

NOVA KUF meeting Nr 22

Date: 27th March, 2007

Place: Oslo, NVH

Agenda

| | Items |
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| 22.1 | Opening of meeting and agenda |
| 22.2 | Follow-up of decisions from meeting No 21 |
| 22.3 | Annual report 2006 and end of year accounts |
| 22.4 | Activity follow-up - Activity plan 2007 |
| 22.5 | Different items - discussions and decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Principles for evaluating PhD applicationsb. National plans for Local NOVA Teamsc. Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinatorsd. Administration of Intensive MSc Coursese. NOVA Strategy 2007-2010 |
| 22.6 | Applications. Reports on.. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Nordic MSc Mastersb. Intensive MSc coursec. New application(s) |
| 22.7 | NOVA seminar 2007 |
| 22.8 | NOVA project funding - new instructions on MSc level projects |
| 22.9 | Other items |

Present: Trine Hvoslef-Eide, UMB, Chairman
Björn Thorsteinsson, LBHI
Marketta Sipi, HU-AF
Lena Andersson-Eklund, SLU
Yngvild Wasteson, NVH
Outi Vainio HU-V
Mårten Karlow, NSF, SLU

Coordinators, others: Knut Wålstedt, NOVA
Hannah Joan Jørgensen, NOVA
Melanie Etchell, NVH
Stina Dahlgren, NSF, NVH
Karin Klitgaard Möller, LIFE
Michael Guldager, LIFE
Sari Mikkola, HU-AF
Haavard Reksten, UMB
Anna Lauritz, SLU
Riitta Kaitajärvi, HU-V
Aija Ryyppö, Joensuu University

Absent Mogens Flensted-Jensen, LIFE
Thorbjörg Valdis Kristjánsdottir, LBHI
Ronnie Babigumira, NSF, UMB

22.1. Opening of meeting

Opening of meeting, excuses from Mogens Flensted-Jensen and Thorbjörg Valdis Kristjánsdottir and Ronnie Babigumira who were absent. Aija Ryyppö from Joensuu was welcomed as an observer. No comments to the agenda.

22.2. Follow-up of decisions from meeting No 21

Item: Follow up from KUF meeting No 21.

Material: Minutes from KUF meeting No 21.

Presented by: Knut Wålstedt

NSF has elected a student representative from NVH to participate in Executive Committee meetings, The Nordic Council of Minister's guidelines for Nordic masters are now available. Remaining issues were dealt with individually later in the meeting.

Decision:

The follow-up information from KUF meeting 21 is accepted.

22.3 Annual report 2006 (a) and end of year accounts (b)

a) Annual report 2006

Item: Annual Report for 2006.

Material: Draft Annual Report for 2006.

Presented by: Knut Wålstedt

The annual report for 2006 should be printed before the annual seminar. Statistics will be available as an e-based appendix. The Board has suggested that parts of the NOVA annual report is printed in local newsletters or reports at individual institutions. There was a short discussion on the report where some alterations were suggested.

Decision:

KUF recommends that the annual report for 2006, with suggested modifications, is approved by the Board.

Knut Wålstedt and Hannah Jørgensen will incorporate suggested amendments in the document.

b) End of year accounts

Item: End of year accounts.

Material: Financial report for 2006.

Presented by: Knut Wålsted

There is an approximately €25.000 excess from 2006 to be used by KUF during 2007.

Decision:

KUF recommends that the financial report for 2006 is approved by the Board.

22.4 Activity follow-up - Activity plan 2007

Item: Activity follow-up - Activity plan 2007

Material: Activity plan 2007

Presented by: Trine Hvoslef-Eide and Knut Wålstedt

The activity plan was presented to and approved by the Board in January. New priority areas should not be defined. Rather, new areas should be selected on the basis of high quality, and referred to as “funded networks”. NOVA encourages more PhD course applications.

