



Work programme 2018–2021

Programme on the Cultural Conditions Underlying Social Change (SAMKUL)

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1. Summary

The Programme on the Cultural Conditions Underlying Social Change (SAMKUL) is designed to supplement and challenge existing knowledge regimes and contribute new perspectives and knowledge in areas of particular relevance to society.

Societal development is characterised by global change processes related to, for example, technology, demographics, culture and the environment. To better equip society to address major societal challenges and exploit the opportunities arising from change, there is a need for an *expanded* knowledge base – a broad understanding of the *cultural prerequisites* for societal development will provide new insights and supplement the economics, technology and natural science knowledge bases that are currently seen as a valid basis for decision-making in society. Thus, the programme has an important research policy task to promote the wider integration of humanities research in particular into challenge-driven research.

During the period covered by this work programme, the SAMKUL programme will fund research that studies the historical, normative, linguistic and communicative, religious and aesthetic dimensions underlying the formation of today's society and societal development in the thematic priority areas Man and Nature; Technology and Material Environments; and Knowledge, Welfare and Diversity. These are areas in which humanities researchers in particular can expand our understanding of societal development and challenges, and by extension the foundation for how we act in the world. To this end, the programme will work to incorporate perspectives and insights generated by research on cultural phenomena into national priority areas for research, in keeping with the Government white paper on the humanities in Norway presented in spring 2017.

It is often beneficial to study complex societal challenges through inter- and multidisciplinary research cooperation between humanities scholars, social scientists and researchers from other subject areas. One of the programme's objectives is also to expand communication and dissemination across disciplinary boundaries and sectors.

The SAMKUL programme is open-ended, without a defined programme period. This work programme is the third one issued since the programme's launch in autumn 2011 and will apply for the period 2018–2021. This work programme is a moderately revised version of the work programme for the period 2016–2020. The programme's objectives and thematic priority areas have for the most part been continued. However, Chapter 2. Background and challenges, Chapter 5. Priorities for structuring the research effort and Chapter 7. Anticipated results, impacts and societal outcomes have been subject to more detailed revision.

2. Background and challenges

2.1 Research to address societal challenges

Societal development is characterised by far-reaching, global change processes. To better equip society to address major societal challenges and exploit the opportunities arising from them, a dedicated initiative is needed to help to compile an *expanded* knowledge base on the cultural conditions, or cultural prerequisites, underlying societal development. Such knowledge provides tools for dealing with important social spheres.

The various academic and knowledge regimes ask different types of questions about, and have different responses to, the major challenges to society in the areas of nature, the environment and climate, food, energy, new technologies, migration, terrorism, war and conflict, social inequalities, democratic development, gender equality and diversity, welfare and health. Humanities and social science research complements the knowledge and practices of other subject areas, in part by enhancing society's and people's self-understanding. A basic assumption of the SAMKUL programme is that there is *unexploited* potential in the humanities in particular for knowledge and research on culture that can enhance insight into society and societal development, thereby better equipping us to deal with challenges in important social spheres both now and in the future. Analyses of complex societal challenges must also be addressed through inter- and multidisciplinary research cooperation – in thematic areas where this is fruitful for producing new knowledge. Thus, the SAMKUL programme aspires to generate knowledge that can supplement and challenge existing knowledge regimes and contribute new perspectives and insights. At the same time, knowledge itself, developed in an interaction with cultural, social, material, political and economic factors, is a major driving force in and prerequisite for societal development.

It is critical that the knowledge about key societal challenges gained under the programme is also of relevance to and applicable beyond the research community – for policy development as well as for the public administration, industry and working life, special interest organisations and civil society, schools and education, the media, research policy, and the public at large. Knowledge of the cultural prerequisites underlying societal development is not just relevant for one sector of society or one area of policy, and may therefore prove to be just as relevant for the broad spheres of responsibility under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as for the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Justice or the Ministry of Health and Care Services – as well as for civil society and daily life.

2.2 The programme's contribution to achieving research policy objectives

Activities under the SAMKUL programme will contribute to achieving several of the objectives of the main strategy for the Research Council of Norway, *Research for Innovation and Sustainability* of 2015, and in particular objectives 1 and 2:

- Increase investment in breakthrough research and innovation;
- Enhance research for sustainable solutions in society and the business sector.

It is also worth noting that the strategy makes mention of key themes relating to the SAMKUL programme and states: “A broad understanding of the cultural prerequisites for social development is required.”

The Government’s Long-term plan for research and education and white paper on the humanities

High-quality, socially relevant research is also a key objective in the Government’s white paper on research and the *Long-term plan for research and higher education*. The white paper [Meld. St. 25 \(2016–2017\) – The Humanities in Norway](#) presented in spring 2017 stresses the importance of incorporating the humanities into research in key areas of society involving major challenges and identifies three particular groups of societal challenges: terrorism, integration, migration and conflict; major technological shifts; and climate, the environment and sustainability. Humanities environments must participate more actively in research in these areas. At the same time, the white paper emphasises that Research Council programmes must open up to the integration of humanities research perspectives and questions to a much greater degree than previously. The white paper points to the SAMKUL programme as an instrument that has worked to increase the participation of humanities environments in challenge-driven research.

The SAMKUL programme has a role to play in following up the humanities white paper, both with regard to encouraging wider participation of humanities scholars and other cultural researchers in challenge-driven research within and outside the framework of the programme and with regard to various types of collaboration on funding announcements and planning of new initiatives within the Research Council.

The Government’s *Long-term plan for research and higher education* will be revised in 2018, and the humanities will be given a clearer place and role in accordance with the white paper on the humanities. Cultural perspectives in general and the field of humanities in particular are almost entirely absent from the current long-term plan. Comparable documents in other countries give the humanities and cultural research themes a much more prominent role. In its input to the revision of the long-term plan, the Research Council proposes a new priority research area: cultural and global change processes.

In general, ongoing contact with ministries, research groups and other stakeholders may provide the SAMKUL programme with important input for priority setting.¹

2.3 Little humanities and cultural research at the Research Council

The SAMKUL programme was launched in response to the main strategy for the Research Council for 2009–2012, which stated that humanities and social research was needed to supplement the more instrument-oriented thematic priority areas in Norwegian research. Recent portfolio analyses at the Research Council also show a significant under-utilisation of

¹ The SAMKUL programme has been responsible for administering the Research Council’s research activities on national minorities for several years and has cooperated with the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation on this. In autumn 2016, the programme was also assigned responsibility for the Research Council’s follow-up of the Government’s action plan against anti-Semitism. In spring 2017, NOK 27 million in earmarked funding from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and the Ministry of Education and Research was divided among eight fellowship positions for research on group-focused enmity in school, and NOK 18 million in earmarked funding from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation was awarded to three new Researcher Projects on national minorities.

humanities research in particular within national priority areas and thematically oriented initiatives, despite the fact that increasing this has been an aim for many years.

