

Board, Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway (NCMM)
Oslo, 6 December 2012

Notice of NCMM Board Meeting

Time: Monday 13 December 2021, 12:00 – 14:30
Place: Room Aqua, Oslo Science Park

Executive officer: Elisa Bjørgo

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

Case 41-21B Approval of minutes from last Board meeting

Draft minutes from the Board meeting on October 27 were available (Attachment 1).

Proposed

Decision: The minutes are approved.

Case 42-21B Hiring of NCMM group leaders - Personnel case Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven

NCMM is in the process of recruiting new group leaders within the field of precision medicine. The call was published in June, and when the call closed on September 15, 59 applications had been received. The Evaluation Committee reviewed all of the candidates individually. Their accomplishments, potential to develop and sustain vibrant research programs and compatibility with the scope of NCMM and the current research at the Centre will be assessed. In a meeting on October 26, the Committee discussed and ranked the candidates and decide to invite 10 candidates for interviews on November 22-23. In addition to the appointed international Selection Committee (Case 29-21B), a local interview panel consisting Prof. Vessela Kristensen, Prof. Finn-Eirik Johansen, Dr. Judith Staerk and NCMM Director Janna Saarela were also present during the interviews. The statement from the international Selection Committee was sent to all the applicants on November 25 with a two-week deadline to comment.

The final assessment from the local interview panel is based on the evaluation statement from the Search Committee, own observations and reviews of the candidates as well as the panel's conclusions based on feedback from the research environments, regarding how well the candidates would fit considering future recruitments and the added value for NCMM, UiO and OUH. Furthermore, feedback from references was also included in the assessment (Attachment 2). The Director will give an update in the meeting.

Proposed

Decision: To be decided in the meeting.

Case 43-21B NCMM recruitment strategy – new call for group leaders

NCMM in June opened a call for 2-3 new group leaders with start-up packages in precision medicine. In particular, NCMM is looking for candidates within AI/machine learning as well as within cell-based approaches. After the evaluation of all the applicants, the Evaluation Committee concluded that the quality of the applications for the AI/machine learning position was not good enough, and NCMM will therefore open a new call early 2022, to recruit a group leader with AI/machine learning expertise (Case 35-21O).

The NCMM areas in Forskningsparken were significantly reduced early 2021 due to the forced move out of building D. In addition, the building process of the new life science building is delayed by several years, and NCMM will most likely not be able to move in until 2027. Furthermore, although group leader Camila Esguerra will rotate out as NCMM group leader end of 2023, the zebrafish facility is planned into the life science building and it will not make sense to move it from NCMM to a new location twice in the period 2024-2027. NCMM will therefore have limited capacity to recruit a new wet lab group to replace Camila.

To keep momentum despite reduced space and uncertainties for when NCMM can move into the new LS building, NCMM suggests to open a call for 1-2 group leader positions in AI/machine learning early 2022. The Director will give an update in the meeting.

Proposed

Decision: To be decided in the meeting.

Case 44-21B NCMM Budget 2022

NCMM invites the Board to decide on the Centre budget for 2022 (Attachment 3). The budget has been prepared in accordance with funding agreements with the RCN, UiO and HSØ, and the proposal provides the research groups with the agreed annual allocation for salary and operations. Looking forward, the largest financial uncertainty for the Centre is the announced termination in funding from the RCN after 2024. The NCMM Director and CAO will present the budget in the meeting.

Proposed

Decision: The 2022 budget is approved.

Case 45-21O Group Leader evaluation 2022

Personnel case - Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven.

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 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.

The next SAB visit is scheduled end of September 2022. Group leaders *** and *** joined NCMM in October 2018 and April 2019, respectively. *** has since joining NCMM, been on parental leave for 6 months. If evaluated in the fall 2022, *** will be evaluated earlier than other NCMM group leaders. The Director will discuss whether to have two SAB visits in 1 year or postpone both evaluations until the spring 2023 with the Chair of the NCMM SAB. An update will be given in the meeting.

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 46-210 National role of NCMM – update

1. Seed-funding call UiT

In June NCMM and UiT agreed to open a joint call for seed-funding of collaborative projects between NCMM group leaders and young researchers at Helsefak, UiT. Altogether, 1.2 mNOK has been allocated for this collaborative effort, and UiT opened the call in October. When the deadline closed 26 November, five applications had been received, and these are now being evaluated.

2. ESFRI-memberships EU-OPENSREEN and EATRIS

NCMM is coordinating Norwegian participation in two ESFRI-RIs: EATRIS and EU-OPENSREEN. The EATRIS membership fee has in the period 2016-2021 been covered by UiO, UiB, NTNU, UiT and the four Regional Health Authorities. However, end of 2020 the Regional Health Authorities and UiT and NTNU decided not to continue their contribution to EATRIS. UiO and UiB have guaranteed to cover the 85 000 Euro membership fee for 2022, but a decision for 2023 and forward is still pending. The annual report to the Ministry was sent early November and is enclosed here FYI (Attachment 4). The Chair of the Board and the NCMM Director will give an update about EATRIS membership in the meeting.

NOR-OPENSREEN is the Norwegian participant in EU-OPENSREEN and the membership fee for the first five years (2018-2022) has been covered through an RCN infrastructure grant. How to cover the membership fee from 2023 is now up to discussion. Ingrid Kjelsvik will give an update in the meeting.

Proposed

Decision: The Board takes note of the briefing.

Case 47 Miscellaneous

Sincerely,

Jens Petter Berg
Chair NCMM Board

Janna Saarela
Director NCMM