

Board, Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway (NCMM)

Oslo, 23 April 2018

Minutes from Board Meeting April 20

Time: Friday 20 April 2018, 12:00-14:30

Place: NCMM meeting room

Executive officer: Elisa Bjørngo

	Present	Absent
Professor Jens Petter Berg (UiO/OUS), Chair	X	
Professor Philippe Collas (UiO), member		X
Professor Finn-Eirik Johansen (UiO), member		X
Professor Hilde Nilsen (UiO), deputy member		X
Professor Bente Halvorsen (HSØ), member	X	
Acting Director Research & Innovation Øystein Krüger (HSØ), member	X	
Førsteamanuensis Maria Perander (UiT, national representative), member	X	
Professor Ola Myklebost (UiB), national deputy member		X
Dr. Torunn Berge (HSØ), deputy member		X
Professor Kjetil Taskén (NCMM), Director	X	
Professor Hartmut Luecke (NCMM), Assistant Director		X

CAO Ingrid Kjelsvik was also present.

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

**Case 12-18O Presentations by NCMM group leaders**

The new Chairman of the Board has suggested that all NCMM group leaders throughout 2018 get 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.

Irep Gözen gave an enthusiastic presentation at the meeting on April 20. Head of the School of Pharmacy, Henrik Schultz, was present and a discussion about the need for and planning of a proper clean room in the new Life Science building was initiated. Henrik Schultz may want to discuss further with Irep to get more information that will justify the needs for the planned clean room and its size in the new building.

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

**Case 13-18B Approval of minutes from last Board meeting**

A draft minutes from the Board meeting on February 20 was available. There were no comments to the minutes.

**Decision:** The minutes were approved.

**Case 14-180 A possible relocation of the Chemical Biology platform – risk assessment**

In connection to the upcoming move of the NCMM Director to OUH, a possible relocation of the high-throughput Chemical Biology platform has been discussed (Case 50-17D). The Director has contributed significantly to establish and develop the platform that today has three employees and serves both in-house and external customers. The platform is organized as a separate unit/core facility at NCMM and is not part of the Director's research group.

The Board in November 2017 asked for a risk assessment regarding a possible relocation of the CB platform and at the time recommended that the platform should stay at NCMM until a new Director has been recruited (Case 50-17D). The Director therefore in agreement with the Chairman of the Board asked Henrik Schultz, Chair of the NOR-Openscreen Board and Head of the School of Pharmacy, to do the risk assessment. Schultz met the platform staff and the NCMM management on March 2 and also had a separate meeting with the Chairman of the NCMM Board and has delivered a written report that was sent out before the meeting (Attachment 2).

Henrik Schultz presented his conclusions from the assessment in the Board meeting. Schultz mentioned that the platform currently runs with deficits. However, he sees great potential in the platform and thinks it should be marketed better. Schultz also emphasized that relocation of such large and complex instrumentation will require specialized expertise and warned against moving the platform more than once (planned for the new Life Science building). The Director made the comments that i) if the platform stays at NCMM, UiO has, contrary to normal practice made an active decision to separate the core facility from the scientific environment that has established and developed it; and ii) furthermore that he is of the opinion that the biggest risk is loss of competence. Based on earlier experience, the platform has had difficulties in finding qualified robotics engineers. If the platform is isolated, it may be more vulnerable and have difficulties in making replacements if the platform leader or staff resigns over time as they no longer have a larger scientific day-to-day environment to interact with. Moreover, anticipating UiO's decision Taskén has discussed important future needs within diagnostics, cancer drug sensitivity screening as well as drug repurposing and risks associated with future operation of the NCMM platform with the OUH research leadership, and he now explores the possibility to establish a new, specialized, clinical node in the NOR-Openscreen network (planned Infrastructure-application to the RCN in 2018 together with the current NOR-Openscreen network).

**Decision:** The Board took note of the briefing and decided to retain its previous decision to keep the CB platform at NCMM until a new Director has been hired.

**Case 15-180 Hiring of NCMM group leaders - Employee issue**

**Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven**

NCMM is in the process of recruiting two group leaders in precision medicine and systems medicine. In the Board meeting in February it was decided to offer these positions to the \*\*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*\*, respectively (Case 4-18B).

