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Final

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Research Committee

Minutes of the meeting in Research Committee on January 31, 2023

Participants: Torsten Nygård Kristensen (chair), Jens Muff, Jeppe Lund Nielsen, Kim Lambertsen Larsen, Mads Koustrup Jørgensen (in stead of Morten L. C.), Majken Pagter, Marco Maschietti, Mette Lübeck, Morten Mattrup Smedskjær, Per Halkjær Nielsen, and Teis Søndergaard (in stead of Jens L. S.)

Unable to attend Jens Laurids Sørensen, Kåre Lehmann Nielsen, Anders Olsen, Michael Toft Overgaard, and Morten Lykkegaard Christensen

Other participants: Louise Bak Søndergaard (minute taker). Item 2: Kristian Bering

Item 1. Approval of the agenda by Torsten N. Kristensen

Minutes:

The agenda is approved by the committee.

Item 2. Internal peer-review and pitch sessions by Torsten N. Kristensen and Kristian Bering

Experiences and discussions on future practices.

Should the practice with mandatory internal peer-review on DFF-applications that we had in the fall 2022 be expanded to other types of applications?

Minutes:

At the department we have been trying to have internal peer-reviews for a couple of years as a voluntary practice. In the fall we tried mandatory peer-review on DFF applications

Kristian Bering have made a small questionnaire, where he got four replies. Based on these responses, he finds that people are generally happy and understand the need of peer-review. Some finds that it is done optimal at the moment, and some will find a mandatory peer-review unnecessary or unwanted. However, it is doubtful whether we can conclude anything from the questionnaire due to the low number of replies.

For future 'questionnaires' it is suggested to have a short meeting (or some meetings) instead.

It is found that it is not advisable to make peer review mandatory, however it is a shame if it isn't done. – Some research areas do have internal reviews.

The department has also had pitch sessions about applications ideas. However, there have only been few participants. It is advisable to discuss an idea in the research area prior to presentation. The sessions are a way of sharing ideas – especially for junior researchers, and therefore it is important that it feels like a 'safe space'.



It is concluded that the department will continue with the current practice regarding pitch sessions: each research area is to send a representative for each pitch session if there is a presenter from the area's section. If there are only few presenters, then there should be fewer reviewers. The announcement of the pitch session should be at least one month in advance.

Item 3. Increased focus on defense / military in DK and internationally by Morten M. Smedskjær

New funding options for us. The Danish Ministry of Defence Acquisition and Logistics Organisation has visited us

Minutes:

Two employees from The Danish Ministry of Defense Acquisition and Logistics (Forsvarets Materielle indkøbsstyrelse) visited AAU, and Morten M. Smedskjær was invited to tell them about glass research.

During their visit they expressed an interest in research that could prove relevant for use in the Arctics.

It is discussed that it will require groundwork to get into this area. The stakeholders want some specific things from bigger projects. It is also pointed out that there are future funding opportunities, however it might be a slight concern, if other universities might hesitate to cooperate.

Item 4. Strategic Institute Money by Torsten N. Kristensen

How much money have we budgeted and what do we want to prioritize for the next round in 2023?

Minutes:

The chair of the committee has been informed that the estimate is that apart from the approx. 400,000 DKK that the committee distributed in 2022 (to be used in 2023) we will have approx. 1 Mill. DKK for strategic institute investments in 2023. The question is what should the department use them for?

Some suggestions (not prioritized): Sabbaticals, Frikøb, Infrastructure (75,000 max), Co-finance PhD students, Hiring lab technicians, Support (pay for) open access publications, Support department missions, Support Arctic research, e.g.

Another suggestion is equipment for (primarily) educational purposes, and that fuel for cars also should be included in infrastructure applications.

Regarding the suggestion of co-financing of PhD students, it is mentioned that many foundations including DFF, EUDP, Innovation Fund Denmark also assesses the budget, so cofounding of a PhD-student might be useful. Furthermore, some funds do not cover the educational part a PhD (taxameter). One perspective is that the student should teach in order to qualify for funding.

Sabbatical and 'frikøb' can be really valuable - also 'frikøb' for junior VIP for writing applications among other things.

During the discussion of selection criteria, it is mentioned whether it should matter whether you have been granted 'frikøb' before, as it is goal to grant the internal funding to different employees. However, it is also suggested that we shouldn't have 'frikøb' applications this year as quite a few researchers got it last year.

It is decided that Torsten will make a draft which will be distributed in the committee, which can include applications for Infrastructure (below 75.000 dkk) and co-financing of PhD-students. It can however be a problem to spend money for PhD-students in 2023 and this should be discussed with the interim head of institute.



It is also mentioned that a deadline in October is too late if the funds should be spent in 2023.

Item 5. Missions by Torsten N. Kristensen

Next steps and discussion on how to work on 'department missions'.

Minutes

Two AAU missions to be initiated in 2023: a) A Sustainable Energy System in Denmark by 2045 and b) Inclusiveness and Wellbeing of Children and Young People.

Should we do something to facilitate progress in regard to the department's suggested missions? Many of the suggestions are quite big so there is the possibility to go directly to foundations. An idea is to make a '1-paper' to show foundations, which could be send to Torsten.

Item 6. Communication within the department by Torsten N. Kristensen

Can we optimize?

Minutes

Kristian Bering or Torsten N. Kristensen might send out an email but not receive much feedback. It is understandable as we are busy - however there might be criticism later in the process.

A suggestion is to send emails to fewer recipients - if it's a selected few then the recipients might feel more responsible (others might be in Cc). Sometimes it might not be quite clear whether it is important. Furthermore, it is important to get feedback when you do send something in.

It is discussed if there are other useful communication canals besides emails, such as 'Slack', however it can also be confusing to have multiple communication platforms.

Item 7. Promotion of research areas / research groups / individuals by Per Halkjær Nielsen

Including a discussion of the interview of Eske Willerslev shared by Per H.N. previously (Eske Willerslev: Eske Willerslev: »Københavns Universitet kan blive verdens bedste med få, enkle midler« (uniavisen.dk)

Minutes

Postponed.