

**Portfolio board for Global development and
International relations**

Minutes

Meeting 4/20

Date 7. - 8. December, kl. 9:30 am – 3:30 pm and 9.30 am – 12.00 pm

Place Zoom

Present: Kim Traavik (chair)
Fanny Duckert
Annelies Zoomers
Camilla Tenne Nørup Sørensen
Christopher Cramer
Elise Must
Isabell Schierenbeck
Nynke van der Broek
Peter Smith
Rainer-Elk Anders

Apologies: -

Observers: Hanne Meldgaard, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Rolf Arne Billington, Ministry of Defence (present 7.12.2020)
Øyvind Jaer, Ministry of Justice and Public Security

Present from the administration:
Bjørn Tore Kjellemo
Camilla Grime
Inger-Ann Ulstein
Jan Monteverde Haakonsen
Karine Kålsås
Kristin Høyby
Thomas Hansteen
Zlata Turkanovic
Nina Therese Maubach

Item PSGLOBAL 28/20 Approval of agenda

No amendments were made.

Decision: *The Portfolio board approved the agenda for the meeting.*

Item PSGLOBAL 29/20 Minutes of meeting 3/20

Decision: *The minutes from the last meeting was approved by correspondence prior to this meeting.*

Item PSGLOBAL 30/20

Updates from the administration

The Research Council will have its annual steering meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence respectively the upcoming week.

The Research Council's CEO, John-Arne Røttingen, has left his position in order to pursue a new role as Norway's Global Health Ambassador within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Department for Global and International Relations has been reorganized and is now counting three new colleagues with responsibilities for international research cooperation with India, China and South Africa.

As an introduction to the item 31,32 and 33 on the Agenda, the administration informed about changes in the assessment process. Due to the Covid-19 situation it was decided by the Research Council that all panel meetings should be done virtually. In order to reduce the number of proposals to be discussed during the virtual panel meetings, it was deemed necessary to do a pre-screening of the proposals. The decision of which proposals to retain or reject for discussion in the panel meeting were based on individual grades set by the experts of each panel prior to the panel meeting. An application was retained for discussion if one or more of a set of grade-based criteria was fulfilled. These criteria were decided upon by the Research Council.

In addition to the external expert panels' assessment of the proposals, the administration has reviewed the proposals' relevance to the call.

To ensure transparency the name of the experts will be published on the Research Council's webpage following the announcement of funding.

Decision: *The updates from the administration are taken into consideration.*

Item PSGLOBAL 31/20

Funding decisions – Global Health

Documents:

1. Book of project proposals
2. PIs relevance description
3. Book of panel and relevance assessments

The overall budget for the call on global health was 80 million kroner, of which The Ministry of Foreign Affairs have reserved 20 million kroner for research that will contribute to filling in knowledge gaps related to Covid-19. In total 45 applications were submitted to the topic Global Health. The total amount applied for was 500 million kroner.

The grant application should be of relevance to one or both of the following priority areas:

- The project must generate new knowledge on the structure, organization, delivery, economics and financing of health services, including prioritization and distribution between available services.
- The project must generate new knowledge on the implementation and/or delivery of new and/or improved health services.

Decision:

1. The Board took note of the proposals rejected by the pre-screening
2. The Board rejected all proposals with mark 4 or lower from the panel assessment
3. The Board rejected all proposals with mark 4 or lower from the relevance assessment

The following applications are funded:

For the earmarked funding to Covid 19 research:

- *Project no. 315637* Covid 19, Universal Health Coverage, and the Kenyan Health System: a collaborative ethnographic study

For the funding to the open call on global health:

- *Project no. 315902* Evidence-based policies and health system interventions for antenatal care
- *Project no.* Supporting inclusive and accountable health systems decisions in Ghana and Kenya for universal health coverage (SUPPORT-SYSTEMS)
- *Project no. 315590* Reporting in context: An interdisciplinary initiative to strengthen material health services and surveillance in Ethiopia and Tanzania
- *Project no. 316354* Equity and financial household impact in randomised controlled trials, implementation research and cohort studies in India (EQUIFINANCE)
- *Project no. 316317* Implementing a user-involved education- and health-system INTERACTIVE task-shifting approach for child mental health promotion in Uganda

The following application is put on the waiting list:

- *Project no. 313855* Improving childbirth outcome through fetal heart rate monitoring in Bihar, India

The following application is rejected:

- *Project no. 316044 Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs: Assessing Gaps in the Progress Towards Universal Health Coverage in India (GAP-IN)*

Item PSGLOBAL 32/20

Funding decisions – International relations, foreign- and security policy:

1. Researcher projects for scientific renewal

Documents:

1. Book of project proposals
2. Pls relevance description
3. Book of panel and relevance assessments

The deadline for submitting proposals to Researcher projects for scientific renewal was 25. May 2020. In total 59 applications were submitted to UTENRIKS. The total amount applied for was 299,8 million kroner. The UTENRIKS call for researcher projects had a budget of 125 million kroner available to the following thematic priorities:

25 million kroner for researcher projects within the whole thematic scope of the UTENRIKS work programme.

