

Board, Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway (NCMM)

Oslo, 5 April 2022

Minutes from Board Meeting 5 April 2022

Time: Tuesday 5 April 2022, 12:00-14:30

Place: Room Aqua, Forskningsparken

Executive officer: Elisa Bjørge

	Present	Absent
Professor Jens Petter Berg (UiO/OUS), Chair	X	
Professor Arne Klungland (UiO), member	X	
Professor Hilde Nilsen (UiO), member		X
Professor Bente Halvorsen (HSØ), member		X
Director Research & Innovation Øystein Krüger (HSØ), member	X	
Professor Ola Myklebost (UiB), national member	X	
Professor Magne Børset (NTNU), national deputy member		X
Dr. Torunn Berge (HSØ), deputy member		X
Professor Arnaldo Frigessi, deputy member		X
Professor Janna Saarela (NCMM), Director	X	

CAO Ingrid Kjelsvik was also present.

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

Case 7-22B Approval of minutes from last Board meeting

Draft minutes from the Board meeting on 4 February were available.

Decision: The minutes were approved.

Case 8-22O Hiring of NCMM group leaders - Update**Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven**

The Board in their December meeting 2021 supported the recommendation from the local interview committee and decided that the two highest-ranked candidates, Biswajyoti Sahu and Charlotte Boccara, should be offered the positions as research scientists in precision medicine with function as Group Leader (position code SKO 1109) on a five-year renewable contract, according to the call text.

Both candidates had second visits at NCMM and received their contract offers mid-February. Dr. Sahu signed his contract 1 March and will be joining NCMM 1 September. Dr. Boccara signed her contract early March and joined NCMM as group leader already on 1 April. The Director gave an update in the meeting.

Decision: The Board took note of the meeting.

Case 9 – 22B Call for new NCMM group leaders – appointment of international Selection Committee

NCMM in the beginning of March re-opened a call for 1-2 new group leaders with a start-up package in machine learning as we did not get qualified candidates for the this position in the 2021 call. The call was adjusted according to discussions in previous Board meetings and with input from both NCMM group leaders and machine learning experts at UiO / OUH. The application deadline is 18 April. The Director gave an update on the recruitment process in the meeting, including the expected timeline. Discussion and ranking of applicants will take place on May 20 and the interviews are planned for June 7.

NCMM follows EMBL's recommendations for selecting group leaders and an international selection committee should be appointed. According to the guidelines, EMBL has been consulted in connection with suggesting a committee. Furthermore, in line with previous processes, key personnel from EMBL are also recruited to the committee. In addition, the committee has to meet the formal requirements UiO has for assessment and employment in scientific positions.

All the four suggested candidates (Dr Alvis Brazma, EMBL-EBI, UK; Dr Judith Zaugg, EMBL, Germany, Dr Esa Pitkänen, FIMM, Finland and Prof. Petia Raeva, University of Barcelona, Spain) have confirmed their willingness to participate in the evaluation committee and agreed on the suggested timeline.

The Board agreed to the suggested recruitment committee.

Decision: The Board appoints the suggested international Selection Committee.

Case 10 -22O Strategy discussion on continuation of NCMM beyond 2024

NCMM currently is in its third 5-year funding period and receives core funding annually from UiO, RCN and HSØ until the end of 2024.

Before starting discussions with other funders, it will be important to obtain a clear funding commitment from UiO for the period starting 2025. NCMM has initiated discussions with MED, and the UiO rector has invited NCMM and the Dean at MED to a meeting on April 8, to discuss both the future of NCMM as well as the upcoming renewal of the EMBL partnership agreement (2023-2032). Furthermore, NCMM has involved EMBL to get support to lift the discussion about future funding of Norwegian EMBL Partnerships to a ministry level.

In the meeting, HSØ communicated that there are currently no signals to terminate their funding to NCMM, but the funding has until now been closely linked to the contribution from the RCN. Future funding could in the future potentially be linked to the strategic location of both NCMM and OUH in the new life science building, but would need to involve close discussions also with OUH.

Decision: The Board took note of the briefing.

Case 11-22O Health, Safety and Environment – regular updates

The annual HSE report was submitted to MED early March. In addition to the report, the Board also got an overview of the reported deviations in 2020-2021. CAO Ingrid Kjelsvik gave an update in the meeting.

Decision: The Board took note of the briefing.

Case 12-22O ARK – update on NCMM results

A work place survey, ARK, was sent out to all staff at MED in the beginning of February. ARK is designed by and for the higher education sector, and this survey has been coordinated by NTNU. 59% of the NCMM staff responded to the survey compared to 66.4% at MED.

In the meeting, the Director gave a short update on the results from the survey at NCMM. Most research groups have received the overall NCMM report as the individual groups were too small to prepare group specific feed-back. Both the admin unit, the group leaders and several of the individual research groups have already had mapping meetings to discuss the results, and the next step is to discuss measures both to keep what is working well as well as measures to improve some aspects of the work environment.

Case 13-22 Miscellaneous

Sincerely,

Jens Petter Berg
Chair NCMM Board

Janna Saarela
NCMM Director