In 2016, the Research Council provided roughly NOK 300 million in funding for research related to “culture”, compared with NOK 160–170 million in the years around the launch of the SAMKUL programme. Although this shows a positive trend, the amount is small compared to the funding for important thematic areas, and allocations from the SAMKUL programme and Independent Projects in the Humanities and Social Sciences under the FRIPRO funding scheme (FRIHUMSAM) accounted for over one-fourth of this amount. While it is not unexpected that little such research is being conducted within segments of technology research and industry-oriented research, it is more worrying that there is barely any research incorporating cultural perspectives within key, large-scale programmes in the areas of health, education, welfare, working life and migration. This is quite striking, given the crucial role played by historical and other cultural dimensions with regard to, for example, the objectives and content of schools, universalism and the employment component of the welfare model, and the links between illness, society and culture. It underscores the need both for a targeted research initiative on the cultural prerequisites underlying societal development and for the above-mentioned programmes to incorporate humanities and other cultural perspectives more clearly into their plans, funding announcements and project portfolios. It is necessary to make use of a larger portion of the knowledge pool and expand the knowledge base for decision-making in society. Some three per cent of the Research Council’s overall allocations go to the humanities, while 14 per cent go to the social sciences.

International developments

A focus on the cultural prerequisites underlying societal development can also be seen in international initiatives. In the EU framework programme, Horizon 2020, the humanities and social sciences are to be included in all initiatives directed towards societal challenges, not just those that are most closely associated with the disciplines’ traditional research fields from the outset. Nonetheless, one of Horizon 2020’s seven Societal Challenges – Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies – has a targeted focus on the humanities and social sciences. It is important for Norway, too, to have a similarly targeted programme of adequate size in the cultural sphere, even as it remains a clear research policy objective to incorporate the humanities more widely into national priority areas and the Research Council’s thematically oriented initiatives. There is a trend, also in the Nordic countries, towards cooperation between the humanities and other disciplinary traditions in order to find solutions to problems in important areas of society, among other things. The international initiatives, like the SAMKUL programme, have emerged from the acknowledgement that more extensive knowledge about cultural dimensions is essential to deal successfully with complex challenges to society.

2.4 The SAMKUL programme 2011-2017

Like many other broad-based initiatives, the SAMKUL programme has been defined as an open-ended programme without a set conclusion date. Three-year action plans will be drawn up specifying the measures to be launched by the SAMKUL programme board and programme administration to realise the programme objectives.

Three funding announcements within the programme’s thematic priority areas have been issued since 2011, and NOK 270 million in funding has been awarded. Of the 364 grant

proposals submitted in response to these funding announcements, only 35 received funding. This is only roughly 10 per cent, which means that many very high-quality grant proposals have gone unfunded. The large number of applications submitted shows that there is widespread interest, and capacity, in the research community to conduct topical, socially relevant research. Under two funding announcements for researcher networks, 36 of the 94 grant proposals received were awarded funding. In autumn 2014, the programme began to make funding available for communication and dissemination measures within the framework of SAMKUL projects. NOK 7.5 million in additional funding has been awarded for 17 such measures as of June 2017.

As a step in the effort to incorporate humanities and cultural perspectives more widely into thematically oriented research in general, the SAMKUL programme has, as of April 2017, contributed a total of NOK 23 million to other programmes' funding announcements in the areas of climate research, urban research, and welfare and migration research. The programme has also contributed funding to various international efforts and calls for proposals to promote the inclusion of cultural perspectives in these initiatives and to strengthen the opportunities for Norwegian humanities scholars and cultural researchers to participate internationally.

SAMKUL projects are clearly rooted in the humanities. Many of the projects are inter- and multidisciplinary, incorporating the social sciences in particular, but also participants from the fields of medicine, natural science, technology and law as well. The project portfolio has a wide thematic scope, with a heavier focus on religion, diversity, the media, rights and ethics, and climate, nature and health. The composition of the portfolio indicates that there will still be a need for a dedicated research programme in the cultural sphere that specifically challenges humanities scholars to explore pressing societal challenges. The research projects are primarily based at the universities, but a good number of projects based at research institutes have also won funding.²

² The Research Council's project database provides information about individual projects and the distribution of the portfolio by various parameters. For a thorough presentation of the programme's background and predecessors, see Vidar Enebakk's critical look at the SAMKUL programme, *Fra beredskap til redskap. Et kritisk blikk på SAMKUL* (2015) [From preparedness to tools. A critical look at the SAMKUL programme]. The SAMKUL programme board's mid-term report analyses the first four years of the programme period (2011–August 2015) in greater detail. The publications (Norwegian only) may be downloaded via the SAMKUL webpages.

3. Objectives for the programme

3.1 Primary objective

The primary objective of the programme is:

The SAMKUL programme will fund research about the cultural prerequisites underlying the formation of today's society and societal development. Research under the programme will strengthen and expand the knowledge base in order to better equip society to address major challenges.

3.2 Secondary objectives

In addition, the following secondary objectives form the basis for the programme's activities:

Scientific secondary objectives

1. The SAMKUL programme will provide funding and develop basic research of high quality in the programme's thematic priority areas.
2. The SAMKUL programme will work to incorporate research on cultural phenomena as well as perspectives from primarily the humanities, in addition to the social sciences, into national priority areas for research.
3. The SAMKUL programme will encourage humanities researchers in particular to apply their research perspectives outside the disciplines' traditional objects of study.
4. The SAMKUL programme will promote the development of a broad knowledge base for decision-making in society and for dealing with critical societal challenges.
5. The SAMKUL programme will promote the development of new forms of humanities-oriented research.

Structural secondary objectives

6. The SAMKUL programme will design its funding announcements to ensure adequate coverage of all of the programme's thematic priority areas.
7. The SAMKUL programme will strengthen and support internationally oriented research that involves extensive international research cooperation.
8. The SAMKUL programme will work to ensure that research results are circulated and applied as widely as possible by expanding communication and dissemination between researchers from various subject areas and between researchers and users and stakeholders outside the research system.

The SAMKUL programme's objectives do not have a fixed time horizon. They will play a key role in, and be applicable for, the programme's entire period of operation.