Further, there are earmarked fundings:

- 15 million kroner for development research directed at Asia in a Time of Change;
- 10 million kroner to research in the field of foreign and security policy, within the scientific and thematic priority areas set out in the document "Asia in a Time of Change".
- NOK 50 million for research relating to Europe.
- NOK 15 million for research on Russian foreign and security policy, including conditions relating to Russia's foreign economic relations.
- NOK 12 million for research on Eastern Europe

Decision:

1. The Board took note of the proposals rejected by the pre-screening
2. The Board rejected all proposals with mark 4 or lower from the panel assessment
3. The Board rejected all proposals with mark 4 or lower from the relevance assessment

The following applications are approved for conditional grant:

UTENRIKS – Europe in Transition

- *Project no. 315074 European integration and National Law: A theory of administrative behaviour in complex institutional settings*

On condition of altering the proposal to meet the priorities of the call:

- *Project no. 314300* Deporting foreigners: Contested norms in international practice

UTENRIKS – Eastern Europe:

The Portfolio Board will give some recommendations concerning adjustments to the project proposal:

- *Project no. 315777* Lowering the bar? - Compliance Negotiations and the EU - Ukraine Association Agreement

UTENRIKS – Russia:

- *Project no. 313766* Russian Repertoires of Power in the MENA region

On condition of altering the proposal to meet the structural requirements of the call:

- *Project no. 314146* Memory politics of the North, 1993-2023. An interplay perspective.

UTENRIKS – Asia in a time of Change:

- *Project no. 315063* Gender, Islam and transnational legal orderings in post-US Afghanistan
- *Project no. 315476* Stateless in the Bengali borderlands: New technologies and challenges for identity and identification

On condition of altering the proposal to meet the structural requirements of the call:

- *Project no. 314604* Chinese Anger Diplomacy

UTENRIKS – overall:

- *Project no. 314770* NGOs Securing Fisheries Environments: Understanding NGO-State Fisheries Protection Programs
- *Project no. 315163* Challenges to Ocean Governance: Regional Disputes, Global Consequences? (OCEANGOV)

The following applications are approved to reserve list, in ranked order

UTENRIKS, Asia in a time of Change -03

1) *Project no. 314145* Territorial self-government, second-order minorities and conflict settlement in post-civil war areas in Asia – Aceh Mindanao and Nepal

2) *Project no 315265* Good Neighbour Policy? China's Approaches to Conflict Mediation in Myanmar and Pakistan

3) *Project no 314512* Integrated impacts on forestry resources of climate change, air pollution and land-use change in China

4) *Project no 314552 Pop Culture, Art, and Indigenous Ideas of Legitimacy in Struggles*

UTENRIKS, Asia in a time of Change-02

1) *Project no 314513 US-China Loose Bipolarity: The New Superpower Rivalry and its implications for East Asia*

2) *Project no. 314554 China's changing role in global environmental governance – laggard or leader?*

UTENRIKS – overall:

1) *Project no. 315555 Experiences of Coercive power and the hybridisation of state security institutions in Africa*

The ranked reserve list implies a conditional grant decision. If applications that are approved for conditional funding are funded by another budgetary purpose, applications on the reserve list will be moved up on to the grant list in ranked order. If applications on the reserve list qualify for partial financing from an optimization pool, the grant decision also covers this.

The administration is authorized to reject applications put on the ranked reserve list in case they do not obtain funding after processing duplicates and distribution of optimizers.

2. Collaborative and knowledge-building projects

Documents:

1. The project proposals,
2. Results of evaluation and recommendations

The deadline for submitting proposals to the call for Collaborative and Knowledge-building projects was 2. September. In total 5 applications were submitted to the UTENRIKS call. The total amount of the applications are 37,6 million kroner.

Decision: *The following applications are approved for conditional grant:*

Business Development in the Barents Region

- *Project no. 320266 Development of Arctic maritime logistics and intermodal sea-land transport connections: Implications for the Barents Euro-Arctic Region*
- *Project no. 319464 Waste Management in High North - new cross-border business opportunities*

Health and welfare in the Barents Region

- *Project no. 318565 Replay or renew? Learning from 20+ years of Norwegian-Russian collaboration on health and social welfare in the Barents region.*

The following application is approved for reserve list:

Business Development in the Barents Region

- *Project no. 320668* Plan B – Defining a New and Sustainable Opportunity Space for Business in the Barents.

The funded proposals should be revised, and the total budget for each proposal should not be more than 7, 5 million kroner.

