Briefing: Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway and Biotechnology Centre
MED Fakultetsstyret, 19. mai, 2015

Professor Kjetil Taskén, Direktør BiO/NCMM
Former organization structure
Move to MED and new organization structure
Biotechnology Centre – Summary

• UiO response to RCN evaluation 2001
• BiO Reorganized from 2003
• Strategy, focus, leadership:
  – Scope: Functional genomics
  – Scientific focus: Cell signaling and cellular communication
• ”Green House” for young group leaders (EMBL Style)
  – International recruitment
  – 5+5 year non-tenured appointments w. start-up package
• Cutting-edge technology platforms for UiO
  – Bioinformatics, from 1987
  – Peptide Array and Molecular Interactions, from 2003
  – Proteomics, from 2004/5
  – Chemical Biology and HTS screening, from 2008
• Commercialization (UiO unit w. most Inv. Discl 2009&2010)
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Biotechnology Centre of Oslo - How to build excellence?

• Recruit top people that complement each other
• Strong scientific leadership, include group leaders in decision processes
• Work towards joint goals
• Create synergies
• Aim entire organization towards research
  – Good adm. support
  – Help with funding strategies
  – Core facilities (proteomics, bioinformatics etc)
• International environment, international networking and collaboration
• International Benchmarking
  – Scientific Advisory Board
• Excel also in dissemination activities and commercialization
• Build visibility
Visibility

• Why
  – International recognition
  – National recognition
  – ”value for money” for The University

• How?
  – Communication strategy and plan
  – RCN evaluation
  – Web site renewals & updates
  – Organize meetings and events, 8 meetings (ESF, EMBO, FEBS, GRC a.o.) organized, 16 meetings co-organized
  – Active profile towards media, >400 news items 2003-12
BiO publication activity vs. reorganization

- All publ.
- Level 2 publ. (top 20%)
- Staff

BiO reorg. and phasing in of young new PIs 2003
- Future strategies - looking forward

• Develop with the area of Life Sciences at UiO and w. new life science strategies
• Group leader renewals (5 rotate out 2012-16)
  – Make use of strategic recruitment and ensure return on investment
• Next period for BiO – Cont’d operation w. young Pis
  – Self-renewing mechanism
  – Green house for development of young faculty cont’d
  – Group budget adjustments for competitiveness
  – Overall plan aligned with facultary needs, ”tenure-track”
• Stay abreast of new technologies
  – Systems biology
  – Personalized Medicine
  – High throughput biology
• Alignment w/ NCMM vs Critical mass
The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo (BiO) Group Leader position(s) with start-up package at the Biotechnology

Group leader(s), Chemistry of Life (starting 2015): The successful applicant(s) for the positions will be responsible for building strong research groups and initiate new independent cross-disciplinary research programs in Chemistry-oriented Life Sciences. The programme could, for example, involve structural biology and modeling, chemical biology, radiochemistry, molecular imaging, catalysis and enzyme-driven reactions (non limiting). The program should have clear cross-disciplinary elements to life sciences, bringing in aspects of medicine, chemistry and biology. An initial budget amounting to 15 million NOK will be used for salaries, equipment and other costs within the Department of Chemistry. It is expected that the applicant will be affiliated with the Department of Chemistry.

The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo is a centre for molecular biotechnology within the University of Oslo, located in Oslo Research Park. The centre is devoted to research and post-graduate training. The aim is to attract, support and develop research groups at the forefront of biotechnology.
Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine: Complementary approach for human health & disease

Staff 505, 47 PIs, Budget 40 M€/year

Complementarity
Collaboration
Cohesion

Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland
University of Helsinki

Danish Institute of Transl. Neuroscience
Aarhus University

Molecular Infection Medicine Sweden
Umeå University

Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway
University of Oslo

Molecular and cellular biology
European infrastructures for lifesciences

Infection, microbiome

Disease mechanisms to clinic

International recruitment & brand, term-limited appointments, reviews and excellence
Nordic EMBL Partnership in Molecular Medicine

Objective: Molecular medicine and translational research
- Investigates the molecular basis of disease
- Explores molecular & genetically based treatments