4. Thematic and scientific priority areas

4.1 The SAMKUL perspective

Culture as a prerequisite

The SAMKUL programme promotes research on critical societal challenges through analyses of their cultural conditions. Culture may be studied from a variety of viewpoints. The programme's point of departure is that societal development is characterised in large part by cultural conditions in which culture is understood as the *sphere within which various groups and individuals think, communicate and act*. This encompasses people's language, practices, forms of expression, norms, values, ideas and behaviours, and establishes parameters and creates opportunities for what may be thought and how one acts in the world. Thus, culture can function as a *prerequisite* for the formation of today's society and societal development. At the same time, cultures are recreated and changed through the very societal development that they form the foundation for.

The SAMKUL programme's overall research perspective is that culture is analysed as a way of thinking, patterns of communication and practices that serve as conditions for societal development. Culture and society are created through various practices – individual, social and corporeal – while these are simultaneously shaped through processes of internalisation, externalisation and materialisation. Both the tangible and non-tangible aspects of culture are vital for the study of conditions underlying societal development.

Analyses of cultural conditions can focus on the present as well as on the past and future, which indicates it is possible to speak of *multiple* societal developments. Societies undergoing rapid, extensive change also have many cultural and social conditions characterised by inertia and continuity. Societal development is not a linear, uniform process that occurs everywhere equally at an even pace. Not least, the various directions, temporalities and development processes vary between sectors and institutional fields or between cultural and geographical contexts. Power and interests, institutions, economic structures, gender and ethnicity are key aspects of, and help to shape, the cultural prerequisites – and must be included in analyses of them. Individuals, groups and collectives affect and are affected by the relations, structures and environments in which they are located.

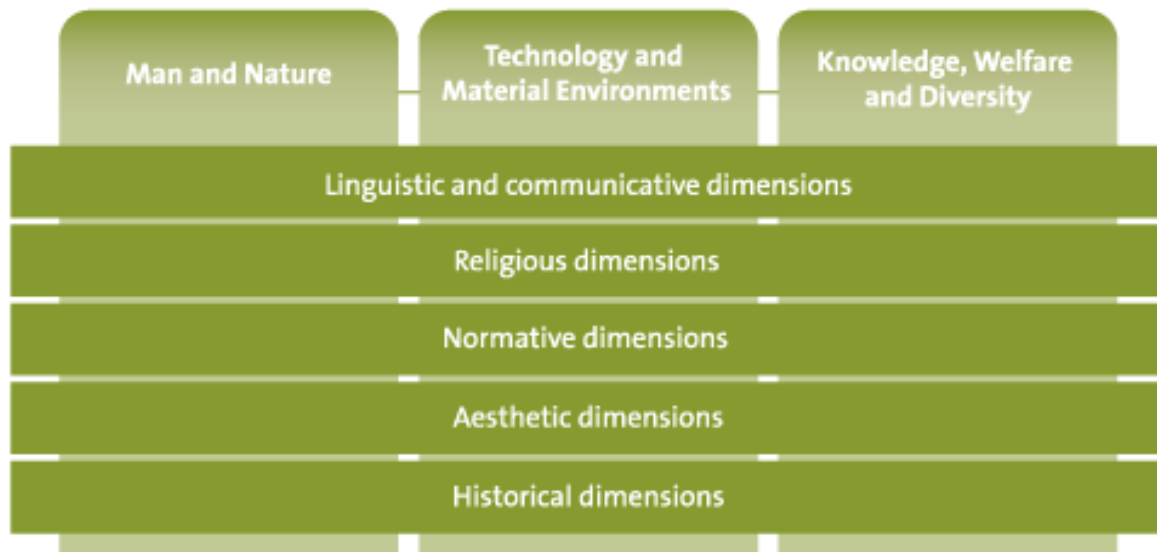
4.2 Key challenges - thematic priority areas

The SAMKUL programme seeks to promote research that provides us with better tools for explaining and understanding the challenges that we as individuals and as a society are facing. Critical societal challenges include man's relationship to nature, to the role of technology and to the development of the knowledge and welfare society. These thematic areas represent research fields that share an interface with, or are a component of, the national priority areas for research. Expanded SAMKUL research, in which humanities researchers in particular apply their research perspectives outside the disciplines' traditional objects of study, will help to ensure that this research is relevant for the general knowledge base and for social, value-oriented and political decision-making.

Cross-cutting dimensions

Man and Nature; Technology and Material Environments; and Knowledge, Welfare and Diversity are all critical areas for societal development that are associated with major societal challenges. The SAMKUL programme will help to explain and understand the cultural conditions underlying societal development by analysing their historical, linguistic and communicative, religious, normative and aesthetic dimensions.

The relationship between the programme's three thematic priority areas and the five cross-cutting dimensions may be illustrated as follows:



The three thematic priority areas are not mutually exclusive, but can and should be viewed in relation to each other when this is meaningful for the issues being studied. Similarly, all of the dimensions may be of relevance in research in each of the thematic priority areas. It is critical that all research has its starting point in societal challenges. Sections 4.2.1–4.2.3 below describe the priority research topics within each of the three thematic areas in greater detail.

Gender perspectives and multi- and interdisciplinarity

In many cases, multi- and interdisciplinary research will be beneficial within the programme's thematic priority areas, as will a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives. By the same token, this is not necessarily a requirement for all research projects.

Interdisciplinarity is required to the extent it is relevant for the research questions being asked and the empirical field being studied, and when it enhances research quality. The programme board points out that it is also relevant to incorporate gender perspectives into studies within all three thematic priority areas.

4.2.1 Man and Nature

The conditions for human life are closely associated with our relationship to nature, both the landscape and the natural world around us and our own nature. Our relationship to nature is a story about limitation and excess, about how changes in nature – both man-made and those outside of our control – change the conditions for what it means to be human.

Today we are facing numerous challenges related to changes in our natural framework conditions. This applies, for example, to risks connected with the global and local impacts of anthropogenic climate change, unsustainable use of biological and physical resources, and reduced biodiversity. Other challenges are linked to population growth, poverty and resource distribution, urbanisation and changes in the natural environment and landscape. The great advancements in medicine are raising new ethical, value-oriented, legal and political questions, generating new perspectives on human nature, and changing our relationship to health, the body and aging.

To understand the cultural conditions underlying the changes in our relationship to nature in a broad sense, research is needed on the cultural significance of the long-term, anthropogenic changes the earth is undergoing, the historical conditions for decision-making related to the utilisation of nature, and the moral questions raised by various decisions. More research is also needed about the cultural conditions underlying our handling of illness, our perceptions of health and the body, and our assessment of quality of life, dignity and death. The cultural conditions for our relationship to both human and non-human nature come to light through religious beliefs and practices, and they are manifested in language and communication, ideologies, and art and other aesthetic forms of expression. There are existing research traditions for many of these issues, including within the fields of medical humanities and environmental humanities, and the SAMKUL programme may help to further develop these.

