



MBG Research Committee meeting – Friday 5 April 2024, 14:00-15:30

Location: 1872-347

Attendants: Torben Heick Jensen (THJ), Anne Færch Nielsen (AFN), Mikkel Heide Schierup (MHS), Claus Oxvig (CO), Esben Lorentzen (EL), Inge Danielsen (ID), Rune Hartmann (RH), Tinna Stevnsner (TVS), Daan van Aalten (DvA), Jens Stougaard (JS), Jørgen Kjems (JK)

Guest: Michael Møller Hansen (MMH)

Agenda:

1. **Approval of the agenda** – *the agenda was approved.*
2. **Approval of minutes from the previous committee meeting** – *the minutes were approved.*
3. **Visit from Michael Møller Hansen (MMH) and presentation of AUFF** – *MMH is NAT's representative in the scientific evaluation committee for AUFF (Aarhus University Research Foundation). He presented the foundation's board, finances, and funding programmes. In addition, he stressed the importance of writing clear applications that can be understood by persons from other fields. The AUFF has introduced a 20% overhead on all grants in 2024. The most relevant grants for MBG are:*
 - a. *Recruiting Grants. The department can apply for these grants as part of ongoing recruitment of external candidates (assistant professor, associate professor, professor). About 7 million DKK per year are available for NAT.*
 - b. *NOVA project grants: Grants of up to 2,5 million DKK for research projects that are hard to fund via other calls. About 8 million DKK per year available for NAT. In 2023, NAT researchers submitted 29 NOVA applications and 11 of these were granted. Only permanently employed staff at AU can apply for AUFF NOVA.*
 - c. *International mobility. Grants of up to 200.000 DKK available for guests and sabbaticals. MMH encourages MBG to use these more often.*

MMH asked for suggestions for future activities in AUFF and this led to a general discussion in the committee. One suggestion was to fund salaries for non-tenured researchers who run start-ups (since these often struggle to fund their own salary). This could be based on a model parallel to Recruiting Grants, where one only becomes eligible to apply for AUFF funds after receiving start-up funding of a certain value from external funders.

4. Announcements

- a. *Summary of recent applications. MBG-affiliated researchers submitted 10 applications for NNF Investigator grants (Emerging, Ascending, Distinguished, NERD) in January. For Villum Experiment, 14 applicants were sent from MBG.*
- b. *Success rates for Lundbeck: The success rates for Lundbeck applications in 2023 are higher than previous years (4 Lundbeck Experiment, 4 Lundbeck postdoc and 1 Lundbeck fellow grant awarded to MBG).*
- c. *Update on MBG recruitments. Professor of Bioinformatics: 3 applicants have been invited for interviews for the position. Tenure-track assistant professor in Bioinformatics:*



Interview candidates will be selected shortly. Faculty position in Molecular Medicine or Molecular Cell Biology: 143 applicants, 27 have been shortlisted for external evaluation.

- 5. News from NAT's research committee:** *No news from NAT's research committee*
- 6. Nominations for EliteForsker 2025 and Villum Kann Rasmussen Annual Awarded.** *The committee discussed the criteria for the two prizes and agreed on candidates from MBG for both.*
- 7. Status for MBG Young Investigator Symposium.** *AFN gave an overview of the programme, including the number of group leaders who have come to MBG as Young Investigators. Given the ongoing recruitment of faculty members at MBG, the research committee discussed if the YIS should still run in parallel with this. The decision was to have a Young Investigator Symposium in 2024 but to limit the number of invited participants to 4-5.*
- 8. MBG Workshop on research integrity and freedom of research.** *NAT has asked all departments to organise annual events focused on research integrity; MBG will organise a workshop in November 2024.*
- 9. Upcoming funding deadlines:** *NNF Interdisciplinary Synergy (Deadline 29 May), Lundbeck Ascending Investigator (Deadline 30 May), NNF Data science investigator (Deadline 30 July), Villum Investigator (Deadline 21 Aug), ERC Advanced (Deadline 28 Aug)*
- 10. AOB**
 - a. BSS project about evaluation of research proposals. The project will be advertised in MBG's newsletter to attract volunteers.*
 - b. Nominations to IFD board. No interested candidates from MBG.*
 - c. A researcher based outside Denmark has expressed interest in applying for an NNF laureate grant to come to MBG. The research committee discussed the CV and competitiveness of the candidate but was not convinced that the person would be a strong match for the department.*
- 11. Next committee meeting**
 - a. 07 June*