



Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge

Minutes from SiN (Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge) board meeting 23. November 2010

Place and time: Oslo, Peppes Pizza, Karl Johans gate 1, 23. November 2010

Present: Sverre Lundemo (DION), Ann-Kristin Molde (STIP-HF, UiB), Hanna Helgeland (FODOS), John-Wilhelm Vinje (PhD-UiA)

News

- ***Short briefing from the seminar arranged by Universitets- og høyskolerådet 16.11***
 - Sverre informed about the seminar, which focused on how to implement doctoral education to the national quality framework. Important questions included how the goals of doctoral education could be covered through the course part and through research, and how to best develop generic skills.
- ***Short briefing from the meeting in UHR's Forskningsutvalg 23.11***
 - UHR's research committee (Forskningsutvalget) has recommended that SiN should have a representative in the committee. The main board of UHR has agreed to this, but due to the need of amending UHR's regulations accordingly, it will not be finally decided before February 2011. However, Sverre will participate as an observer in the committee until the matter is settled. Sverre informed about the main items from the committee's meeting earlier this day, including the response to SiN's survey (cf. next point).

SiN survey

- Sverre presented the main findings in SiN's survey, which has aimed at documenting what possibilities doctoral candidates and other temporary employees have at participating within the structures of Norwegian academic institutions.
- Based on the survey, UHR's research committee did encourage SiN to make a note on its aims and results, and together with our recommendations, submit it to the research committee. After approval they can forward it to academic institutions in Norway. It was decided that Ann-Kristin will write a draft of this note, as she already created a .ppt presentation summarising the results and recommendations. She will circulate the draft to the rest of the board for comments on structure and content.

SiN and its members

- Since the previous meeting SiN has gotten a common mailing list to which all local organisations and other representatives can be subscribed. We have decided to use it for sending out agendas and minutes of meetings, as well as information about important issues and events. Another possibility is informing about updates on the web page. It should also be stressed that member organisations and contact persons can contact the board to address issues at their institutions. It is important to mind the amount of mails going through the list, i.e. avoiding it being flooded. However, it is a

mailing list for those interested in being informed on SiN's work and the posting of relevant issues on this list should not be too restrained.

- The board will continue to use its own mailing list for internal communication. We decided that John-Wilhelm Vinje, representing the recently established organisation PhD-UiA, will support the board in its work, and he will thus be added to the board's mailing list.
- SiN wants to prioritise getting more members. A precondition for this is the existence of active, local organisations representing doctoral candidates and other temporary employed researchers. The note mentioned in the previous point may encourage institutions to provide more support for the establishment of such organizations, and towards already existing organizations. We want to create a "starting package" with relevant information and advice for those that are interested in initiating or improving such organisations. John-Wilhelm will make a draft of this for the next board meeting, which most likely will be held in connection with SiN's seminar in Bergen in March (cf. next point).
- At institutions where there are at present no organizations existing SiN would like to have contact persons. Hanna, which participated on behalf of SiN at the seminar for PhD candidates arranged by the Norwegian Association of Researchers (Forskerforbundet) 14.-15. October, mentioned that several of the other participants had been interested in being contact persons for SiN, perhaps even at initiating local organisations. She will send an email to all participants of this seminar, inquiring for who would like to become contact persons at their institutions. They will be added to the already mentioned mailing list for local organisations and contact persons.
- We decided at our last meeting that we would like to get some written information on what is happening in our member organizations twice a year and publish this information on our web pages. We discussed how this could be done and decided that it should be as simple and easy as possible. Ann-Kristin will during December send out two-three questions, focusing on obtaining information on main activities within the last six months. She will summarise the answers and put it on the web page. Additionally, the first time this request is sent out we should ask how the organisations are structured. This can be a supplement to the SiN survey.
- Today, the fee for SiN membership is NOK 2000 per year, and we discussed whether it should be increased, e.g. by having a higher fee for organisations representing many doctoral candidates. However, only the annual meeting can decide to change the fee, and we thus have to address this issue on a later occasion.

SiN's seminar "Life after the PhD" ("Livet etter doktorgraden")

- SiN decided on the previous meeting that we would like to arrange a seminar called "The Life after the PhD" (Livet etter doktorgraden) in Bergen next spring. The focus group will be doctoral candidates, master students, and staff in the research administration, both in Bergen and elsewhere. However, most attendants will likely come from Bergen.
- We want to arrange the seminar at Studentsenteret, at the University of Bergen, one of the following dates: 7, 11, 14, 18 or 22. March. Ann-Kristin will check whether this is possible no later than 26. November.
- We decided that the event should last 10:15-16:00 and consist of four sessions with presentations and question rounds. The idea is to have an introduction to the topic, like where do doctoral candidates end up, followed by talks on career opportunities. Speakers, and perhaps others as well, could get the opportunity to have stands outside

the seminar room. We discussed various alternatives for potential speakers, and we should all provide suggestions by 26. November.

- After the date, place and suggestions for speakers are ready, we should create an invitation template with vision for the seminar and information on the suggested program. Ann-Kristin will send this to UiB and ask whether they can contribute with a speaker and support the event economically.
- Sverre will send invitations to suggested speakers when the program is ready.
- We can propose to the labour unions that they could support members that need financial support to attend this seminar, and likewise we can suggest to the national student organisation (NSO), if it is interesting for them, to do the same for master students outside Bergen. Finally, we can announce the event.

SiN and Eurodoc

- Each year all member organisations in Eurodoc, including SiN, should answer a questionnaire on working conditions for doctoral candidates and post doctoral researchers in their country. Last year's answers could be used to some degree, as the situation does not change that much between years. Sverre will ask Jon whether he can be in charge of coordinating SiN's answer.

Hearing about criteria for accreditation of doctoral studies

- We discussed a draft to changes in the regulation of accreditation of doctoral studies. The deadline for giving input to the Ministry of Education and Research is 1. December. The suggested changes entail stricter demands when establishing new doctoral studies in Norway, by demanding a minimum number of scientific staff (at least 8 persons with PhD), and a minimum number of doctoral candidates connected to the study (at least 20 over a four year period).
- It was commented that several of the terms used in the suggested changes seemed vague and were used in different contexts. For instance "fagmiljø" (research environment), which can be interpreted both in a wide or narrow way, and "doktorgradsstudium" (doctoral study), which today is at some institutions organised at lower institutional levels, while at other places it is organised more central (at UiB there is one doctoral program for the entire university). SiN is worried that this suggested change in regulations may lead to discipline based doctoral programs becoming more widely defined. If so, the doctoral candidates may not be ensured an active research environment to partake in, and the course portfolio may become less varied.
- Sverre will write and submit SiN's input to the hearing based on our discussion.

Temporality in academia

- We discussed in brief the main findings of a new report on temporality in academia, but agreed on not giving any public statement on the topic unless there will be a hearing on it. If so we will get back to this issue.

A.o.b.

- The next annual general meeting of Eurodoc will be in Vilnius 31. March- 4. April 2011. SiN will have two votes at the meeting, but more participants are possible if we desire so.
- Sverre will check whether there are any active hearings about the implementation of the quality framework (cf. UHR's seminar). If so, we should give our view on this, but if not we will leave the issue for now.

- SiN received a question on what happens when a doctoral candidate finishes before the employment contract ends. DION received the same email, and since the candidate is registered at NTNU, which has its own regulations regulating this issue, they answered the question. Sverre will contact UHR's research committee about whether this should be included in the coming national directive on doctoral education, as this is likely treated differently among Norwegian institutions today.