4.2.2 Technology and Material Environments

We are living in a time when we experience the world to a large extent through technology, in which technology structures our lives, and solutions to problems are sought in technology. Technological development has resulted in major advancements and improvements, but it has also presented new challenges by generating opportunities for, parameters around and limitations on human behaviour. Technological development creates changes in our material environments, which in turn help to shape the cultural prerequisites underlying societal development.

There are many challenges related to how the results of technological development have been dealt with up to today, and to the choices regarding future technological development, which involve values and norms, power and powerlessness. There is a need for more research on the role of technology related to issues such as surveillance and control, among other things to weight personal privacy against societal security and private companies' access to personal information. Digitalisation and new media technology, for example, are setting the premises for the development of the public sphere, democratic participation and inclusion, for daily life, interaction and social relations.

There is a need for research related to developments within technologies such as gene technology; language, information and media technology; modern experimental biomedicine and nanotechnology, among other things in the context of responsible and socially robust research and innovation. Use of technology in the care sector raises new questions about the effect of technology in human relations. Large segments of working life are undergoing continual change as a result of increasing automatisisation arising from the digital transformation.

The field of digital humanities shows the steadily increasing potential of technology-oriented humanities research. This research field is creating a demand for new literacies and

competencies, necessitates the use of interdisciplinary perspectives and requires new thinking in relation to traditional academic work methods.

Humans influence materiality, the natural world, landscape, buildings, infrastructure and things that are around us. At the same time, this materiality forms a framework for daily life and social and cultural practices. Growing material consumption leads to environmental problems and pressure on natural resources. The compact city concept and an emphasis on urbanity have dominated sustainable urban and suburban planning in recent decades. New building and transport technologies bring physical changes to people's accustomed surroundings in cities and put pressure on the natural environment and architectural heritage. However, they also open up opportunities for sustainable mobility, new organisation of daily life and new lifestyles. Public spaces are developed by private and public sector actors alike and require new thinking regarding universal accessibility, inclusion and exclusion. Active use is being made of architecture and iconic buildings to enhance the attractiveness of cities, while the focus on urbanity and compactness is setting a new framework for the design of homes and the residential environment.

4.2.3 Knowledge, Welfare and Diversity

Knowledge and knowledge institutions are crucial in the development of the welfare society and in new lines of thinking about the basis for the economy and the business sector. New media platforms and digital technology create a different framework and opportunities for the production, storage and circulation of knowledge. This paves the way for new cultural "archives" and alternative cultural canons. Changed management regimes, e.g. related to management by objectives, a bottom-line focus and reporting, also influence schools, education and research as well as the valuation and perception of the role of research and education in society. A broad understanding of the cultural prerequisites underlying the development of the knowledge society, the role of schools and the relationship between personal formation and education is important.

Knowledge itself, developed in an interaction with cultural, social, material, political and economic factors, is a major driving force in and prerequisite for societal development. Critical studies of knowledge regimes and hegemonies in various subjects and areas of society are therefore vital research areas under the SAMKUL programme. One example here is the role of economics as a key model and agenda-setter for societal governance and achievement of objectives.

Society is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of values, religion, linguistic and social forms of interaction, public spheres, economic resources and demographics. There is a need for up-to-date knowledge on various aspects of this development, including the cultural conditions underlying radicalisation and extremism and how societal security and risk are dealt with. Likewise, the conditions underlying democracy and social engagement are also an area of interest for the SAMKUL programme, and will entail, for example, investigating how religion, ethics, norms, the media and forms of communication affect the understanding of democracy, politics and society.

The social and economic sustainability of the welfare society – and the welfare *state* – is a topic of discussion, in light of, among other things, immigration and the growing proportion of elderly among the population – and the beginning of the end of the oil age. The Nordic model is being challenged by major changes in working life and trade and industry, social

inequality and greater differences. It is important to understand the ramifications of this and the cultural conditions for social belonging and participation, inclusion and exclusion, support for the welfare society's schemes and confidence in one another and in society's institutions – and in the broad sense, the cultural conditions underlying the welfare state.

The conditions in Norwegian society are closely linked to developments in Europe and other parts of the world. It is relevant to incorporate a global context in studies of the cultural conditions underlying challenges to the welfare society.

5. Priorities for structuring the research effort

Based on the programme's objectives and thematic priority areas, the programme board has established the following priorities for structuring the programme's activities:

5.1 Basic research - and relevance to society

The SAMKUL programme seeks to produce basic knowledge of high quality by studying the cultural prerequisites underlying societal development. The programme will be relevant to society in the sense that the understandings, interpretations and explanations generated will be beneficial to and useful for societal and policy development, as well as for the public debate on various decisions.

The SAMKUL programme board does not see any clear distinction between basic, applied and policy-oriented research. Nor is there any contradiction between the SAMKUL programme's long-term focus and prioritisation of high-quality research on the one hand, and the objectives to conduct research that is relevant and useful for decision-makers, policymakers and other stakeholders as well as for the public debate on the other. These are regarded as complementary objectives that promote high quality in research. The SAMKUL programme is therefore targeted towards all research sectors and environments, not just towards the universities, where the humanities subjects have their main base.

To achieve its aspirations of drawing humanities scholars and other cultural researchers into challenge-driven research in new and existing thematic areas, and encouraging multi- and interdisciplinarity in the research funded, the programme will give priority to research projects that:

- apply innovative theoretical and methodological perspectives;
- have a well-integrated structure;
- have clearly defined research management and are based in sound research groups.

Scientific development

The programme's focus will create good opportunities for strengthening and developing humanities research as well as social science research. The SAMKUL programme's profile and thematic framework mean that the research environments must ask themselves how to target their expertise to shed light on the societal challenges on which the SAMKUL programme is seeking new knowledge. Moreover, the programme will work to expand the integration of the humanities and social sciences into research within national priority areas. These have been essentially dominated by disciplines such as natural science, medicine, technology, economics and other quantitative social science research. Humanities scholars and others must to a greater degree than previously orient themselves towards thematic programmes at the Research Council, both on their own and in cooperation with researchers in other disciplines. This is also stressed in the white paper on the humanities in Norway.

User participation

User participation is not a general requirement for projects under the SAMKUL programme. Researchers are nonetheless encouraged to identify target groups for communication and dissemination activities at an early stage, and users and other stakeholders can and should be included in projects, depending on the topic studied and the way the project is organised.

5.2. Communication and dissemination activities and meeting places

It is a challenge for the programme that no single ministry or societal sector has responsibility for, or ownership of, SAMKUL-related research as such. Research on cultural prerequisites touches on many themes and areas of society, and this means that active, targeted dissemination of research, and its perspectives and results, to the public administration and authorities will be a critical task. The researchers and research institutions have the primary responsibility for communicating and disseminating the results of their research to the research community, users of the research and the general public. One of the criteria for selecting projects for funding will therefore be creative, concrete, ambitious and realistic plans for dissemination .