\*\*\*\*\* received his contract offer during his second visit here on April 11-12 and also met several potential collaboration partners in the Oslo region. He has asked for a 10-day extension to communicate whether he accepts the position or not, and NCMM is therefore expecting a decision within May 2.

\*\*\*\*\* unfortunately end of March informed us that she has accepted another position. The Board in February decided that the position would be offered to \*\*\*\*\* if \*\*\*\*\* declined her offer (Case 4-18B). The hospital environments were very supportive of her but unfortunately she did not meet many of the NCMM group leaders on her previous visit. The Director discussed the situation with the Chairman of the Board and it was decided to invite \*\*\*\*\* for a second visit to explore her possibilities here further, particularly the details of a dual appointment and clinical training. \*\*\*\*\* visited NCMM on April 19 and 20 and met several group leaders and potential collaboration partners in the Oslo region. A plan for her clinical training has been made and NCMM now plans to prepare an official offer to her.

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

**Case 16-180 NCMM group leader Morth has accepted a Professor position at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU)**

NCMM group leader J. Preben Morth on March 16 informed NCMM that he has accepted a Professor position at DTU from 1 August 2018. Morth was recruited to NCMM in 2010, renewed for a second period in 2015 and returns to Denmark after 8 years at NCMM.

Morth will keep a 20% position at NCMM for one year after starting at DTU to carefully rotate out his activities and current group members; 3 postdocs, 1 PhD student and an engineer.

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

**Case 17-180 Evaluation of NCMM**

The mandate and a time line for the NCMM evaluation was approved by the RCN Board in February, and the Research Council on February 28 informed NCMM that the evaluation site-visit and hearing will take place on June 18-19. An external Committee has been appointed, consisting of international researchers; 3 with molecular medicine expertise, 1 with more general competence + 1 observer. NCMM will not know who has been appointed until after the written material has been submitted.

NCMM as instructed by the RCN, prepared a 15-page Centre self-evaluation document with sections on organization of the Centre, strategic roles of the Centre, including national activities, scientific collaborations, translational research, as well as strategy and plans for the next five-year period according to the provided guideline. Furthermore, each NCMM Group Leader prepared a 4-page self-evaluation of his or her group according to the provided outline. All group members

holding a PhD also provided CVs, and fact sheets for both the Centre and on a group level were also included according to the format provided by the RCN. The evaluation material was submitted on April 19.

NCMM will inform the Board and its owners as soon as more information about the up-coming evaluation is available.

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

#### **Case 18-18O Strategy discussion on continuation of NCMM – update**

NCMM is in its second 5-year period and will be evaluated on June 18-19. The Board already in the spring 2017 started a strategy discussion regarding the continuation of the Centre for a third 5-year period and NCMM prepared a position paper. The former Chair of the NCMM Board presented the possibility to expand the ownership of NCMM to all health regions at a strategy meeting for the research health regions in October 2017. Furthermore, the Dean at the Medical Faculty presented this idea also at a Dean meeting in December 2017. It has previously been decided that the NCMM Director would travel to all regions and discuss a potential expansion of ownership in more detail directly with the different regions.

A meeting with both the university and health region has been scheduled for May 28 in Bergen. In addition, a meeting with NTNU has been scheduled for May 9 in Trondheim. Furthermore, a meeting with UiT and Helse Nord has been scheduled for June 5 in Bodø. NCMM has not yet gotten a meeting with Helse Midt-Norge, but will continue to pursue that. Øystein Krüger was asked if he could help to establish some contact there. In addition to the Director, Elisa Bjørge will also attend these meetings to secure that NCMM has all necessary information also after the Director rotates out of the Centre and to give the regions an additional contact point.

Øystein Krüger stressed that the most important thing now is to get support for a concept where there is consensus for a new model for organization of NCMM after 10 years and for NCMM ownership to be extended to a national consortium where all the health regions commit to participate. Commitment for later funding can be made in Nov-Dec 2018, but an official decision where funding is allocated to NCMM for the upcoming period (2020-2024) will not be possible before Nov-Dec the following fall 2019.

