

Board, Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway (NCMM)
Oslo, 6 February 2019

Notice of NCMM Board Meeting

Time: Wednesday 13 February, 12:00
Place: NCMM, Meeting room Nano (level D3)

Executive officer: Elisa Bjørgo

Agenda (O = information item, D = discussion item B = decision item)

Case 1-19O Presentations by NCMM group leaders

NCMM group leaders have since the beginning of 2018 had the possibility to present their research to the Board in the beginning of each Board meeting. Each group leader gets 5 minutes for a short presentation + 5 minutes for discussion. The group leaders have been asked to outline their main focus areas as well as to highlight what their main challenges are.

Janna Saarela and Judith Staerk will give their presentations in the Board meeting on February 13.

The new NCMM Director, Janna Saarela, started in January. Since this is her first meeting with the Board, the meeting will start with a short round of introductions.

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 2-19B Approval of minutes from last Board meeting

A draft minutes from the Board meeting on November 26 2018 was available (Attachment 1).

Proposed

Decision: The minutes are approved.

Case 3-19B Overview of NCMM's finances

The final accounts for 2018 are enclosed – the results are according to the information given in the previous board meeting (Attachment 2). Transferred funds from 2018 to 2019 are tied up and linked to obligations in relation to already employed group leaders, equipment investments and planned start-ups of new groups in the period 2019-2023. These transferred funds are included in the next five-year budget and are necessary for the long-term budget to be in balance between 2019-2023 and for the Center to fulfill its obligations also beyond the current five-year period for NCMM Translational Research (after 2019). In addition, an overview of the external funding generated in 2018 as well as an estimate for 2019 is also enclosed (Attachment 3). The management assessment from NCMM to the Faculty of Medicine covering the third four-month period of 2018 is also enclosed for your information (Attachment 4).

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 4-190 SAB – update

The NCMM Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) has 6 members and since 2017 Richard Treisman is the chair. Erich Nigg retired in 2017 and has previously informed NCMM that the SAB visit in February 2018 would be his last visit. The recruitment of his replacement as well as the planning of the next SAB visit has been postponed until a new NCMM Director was recruited.

SAB member Margaret Frame was recruited to the SAB in 2014 and has also been involved in the recruitment processes of both the Assistant Director and the new Director. She will step down as Director at the Edinburgh Cancer Research Centre in 2019 and has therefore also asked to be replaced. She has agreed to continue until after the next SAB visit in 2019 but NCMM should start thinking about replacing her as well.

A list of potential new SAB candidates was approved by the Board in November 2018 (Case 58-18B) and the NCMM Director has started to contact candidates. The two first candidates were unfortunately not able to say yes due to other commitments and the NCMM Director will continue the search for a new SAB member. Furthermore, all current SAB members have been contacted to find a suitable date in October for the next SAB visit.

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 5-190 Group leader evaluation – update

Group leader Camila Esguerra's first five year period ends on November 30 2019. Criteria for the assessment for renewal in function as group leader at NCMM have previously been prepared as well as a procedure for the renewal process that was last dealt with by the Board in November 2018 (Case 59-18B). The procedure includes individual external evaluation of 4-6 experts in the field that are chosen from a list of approx. 10-12 experts, followed by an assessment of the evaluations and the group's progress by the SAB. The NCMM Director will after this process promote a recommendation to the Board.

Camila Esguerra has in a letter dated January 22 been informed that she can apply for renewal of her function as group leader by June 7, 2019. She has also been given the opportunity to suggest scientific experts for the evaluation process within February 20. NCMM welcomes suggestions also from the Board and will also contact the SAB. A list of 10-12 experts will be presented to the Board in our next meeting in April.

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 6-19O Strategy discussion on continuation of NCMM – update

The Board already in the spring 2017 started a strategy discussion regarding the continuation of the Centre for a third 5-year period. As a national Centre, NCMM in coordination with its current owners wishes to explore the possibility of including all four Health Regions and all four universities with medical schools as owners in the Centre for the upcoming five-year period.

The former NCMM Director visited the health regions in the spring to meet with representatives from the regional health authorities, university hospitals and universities with medical faculties. In June the Chair of the Board, the NCMM Director and Finn-Eirik Johansen had a meeting with UiO rector Svein Stølen, vice rector Per Morten Sandset and the Dean Frode Vartdal to inform them about the ongoing process and to ask the UiO leadership to drive this process towards the other regions throughout the fall. Moreover, a strategy meeting with Per Morten Sandset was also held in September to discuss the evaluation report and the continued process.

Rector Svein Stølen discussed an extended ownership of NCMM with the other university rectors at the U5 meeting in Tromsø on December 18 2018. He also invited the new NCMM Director and the Chair of the Board to discuss the continued process in a meeting on January 29. An update from these meetings will be given in the Board meeting.

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 7-19D New call for NCMM group leader

NCMM group leader Preben Morth in the spring 2018 informed NCMM that he had accepted a Professor position at DTU, Copenhagen from August 2018. Morth still has a 20% position at NCMM until August 2019 to phase out his research group here.

NCMM now wants to start the recruitment process of a new research group that will be placed in the NCMM Translational Research department. The SAB has previously recommended that NCMM in future group leader recruitments consolidate the Centre's profile rather than investing in completely new areas. Furthermore, the evaluation report from 2018 recommends NCMM to establish a clear theme based research structure and expand the recruitment strategy to attract also clinician scientists.

NCMM wishes to discuss a timeline and how broad or specific the call text should be. The NCMM Director will also discuss future needs with the Faculty and OUH before a call text will be presented to the Board in the April meeting.

Proposed

Decision: To be determined in the meeting.

Case 8-190 New Life Science Building – update

NCMM will move into the new Life Science building in 2024. The building process is planned to start in the first half of 2019.

Detailed planning of lab space a.o. is in process and the planning of NCMM's areas has been merged with the planning of the general life science labs, led by Carl Henrik Gørbitz. Due to the placement of the structural biology unit close to NCMM, part of the NCMM area has been moved to level 6 and this will affect our planning somewhat.

Janna Saarela has had a meeting with Carl Henrik Gørbitz to discuss NCMM areas and she will also take part in the continued process throughout the spring.

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 9-18 Miscellaneous

Sincerely,

Jens Petter Berg
Chair NCMM Board

Janna Saarela
Director NCMM