The following application is rejected based on low mark:

- *Project no. 320795* Cross-border cooperation in the Barents Region - New Conceptual Framework.

Item PSGLOBAL 33/20

Funding decisions – Global development

Documents:

1. Book of project proposals
2. Pls relevance description
3. Book of panel and relevance assessments

The deadline for submitting proposals to Researcher projects for scientific renewal was 25. May 2020. In total 77 applications were submitted to NORGLOBAL2. The NORGLOBAL2 call for researcher projects had a budget of up to 100 million kroner. About 7 million kroner are earmarked projects on *humanitarian issues*. 30 million kroner of the call budget is earmarked for projects on *Taxation and illicit capital flows*.

Decision:

1. The Board took note of the proposals rejected by the pre-screening
2. The Board rejected all proposals with mark 4 or lower from the panel assessment
3. The Board rejected all proposals with mark 4 or lower from the relevance assessment

The following proposals will be funded:

Taxation and illicit capital flows:

- *Project no. 314479* Successful Advances in Fiscal Architecture (SAFARI): Evidence from a new tax in Zanzibar

NOGLOBAL2:

- *Project no. 314916* Perennial grassland mixtures: a novel approach to forage and food production, land restoration and climate resilience in Ethiopia
- *Project no. 315356* Public-Private Development Interfaces in Ethiopia
- *Project no. 314530* From Curse to Demographic Dividends: Sub-Saharan Africa's Youth Bulges

- *Project no. 316070* God, grievance, and greed? Understanding Northern Mozambique's new Islamist war
- *Project no. 315587* Prioritising the Displacement-Environment Nexus: Refugee and IDP Settlements as Social-Ecological Systems
- *Project no. 316345* Inclusive Hearing Care for School Children in Tanzania
- *Project no. 314557* Truth commission and sexual violence. African and Latin American Experiences

Waiting list A:

- 1) *Project no. 315262* Perpetual Statebuilder. The Case of Norwegian and Aid to Palestine, South Sudan and Afghanistan
- 2) *Project no. 315555* Experiences of coercive power and the hybridization of state security institutions in Africa
- 3) *Project no. 315628* Deforestation diagnostics for robust and context-relevant policies

Project no. 315476 Stateless in the Bengali borderlands: New technologies and challenges for identity and identification was rejected due to being funded through the UTENRIKS call.

The proposals listed on waiting list B are rejected:

- *Project no. 315359* Applying circular economy as a tool for job creation, business development and improved nutrition and food security in Sub Saharan Africa
- *Project no. 316020* Transformative Dialogues in an Uncertain World: fostering sustainable, socially just, and climate resilient futures
- *Project no. 314254* Transforming Climate Change and Invasive Species Challenges into Economic and Socio-Ecological Opportunities in Ethiopia
- *Project no. 313661* The Private Sector as Peacebuilder: Assessing Business Actions for United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16
- *Project no. 314960* Aspirations and strategies for irregular migration. Stigma, status and social mobility
- *Project no. 314627* One-REFugee Approach and Policy for Inclusion (1REFIN)
- *Project no. 314416* Contextualizing Early Childhood Development in East Africa
- *Project no. 314243* The future of resettlement: vulnerability revisited
- *Project no. 315384* Red Lines and Grey Zones: Dilemmas in the Ethics of Humanitarian Negotiation
- *Project no. 315370* Innovations for green development

- *Project no. 315265* Good Neighbour Policy? China's Approaches to Conflict Mediation in Myanmar and Pakistan

Item PSGLOBAL 34/20

Priorities for a new funding period for global health

Document: Document New Priorities for global health

Following the end of the funding period for GLOBVAC, a working group chaired by Dr. Atle Fretheim, Norwegian Institute for Public Health, has developed a new work programme for global health research. The key points of the document are: i) Support high-quality research relevant to SDG 3 and its targets. Promote health equity by supporting high-quality research that can contribute to sustainable health improvements for disadvantaged populations in low- and lower-middle income countries (LLMICs); ii) priority to implementation research. Allocate at least 50 percent of the funds to that area; iii) remaining funding should go to thematically unrestricted projects that are relevant to the primary aim of the funding scheme; iv) promote Equitable partnerships; v) sustain Norwegian groups and promote national collaboration; vi) separate calls for EDCTP; vii) additionally, include gender equality, user involvement and innovation.

The working group has been supported by input from members of the Portfolio Board for Global Development and International Collaboration.

The Portfolio Board was in agreement that the working group have solved the task of developing a new work programme in a very satisfying manner, as the document is well-informed and comprehensive, and the attention to context is commendable. There were some remarks that the work programme was rather lengthy, and that the summary was more apt as a document for guiding applicants. The Board found the process of inviting researchers to provide the basis for a new programme on global health research to be both innovative and interesting. A similar approach should be considered for future development of other work programmes.