Partnership
- Capitalizes on regional strengths in Nordic countries
- Each partner provides access to:
  - Scientific infrastructure: databases, facilities, instrumentation
  - Clinical materials
  - Networks and training activities
- EMBL model adopted, joint hiring processes
- EMBL Partnership financed as Nordforsk Nordic Network of National Centres of Excellence. Involves:
  - Research collaborations, joint scientific meetings, exchange, strategic fora

Image credits: EMBL/P.Riedinger
From disease mechanisms to clinical practice
Establishment timeline NCMM
NCMM – Research focus

› Disease mechanisms
  ▪ Original plan: Cancer, metabolic diseases, neurological diseases, infection and inflammation, stem cells
  ▪ Development based on synergy/networking:
    ▪ Prostate, breast, colorectal and hematological cancer, tumor immunology.
    ▪ Neurodegenerative and inflammatory diseases

› Personalised medicine

› Approach
  ▪ Functional genomics
  ▪ Exploit Nordic Biobanks & health registries
Facilitation of Translational Research

- All group leaders - adjunct appointments in clinical or paraclinical depts
  - Inside dept. wrt patient materials, biobanks, clinical trials o.a.
  - Link for dept. to NCMM
  - PIs linked to Departments of Neurology, Urology, Infectious Diseases, Hematology
  - Institutes for Cancer Research (Cancer Prevention, Genetics) and Experimental Medical Research

- Build links to clinics for each new recruited PI
- Possibility for researcher/clinician co-PIs
- Possibility for clinician postdocs and PhD students in groups
- Possibility for hospital-funded positions in centre groups
NCMM Research Groups

Erlend Nagelhus
Ian G. Mills
J. Preben Morth
Antoni Hurtado
Judith Staerk
Kjetil Taskén

NCMM Founding Partners

Stefan Krauss
M. Amiry-Moghaddam

NCMM Associate Investigators

- Lars Akslen: University of Bergen and Centre for Cancer Biomarkers
- Ole A. Andreassen: KG Jebsen Centre for Psychosis Research
- Rolf Bjerkvig: University of Bergen and Centre de Recherche Public de la Santé, Luxembourg
- Bjarne Bogen: Centre for Immune Regulation and University of Oslo
- Anne-Lise Børresen-Dale: KG Jebsen Centre for Breast Cancer Research
- Geir Christensen: Oslo University Hospital and University of Oslo
- Arne Klungland: Oslo University Hospital and University of Oslo
- Per E. Lønning: University of Bergen and Haukeland University Hospital
- Pål Njølstad: KG Jebsen Centre for Diabetes Research, University of Bergen
- Ole P. Rekvig: University of Tromsø
- Helga Salvesen: University of Bergen and Haukeland University Hospital
- Vidar Steen: University of Bergen and KG Jebsen Centre for Psychosis Research

NCMM Young Associate Investigators

- New mechanism offered to universities/university hospitals hiring young PIs – first 2 at UiT / HNN
- Lorena Aranz
- Sören Abel
NCMM Associate Investigators

› Individual program with aim to develop NCMM scientific and technological capabilities by establishing strong collaborative links with key scientists and research groups working across Norway and facilitating translational networking in Norway

› First 7 Associate Investigators appointed end 2009:
  • Lars A. Akslen
  • Anne-Lise Børresen Dale
  • Per Eystein Lønning
  • Rolf Bjerkvik
  • Geir Christensen
  • Pål Rasmus Njølstad
  • Vidar Steen

› 5 new Associate Investigators appointed spring 2011
  • Ole A. Andreassen
  • Bjarne Bogen
  • Arne Klungland
  • Ole Petter Rekvig
  • Helga Salvesen

› 2 new Young Associate Investigators 2014 – at UiT
  • Lorrena Arranz
  • Sören Abel
NCMM INTERNATIONAL STAFF DISTRIBUTION

NCMM (excl. Founding Partners) has employees from 19 countries and a foreign staff of 82% (plus some nationalized among the Norwegian staff).

