

Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge

Board meeting

Date: 18.05.2021

Time: 17:00

Place: Zoom

Agenda

1. Access to emails and board composition
2. NIFU interviews
3. Next quarterly meeting
4. Update on working group activities
5. Events attended by SiN
6. Guidelines and digital infrastructure for board work
7. Working group composition
8. Emails to the board
9. Public statements on higher education and research policies
10. Consultations by the ministry and UHR
11. Calendar for important deadlines
12. Any other business

Attendees

- Sin board: Camilla, Idd, Yannik, Margret, Grace, Bikal (arrived late)

Minutes

Meeting start: 17:05

1. Access to emails and board composition

Yannik has been unable to log in to leder@stipendiat.no with two-factor identification due to issues with his device. He has contacted the Google help desk and there will hopefully be a solution soon. Margret proposes to build in some functional redundancy in the future so we don't miss important emails - for example, by making sure that at least two people receive emails sent to "leder".

Hui was elected chair of UiSDC, which prevents him from continuing as a SiN board member according to the UiSDC statutes. He has, however, offered to stay on as a webmaster. Yannik will check whether Hui is still entitled to continued compensation for this service, and if this turns out not to be the case, whether Hui would still be willing to serve as webmaster. If necessary, a new webmaster will have to be appointed by the end of this week. Enrico has also resigned from SiN, and Miro has indicated that he will be on long-term sick leave.

As soon as Yannik's access to his email address is restored, he will update the email list "styret" and the Google Drive privileges to reflect the new composition of the board. A question was

raised whether the “medlemmer” email list is still in use, since most of our emails to local organisations are sent to the organisations directly, not to the list. While the list still exists and is functional, it is not up to date. Yannik will therefore update this as well as “styret”. Another question is raised as to which receivers are subscribed to mail@stipendiat.no, through which SiN recently received an email from EuroDoc, and if this is used in the same way as “styret”. Yannik will check this as well.

2. NIFU interviews

NIFU contacted us in March with the request to interview SiN for their research project on researcher careers and career conditions. Yannik replied and told them he would take it up at the next board meeting. He thinks it’s best to send 2-3 people to the NIFU interview. Yannik, Margret and Idd offer to volunteer. Yannik will reply to confirm our interest and set up a date. NIFU came with a similar request in May, but this concerned an invitation to participate in group interviews with PhDs in Norway, and the request to forward this invitation to our members. The message was forwarded together with the newsletter.

3. Next quarterly meeting

Four people filled out the doodle and 25 and 27 May emerged as the best dates. The board has a slight preference for the 27th at 5pm. Yannik will send out the invitation tomorrow. Public statements and consultations as discussed under point 9 will be one of the main agenda points. Information about these will be included in the invitation, so that the local leaders have some time to reflect on it and prepare.

4. Update on working group activities

The career outside academia (CoA) working group (WG) has been struggling to access the raw data from the survey that was conducted last year, to discover that large parts were already analysed. Bikal and Idd will focus on creating a flyer to summarise and disseminate the results. The mental health working group is in the process of finalising their follow-up survey and awaiting approval from NSD to collect personal data. If all goes well, the survey will be released in the first week of June.

5. Events attended by SiN

Yannik attended the UiB PhD day and presented SiN there. There were many questions from engineers and scientists. He did not attend the humanities PhD day because after he emailed them to confirm his attendance, they never got back to him with the details. Idd attended the industrial PhD day on behalf of SiN, but this mostly revolved around watching other people’s presentations, with no opportunity to present or interact on SiN’s behalf. The aim seemed mostly to advertise the benefits of doing a PhD in collaboration with industry. Margret attended the annual meeting of the DIKU funded research school for artistic research, which was a relatively small meeting with fewer than 20 participants from various institutions in Norway. Both SiN and Forskerforbundet (who did not attend) were invited to discuss possible ways the artistic researchers could take collective action in the face of the pandemic and other conditions particular to their predicament as researchers in a somewhat new and unknown discipline. Margret has encouraged them to join SiN if their own university is not already a member, and is now in search of the most recent board and chairperson of the KunstStipendiatForum, which is an inter-institutional interest organisation for artistic researchers but appears to have been inactive for a while.

6. Guidelines and digital infrastructure for board work

Unforeseen circumstances have put the work on the guidelines (as well as the regular board meetings in March and April) on hold. Yannik and Margret will finish a draft of the guidelines before the next board meeting in June. A Microsoft Team was set up for all the local leaders, but this was made with the UiO account of the leader of UiODoc, which creates problems with continuity once the UiODoc board changes or becomes inactive/unresponsive. It would be better if this Team was administered through a more permanent entity that is independent from any one university, such as SiN, which as a non-profit organisation could qualify for a Microsoft Business account. If SiN would like to take this responsibility, it might be useful to integrate the local leaders Team with a Team for the SiN board as well and any other SiN related groups (e.g. working groups), to which members can subscribe.

The question is whether the SiN board would like a digital solution for communicating other than email, and if so, what solution this should be. Camilla and Margret are more familiar with and have a slight preference for Slack, but everyone else (including Camilla and Margret) are okay with a Teams solution. Margret will coordinate with Yannik and Grace to set up a Microsoft Business account for SiN, so that ownership of the local leader Team can be transferred and communication within the board can migrate to Team as well.

7. Working group composition

Now that the active board consists of fewer members, available labour needs to be redistributed over working groups to ensure we are able to focus on the most topical issues. Priorities in the coming weeks and months will be the consultative processes on developments related to various aspects of academic careers: researcher recruitment and career development (deadline in June), the new job position structure (deadline in August), and the new long-term plan for higher education and research (deadline in September). This will require extra effort from board members normally not engaged in the working group on career in academia.

