

Board, Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway (NCMM)

Oslo, 10 September 2021

## Minutes from Board Meeting 10 September 2021

Time: Friday 10 September, 12:00-14:30  
 Place: Oslo Science Park, Room Aqua and Zoom

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 28-21B Approval of minutes from last Board meeting**

Draft minutes from the Board meeting on June 3 were available.

**Decision:** The minutes were approved.

**Case 29-21B Call for new NCMM group leaders – appointment of evaluation committee.**

NCMM is in the process of recruiting 2-3 new group leaders within the field of precision medicine. The call was published in June, and the application deadline is September 15.

NCMM Director Janna Saarela gave an update on the recruitment process, including the expected timeline and suggestion for the recruitment committee. The committee will evaluate and score the applications individually before a telephone conference will be held end of October to discuss and rank candidates. The interviews will take place over two full days on November 22-23. NCMM plans for physical interviews in Oslo and will also organize a mini-symposium where the candidates give public talks, like for previous recruitments.

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. Judith Zaugg, EMBL, Germany, Prof. Krister Wennerberg, BRICK, Denmark, Associate Professor Catherine Robin, Hubrecht Institute, The Netherlands and Dr. Esa Pitkänen, University of Helsinki, Finland) have confirmed their willingness to participate in the evaluation committee. Together, the suggested committee members have expertise in all the areas highlighted in the call text and they all work within the field of translational research.

The Board agreed to the suggested recruitment committee and made a note that the interviews should be in person in Oslo.

**Decision:** The Board appoints the suggested international Evaluation Committee.

**Case 30-210 Personnel case - Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven.**

**Case 31-210 NCMM Seed Funding call**

NCMM in June opened a seed-funding call for new collaborative projects between NCMM group leaders and Associate Investigators. The application deadline was 31 August and NCMM received altogether 20 applications.

The NCMM Director gave a short update in the meeting and also raised some principal questions on how to best evaluate the applications. Most applications are of good scientific quality and within NCMM fields of expertise. Altogether, 6.7 mNOK has been allocated to this call whereas the applicants in total ask for more than 12 mNOK for their suggested projects. It will be very difficult to rank based on scientific quality alone as the projects are very diverse. Since the seed-funding mechanism is a strategic tool to foster increased interaction it was in the meeting discussed how to best evaluate the applications. The Board suggested that in addition to the scientific quality, selection criteria such as the national aspect as well as to consider which applications involve clinicians should be included. In addition to the NCMM Director, one outgoing NCMM group leader and someone from MED will participate in the evaluation process.

In June, NCMM also had a meeting with UiT regarding a separate co-funding mechanism between NCMM group leaders and young researchers at the Medical Faculty at UiT. Altogether, 1.2 mNOK will be made available for this collaborative effort and UiT has prepared an initial call text. UiT is in the process of organizing a pitch seminar at the end of September so the researchers get to know each other better before the call opens. The application deadline will be end of October.

**Decision:** The Board took note of the briefing.

**Case 32-210 Health, Safety and Environment – regular updates**

The Faculty of Medicine has requested that HSE matters should be included regularly at Board meetings. CAO Ingrid Kjelsvik gave a short update in the meeting and included the following topics:

- The NCMM HSE coordinator will be working at the MED Faculty level for one year to contribute to the upcoming ARK process. NCMM is in the process of finding a temporary replacement and has offered one applicant a position as HSE trainee.
- The last 3 months there have been some unfortunate episodes involving the cleaning company in Forskningsparken. It has been agreed to have two meetings per year with the cleaning company in order to plan and agree on timings of any operation that isn't the usual daily cleaning.
- The asbestos situation at Kristine Bonnevie's house is now resolved for the part of the building where NCMM is located, and the NCMM areas have been fully operational since the beginning of June.
- NCMM is in the process of preparing written introductory material for all new group leaders. There are also plans for arranging more social events for NCMM staff after the long period with Covid-19 restrictions.

**Decision:** The Board took note of the briefing.

**Case 33 -21 Miscellaneous**

Board member Hilde Nilsen in the meeting informed that she is taking a yearlong leave of absence from her position at Ahus from 1<sup>st</sup> October. However, she will keep a 20% Professor position at UiO. Nilsen is representing UiO in the NCMM Board. The Chair of the Board will inform the Dean of the Medical Faculty of the change in affiliation and discuss with him any implications for Board representation.

Sincerely,

Jens Petter Berg  
Chair NCMM Board

Janna Saarela  
NCMM Director