

Board, Centre for Molecular Medicine Norway (NCMM)

Oslo, 12 June 2018

Minutes from Board Meeting June 11

Time: Monday 11 June 2018, 12:00-14:30

Place: NCMM meeting room

Executive officer: Elisa Bjørge

	Present	Absent
Professor Jens Petter Berg (UiO/OUS), Chair	X	
Professor Philippe Collas (UiO), member	X	
Professor Finn-Eirik Johansen (UiO), member	X	
Professor Hilde Nilsen (UiO), deputy member		X
Professor Bente Halvorsen (HSØ), member	X	
Acting Director Research & Innovation Øystein Krüger (HSØ), member		X
Førsteamanuensis Maria Perander (UiT, national representative), member	X	
Professor Ola Myklebost (UiB), national deputy member		X
Dr. Torunn Berge (HSØ), deputy member	X	
Professor Kjetil Taskén (NCMM), Director	X	
Professor Hartmut Luecke (NCMM), Assistant Director		X

CAO Ingrid Kjelsvik was also present.

Agenda (O = information item, D = discussion item B = decision item)

**Case 25-18O Presentations by NCMM group leaders**

All NCMM group leaders will throughout 2018 get the possibility to present their research to the Board in a Board meeting. Each group leader gets 5 minutes for a short presentation + 5 minutes for discussion. The group leaders have been asked to outline their main focus areas as well as to highlight what their main challenges are.

Nikolina Sekulic and Anthony Mathelier presented the main lines of their research in the meeting.

**Decision:** The Board took note of the briefing.

**Case 26-18B Approval of minutes from last Board meeting**

A draft minutes from the Board meeting on February 20 was available. There were no comments to the minutes.

**Decision:** The minutes were approved.

**Case 27-18B SAB report**

The Scientific Advisory Board visited NCMM on February 14-15 and in the Board meeting in February the Director gave an oral summary from this visit and the

feedback from the SAB in their summary meeting with the NCMM leadership. The written report was released in March and was also sent to the Research Council when the evaluation material was submitted on April 19. The evaluation material was forwarded to the Board. However, the written SAB report was not discussed in detail by the Board in their April meeting (many absences) and was summarized in the meeting.

The report addresses among other things the continued need to consider fit with existing research groups at NCMM when recruiting new group leaders, the need to balance the requirement of increased translational focus with good basic research and technology development as well as PI career development and the need for long-term planning towards tenure positions at UiO faculties and the OUH. Moreover, the SAB strongly supports the initiative that aims to establish cryo EM in Norway, and they also support the plans of broadening the national involvement in NCMM. Finally, the SAB is somewhat concerned about the timing of recruitment of a new director versus the upcoming evaluation. Individual feedback to all group leaders was also given in the report.

The non-tenure EMBL model and the need to plan for more permanent positions is a recurring theme. The Board acknowledges that it is important to plan well for rotation of NCMM PIs out to more permanent positions at UiO/OUH and that the planning at the latest should start when a group leader is renewed for a second period. Furthermore, one NCMM group leader is up for evaluation within the next year. The Board raised some concerns regarding her getting enough backing from the NCMM management in the transition period between the current Director and the incoming Director and therefore suggested that NCMM contacts her local mentor as well as the Head of the Dept. where she holds her adjunct position to make sure she can discuss with them how to focus her research projects in the best way before her upcoming evaluation for a second funding period.

**Decision:** The Board took note of the report and made comments to go in the minutes for further follow-up by NCMM.

#### **Case 28-18B Hiring of NCMM group leaders - Employee issue**

##### **Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven**

NCMM is in the process of recruiting two group leaders in precision medicine and systems medicine. In the Board meeting in February it was decided to offer these positions to the \*\*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*\*, respectively (Case 4-18B).