Decision:

KUF accepts the Activity follow-up and the comments to the activity plan 2007.

22.5 Different items - discussions and decisions

- a. Principles for evaluating PhD applications
- b. National plans for Local NOVA Teams
- c. Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinators
- d. Administration of Intensive MSc Courses
- e. NOVA Strategy 2007-2010

a) Principles for evaluating PhD applications

Item: Principles for evaluating PhD applications

Material: Application guide for NOVA PhD courses 2008

Presented by: Knut Wålstedt

For practical reasons, some adjustments have been made to the technical evaluation criteria with respect to fees and funding, these were briefly discussed. The principle of “series of events”, and scientific evaluation criteria for course applications were discussed in detail.

Decisions:

KUF approves the adjustments in the application guide.

The concept of “series of events”, and the application procedure for these should be defined and clarified in the application guide. Knut Wålstedt will incorporate the specifications into guide and inform this years applicants.

The scientific criteria on for PhD applications were decided to be: course content, competence of teachers, pedagogical approach, the course time-schedule, nordic dimension

Knut Wålstedt and Hannah Jørgensen will formulate and incorporate the discussed scientific criteria, prepare a score-sheet for KUF to use, and inform this years applicants.

b. National plans for Local NOVA Teams

Item: National plans for Local NOVA Teams

Material: National plans for Local NOVA Teams

Presented by: Knut Wålstedt

After a member vice presentation, there was a short discussion on the national plans. All local coordinators were pleased with the process and found it useful.

Decision:

The national plans were approved by KUF.

c. Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinators

Item: Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinators

Material: Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinators

Presented by: Knut Wålstedt

The document specifying tasks for Local NOVA coordinators was discussed. This is a list of tasks that should be taken care of at the institutional level. The role of the local coordinators on certain projects could become a disproportionate amount of work. All items should be reworded in order to clarify that NOVA does not wish to interfere with the national organization. The heading should be rephrased to reflect the purpose of the document.

Decision:

Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinators will be rephrased and amended by Knut Wålstedt and circulated by email for discussion and approval.

d. Administration of Intensive MSc Courses

Item: Administration of Intensive MSc courses

Material: Tabulated information on administrative procedures

Presented by: Hannah J. Jørgensen

Short discussion on the administrative procedures of intensive MSc courses. NOVA needs a document to show course leaders and applicants, that describes local procedures at each institution.

Decision:

Each Local Coordinator will look into solving problems in the administration of intensive courses at their institution. They will also reconsider the answers given to the questions and report back to the NOVA secretariat.

e. NOVA Strategy 2007-2010

Item: NOVA Strategy 2007-2010

Material: Draft NOVA strategy for 2007-2010

Presented by: Hannah J. Jørgensen

Most institutions have started discussions on the Strategy. Brief discussion on the document, a few amendments were suggested.

Decision:

The suggested amendments will be incorporated into the document, and further comments to the strategy will be prepared locally and sent to Hannah J. Jørgensen in the NOVA secretariat.

22.6 Applications.

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| Item: | Applications: a. Nordic MSc Masters b. Intensive MSc course c. New application(s) |
| Material: | Report from applications. New application (from SoilSoc) |
| Presented by: | Knut Wålstedt |

Knut Informed KUF about decisions made on the received applications in 2007. There was a short discussion on principles of network support especially with regard to administration costs and websites.

Decision:

The decisions of the Executive Committee with respect to grant applications were approved.

KUF approves funding the “Soilsoc” project as requested by the applicants.

22.6 The NOVA seminar 2007

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| Item: | The NOVA seminar 2007 |
| Material: | Oral information and printed plan of cultural events |
| Presented by: | Trine Hvoslef-Eide and Anna Lauritz |

Trine Hvoslef-Eide presented the list of external and internal speakers and their topics at for the seminar. Anna Lauritz presented the planned cultural events during the seminar.

