

MEMORANDUM

From: CSMN
To: IFIKK

Date: 5 November 2015

Post CSMN funds

As CSMN's existence as an NRC Centre of Excellence draws to a close, the question of how best to preserve the research competence and other institutional gains that have accrued over the ten years must be addressed. A very important tool in this regard is the allocation from UiO to IFIKK of NOK 2M p.a. Naturally, the CSMN core group is deeply committed to ensuring that the funds are spent as productively as possible.

We recognize that IFIKK's budgetary constraints are complex and multifaceted, and that this will affect the amount available for project allocation in the wake of CSMN. A significant factor here is the cost of the two co-financed positions in philosophy. The understanding of the Core Group is that these positions continue to be supported by CSMN-generated funds, and that this includes the post-center UiO allocation. However, we also take it that the cost of these two positions continues to be shared. Hence we estimate that something in the order of one half of the UiO allocation will be available for project funding.

The Core Group takes it that IFIKK and CSMN have converging interests; viz., to ensure that the available allocation is spent in ways that yield as much high-quality research as possible (call this *the quality condition*) within the areas of CSMN research (call this the *remit condition*). The Core Group wishes to stress that our fundamental concern is that high-level research continue to be conducted—institutional framework and organization structure, including personnel, is secondary. Thus we take it that the post-CSMN allocation from UiO entails prioritizing CSMN research *areas*, rather than past CSMN *affiliation*. In other words, *eligibility* for funding should not be tied to affiliation.

Once the NRC Centre of Excellence allocation ends in 2017, increased pressure on in-house research funds is highly likely, even if other external funding should rise considerably. In this context, open eligibility for post-CSMN funds among IFIKK staff would serve to improve the quality of the research that is funded—provided, of course, that allocation is efficient. Bearing that particular challenge in mind, we believe some important lessons drawn from CSMN's successes are worth emphasizing. Among key advantages for research at CSMN have been the smoothness, transparency, simplicity and predictability of allocation decision procedures. Another has been a reasonably flexible and pragmatic

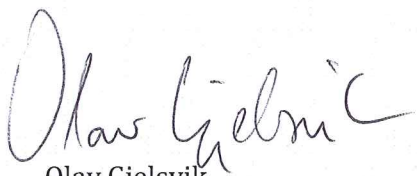


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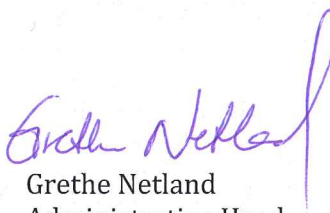
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understanding of our topical remit. Evidently, the productivity of funding allocations in post-CSMN conditions will also depend on simple and effective mechanisms for tracking the merit and productivity of researchers, in so far as scientific merit must remain the primary principle of allocation.

We realize that there are alternative ways of pursuing our common goal, and that different mechanisms may be feasible. In our view, an optimal solution would adapt allocation of the CSMN funds to existing departmental budget procedures (avoiding unnecessary expansion of bureaucratic structure), while at the same time effectively ensuring that the quality condition and the remit condition are satisfied. The latter requires, we think, that CSMN core group personnel be directly involved in the allocation decision procedures, in a way that ensures that each of the three main areas (Linguistic, Rational, and Moral Agency) is represented. However this is worked out in practice, we suggest a time frame of three years might be a suitable initial commitment. That would allow us to accrue sufficient track record to perform a meaningful evaluation, without overly stretching the bounds of reasonable budgetary predictability for the Department.



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