The SAMKUL programme will facilitate researchers' efforts to develop meeting places and other forms of communication between researchers from various subject areas and between researchers, users and stakeholders outside of academia, such as policymakers and government ministries, special interest organisations, industry and working life, the media and civil society. Communication to the public administration and decision-makers is vital for generating a broader knowledge base for political decision-making. Ambitions of this type may lead to closer cooperation between the SAMKUL programme and other programmes and initiatives at the Research Council, also with regard to dissemination activities. Societal challenges – and the research to address them – cross established dividing lines between disciplines, research fields and programmes. A focus on the overall portfolio and on relevance, not on individual programmes, may help to expand the knowledge base for the public debate and policy development.

The SAMKUL programme will provide the projects with adequate resources so they can satisfy both the requirements regarding increased (international) scholarly publication and the requirements regarding communication and dissemination of research results and processes to users and the general public. Depending on the topic and focus of the projects, this means that the relationship between research and dissemination does not always have to be viewed as completely separate from each other or as two consecutive phases.

5.2.1 Dissemination of SAMKUL research

Scholarly publication

The most important form of scholarly publication will be articles in scientific journals and other publications by recognised academic publishing houses. This will safeguard and advance scientific quality and put Norwegian researchers in contact with their peers in other locations and in other areas. An important criterion when selecting projects for funding will be concrete, realistic plans to publish books and articles in various scientific genres and in different languages.

Dissemination to decision-makers, stakeholders and the general public

The SAMKUL programme entails basic knowledge building in important areas of societal and policy development in a broad sense, and has many potential users and stakeholders in addition to the research community. The individual SAMKUL projects will nonetheless have specific target groups and stakeholders, so targeted dissemination of research results will be

crucial. Interaction with relevant target groups throughout the project period will be just as important as dissemination in the final phase of the projects. As a channel to the population, the media and the public sphere are important users of research conducted under the SAMKUL programme, in part by casting a critical light on the research activity itself. The school and education field is another important target group for cultural research, and research groups are encouraged to place greater focus on schools.

Instruments

SAMKUL projects may seek funding for communication and dissemination measures that extend beyond the dissemination activities that have been agreed on and may generally be expected from the projects and host institutions, given that these are where the main responsibility for dissemination lies. The programme board invites the research projects to design creative, experimental and ambitious measures, in cooperation with academic and other publishing houses, public institutions and the public administration, media channels and producers, organisations, museums, galleries and other parties. The use of social media and new technology is encouraged.

The SAMKUL programme's [webpages](#) comprise the key channel from the programme board and programme administration to researchers and research groups, applicants, relevant users and the public at large.

5.3. Types of support - primarily Researcher Projects

The funding allocated by the programme will mainly be used to promote new research activity within the programme's thematic priority areas as described above. In keeping with its focus on basic research, the programme will use most of its grant allocations to fund Researcher Projects. Recruitment of doctoral and post-doctoral research fellows and other early career researchers will be an important component of these projects, although recruitment is not a primary task of the programme. On the whole there is an adequate recruitment flow to the "core" subject areas encompassed by the SAMKUL programme. Researcher Projects may vary in size and focus, but importance will be attached to high scientific merit and relevance to society when selecting projects for funding, as described in the thematic priority areas above and in the individual funding announcements.

Many of the areas that the SAMKUL programme seeks to explore will require cooperation across traditional faculty boundaries and the main researcher target groups within the humanities and social sciences must be qualified to address new issues and questions. The programme will therefore use various means to encourage the establishment of meeting places, networks and other collaborative arenas, and will also continue to make funding available for researcher networks.

Exploration of the cultural prerequisites underlying societal development may give rise to a need to develop new forms of knowledge production. The SAMKUL programme also aims to establish new collaborative constellations and work methods in the research conducted. This will strengthen the role of research as a supplier of knowledge to society today and in the future.

5.4. Gender balance and research ethics

When assessing grant applications and selecting projects for funding, the SAMKUL programme will attach importance to achieving a good gender balance among the project managers in the portfolio as a whole and – to the extent possible – among the project participants as well. Thus far the number of men project managers among the funded projects has been disproportionately high.

Challenges relating to research ethics, environmental impact and/or social responsibility may arise in projects under the SAMKUL programme. These issues will in part be intrinsic to the research activity itself, and research ethics will be an integral component of the scientific quality assessments. SAMKUL projects, like all others, must comply with the applicable ethical guidelines³ and give adequate consideration to potential environmental impacts.

5.5. Internationalisation

The major societal challenges have different national and local ramifications. Societal challenges and change manifested at the local level may be part of processes that are much broader in scope. Similarly, culture is not confined to national boundaries.

International research cooperation is essential for enhancing quality in Norwegian research and for ensuring that Norway has access to – and contributes to – international knowledge production. Addressing major, global societal challenges requires an international perspective and cooperation. The SAMKUL programme will therefore generally encourage the use of empirical data from other countries, as well as comparative research when this is beneficial for the analyses, thereby helping to expand knowledge about the cultural prerequisites underlying societal development in an international context as well.

The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, and other international collaborative efforts such as Joint Research Initiatives (JRIs), Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) and the ERA-NET scheme incorporate priority areas of relevance to the SAMKUL programme. The programme will encourage SAMKUL project participants as well as other cultural researchers to take part in these types of arenas and will continue the recent practice of providing funding to encourage such participation.

The SAMKUL programme board will therefore continue to attach significant importance to projects that incorporate close cooperation with international research groups and are internationally oriented in the coming programme period. Researchers will be encouraged to cooperate with non-Nordic, non-European researchers and research groups, and in particular to focus on the Research Council's priority countries outside the EU/EEA, i.e. the BRICS countries,⁴ as well as Japan, the US and Canada.

Instruments and measures

³ In the case of the SAMKUL programme, these are the ethical guidelines set out by the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH).

⁴ The BRICS countries are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Norway has signed agreements with many countries on bilateral research cooperation. The Research Council has several general measures and funding schemes related to this, including mobility grants, cf. www.forskingsradet.no/en/International. This webpage also includes links to information about Horizon 2020 and the Research Council's support for the establishment of project proposals directed towards H2020.

In order to strengthen international cooperation, the programme will require projects to:

- draw up specific plans for international cooperation;
- include international partners and participate in international networks;
- incorporate a stay at a research institution abroad for doctoral and post-doctoral research fellows, and for senior researchers as well if relevant, during the project period.