Decision:

KUF accepts the information, and approves the planned cultural events and the list of speakers for the seminar. Participants must be registered no later than the end of April. Each member is responsible for arranging transportation to and from Uppsala.

22.8 NOVA project funding - new instructions on MSc level projects

Item: Need for new instructions on funding of MSc level projects

Material: Information on NOVA Networks and Projects
Suggested new Instructions for funding MSc courses and Projects

Presented by: Knut Wålstedt

Short discussion on the proposed formulation. Agreement that the basic principle for funding should be based a process chart requiring 1) establishment of a network, 2) the holding of planning meeting(s) that should result in 3) a course application and eventually 4) the running of a course.

Decision:

KUF accepts the suggested new instructions, and commissions the NOVA secretariat to make necessary changes on the NOVA web-page.

22.9 Other items and information

Brief information from all institutions, and discussion on proposed dates for KUF meetings.

Decision:

The next KUF meeting will be held on the 13th June at LIFE, following this there will be a video meeting on the 11th September, and a meeting at SLU on the 13th Nov

22.10 End of the meeting

The meeting was closed at 16.00. Thank you to NVH, in particular Melanie Etchell, for hosting the meeting.

Trine Hvolsef-Eide
UMB, Chairman

Knut Wålstedt
NOVA Secretary General

Hannah Jørgensen
Central NOVA Coordinator

Minutes

22.1. Opening of meeting

Aija Ryyppö from Faculty of Forestry at University of Joensuu was welcomed as a non-voting observer. This faculty will enter negotiations with NOVA later this year with the aim of becoming a full member in 2008.

22.2. Follow-up of decisions from meeting No 21

Information from Knut Wålstedt:

The strategy work is underway; feedback is due on the 30th March. It is important that all levels of all institutions get involved in the process and the Local Coordinators are encouraged to make sure that the feedback reaches the secretariat.

NSF has elected a student representative from NVH to participate in Executive Committee meetings. A student was present for only the first meeting in the Executive Committee. It is necessary to find out who the elected student is and invite this person to future meetings.

A document suggesting tasks for local coordinators and the secretariat will be presented later in the meeting.

Rules and routines on mobility funds, and information about funding of intensive MSc courses have been updated and are available on the NOVA website. This will be dealt with later in the meeting.

Information regarding procedures for administration of intensive MSc courses has been collected, and will be dealt with later in the meeting.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' guidelines for Nordic masters are now available.

22.3 Annual report 2006 (a) and end of year accounts (b)

a) Annual report 2006

The Board has decided to keep the structure of the 2006 report largely as the 2005 report. However, the Board wishes to see "stories" from course participants and organisers in the annual report. Furthermore, the Board has decided that the statistics and financial information will be supplied as a separate non-printed, e-based appendix. The aim is to have the report printed before the annual seminar.

The Board also wishes to see parts of the NOVA annual report printed in local reports or newsletters, KUF members are encouraged to promote this in their institution.

There was general agreement in KUF that the proposed model and structure of the report is good.

One should probably be consistent in the use of either KVL or LIFE. It was agreed that one will use KVL in the report for 2006.

There were a few specific suggestions for changes in the report. These have been taken note of and amendments will be made.

b) End of year accounts

At the end of 2006 there was an approximately €25.000 excess which is significantly less than 2005. This is pleasing since it shows that NOVA has made use of its funds.

22.4 Activity follow-up - Activity plan 2007

The activity plan was presented to and approved by the Board in January.

The Board has decided that new priority areas should not be defined. Rather, “priority areas” are networks/areas that selected on the basis of a quality evaluation and receive major support from NOVA. This is why the veterinary side has been removed as a “priority” area (they did not utilise funding). There was some concern about how the new definition of “prioritised areas” might influence certain networks. The principle should be to promote quality rather than actively supporting specified areas.

It was suggested that “prioritised areas” should rather be referred to as “funded networks”.

NORBE has been granted funding for a 3rd year.

