

Statutes of the Research Council of Norway

Section 1 Purpose

The Research Council of Norway shall serve as a national strategic and executive body for research. The Research Council is responsible for increasing the general knowledge base, and for helping to meet society's research needs by promoting basic and applied research as well as innovation. The Research Council shall promote international research cooperation. The Research Council shall serve as an advisory body to the government authorities on matters concerning research policy.

Section 2 Main tasks

The Research Council of Norway shall

- support basic research and seek to encourage development within the various research fields and disciplines as well as to ensure inter- and multi-disciplinarity in research;
- support research that encourages public debate and contributes to the development of democracy and the formulation of policy;
- promote innovation in public and private sectors in all parts of the country;
- promote coherence and interaction between basic research, applied research and innovation;
- fulfil national responsibilities with regard to dissemination of research and work to promote the uptake of research results;
- promote international research cooperation;
- work to ensure the highest possible quality in Norwegian research activities;
- work to achieve cooperation and cohesiveness between public agencies within the research and innovation system;
- work to achieve constructive distribution of tasks and cooperation between research institutions, and take strategic responsibility for the research institute sector;
- ensure the evaluation of Norwegian research activities;
- provide input to government authorities as a basis for the formulation of research policy.

Section 3 Organisation

The Executive Board is the Research Council's highest authority.

The Research Council's research-oriented activities shall be organised into four divisions, with responsibility for the following areas, respectively:

- development of subject fields and disciplines and of the research system at large;
- research and innovation within and for trade and industry;
- challenges facing the welfare society in related to health, welfare and education;
- global challenges in areas relating to energy, the environment and climate.

The Executive Board shall appoint division research boards that shall be given responsibility for overseeing the division's tasks, as delegated by the Executive Board.

The Research Council of Norway shall have a cohesive administration headed by a Director General.

Section 4 Executive Board

Section 4.1 Appointment, composition and term of office

The Executive Board is appointed by the King and serves for a term of four years. The Executive Board shall consist of persons with broad insight into research, business and industry as well as overall social issues. The Executive Board shall be composed of nine members and two non-personal deputy members.

The King appoints the Chair and Vice-chair of the Executive Board, as well as the chairpersons of the division research boards. In the event that an individual member withdraws from the Executive Board, the Ministry of Education and Research may appoint a new member for the remainder of the term.

Members may be reappointed, but no person may serve on the Executive Board for more than two consecutive terms.

When dealing with internal administrative matters, the membership of the Executive Board shall be supplemented with a representative of the employees.

Section 4.2 Tasks

The Executive Board is the Research Council's highest authority and represents the Research Council of Norway externally. The Executive Board is responsible for the overall activities of the Research Council.

The Research Council's Executive Board shall follow up the research policy guidelines drawn up by the Government and the Storting (Norwegian national assembly), and shall in its advisory capacity to government provide input for future research policy.

The Executive Board has primary responsibility for drawing up the Research Council's strategy and for ensuring that this strategy forms the basis for all Research Council activities. The Executive Board is responsible for ensuring that the Research Council operates as an integrated body. This involves among other things ensuring adequate cooperation within the Research Council itself. The Executive Board delegates tasks and allocates responsibility within the Research Council, and shall assess whether the institution's internal organisation is optimal, including whether the number of division research boards and the distribution of spheres of responsibility within these boards is appropriate.

The Executive Board shall draw up an annual proposal to the Ministry of Education and Research regarding the Research Council's overall budget. The Executive Board submits budget proposals to all relevant ministries, distributes the funding allocated to the Research Council of Norway and issues general guidelines for use of such funding.

The Executive Board represents the Research Council in the dialogue on institutional governance with the Ministry of Education and Research. The ministry establishes the form and content of this dialogue in consultation with the Research Council.

The Research Council Executive Board is responsible for appointing the Director General.

Section 4.3 Rules of Procedure

The Chair of the Executive Board shall convene the Board's meetings. The Executive Board shall meet as frequently as the Chair deems necessary, or whenever four or more members have requested that a meeting be held.

A quorum is obtained in the Executive Board when more than half of the members entitled to vote are present. Decisions shall be taken on the basis of a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall cast the tie-breaking vote.

The Research Council Director General may participate in the meetings of the Executive Board but is not entitled to vote.

Section 5 Appointment of the division research boards in compliance with Section 3

Research Boards appointed in accordance with Section 3

With the exception of the chairpersons, the members of the division research boards shall be appointed by the Executive Board to serve for a term of four years. Each division research board shall number from six to ten members. When appointing members, particular regard shall be given to their breadth of competence and expertise within the relevant division research board's sphere of responsibility. The Executive Board may not appoint any person to serve on the division research boards for more than two consecutive terms. The Executive Board shall stipulate the mandate and rules of procedure for each division research board.

The division research boards shall report to the Executive Board, serve the Executive Board in an advisory capacity, and shall otherwise conduct their activities within the framework and guidelines issued by the Executive Board.

The Director General, or a representative designated by the Director General, may participate in the meetings of the division research boards but is not entitled to vote.

Section 6 Other bodies and work methods

The Research Council may appoint committees to assist in implementing the tasks of the Research Council. Such bodies may comprise advisory committees, expert committees, programme boards, etc. The authority to take decisions and allocate funding may be delegated to such committees.

The Research Council's administration and governing bodies shall employ transparent working methods. Routines and procedures shall be adapted to the various user groups.

Section 7 Director General

The Director General is appointed by the Executive Board for a term of six years, with the option of renewing the appointment once. The Executive Board shall determine the Director General's salary.

The Director General is the administrative head of the Research Council of Norway and is responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Executive Board are implemented by the administration. The Executive Board is responsible for stipulating more detailed instructions for the Director General.

Section 8 The status and powers of authority of the Research Council of Norway

The Research Council of Norway is a public administrative body granted special powers of authority, and is organised under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Research. Any matters of principle requiring political clarification shall be submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research.

In addition to that which is otherwise specified in these statutes, the following applies in keeping with the Research Council of Norway's public administrative status:

- The terms of employment in the Research Council of Norway are regulated by the provisions of the Working Environment Act and the Labour Disputes Act.

- The Research Council manages its revenues itself, and is thus not required to adhere to the gross value principle that applies to budgeting in government activities.
- The budgets and accounts of the Research Council follow the fiscal year for government accounts. The accounts of the Research Council are audited by the Office of the Auditor General.
- The accounts and annual report of the Research Council of Norway are submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research. All performance information required in accordance with budgetary and allocation procedures from the various ministries shall be submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research as well as to the relevant ministry.
- The provisions of the Public Administration Act relating to the obligation to state grounds do not apply to the decisions of the Research Council of Norway, nor may such decisions be appealed. However, for matters relating to government officials, the provisions of the Public Administration Act shall apply insofar as is prescribed by the Act itself.
- The Research Council of Norway shall comply with the powers of authority and guidelines as stipulated in the most updated, applicable general instructions on financial administration.

Section 9 Statutes

The statutes of the Research Council of Norway are laid down by Royal Decree. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Executive Board for comment. The Executive Board may propose amendments to the statutes.

Section 10 Entry into force

These statutes shall enter into force as from 1 January 2011.