



MBG Research Committee meeting – Tuesday 16 January 2024, 14:00-15:30

Location: 1872-547

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), Jens Stougaard (JS)

Not attending: Jørgen Kjems (JK), Daan van Aalten (DvA),

Agenda:

- 1. Approval of the agenda** – the agenda was approved.
- 2. Approval of minutes from the previous committee meeting** – the minutes were approved.
- 3. Announcements**
 - a. Summary of NNF applications in January: 7 applications for Emerging Investigator, 1 for Ascending Investigator, 1 for Distinguished Investigator.
 - b. Success rates for applications in autumn 2023. Good success rate for NNF project grants in Bioscience and Basic Biomedicine (42%), success rates for Lundbeck and Carlsberg are comparable to previous years. THJ noted that the research infrastructure grants awarded by Carlsberg tend to be larger than previous years.
 - c. An MBG applicant has made it to the second round of NNF Challenge 2024
 - d. Pablo Alcon (YIS 2022) has received a Villum Young Investigator grant of 9 million to set up his research group at MBG.
 - e. Within the YIS programme, outstanding candidates will be able to negotiate a 3-year extension of the programme, funded by MBG. This should be formalized in a format comparable to the midterm evaluation for tenure-track assistant professors to make the criteria for an extension clear and transparent. AFN and THJ will draft a document to describe the criteria and the evaluation process.
- 4. New AU recommendation for time-limited contracts**
 - a. AU management has sent out a memo describing a set of principles for limiting the use of multiple, short-term contracts at AU and invited the faculties to comment. The research committee discussed the phrasing and content of a response from MBG. While the committee understands the pressure of multiple, time-limited contracts, the current funding situation at the Danish universities makes it difficult to change at a local level. A central point in the principles is that scientific staff in time-limited contracts (mainly PhD students and postdocs) should have a realistic understanding of their career options at AU. This is already done as part of the annual staff development dialogues at MBG, but group leaders should make sure their group members are aware of the fact that most PhDs (and postdocs) end up in positions outside academia.



5. Summary of NAT meeting with Martin Ridderstråle from NNF

- a. The Senior Vice President for Medical Sciences at Novo Nordisk Fonden, Martin Ridderstråle, visited AU in January to learn about ongoing research activities. Presentations were given by researchers from MBG, iNANO and Chemistry and the foundation was encouraged to make this type of visit an annual event.

6. New NAT policy for IP and commercialization

- a. AU has produced an updated policy document to reflect the current needs for IP and commercialization. The research committee agreed with the overall content of the document but noted that a bottleneck for innovation activities at AU is to secure salary for the researchers behind the innovation activities. There was a suggestion to approach AUFF about possible support for this.

7. Summer school for recruitment of international students

- a. Postponed to a later meeting.

8. Additional input for department strategy document

- a. The research committee discussed strategic focus areas for MBG in preparation for the annual strategy meeting with the dean's office.

9. Upcoming funding deadlines

10. AOB

a. Status for hiring process at MBG

- i. Interviews planned for the position as Professor of Protein Science, external evaluations started for Professor of Bioinformatics and Tenure-track position in Bioinformatics, job posting for new group leader recruitments at MBG will be published shortly.

b. MBG policy for China Scholarship Council (CSC) postdocs and guest researchers

- i. The department has been asked if we accept guest researchers and postdocs supported by the CSC, given that AU discourages the enrollment of PhD students funded by CSC scholarship. The committee discussed the issue and decided to follow the line laid by the Danish universities to not accept researchers funded by the CSC.

11. Next committee meeting