UFUG seems a success, but difficult to attract students. They are working towards Erasmus Mundus funding. The question is to what degree NOVA should fund projects that target non-NOVA students. The Board has decided that NOVA should be a platform to Europe, and therefore NOVA may support networks that are working to achieve Erasmus Mundus funds. However, NOVA will not support networks that can stand on their own feet. When networks achieve Erasmus Mundus funding NOVA funding may not be necessary any more.

NOVA has signed an agreement with Høgskolen i Sogn og Fjordane (Norway). They will participate in UFUG during the first year of a new master’s degree that they are starting.

KUF members were encouraged to go home and stimulate colleagues to apply for PhD course funding. Local NOVA Coordinators should also help make sure that the quality of applications is of a suitable standard.

With respect to NOVA-BOVA, the Executive Committee are going to Riga for a meeting in May. NOVA students will be able to go to BOVA courses, and vice versa, next year.

The Faculty of Forestry at University of Joensuu has been invited to join as a new member NOVA from 2008. Formal discussions will be held this autumn. Students from Joensuu may attend NOVA courses this year subject to own funding.

22.5 Different items - discussions and decisions

- a. Principles for evaluating PhD applications
- b. National plans for Local NOVA Teams
- c. Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinators
- d. Administration of Intensive MSc Courses
- e. NOVA Strategy 2007-2010

a) Principles for evaluating PhD applications

For practical reasons, it was necessary to make the following adjustments to the technical evaluation criteria on fees and funding that were decided on at the last KUF meeting:

- As soon as a course is approved, a cost-dependent fee of between €300-500 should be calculated
- Special reasons are required if students shall be granted more than €100 per night for accommodation, which means that €100 is not an absolute upper limit.

There were no objections to the adjustments.

The principle of “series of events”, and scientific evaluation criteria for course applications were discussed. The instructions may not be clear enough.

A “series of events” is a series of courses (over 2-3 years) that are held by the same network within the same field.

An application for a “series of events” requires a detailed application for the first year only followed by shorter applications for years two and three. Follow-up courses in the series will be prioritised for funding if the course meets the expected standards, and if a detailed plan for each subsequent course is submitted prior to the annual deadline. The instruction guide will be amended to make this clearer.

Scientific criteria for evaluation of PhD course applications were discussed and defined:

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| Course content: | The course should provide adequate tuition for PhD level, and should be a relevant topic. |
| Competence: | The competence of course teachers should be evaluated. Teachers should represent a high scientific quality, and have an appropriate scientific background that demonstrates experience and recent activity within the subject. The use international (non-Nordic researchers/teachers) is encouraged if this significantly contributes to elevating the level of competence. |
| Pedagogical approach: | The planned methods of teaching should be evaluated. Interactive teaching where students are engaged and activated is generally encouraged. |
| Course time-schedule: | The course time plan should be detailed and realistic, and should include time for student independent work. |

Nordic dimension: The course should have a Nordic dimension. This could mean that teachers from several Nordic countries contribute by teaching in the course, that the course content has some relevance to a Nordic situation or to Nordic conditions, or that Nordic cooperation is a real benefit or even necessary for the course (small academic milieus or small student bodies). The applicants should also state why they choose to arrange the course through NOVA.

b. National plans for Local NOVA Teams

The national plans have been prepared and were available at the meeting.

The plans shall not be commented on further at this meeting, but each NOVA member institution presented their own plan. There was general agreement that the process had been useful.

Several of the plans include the idea of a NOVA-information day. Knut Wålstedt offered the assistance of the Secretariat for such events.

The plans shall be followed up at the end of the year.

c. Tasks for Local NOVA Coordinators

The document specifying tasks for Local NOVA coordinators was discussed.

This should be a list of tasks that should be taken care of at the institution, a "memory list" of NOVA tasks.

Not necessary for the Local Coordinator be responsible for doing all the tasks, but the coordinator must oversee that the tasks are taken care of.