The programme will promote international cooperation within the framework of the projects it funds by continuing its support schemes for overseas research grants, visiting researcher grants, support for participation in international networks and international projects, international publication as well as supplementary funding for projects of relevance to the SAMKUL programme that have received EU funding.

6. Cooperation with other programmes

The Research Council is seeking to achieve wider integration of perspectives from the humanities and social sciences into research addressing major societal challenges. A key strategic task for the SAMKUL programme is to promote these efforts by cooperating with other thematic initiatives at the Research Council.

It should be possible to incorporate SAMKUL-related research into a greater number of thematically oriented programmes, both by means of specific knowledge and by problematising the technological and natural science knowledge hegemonies. This applies to several of the initiatives under the Research Council's Division for Energy, Resources and the Environment, Division for Society and Health, and Division for Innovation. The application of SAMKUL perspectives should not least be useful for research under the Research Council's Large-scale Programmes in the areas of energy, resources and technology. Evaluations and portfolio analyses have noted that humanities perspectives in particular, but also the social sciences and interdisciplinarity in general, are largely missing from these programmes as well as from programmes in the areas of welfare, working life and migration, health, education, and natural resource management. Viewed in the context of, for example, the role played by attitudes and behaviour in nature-related and environmental issues, the importance of school as a social institution, or the values and prerequisites underlying the welfare model, this emerges as a serious lack. Clearly the programmes must join forces with humanities scholars and other cultural researchers to rectify this situation.⁵

Closer cooperation

The SAMKUL programme will cooperate with the other thematically oriented programmes as a supplier of both perspectives and knowledge – and vice versa. These programmes will in turn be able to provide the SAMKUL programme with useful insight as well as empirical data and perspectives. This should be the case at the project level as well. Such cooperation will further facilitate the incorporation of SAMKUL perspectives into the priority research areas set out in the Government's *Long-term plan for research and higher education* and the main strategy for the Research Council of Norway. Moreover, this may help to bolster change processes at the Research Council, where there is a shift towards viewing research areas and research activity in a more cohesive manner and targeted towards broader thematic areas, with less focus on the individual research programme.

At the programme level, co-funding calls for proposals for research funding across programmes will be an important instrument for strengthening the integration of cultural perspectives into thematically oriented initiatives. Incorporation of SAMKUL perspectives and other humanities and social science research may expand the scope of scientific deliveries and raise the quality and relevance of research. However, it is very clear – in keeping with the white paper on the humanities – that the other programmes must assume the primary responsibility for utilising the full scientific breadth of their respective areas, except in cases where the SAMKUL programme receives additional allocations that are targeted specifically towards expanding the knowledge base in given areas. Another measure could be to use the SAMKUL programme more actively (the programme board, administration and associated researchers) as a critical, constructive contributor to the development of programmes and initiatives.

⁵ For more information about the Large-scale Programmes and other research programmes, see an alphabetical list of all programmes and their webpages www.forskingsradet.no/en/Programme_webpages, for.

7. Anticipated results, impacts and societal outcomes

How can the impacts and societal outcomes of the SAMKUL programme be measured?

The SAMKUL programme has a broad-based strategic objective of funding research about cultural prerequisites in order to expand the knowledge base and better equip society to address major societal challenges.

While insights obtained from long-term research on cultural phenomena do not provide recipes for problem-solving, they can help to deal with pressing problems by, for example, clarifying historical perspectives, analysing conflicts on values and bringing in alternative, critical perspectives. The *results* of the research conducted may be measured via publications, scientific developments, new forms of research collaboration, dissemination to various stakeholders outside the research community, and various types of contributions in the larger public sphere. The *impacts* of these research contributions may be assessed by how visible they are in the scientific and public debate, and the degree to which the research results are circulated and, for example, incorporated into the basis for making various decisions. The *societal outcomes* of these impacts are, however, indirect and have a long-term perspective. This is true for research programmes in all subject areas, not just the SAMKUL programme, although the different disciplines and research fields may face different challenges relating to the observation and measurement of such outcomes. Impacts and societal outcomes are often not the result of one type of programme activity, but rather of multiple measures and diverse research projects implemented within and outside of the Research Council and specific programmes.

Efforts are underway to map and measure how research contributes to society within various time horizons, and in this context the SAMKUL programme will provide knowledge related to cultural research in various ways. An example of the results and impacts of research, partly within related areas such as the SAMKUL programme, are the numerous descriptions of the impacts of research projects in the evaluations of Norwegian humanities and social science research carried out in 2016 and 2017. Under the SAMKUL programme, too, various types of descriptions of the societal contributions of research will provide a basis for assessing the programme's performance, results and impacts/societal outcomes. In such assessments, the programme board will not be able to clearly distinguish between impacts and societal outcomes, although this distinction is made in the schematic representation on the following page.

The SAMKUL programme provides funding for only a small portion of Norwegian humanities research and is one of several actors working to incorporate a wider range of cultural perspectives and the humanities into national priority areas for research and the knowledge base for policy development. Although it is possible to measure such an impact, it will be difficult to ascribe it to the SAMKUL programme alone.

