Board decided to support the establishment of a new call on societal security beyond COVID-19 within the Nordic Societal Security Programme with up to 5 MNOK. The Board decided to delegate to the NordForsk Director to appoint additional representatives to the programme committee.**

08 BM 21/1061

**Expression of Interest Sustainable agriculture and Climate Change**

Arne Flåøyen presented the Expression of Interest for a research programme on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change, submitted by the Research Council of Norway, with support from the Estonian Research Council, the Ministry Rural Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, the Academy of Finland, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland and Formas – the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning.

**Action:**

**The Board decided to support the establishment of a research programme on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change with up to 20 MNOK and a maximum of ½ of the total contribution from the Nordic research funding organisations. The Board decided to delegate to the Chair and Vice Chair to appoint a chairperson for the programme committee. The Board decided to delegate to the Director to appoint members to the programme committee.**

09 BM 21/1062

**Expression of Interest: Expression of Interest – Nordic-Baltic research programme on Future Working Life**

Siri Bjarnar presented the Expression of interest to establish a Nordic-Baltic research programme on Future Working Life, submitted by the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (Forte) with support from the Research Council of Norway, The Icelandic Centre for Research RANNIS and the Lithuanian Research Council.

**Action:**

**The Board decided to support the establishment of a Nordic-Baltic research programme on Future Working Life with up to 15 MNOK and a maximum of ½ of the total contribution from the Nordic research funding organisations. The Board decided to delegate to the Chair and Vice Chair to appoint a chairperson for the programme committee. The Board decided to delegate to the Director to appoint members to the programme committee.**

10 BM 21/1063

#### **Financial prognosis 2022-2025 and status for Open Invitation**

Arne Flåøyen and Mikael Heimonen presented the financial prognosis for 2022-2025. The prognosis includes the expected decrease of funding from the Nordic council of ministers from 2024. Several new initiatives for Open invitation are in pipeline, and new Expressions of interest are expected to the board meeting in March.

**Action:**  
**The Board was notified.**

11 BM 21/1064

#### **Terms of Reference for the evaluation of NeIC**

Arne Flåøyen presented the item. NRICC has prepared a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation of NeIC. The timeline for the process is also outlined in the ToR.

**Action:**  
**The Board approves the process for evaluation of NeIC as outlined in the ToR.**

12 BM 21/1065

#### **Instructions for the NordForsk Director**

The Board decided in their meeting in March 2021 to establish an annual evaluation of the Director and the administration. As a part of this work, instructions for the NordForsk Director and for the annual evaluation had been prepared.

**Action:**  
**The Board discussed the suggested instructions for the NordForsk director and administration and decided on some adjustments. The instructions will be approved in the next board meeting, in December 2021.**

13 BM 21/1066

#### **Researchfish status**

Guttorm Aanes presented the status for the implementation of Researchfish. NordForsk conducted the first reporting period in Researchfish in February and March 2021. Both the implementation and the reporting worked as intended, namely as an efficient and more systematic way of gathering information to document the impact of the research. Further improvements will be made in next year's reporting.

**Action:**  
**The Board was notified.**

14 BM 21/1067

#### **Mobilising the Nordics - status**

Arne Flåøyen presented the item. As a conclusion to the Mobilising the Nordics process that was completed in spring 2021, the report "How to mobilise the Nordics! An inspiration catalogue from NordForsk and more than 160 Nordic leaders" was recently published. The inspiration catalogue contains the most important and valuable content and points of inspiration formulated and collected within the Mobilising the Nordics series.

**Action:**  
**The Board was notified.**

**15 BM 21/1068**

**Information from the Nordic Council of Ministers**

Jonas Waller underlined that the NCM was pleased with the constructive and positive meeting between NORDHORCS, NordForsk and MR-U on 12 October. He informed about the organisational processes and development in the NCM taking place this autumn. The tender for evaluating NordForsk resulted in five submitted offers.

**Action:**  
**The Board was notified.**

**16 BM 21/1069**

**Information about Director's Decisions**

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

**Action:**  
**The Board was notified.**

**17 BM 21/1070**

**Information from the Administration**

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

**Action:**  
**The Board was notified.**

**18 BM 21/1071**

**Information from Board members and observers**

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

**Action:**  
**The Board was notified.**

**19 BM 21/1072**

**Any other business**

No other business was brought up at the meeting.