



SiN Transition Meeting 2023-01-07
NHH Norges Handelshøyskole, Helleveien 30, 5045 Bergen

Datum: 2022-11-26

Time: 12.00 January 7th - 12.00 January 8th

Place: NHH Norges Handelshøyskole

Helleveien 30

5045 Bergen

Attendees: 12 (9 in person) (see Appendix)

Welcome to the transition meeting and intro to SiN

Nicolas Gibney welcomed the participants and introduced the participants in how SiN works

- what SiN is
- board composition
- working groups e.g. career development in-/outside academia, mental health, international mobility
- participation in workshops and conferences e.g. Kontaktkonferanse, UHR-konferansen
- output e.g. position statements, working group reports and media appearances
- position statements e.g. PhD education & PostDoc
- expectations from the government e.g. fewer temporary positions, unemployment benefits even if dissertation is not finalized, extensions
- finalization of the annual report 2022, application for funding fro Kunnskapdepartement, PhD day?

Documents and Q&A

Guidelines

- can be changed by the current board
- internal organization e.g. mail domain, Slack, Google Drive
- board meetings at least 6 times a year, June off, approx. an hour with agenda (sent out one week before, more in advance for quarterly meetings)
- meetings and communication with PhD organizations e.g. quarterly meetings



- consultation statements
- Annual General Meeting (AGM), important to start preparations early e.g. in August
- travel (reimbursement), phone contract for the president
- yearly wheel of SiN, September and October are pretty busy, AGM in November
- folder in Google Drive with board meeting contact information, contact information for the local organizations, workload to keep track of the hours, Slack (includes contact info of people from local organizations), every board member has a folder
- all the time one spends for SiN e.g. answering emails, meetings
- no guidelines for external funding (if SiN would like to apply for), only guidelines if SiN would like to fund something, the new board is welcome to write the guidelines, recommended to check with HKDir
- in Statutes only three roles are set (president, secretary and treasurer), i.e., other board members are not bound to their positions, tasks are flexible
- templates e.g. logos available in Google Drive

Transition meetings

- President
- Treasurer
- UHR Representative
- Communication officer
- Event officer
- EuroDoc Liason

Introduction to KiF

- Anna Piterskaya briefly introduced KiF's work to SiN
- new representative Nicolas Gibney; Ole Kristian Dyskeland as substitute



SiN in 2023. Priorities

- career for PhDs in and outside of academia in connection with transferable skills, prejudice that PhDs are too specialized, include PhDs in public sector and startups, focus on transferable skills
- finances
- mental health in connection to the supervisor's role in PhD life

Working groups

Transferable skills and career

- advocate for transferable skills, i.e., make them recognizable as courses at the universities
- make PhDs more attractive for the employers
- getting the information from the local organizations, e.g. questionnaire
- results in form of a report e.g. article in Khrono
- two different investigations: one of the employers side e.g. UK: employees are more aware of all the advantages a PhD has and a second: make the universities aware of it
- talk to already employed PhDs

Mental health

- in connection with supervision: quality of supervision, when is someone allowed to supervise, courses for supervisors
- supervisor on leave
- survey
- ask administrators about the policies and post them on the web page
- clarify the rules when a PhD has a right to change a supervisor e.g. supervisor on a leave or exploring new fields and is not able to provide supervision
- make PhDs aware of these rules as not everyone does necessary know
- PhD handbook more as a recommendation and not rules, where are the rules written?
- difficult to make uniform for all the universities



- results from the mental health study from the previous board can be used in general terms (not necessarily from Covid-19 perspective)
- raise awareness that psychological help is offered by a university
- UiS has a version of a PhD handbook written by themselves because usually these books are written by administration
- UiS has their own mental health working group which organizes sessions where PhD can talk about important topics e.g. procrastination, how to kick off your PhD
- demand for horizontal exchange of knowledge
- how we can ensure that PhDs have equal rights as at the moment it is very dependent on an institution where go to

Finances

- how to improve the financial situation of SiN

Events

- Soft Skills Day at NTNU
- PhD Day
- share digital events with SiN, digital events are a good platform for people from different universities to attend
- Life of after PhD on the basis of the University of Oslo was also well attended by PhDs from Bergen
- exchange between local organizations about their experience in organizing the events
- board meeting in person e.g. a cabin close to NTNU in a national park e.g. in August

Comments

- should SiN go on LinkedIn?



Problem solving case

The new board received the following fictive case and discussed in two groups how they would react to this:

The government comes with a proposition for a new national rule. All PhD students must demonstrate B2 Norwegian proficiency in order to defend. The argument is that valuable tax money will be lost on education of highly skilled workers who will otherwise only leave Norway. The Young Academy of Norway (AYF) goes out publicly out and say they support it. What should SiN do?

Possible questions you can ask yourself:

1. What is behind this proposal?
2. Why do AYF support this?
3. How can SiN best defend the interests of PhD students?
4. What is the best way to promote this publicly?

Thoughts from the new board on how to approach this case:

1.
 - Norway needs highly educated employees
 - Norway wants on the one hand to have more Norwegian PhDs and at the same time keep the international PhDs after graduation in the country which will be more likely if they know the language
 - Norway will suffer less of Brain drain”
2.
 - AYF’s working language is Norwegian -; they are in favor of Norwegian as a working language
 - they have in their annual goals that they want to promote Norwegian courses for temporary and especially for permanent employees; they also want stricter rules and follow-ups of Norwegian tests for permanent employees
3.
 - show that SiN is in favor of Norwegian courses of PhDs - they need to be easier accessible, better combinable with their research and course work, costs covered by the respective department/university
 - a PhD defense is only on the scientific work and research output and not about language - therefore, SiN is strongly against coupling a PhD to language requirements; scientific language is English so there needs to be a sufficient level
 - putting language requirements for a PhD in place will reduce the number of international PhD students, but they are needed to fill the positions and Norway needs the international competencies to tackle future challenges; a reduced number of applicants will reduce the number of ”ideal fits for the positions



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4.
 - write a position statement
 - answer to the proposed change when a consultation comes to this
 - publish statement/article in Khrono and make SiN's position clear
 - if asked, participate in debates and interviews

Meeting closing

Nicolas Gibney declared the meeting as closed at 12.00

Appendix: Attendies

Ole Kristian Dyskeland

Regina Matveeva

Zihao Wang

Friederike Schäfer

Dimitrios Polychronopoulos (online)

Anum Masood (online; only for the transition meeting)

Nicolas Gibney

Jareef Bin Martuza (online)

Yucong Ma

Anna Piterskaya

Chris Magnussen

Johanne Kalsaas

Yauhen Yakimenka (only for the transition meeting)

Absent

Sanja Kovacevic

Andrea Vallejo Vargas

Siamak Karimi