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

#### **Case 19-18D Health, Safety and Environment – regular updates**

The Faculty of Medicine has announced that HSE should be a regular topic at Board meetings. The Board was therefore asked what type of topics or what type of overviews they want NCMM to prepare for our meetings.

In the meeting, CAO Ingrid Kjelsvik gave a brief overview about HSE management at NCMM, including the NCMM LAMU, safety representatives, safety inspections,

as well as information to newly recruited staff. NCMM has a very dedicated HSE officer and information is also available on our web site: <http://www.med.uio.no/ncmm/english/about/hse/>

The Board suggested that NCMM prepares a quiz or a checklist that all employees must pass to make sure that the available information is actually read and understood.

**Decision:** For the June meeting, the Board would like to see the annual HSE report submitted to the Faculty in March. The Board would also like to have regular updates on deviations as well as information about any serious events, if they happen.

**Case 20-180 EATRIS – status update**

NCMM in 2017 received funding for a national EATRIS coordinator from the Helse-EU programme at the Research Council of Norway. A coordinator based in Bergen was hired and was supposed to start in January 2018 after finishing her maternity leave. Unfortunately, the coordinator resigned this position end of December 2017 for personal reasons. March 1 2018 a new EATRIS coordinator, Laetitia Abdou Garonne, started. She has in agreement with OUH and in consultation with the 8 EATRIS partner institutions been placed at the Dept. of Research Support at OUH. The role of the coordinator is to encourage the involvement of Norwegian experts and infrastructures in EATRIS platforms, and to help facilitate Norwegian participation and applications in EU-funding in translational medicine.

In agreement with the central EATRIS office in Amsterdam it has also recently been decided that Norway will get 0.5 FTE from January 2019 to take on the role of Innovation Manager in the European Joint Programming initiative in Rare Diseases (EJP RD).

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

**Case 21-180 Recruitment of a new NCMM Director – status update. Employee issue Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven**

The NCMM Director on 2 November 2017 handed in his resignation to start as Head and Director of the Institute of Cancer Research, OUH from January 2018. In a transition period until 30 June 2018, Taskén has a 40% position as NCMM Director and 80% position at OUH.

The call text and appointment of the Selection Committee was approved by the University Board on January 29 and the position was advertised on 1 February with an application deadline 15 March. By the time the call closed, 16 applications had been received. The Selection Committee has evaluated and ranked the applications individually and will decide on rankings for interview in a phone conference on April 24. Interviews will take place on June 7.

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

**Sak 23-18B Any other businesses**

1. *Appointment of Assistant Director as Acting NCMM Director from 1 July 2018*

The NCMM Director will rotate out of NCMM end of June 2017. The SAB in February recommended that the Assistant Director is appointed Acting Director from July and the Board agrees that this is the best solution given the current situation where the Centre is in the process of recruiting a new Director.

**Decision:** Hartmut Luecke is appointed Acting Director of NCMM from 1 July for a period of 6 months. This appointment can be extended if necessary.

2. *Infrastructure application for a Titan Krios*

The NCMM Board discussed the application for a Titan Krios as part of the ongoing EM-INFRA application and that NCMM would host the instrument in the new Life Science building where UiO has agreed to accommodate it space-wise. The Board understands that to be able to host this, NCMM may have to cover parts of running and operation costs, in coordination with other units or UiO centrally. The Board would also expect the Assistant Director and the structural biology community to raise funding for operations and that the INFRA-application asks for staff to the extent possible. NCMM commitments and ability to make funding available would rely on the renewal of the NCMM funding from the RCN and HSØ and subsequent negotiations. The Board would expect to be consulted and that budgeting is coordinated with NCMM before the pre-application is submitted in May and particularly before the full application is submitted in the fall.

3. *NCMM Annual Report 2017*

The Board is very pleased with the 2017 Annual Report. The printed report will be distributed to collaborators and stakeholders in the beginning of May.

4. *Planning of space in the new Life Science Building*

The Chair of the Board will replace the NCMM Director in the workgroup in charge of planning the space of the new Life Science Building.

Sincerely,

Jens Petter Berg  
Chairman NCMM Board

Kjetil Taskén  
NCMM Director