There were some reservations regarding the earmarking of funding to implementation research, as this is not a pronounced area in Norwegian global health research. On the other hand, it was argued that the move towards implementation research is timely, as this is an innovative and growing area of research. It is important to understand which definition(s) of implementation research the Board would like to subscribe to. Attention to methodology and capacity-building in the research community within this area is important. Multidisciplinary should be encouraged, and emphasis on high-quality research is important. The distinction between implementation research and other research was also argued to be somewhat artificial, as 'other' research also should be impactful. Length of projects should be given more flexibility, - could be longer than 4 years.

The definition of global health research should possibly be more pronounced in the document. Mental health issues and gender-based violence were highlighted by several Board members as areas to be more explicitly addressed in the document. It was agreed to include a paragraph on the general and implicit definition of health that encompass mental health.

The Board was invited to contribute with additional paragraphs and rephrasing of the wording of the document.

The Board had some exchange as to whether the issue of Covid-19 should be elaborated in the document.

Impact of the research should be more pronounced, thus the transmission from the work programme to the call text needs careful consideration. The RCN has commissioned a study on methodologies to monitor and measure impact. The aim of the study is to identify and assess the societal impact research and research-based innovation activities performed by the professional community of knowledge producers (academia, research institutes, firms and others) has on the environment, economy, technologies, policies, culture and practice across society. This includes also identification of the mechanisms leading to impact.

There should be made efforts to secure more funding for the global health research. This is particularly important in regard to ensuring impact.

Decision: *The Board approves the document on New Priorities for global health research with the added sentences on Norwegian global health research groups and national collaboration. The document is added as an attachment to the Portfolio plan for Global development and international relations.*

Item PSGLOBAL 35/20

Final call text for global health

Document: Call for proposals 2021

Based on the document on new priorities for global health research the administration has developed a draft call text for the call for

Proposals for Scientific Renewal with the deadline 10.02.2021. The text will be forwarded to the team coordinating the Research Council's calls and amended according to their criteria. Projects should contribute to sustainable health improvements for disadvantaged populations in low- and lower-middle income countries (LLMICs). Half of the available funding of 50 million kroner will be earmarked implementation research. Impact will be given extra consideration.

Based on the discussion of the new work programme, the Board had some exchange concerning the criterion on earmarking 50 % of available funding to implementation research. Remarks were made on prioritizing the best proposals, regardless of implementation research perspectives or not. However, it should be clearly stated in the call text that implementation research is desired. The success of implementation research is more difficult to assess than another research. The problem with earmarking funding, results in two calls effectively. Being vaguer gives more flexibility in allocation of funds. Further, a clear definition of implementation research should be included in the call text.

There were a few remarks on the call text being somewhat less ambitious than the work programme, and that some of the language from the document should be included in the call text.

If all other criteria being equal, impact should be the discriminatory criterion.

The Board was invited to give input to the call text after amended according to the discussions.

Decision: *The Board approves the call text, amended in accordance with the comments from the Portfolio Board Members, announcing that NOK 50 million is available for research on global health in the call for Proposals for Scientific Renewal with a deadline 10.02.2021. The priorities in the call are based on the document on new priorities for global health research.*

Item PSGLOBAL 36/20**Coordinated call for proposals with Russian Foundation for Basic Research – 2021**

Document: Coordinated call for proposals with Russian Foundation for Basic Research – 2021

The topic for the coordinated call is sustainable resource management and societal development in the High North. The call will underpin the Norwegian chairmanship of the Barents Euro Arctic Council (2019-2021). It will also be an activity that align with the Russian chairmanship in the Arctic Council in 2021 and thus underpinning both countries' priorities and activities in the High North and the Arctic.

The coordinated call will be conducted as two separate coordinated calls in Norway and Russia respectively. Each funding institution will use its own guidelines and assessment system. The Research Council will be using the application type International Call, with deadline for submitting the application in September 2021.

Decision: *The Portfolio Board for Global development and International relations approve to use the unspent funds on the High North (MFA allotment on the High North 2017-2021) to participate in the coordinated call between the Research Council of Norway and the Russian Foundation on basic research.*

Item PSGLOBAL 37/20**Any other business**

The full list of the Boards decisions regarding the investments and rejections based on the 2020 calls for proposals will be attached to the minutes of meeting.

The administration will approach the Portfolio Board members by correspondence in order to setting the dates for upcoming meetings for the Portfolio Board. First meeting is scheduled for late February/ early March. The second meeting will probably be in the start of week 25.

Item PSGLOBAL 28/20**Approval of Decision protocol**

Decision: *The Decision protocol/investment decisions and minutes of meeting will be approved by correspondence following the meeting.*