PERSONNEL STATISTICS

NCMM Staff

NCMM Staff 2014: Gender Balance

* Numbers for 2014 are estimated. The staff will be reduced in 2015 due to relocation of one research group out of the center. In addition, the Founding Partners (FP) arrangement has been terminated from 2015.
• NCMM groups (excl. Founding Partners), including that of the Director from 2011.
NCMM output and growth

*Incl. founding partners
Disease mechanisms and translation

› 35 observational or interventional studies per Q1, 2015

› Ongoing development - Therapy area
  - Immunomodulating cAMP antagonist and PKA anchoring disruptors (immunodeficiency and anti-tumor immune responses)
  - Small molecular inhibitors of tankyrase for colorectal and other cancers with activated Hh-wnt-b-catenin signaling pathway
  - Aquaporin 4 antagonists for brain edema and AQP4 involvement in brain swelling
  - Disruption of PKA-AKAP18d-phospholamban-Serca2 complex for cardioprotective effect in ischemia-reperfusion damage
  - Targeting CAMKK2 for metabolic regulation in prostate cancer
  - Targeting of Na+/K+-ATPase and Serca2 in neurobiology and heart disease
  - Suppression mechanisms by regulatory T cells with application in immune diseases, autoimmunity, cancer
  - iPSC disease-modeling of blood disorders

› Proof of concept in humans
  - Effect on CD38 and vaccine responses in HIV-infected humans by anti-inflammatory drug (COX-2 inhibitor Phase IIA)
  - Vaccine and radiation in prostate cancer

› Ongoing development - Diagnostics and monitoring area
  - Prostate cancer markers – androgen receptor regulome
  - New biochemical marker for MAO diseases & early screen Parkinson
  - Single cell analysis of inflammatory signalling events by fluorescent cell bar-coded phospho-flow cytometry for diagnostics and monitoring
  - Regulatory T cell markers

› Starting w NCMM involvement: Translational Research Centres: KG Jebsen Centres for a) Breast Cancer; b) Inflammation Research c) Immunotherapy,
Nordic EMBL Partnership – relation to ESFRI & EU Infrastructures

**FiMM**
Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland
University of Helsinki
- Human genomics & personalised medicine
- Biobank & tech services
- 180 people
- 15 PIs

**MiMS**
Molecular Infection Medicine Sweden
Umeå University
- Molecular basis of infectious disease and treatments
- 150 people
- 16 PIs

**NCMM**
Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway
University of Oslo
- Disease mechanisms, targets & treatments
- 95 people
- 8 PIs

**DANDRITE**
Danish Institute of Transl. Neuroscience
Aarhus University
- Newly established in 2013. Planned size:
- ~80 people
- 8 PIs
“EATRIS opens the door of leading translational centres, assembling fragmented capacities and leveraging expertise through cross-disciplinary interaction”
Summary – NCMM key figures

Over first 5-year period 2010-15 (Q1):

› Grown from 0 to approx 100 staff (50% international)
› Raised some 170 mNOK extramural funding
› Published some 200+ papers over period 2010 - Q1 2015 as listed in annual reports (300+ in Medline for PIs incl founding partners but not all from NCMM)
› Some 30 clinical studies and translation projects as reported by PIs per Q1 2015
› Some 70 national and 50 international collaborations as reported by Pis per Q1 2015
› First PIs coming through first 5-yr period (Nagelhus appointed full professor at IMB, Mills renewed)
› First PhD degrees from NCMM now granted
› First patents and spin-out commercialization projects from NCMM now coming
NCMM Future Promise - Vision 2015-19

› NCMM has clear vision to continue to

› Develop as a **national resource** and take **leadership on national arenas** for molecular and translational medicine, infrastructure, organization of research, recruitment, training and development of excellent young researchers at different levels,

› **Deliver excellent research in molecular medicine** and translate findings to clinical testing, and

› Stand out as an **attractive collaboration partner** to researchers and groups at the University of Oslo and in Health SouthEast, at national and international institutions and in the Nordic EMBL Partnership.
Hiring of young internationally recruited Group Leaders according to the EMBL model