Perhaps one should call rename the document "Local NOVA routines".

There was some concern that the role of the Local Coordinators on certain projects could become a disproportionate amount of work if the wording in the document under the section of "projects" is taken literally. This section should be reworded.

Morten Karlow asked Coordinators and others to please bare i mind that students are occupied full time as students and should not be "overloaded" with NOVA tasks. This must be adjusted appropriately at individual institutions according to the wishes of the students and the needs of the local NOVA teams.

It was also specified that it is important that NOVA issues are incorporated into the general university system and is not handled as a separate element.

d. Administration of Intensive MSc Courses

The answers received following a questionnaire to all Local NOVA Coordinators have been tabulated and presented. It has been difficult to standardise the administration procedures, therefore it is important to have the information of local procedures to present to teachers and students.

There appears to be some discrepancies between formed information and the new information which has been received on some areas from some institutions. All coordinators should work through the document one more time in order to secure that the answers are correct.

All Coordinators are encouraged to work on their local procedures, try and define ways of overcoming obstacles and report back to the Secretariat (Hannah Jørgensen). Meanwhile the EC will give an interim report to the Board.

e. NOVA Strategy 2007-2010

Most institutions have started discussions on the Strategy. Brief discussion on the document, a few minor amendments were suggested. Agreement that the tone under the section "challenges" is still too negative.

Feedback will be sent to Hannah Jørgensen shortly. Following this the strategy will be amended and recirculated before the seminar.

22.6 Applications.

Knut informed KUF about decisions made on the received applications in 2007. There were no objections to this.

There was a short discussion on principles of network support with regard to administration costs and websites.

The question on funding of coordinators/coordination of networks needs to be addressed. A suggestion to restrict the amount available for coordination/administration to 5.000 euro per year is presented under item 22.8.

It was agreed to support the application for funding for the SoilSoc programme.

22.7 The NOVA seminar 2007

Trine Hvoslief-Eide presented the list of external and internal speakers and their topics at for the seminar.

Anna Lauritz presented the planned cultural events during the seminar.

A web based system for registration will be available soon. Registration must be made no later than the end of April. Each member is responsible for arranging transport to and from Uppsala.

22.8 NOVA project funding - new instructions on MSc level projects

Short discussion on the proposed formulation suggested by the Secretariat. Agreement that the basic principle for funding should be based a process chart requiring 1) establishment of a network, 2) the holding of planning meeting(s) that should result in 3) a course application and eventually 4) the running of a course.

22.9 Other items and information

Brief information from all institutions:

In the next academic year UMB will have 9 programmes in English.

SLU are working to implement the Bologna declaration.

NVH now have final year students in the new differentiation programme, some teething problems, but generally going quite well.

Joensuu have several programmes taught in English, and have travelling grants for their own students to participate in NOVA courses. They also have some intensive courses in statistics that would be free of charge for external students.

At LBHI they have spent a lot of time and effort adjusting to the new university law. They are applying for accreditation and implementing quality assurance.

NSF is working on an information booklet on NOVA, they are also busy with the strategy, and have elected some new representatives from NVH.

The annual report for 2006 from HU-AF was handed out at the meeting. There will be an international evaluation of the whole university in 2008, and they are busy preparing for this.

At HU-V a teacher has been engaged to work especially on helping outgoing/travelling students to adjust and get accepted their study plans. They are also looking to establish a Swedish speaking professorship, and have a German prof. at the dept who teaches in English. Their clinical dpt has been divided in two (production animals as one dpt, and equine and pets as a second dpt)

It was agreed that the next KUF meeting will be held on the 13th June at LIFE, following this there will be a video meeting on the 11th September, and a meeting at SLU on the 13th Nov

22.10 End of the meeting

The meeting was closed at 16.00. Thank you to NVH, in particular Melanie Etchell, for hosting the meeting.