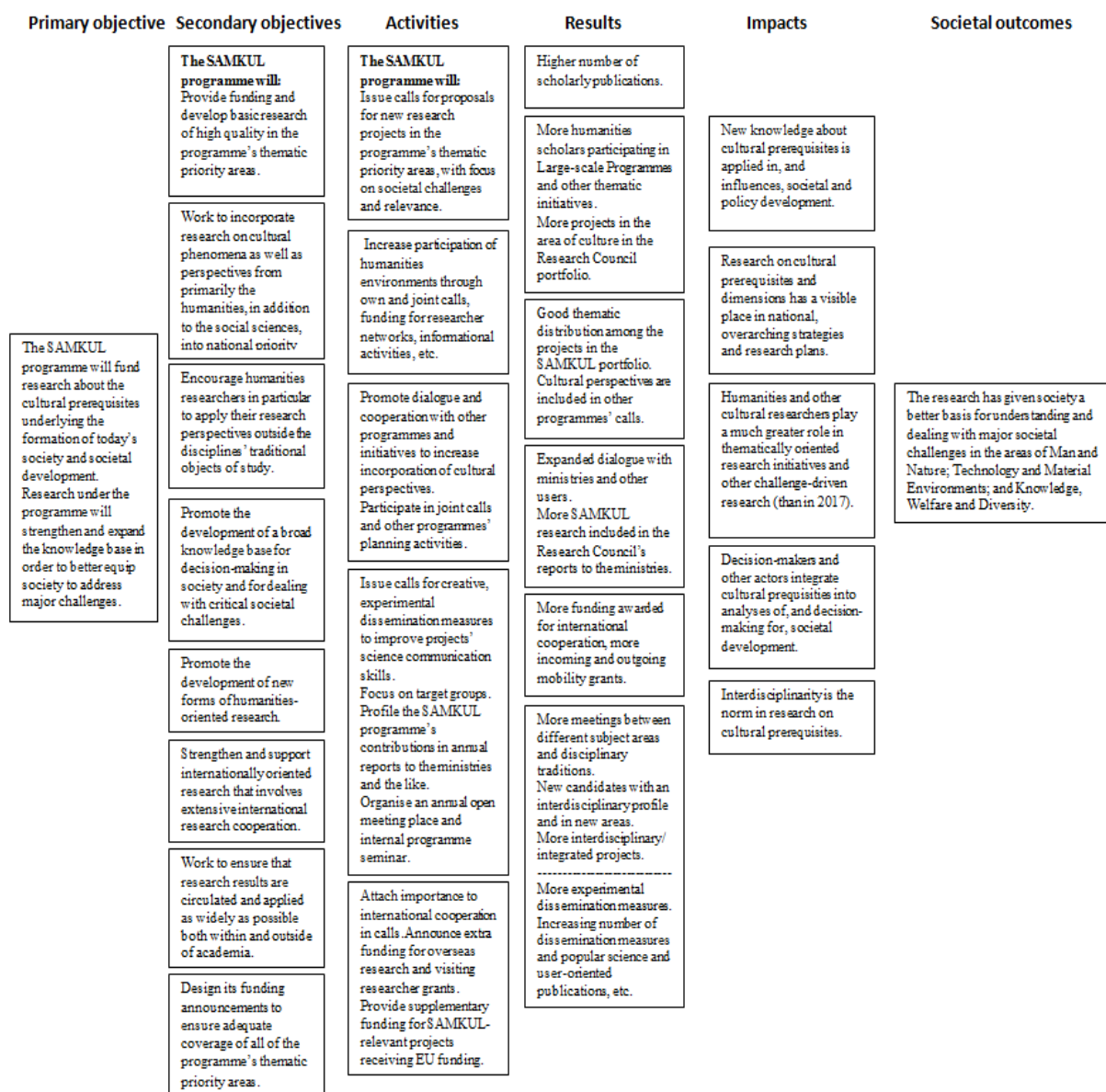
The SAMKUL programme's performance must be assessed in light of a combination of indicators based on quantitative data and qualitative assessments.

7.1. Relationship between objectives and results

A schematic representation of the relationship between the programme's various objectives and its anticipated results, impacts and societal outcomes – via activities and measures – is

presented on the following page. A given programme activity may help to achieve multiple secondary objectives and generate multiple types of results and impacts.

Programme logic model



Indicators

There are many indicators that could provide a good picture of the results achieved. As implied above, these indicators will only provide a more indirect picture of the specific objectives achieved, although they will nonetheless indicate whether the programme is developing in the right direction. The most important indicators may be extracted from the programme's project portfolio and research in related areas. These include:

- publication and dissemination measures;
- internationalisation measures;

- scientific quality;
- external interest (applicants, the public authorities and others);
- budgetary development of the SAMKUL programme;
- general visibility of SAMKUL research and use of the research results in public documents, policy development, research strategies, etc. (i.e. the societal contribution of the research).

The indicators for impacts and societal outcomes – i.e. the programme’s results in the longer term and at a more overarching level –will be even more diffuse, and assessment of performance based on such indicators will primarily be qualitative. Development over time will be critical in all assessments.

Sources of information

- Statistics on the grant applications submitted to the SAMKUL programme and on the project portfolio:
 - o response and interest, distributed by type of applicant, thematic priority area and discipline, institution, gender, etc.;
 - o projects awarded funding under calls for proposals, distributed by discipline, institution, gender, recruitment, etc.;
 - o distribution of marks (scientific merit);
 - o distribution of projects by thematic priority area.
- The projects’ progress reports and final reports:
 - o number of scholarly publications and publications and measures directed towards target groups, users and the general public, overviews of recruitment and mobility grants, descriptions of findings and new insights (“results”), etc.;
 - o descriptions of the projects’ societal contribution /impacts, including use of the research results in the public administration and policy.
- The Research Council’s portfolio analyses:
 - o developments in overall activities in the cultural sphere, distributed by discipline, institution, sector, the programmes funding research incorporating cultural perspectives, and the like.
- Budgets:
 - o allocations, expenses, transfers;
 - o allocations from ministries other than the Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Culture;
 - o input from the SAMKUL programme’s annual reports to ministries other than the Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Culture.
- External evaluations and statistics, including overviews of the visibility of the subject area and application of the research results.

7.2. Other reports and evaluations

In 2015, the programme board delivered a report on the programme’s activities for the period from its launch in 2011 through August 2015.⁶ As part of the ongoing monitoring of the

⁶ [Programmets midtveisrapport 2011-august 2015](#) [Mid-term report, 2011–August 2015]. The initial programme period was from 2011 to 2020, and the term of the first programme board was from 2011 to 2015. That is why the report is entitled a “mid-term report”.

programme, the programme board is planning to prepare a new report on the project portfolio and strategic activities at the expiry of the next programme board's term in 2018.

Because the SAMKUL programme is defined as an open-ended programme and by 2020 will have been active for almost 10 years, there is much to suggest that the programme should be evaluated by an external evaluator, along dimensions such as relevance, purpose, cost-effectiveness, benefit, sustainability and impacts in the research community and beyond. There may be a need for partial summaries and assessments of activities in specific focus areas. The scope of external evaluations, self-evaluations, portfolio analyses and other reports must be adapted to the programme's size and the usefulness of such summaries. The Division for Science is responsible for deciding whether an external evaluation of the SAMKUL programme is to be carried out.

8. Resources and budget

The SAMKUL programme has a medium-sized budget compared with other programmes at the Research Council. Allocations have increased from NOK 10–15 million annually for the first several years of the programme to NOK 52.5 million in 2017. Some NOK 6.8 million of this amount is earmarked for specific activities assigned to the SAMKUL programme:

- NOK 5.3 million annually, preliminarily up to 2021, from the Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation for research to prevent anti-Semitism and group-focused enmity in schools (follow-up of the Government's action plan against anti-Semitism);
- NOK 1.55 million annually from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation for research on national minorities.