- Joint recruitments (NCMM/FIMM/MIMS) / EMBL marketing of call
- Committee: EMBL appointees (Heads of Units), Partnership Institute senior members, external members

Process:
- Committee appointment and timeline negotiations
- Call deadline
- Information to applicants on tentative interview date
- Committee scoring (sheet)
- Committee phone conf. on invitees for interview (3 weeks)
- Draft statements on candidates
- Interviews (4-6 weeks after call) & and completion of ranking and statement (in mtg / just after mtg)
- Release of statement (6 weeks, natl. requirement, 2 wks)
- Site visit candidates
- Board decision (8-10 weeks)
- Contract and offer (10-12 weeks after call)
- Second site visit w/spouse, presentation of offer & negotiation
Group Leader Development

› Develop to the best of each one's ability
  ▪ Excelled elsewhere – possibility to excel here

› Working conditions that are competitive
  ▪ Possibility to develop independent and successful research group including resources, instrumentation, administrative support etc.

› Structured elements
  ▪ Mentoring
  ▪ Benchmarking
  ▪ Help with grants and positioning
  ▪ Leadership training
  ▪ Alliances to other Departments / adjunct ap
Criteria for renewal of Group Leader contracts

› Group leaders should during the first 3.5-4 years of their 5-year appointment period have been able to:
  ▪ Build a competitive group with the critical mass to accomplish future goals.
  ▪ Win competitive research grants to finance own research.
  ▪ Participate in researcher training. Have supervised 1-2 PhD students to completion/near completion.
  ▪ Develop a successful line of research with publication activity. This includes publication of some significant senior author papers in the top journals.
  ▪ Contribute to synergy and collaboration, infrastructure and institutional profile.
Evaluation of biology, medicine and health research in Norway (2011):

International evaluation panel strong support to the rationale for establishing NCMM and stated that **"the concept is excellent and could be a blueprint for other initiatives in Norway to overcome problems with recruiting young staff."** The panel went on to conclude that **"..this Programme has serious merit and it is important that it is seen as a way forward."**
BiO / NCMM evaluation

All three programmes: score to **Very Good**

**General**: established since the previous assessment .. / .. completely revamped. …developed in a unique set up in Norway.  
Young PIs .. recruited internationally with a high profile .. posts along the model of EMBL…

The concept is excellent and could be a **blueprint for other initiatives in Norway** to overcome the problems associated with recruiting young staff against a widely ageing research staff population across the rest of the university sector.

The panel concluded that this **programme has serious merits** and it is important that it is seen as a way forward.
BiO external evaluation 2012

• Important role to support the training, mentoring and development of future faculty members.
• Facilitating transition to permanent positions – committed and tight cooperation with the Faculties
• Time needed for success
• Number of tasks and expectations too many vs size and budget
• De-emphasize core facilities
RCN Evaluation 2013

› Declared a clear success already after the first 5-year period.

› Strong support to management, recruitment and scientific production as well as translational research activities.

› RCN continuation of financing decided in Sept. 2013 and stepped up for period 2015-19

› UiO and HSE made budget allocation in 2014 for next 5-year period
Nordic EMBL Partnership in Molecular Medicine
Evaluation Report Form
Group Leaders
Deadline October 1, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Search Committee Member</th>
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<tr>
<td>Name of the Applicant</td>
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<td>Name of the Research Plan/Research Interests</td>
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Please find below an outline for your evaluation/statement of the Group Leader candidates. You may write your evaluation/statement on this document, or write it in free form. In the latter case, please, use the titles and subtitles given below. The texts in brackets under subtitles are citations from the call text.

Numerical evaluation is made with ratings ranging from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent, outstanding). 1 = poor, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = good, 4 = very good, 5 = excellent, outstanding. Threshold for scientific quality is 4. If your rating is below threshold, no further evaluation is needed.