Temporary pause in activities: Since Miro is on prolonged sick leave and is the main person in charge of the open science/open access working group, this work will be put on hold for the time being. Without Miro, we will not have capacity to organise the workshop on intellectual property rights either. Margret will let the external committee members from UiODoc know that this event is temporarily put on hold. Since Camilla is the only member of the working group on mobility and internationalisation and is already doing a lot of work for the mental health survey and as information coordinator, the activities of this working group will be temporarily put on hold as well.

Continuation as normal: The mental health working group has a lot of activities at the moment in collaboration with partnering organisations in Denmark and Sweden and with the Young Academy, that cannot be postponed. The working group on Career development outside academia will also continue their activities as planned, but since Idd has been elected as the new representative for temporary staff at NTNU, she will not have much time to take on extra duties.

Future of working groups: Camilla points out that we do not have enough people in the board to populate all working groups right now, and that it might be more useful to work with a delegate or contact point for each topic or theme, rather than an entire group, which would require board members to take up multiple positions. It is suggested that it makes more sense to structure the activities of the board around important developments and switch between priority areas as

needed, rather than expecting people to keep working within the limits of their working group and to keep a constant level of activity within their working groups. The long-term goals and structure of the working groups, including potential extra members, will be discussed at the next board meeting in June.

8. Emails to the board

Since it is not clear who is supposed to handle emails sent to “styret”, several emails have gone unanswered. Someone needs to reply to the past emails, and we need a person responsible for sorting, answering and delegating emails to the board. As long as Yannik does not have access to “leder” and “styret”, Margret will handle general emails sent to the board. After he regains access, Yannik will be responsible for emails addressed to “leder” and Margret for those addressed to “styret” but not to “leder”. In the mean time, Margret will make sure that the emails Camilla mentioned are still unanswered (two from PhD students, one from a member organisation), will be addressed.

9. Public statements on higher education and research policies

Camilla has been unable to comment on several important developments concerning policies in higher education and research on social media, because we have not properly consulted our members and drafted a statement on any of them. Writing short statements (in Norwegian called “resolusjon”) on topics of importance on our website makes us accessible to and quotable by the media, and hence more visible. It also makes it easier for board members contacted by journalists and posting on social media to give a reaction. The student level equivalent of SiN (NSO) has a tab on their website called “NSO mener”, where they highlight the student organisation’s opinions on four selected topics. We could do something similar and focus on writing brief statements on topics that are at the center of the most important developments going on right now, which includes the pandemic (and the lack of central funding for extensions), the postdoc position, and the revisions to the job position structure. Statements such as these should be no more than 2 paragraphs or around 300 words and preferentially be backed by all our member organisations.

The question arises to which extent member organisations need to be involved in providing input for and approving of the final statement. It is proposed that we use the quarterly meeting in the last week of May as an opportunity to gather input and to draft statements based on this input, allowing us to publish our first statements in early June. To avoid information overload and keep things manageable, only the most urgent topics (the pandemic and academic career paths) will be included on the agenda of the quarterly meeting. In order to get relevant input, Yannik will notify the member organisations of the topics we want input on when he send out the invitation, and we will use a couple of minutes per topic during the meeting to outline the most important developments in each domain and ask targeted questions.

Short powerpoints will be prepared by:

1. Ingvild (pandemic: delays and crisis package for young researchers)
2. Idd (UHR consultations: job position structure - including postdoc position - and assessment of research careers)
3. Camilla (KD consultations: strategy for researcher recruitment and career development and the Long Term Plan)

After the meeting we will draft the public statements and send them, together with the powerpoints and the minutes to the local leaders for review, who can discuss the matter with their board. If there are no major objections after a week, the first three statements will be published on our website. In the coming months, we can then gradually add statements on topics related to other working groups. Potentially, every working group could draft 2-3 short statements related to the theme they work as a basis for discussion; the content and timeline for this is to be discussed in June.

10. Consultations by the ministry and UHR

Margret has compiled a list of all past and upcoming consultation deadlines and meetings, with associated documents, on Google Drive. The statements mentioned under point 10 will be useful as a starting point for writing the replies to the various consultations issued by the ministry and UHR. Who will write the actual consultation replies will be decided following the next quarterly meeting on 27 May.

11. Calendar for important deadlines

Camilla proposes it will be easier to stay on top of all the deadlines with a shared calendar. Apparently Microsoft Teams has a calendar functionality that works quite well. This would also make it easier to share information with and consult the leaders of local organisations. Once the SiN Teams has been set up, Yannik will look into implementing this.

12. Any other business

A postdoc member of SoDoC was interested in joining SiN. The current board mostly consists of PhDs and she feels the postdoc voice is therefore underrepresented. It is noted any PhD or postdoc employed in Norway can nominate themselves to join the SiN board, and that the first opportunity to do this would be our next AGM in the Fall. Any individuals elected, are elected on personal title to represent *all* PhDs and postdocs in Norway regardless of their own position, so anything the SiN board does explicitly has to take the interests of postdocs into account. Interested candidates do not have to be on the board of SoDoc or any other member organisation to attend the AGM or nominate their candidacy. The cap of two delegates per member organisation only applies to individuals with voting rights. SoDoc can however play a role in advertising the SiN AGM and making sure those interested receive all details (and potentially sponsor their attendance). Bikal will pass on this information, and if she still has questions she can contact the board by email.

Meeting end: 19:30



Stipendiatorganisasjonene i Norge

Org. nr: 885 485 472

Margret Veltman

Date: 18.05.2021