\*\*\*\*\* end of March informed NCMM that she had been offered another position and would therefore not be coming to Oslo. The Board in February decided that the position would be offered to \*\*\*\*\* if \*\*\*\*\* declined her offer (Case 4-18B). The hospital environments were very supportive of her but unfortunately she did not meet many of the NCMM group leaders on her previous visit. The Director discussed the situation with the Chairman of the Board and decided that \*\*\*\*\* should be invited for a second visit to explore her possibilities here further, particularly the details of a

dual appointment and clinical training. \*\*\*\*\* visited Oslo end of April and received an official offer in May. She has now signed a contract with NCMM and will be joining NCMM as group leader in precision medicine from July 2019. Before taking up her group leader role at NCMM, \*\*\*\*\* will spend six months working at OUH in order to pursue her training in paediatrics. She will continue her residency part-time in parallel with setting up a group at NCMM.

\*\*\*\*\* declined his offer on May 2. The Board in February decided that if the ranked candidates did not accept an offer for the systems medicine group leader position, \*\*\*\*\* would be invited to Oslo to finalize her interview. She had travel restrictions in January due to her green card application and only interviewed via Skype. She could therefore not be ranked at the Board meeting in February. It was decided that \*\*\*\*\* after a visit here would be compared to \*\*\*\*\* before a decision could be made. \*\*\*\*\* visited NCMM on May 22-23, gave a scientific presentation and met NCMM group leaders and potential collaboration partners in the Oslo region. The surrounding environment that met her was very positive and several expressed interest in initiating collaborations. \*\*\*\*\* clearly received stronger support after discussing future scientific possibilities than \*\*\*\*\* , and she was therefore ranked for the position as group leader in systems medicine.

**Decision:** \*\*\*\*\* is hired as researcher (position code SKO 1110) with a function as group leader in systems medicine. If she declines the offer, the position will be re-advertised.

#### **Case 29-180 Health, Safety and Environment – regular updates**

The Faculty of Medicine has announced that HSE should be a regular topic at Board meetings. As decided in the April meeting, the annual HSE report submitted to the Faculty of Medicine, was distributed to the Board. Ingrid Kjelsvik also gave a short update on current HSE issues in the meeting.

The Board acknowledged that NCMM has a very competent HSE coordinator in Liv Bjørland and is certain that she informs NCMM staff well. However, the Board recommends that the Centre starts documenting HSE training of employees in the Centre.

**Decision:** The Board took note of the briefing.

#### **Case 30-180 Strategy discussion on continuation of NCMM – update**

NCMM is in its second 5-year period and will be evaluated on June 18-19. The Board and the NCMM management already in the spring 2017 started a strategy discussion regarding the continuation of the Centre for a third 5-year period. The former Chair of the Board presented the possibility to expand the ownership of NCMM to all health regions at a strategy meeting for the research health regions in October 2017. Furthermore, the Dean at the Medical Faculty presented this idea also at a Dean meeting in December 2017. It has previously been decided that NCMM

Director would travel to all regions and discuss a potential expansion of ownership in more detail directly with the different regions.

The Director and Elisa Bjørgo in May and the beginning of June visited all health regions and universities with medical faculties. In these meetings, the Director presented NCMM, strategic future plans and what ownership could mean for each region. The aim is for each region to take greater ownership of NCMM as a national center. The details of a potential extension on the ownership side and how the financial contribution would be organized will have to be subject of future negotiations. As a consequence, the NCMM consortium agreement would also have to be renegotiated.

The Board thinks these local meetings are a good start towards a potential extension on the ownership side. The Chair of the Board and the NCMM Director will now discuss and plan the continued process, including a joint meeting with representatives from all the regions present. Furthermore, the Chair will ask vice-rector Per Morten Sandset for assistance in future negotiations. The goal is to reach an agreement of intent in the fall 2018 and start negotiations in 2019.

**Decision:** The Board took note of the briefing.

#### **Case 31-18O Evaluation of NCMM**

NCMM is in its second 5-year period and will be evaluated on June 18-19. In April NCMM submitted the requested evaluation material (Case 17-18O). The evaluation committee consists of Mimoun Azzuz, University of Sheffield, Sirpa Jalkanen, University of Turku, Yvonne Jones, University of Oxford and Thomas Sinkjær, Lundbeckfonden. In addition, General Director EMBL Iain Mattaj is an observer.