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<tr>
<th>Scientific quality and feasibility of the proposed research</th>
<th>Rating 1—5</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Considerable weight will be put on the research plan proposed by the candidate.)</td>
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<td>[Comments]</td>
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<tr>
<th>Qualifications and scientific excellence of the candidate, scientific leadership</th>
<th>Rating 1—5</th>
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<td>(Qualification requirements include a MD/PhD, PhD or equivalent degree, appropriate postdoctoral training, experience with supervision and a track-record of high-impact publications in top journals of biology or medicine. Group leader positions are intended for early-stage independent investigators, comparable with the assistant or associate professor level, with the latter group expected to show experience in scientific leadership and a track record for attracting significant independent funding.)</td>
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<td>[Comments]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Translational impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Successful candidates are expected to initiate a new independent research program with a clear relevance to molecular medicine in indicated areas and with significant translational opportunities.)</td>
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<td>[Comments]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance of the research for the mission and research profile of the relevant node (FIMM, MIMS, NCMM) and the Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(The Nordic EMBL partnership aims to exploit emerging technologies as part of a process towards molecular medicine and will capitalize on synergies within the Nordic region.)</td>
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<td>[Comments]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional value for local node and for science nationally</td>
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<tr>
<td>(We expect multi-disciplinary research collaborations with the biomedical and medical research environment locally and nationally.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall remarks/comments</td>
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  - Participate in researcher training. Have supervised 1-2 PhD students to completion/near completion.
  - Develop a successful line of research with publication activity. This includes publication of some significant senior author papers in the top journals.
  - Contribute to synergy and collaboration, infrastructure and institutional profile.
Procedure for reappointment to Group Leader

› 3.5-4 years: submit dossier (EMBL style)

› Two-tier evaluation process:
  ▪ Written evaluations from 4-6 international experts, suggestions of 10-12 from GL, Director, SAB, Board
  ▪ Assessment of the letters from international experts and group performance by the NCMM Scientific Advisory Board (SAB w/ EMBL presence) and Director integrating both the international feedback and the SAB observations from following each group
  ▪ Director recommendation to the Board.

› Decision to continue/discontinue group & reappoint leader

› If negative, 1 year phasing out. (natl. requirement: dismissal of leader/members separate from above)
What have we learnt with respect to recruitment of young group leaders that may have wider relevance?

› What terms are competitive on a European arena
› Visibility important
› Recruitment must proceed rapidly (score on transparency)
› “Sale” of environment/institute important
› Criteria for renewal needs to be set out early
› Significant need for mentoring and benchmarking
› Takes five years before relevant to evaluate
› Important to plan recruitment and exit in coordination with UiO and relevant Faculties and Departments
› International recruitment at this level leads to more international recruitment at the level of the research groups
The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo (BiO) Group Leader position(s) with start-up package at the Biotechnology Centre of Oslo in collaboration with the Department of Chemistry

The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo (BiO) is a centre for molecular biology and biotechnology within the University of Oslo, located in Oslo Research Park. The centre is devoted to research and post-graduate training. The ambition of the centre is to ensure continued development and to act as a driving force for the establishment of biotechnology and biomedicine in Norway.

The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo (BiO) Group Leader position(s) with start-up package at the Biotechnology Centre of Oslo in collaboration with the Department of Chemistry

**Group leader(s), Chemistry of Life (starting 2015):** The successful applicant(s) for the positions will be responsible for building strong research groups and initiate new independent cross-disciplinary research programs in *Chemistry-oriented Life Sciences*. The programme could, for example, involve structural biology and modeling, chemical biology, radiochemistry, molecular imaging, catalysis and enzyme-driven reactions (non-limited). The program should have clear cross-disciplinary elements to life sciences, bringing in aspects of biology and/or medicine. The group leader will have an initial budget amounting to 15 mNOK over the first 5-year period (approx. 1.8 mEUR), to be used for salaries, equipment and consumables and will have an adjunct appointment in the Department of Chemistry.