The allocations to the programme as it is defined in this work programme amount to roughly NOK 45.6 million for 2017. The Ministry of Education and Research is the main funding source (NOK 40 million) and funding is allocated to the Research Council over item 53 "strategic initiatives". The programme board takes this as a sign that the SAMKUL programme is being viewed as a long-term programme with important research policy and strategic tasks. The Ministry of Culture allocates some NOK 5.6 million annually as a step in fulfilling its broad sectoral responsibility for research in the cultural sphere. Segments of the project portfolio are clearly relevant for many of the ministry's policy areas. Allocations for "core activities" under the SAMKUL programme will increase to approximately NOK 52 million annually from 2018, as the Research Council will give priority to the SAMKUL programme when distributing the free allocations from the Ministry of Education and Research. Given that the research conducted under the SAMKUL programme is relevant for other ministries as well, dialogue will be initiated with these to work towards a broader funding of the programme.

A unified budget

The programme's thematic priority areas are interrelated, and the secondary objectives cannot be clearly separated from one another either. Thus there is little point in dividing the budget among the thematic priority areas or estimating the amount of the budget used by secondary objective. For the same reason, any future changes in the budget will generally not affect the distribution of resources in the three areas. It is the composition of the portfolio and the assessment of achievement of objectives and results, among other things, that will influence prioritisation between the thematic priority areas, and by extension the size of their portion of the budget.

Funding for various activities

Most of the programme's budget will be allocated to new research projects under funding announcements issued by the programme itself, but some funding will be allocated to other types of measures as well, in keeping with the objectives and aspirations of the programme:

- calls for proposals for new research projects under the SAMKUL programme;
- calls for proposals for researcher networks;
- co-funding with other Research Council programmes, joint calls for proposals and other measures to strengthen humanities and cultural perspectives in challenge-driven research;
- support for dissemination measures under SAMKUL projects and for meeting places;

- support for internationalisation measures and international cooperation under SAMKUL projects and for participation in international calls for proposals.

Minimum budget

In accordance with the guidelines for open-ended programmes, the SAMKUL programme will issue regular funding announcements encompassing the entire scope of the programme. Based on the information on projected budget parameters as of July 2017, the programme board is planning to issue funding announcements every 15 to 16 months, not once a year, to ensure that the financial framework remains of adequate size (above NOK 48 million).

There is widespread interest in the SAMKUL programme, so even a funding announcement with a budget of nearly NOK 50 million is small if 80–100 grant applications are submitted. It is therefore important to stipulate thematic priorities for each funding announcement. A larger budget would make it possible to realise many high-quality projects under the programme as well as to invest more resources in increasing the amount of cultural research conducted under other programmes.

The SAMKUL programme – an important component of the Research Council’s research activities in the cultural sphere

As mentioned earlier, the Research Council is providing nearly NOK 300 million in funding for research related to culture in 2017. The SAMKUL programme accounts for roughly 15 per cent of this amount, and is thus part of a larger-scale research initiative in the wide-ranging sphere of culture. The Research Council’s investments in the cultural sphere are part of a larger effort to increase the amount of humanities and other cultural research incorporated into thematically oriented programmes and other challenge-driven research.

There is a certain overlap between international funding sources, particularly Horizon 2020 and the European Research Council (ERC), and the SAMKUL programme. Although talented researchers and research groups may succeed in the competition for international grants, such international funding arenas will not be able to replace a national initiative such as the SAMKUL programme until far into the future.

Long-term budget

The table below (only in Norwegian) shows the allocations for the five-year period from 2017 to 2021 distributed by the ministries that are funding the SAMKUL programme in 2017.

Inntekter							Forpliktelsesplan							Resultat							Prosjektinfo							Regnskapsført							Kopiere arbeidsversjon													
Inntekt							Alle verdier vises i 1000																																									
							Overført inn							LTB2017v1																																		
							2017							2018							2019							2020							2021													
▲ KD Kunnskapsdepartementet							17 348							4 000							4 000							4 000							4 000							4 000						
8792406 KD Kap. 285.52							17 348																																									
8792408 KD Kap. 226.21														4 000							4 000							4 000							4 000							4 000						
▲ KD-SO Kunnskapsdepartementet – sektorovergripende							986							40 000							46 400							46 400							46 400							46 400						
8792432 KD Kap. 285.53							986							40 000							46 400							46 400							46 400							46 400						
▲ KMD Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet							8 767							2 850							2 850							2 850							2 850							2 850						
8790803 KMD Kap. 500.50							3 100							2 850							2 850							2 850							2 850							2 850						
8790850 KMD Kap. 500.22							5 667																																									
▲ KUD Kulturdepartementet							2 615							5 623							5 623							5 623							5 623							5 623						
8790501 KUD Kap. 320.52							2 615																																									
8790505 KUD Kap. 325.52														5 623							5 623							5 623							5 623							5 623						
Sum							29 715							52 473							58 873							58 873							58 873							58 873						

9. Governance and organisation

Research board and programme board

The overall responsibility for the programme lies with the Division for Science, which has also appointed the SAMKUL programme board. The programme is administered by the programme board, acting on behalf of the Research Council. The programme board reports to the Research Board of the Division for Science via the Director of the Department for Humanities and Social Sciences and the Executive Director of the division. The programme board will serve as the Research Council's executive body for the research area covered by the SAMKUL programme. The tasks of the programme board are primarily strategic in nature. The programme board is responsible for ensuring that the programme achieves its stipulated objectives and is implemented as efficiently as possible within the framework approved by the division research board, cf. the general terms of reference for programme boards.

The Research Council administration is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the programme. The programme falls under the Department for Humanities and Social Sciences under the Division for Science.

The SAMKUL programme board for the period from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2018 consists of the following persons:

- Dag Elgesem, Professor, Department of Information Science and Media Studies, University of Bergen (*chair*)
- Ellen Krefting, Professor, Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas, University of Oslo
- Sune Lægaard, Associate Professor, Department of Communication and Arts, Roskilde University
- Inger-Lise Saglie, Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning, Norwegian University of Life Sciences
- Bente Ailin Svendsen, Professor, Department of Linguistics and Scandinavian Studies, University of Oslo
- Sverker Sörlin, Professor, Division of History of Science, Technology and Environment, KTH Royal Institute of Technology
- Kristofer Hansson, Associate Professor, Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences, Lund University (*first deputy*)
- Liv Ingeborg Lied, Professor, Norwegian School of Theology (*second deputy*)
- *Steps will be taken to appoint another programme board member in the course of autumn 2017, in addition to those listed above.*

Programme administration

- Isabella Sandkleven Dahl, Senior Executive Officer
- Tor Lunde Larsen, Special Adviser (programme coordinator)
- Johannes Waage Løvhaug, Special Adviser
- Solbjørg Rauset, Senior Adviser
- Siri Tønseth, Special Adviser
- Elisabeth Westphal, Adviser

Programme address and webpages

Programme on the Cultural Conditions Underlying Social Change (SAMKUL)

Research Council of Norway

P.O. Box 564

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www.forskningsradet.no/samkul