The evaluation committee and the RCN will visit NCMM on June 18 and the program this day includes a Centre presentation and hearing as well as discussions with all NCMM BiO group leaders. The Committee will in addition get a tour at NCMM and meet PhD students and postdocs. On June 19 the hearing will take place at the Research Council, including discussions with all group leaders at NCMM Translational Research as well as discussions with the owners UiO and HSØ.

Acting Director Research and Innovation Øystein Krüger (HSØ), vice-rector Per Morten Sandset (UiO) and Dean Frode Vartdal (UiO) have confirmed their attendance at the hearing on June 19. Chair of the Board will be present at both the Centre presentation on June 18 as well as during the discussions with the owners on June 19.

**Decision:** The Board took note of the briefing.

#### **Case 32-18B NCMM Young Associate Investigators – appointment of Lynn Butler – decision on circulation**

NCMM Young Associate Investigators (YAI) can be appointed through two mechanisms: through open calls or if another institution aims to recruit a young group leader that is offered approx. the same conditions as NCMM group leaders.

UiT used the NCMM YAI mechanism in the fall 2017 to recruit a new group leader to the KG Jebsen TREC Centre for Thrombosis Research. The NCMM Director has participated in the recruitment process and informed the Board about this process at the meeting in December 2017 (Case 61-17B).

Lynn Butler signed her contract at UiT in April and will officially start her role at UiT in September. A suggestion to appoint Lynn Butler as YAI was sent to the Board via circulation on May 8 (Case 24-18B).

**Decision:** The decision to appoint Lynn Butler Young Associate Investigator made via circulation on May 15 is confirmed.

### **Case 33-18O Recruitment NCMM Director – status update. Personnel case**

#### **Exempt information cf. §13 Offentlighetsloven**

The NCMM Director in November 2017 handed in his resignation to start as Head and Director of the Institute of Cancer Research, Oslo University Hospital from January 2018. In a transition period until 30 June 2018, Taskén has a 40% position as NCMM Director and 80% position at OUH.

The Director position was advertised in February with an application deadline 15 March. By the time the call closed, 16 applications had been received. The selection committee in a phone conference on April 24 decided on rankings for interview and five candidates were invited. One of these candidates later withdrew his application for personal reasons. The interviews took place on June 7. In addition to the appointed selection committee, a local interview panel consisting of Erlend Nagelhus, Inger Sandlie and Ivar Sjaastad were present during the interviews. Furthermore, the candidates met all NCMM group leaders in addition to some life science stakeholders in the Oslo region.

The evaluation statement was sent to all applicants on June 8 and they now have until June 18 to send in formal comments. In addition, the local interview panel is preparing its assessment and will send this to the Board within June 18. The Board will therefore in an extraordinary Board meeting on June 19 discuss this assessment and send their decision on who to recommend for the position and the ranking to the Hiring Board at the Faculty of Medicine for their meeting on June 26.

**Decision:** The Board takes note of the briefing.

### **Case 34-18B Miscellaneous**

1. *Appointment of Kjetil Taskén as NCMM Associate Investigator*

Kjetil Taskén has been Director of the Biotechnology Centre and NCMM the last 15 years and has built up NCMM from the beginning. He has a unique knowledge about the Centre and combines outstanding science and leadership competence in an extraordinary way. The Chair of the Board therefore on May 28 proposed that the Board by circulation should appoint Kjetil Taskén as NCMM Associate Investigator from July 2018. The board supported the proposal unanimously, and the outgoing Director was informed in the Board meeting.

**Decision:** Kjetil Taskén is appointed NCMM Associate Investigator from 1 July.

2. *Board Meetings in the fall 2018*

To decide on dates for the Board meetings in the fall 2018, a doodle with potential dates will be distributed as soon as possible. Outlook invitations will be sent before the summer for the decided dates.

Sincerely,

Jens Petter Berg  
Chairman NCMM Board

Kjetil Taskén  
NCMM Director