The Department of Chemistry has 36 PIs with research and teaching activities spanning a wide range of subdisciplines including structural biology, theoretical and computational chemistry, organic synthesis, bioanalytical chemistry, PET-tracers and radiochemistry, functional inorganic materials and nanotechnology. The department has an array of modern instrumentation at its disposal and hosts key regional and national infrastructure facilities for some fields.
Kjetil Tasken
To: Kjetil Tasken

Chemistry in the Life Sciences: Group Leader position(s) with start-up package at the Biotechnology Centre of Oslo - PLS DISTRIBUTE

RE: Chemistry in the Life Sciences: Group Leader position(s) with start-up package at the Biotechnology Centre of Oslo - PLS DISTRIBUTE

Dear friends and colleagues,

If you are aware of relevant and competitive candidates ready to make the transition to PI in your lab/institute or former students, great if you can forward the enclosed. Good also if you can all circulate this in your network nationally and internationally:

**Group Leader position(s) with start-up package at the Biotechnology Centre of Oslo in collaboration with the Department of Chemistry**

Group leader(s), Chemistry of Life:

Applications are invited for 1-2 group leader position(s) (Ref. No.: 2014/13910) at the Biotechnology Centre of Oslo (BIO, www.biotek.uio.no), University of Oslo, Norway in collaboration with the Dept. of Chemistry (http://www.mn.uio.no/kjem/english). BIO is a centre for molecular biology and biotechnology within the University of Oslo, which is co-localized with and closely coordinated with the Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway, Nordic EMBL Partnership (ncmm.uio.no).

The successful applicant(s) for the positions will be responsible for building strong research groups and initiate new independent cross-disciplinary research programs in Chemistry-oriented Life Sciences. The programme could, for example, involve structural biology and modeling, chemical biology, radiochemistry, molecular imaging, catalysis and enzyme-driven reactions (non limiting). The program should have clear cross-disciplinary elements to life sciences, bringing in aspects of biology and/or medicine.

The successful candidate will be offered a fixed-term, 5-year, renewable contract starting end 2015 or early 2016 with an initial budget amounting to 15 mNOK over the first 5-year period (approx. 1.8 mEUR), to be used for salaries, equipment and consumables and will have an adjunct appointment in the Department of Chemistry.

**Application deadline:** February 16, 2015

For further information and a more comprehensive job description see: http://uio.easycruit.com/vacancy/1305951/70931?iso=no and follow link web-based application portal.

Best regards, Kjetil

Kjetil Taskén, Professor of Medicine, M.D., Ph.D.;
Director, Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway (NCMM), Nordic EMBL Partnership;
Director, The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo;
University of Oslo P.O. Box 1125, Blindern
NO-0316 Oslo.
Selection Committee

• EMBL Interdisciplinary Group Leader and Senior Scientist **Carsten Schultz**, Ph.D., Cell Biology and Biophysics Unit, EMBL, Heidelberg, Tyskland (*leder*)
• Jun.-Professor **Ruth Brenk**, Ph.D., Institut für Pharmazie und Biochemie, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Tyskland
• Professor **Mikael Elofsson**, Ph.D. Eng., Department of Chemistry and Umeå Centre for Microbial Research, Umeå University
• Principal Scientist **Anette Henriksen**, Ph.D., Protein Biophysics and Formulation, Novo Nordisk A/S, Danmark
• Professor **Stefan Knapp**, Ph.D., Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford, Storbritannia

Local interview panel

– Kjetil Taskén, Director BiO/NCMM
– Jo Døhl, Chair Dept. Chemistry
– Finn Eirik Johansen, Chair, Dept Biosciences
– Hilde Nebb, Dean of Research, Faculty of Medicine
Time line

• Call published, Dec 1, spread Dec-Jan
• Committee recruited and appointed Dec
• Call Deadline February 16
• Applications prescreening Jan 16-20
• Applications to Committee Feb 21
• Committee assessment Feb 22-March 12
• Committee Telecon, selection for interviews March 13
• Candidate invitations & instruction March 13
• Candidate interviews April 14
• Candidate public presentations and local meetings, April 14 and 15 (and possibly April 13), PLS NOTE
• Feedback local meetings to BiO Director
• Committee statement to candidates Approx April 20, 2 week turn-around time
• Finalized recommendation from local panel approx May 7-8
• BiO/NCMM Board – formal appointment June 10
• Second visit, offer, negotiation