

Portfolio board for Global development and International relations

Minutes	Meeting 2/22
Date	23 August, CET 10.00-14.00
Place	Teams

Present: Liv Tørres (chair)
Rainer Elk Anders
Nynke van den Broek
Kerry Brown
Christopher Cramer
Niklaus Labhardt
Juliet Nabyonga
Camilla Tenna Nørup Sørensen
Isabell Schierenbeck
Annelies Zoomers

Observers: Hanne Meldgaard, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Apologies: Elise Must, Marianne van der Wel (observer)

Item PSGLOBAL 8/22 Approval of agenda

No amendments were made.

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

Item PSGLOBAL 9/22 Minutes of meeting 1/22

Decision: *The minutes were approved.*

Item PSGLOBAL 10/22 Updates from the administration

- Update on the Portfolio Plan.
The Portfolio Plan is proofread and will be up for approval by the RCN Executive Board this autumn/winter.
- Global Health and the results of the AMR call.
The administration informed about the results from the joint call on Antimicrobial Resistance from a One Health Perspective. The funding decision was made by the Portfolio Board for Health on June 16th where Juliet and Nynke also participated. 18 proposals were submitted, 12 of which had partners from an LLMIC or India or China. 3 proposals, all

with partners from LLMIC were awarded funding for the total sum of NOK 46,9 million.

- Global health - Preparations for investment plan
The administration invited the Board's global health experts to give input to the thematic and strategic priorities for future global health calls that will be part of the Portfolio's investment plan for the next three years. Nynke, Juliet and Niklaus were willing to do this. The administration will follow up with them directly.
- The administration informed about the Research Council of Norway's participation in the Global Research Council's (GRC) upcoming pilot call on implementation and innovation for the achievement of the SDGs called Sustainable Development Goals Pilot Call. 11 countries will participate and have contributed with funding. More details about this will follow in September when we discuss the Portfolio's Investment plan.
- The administration continues the dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the budgetary restrictions in the yearly allotment to the Research Council. The Ministry has signaled a possibility for additional allotments in 2022. If so, the administration proposes to use these additional funds to finance eligible and relevant projects from this year's call for proposals that at the moment is not possible to fund due to lack of funds. A reserve list will be proposed to the board when the investments are up for approval in item 12/22 and 14/22.
- The Portfolio Boards were appointed in April 2019. The Board members have a function time of four years. The PS Global Development and International Relations changed some of its board members in 2021, hence not all members are up for change or re-appointment.

In connection with the (Re-) appointment of members to the Portfolio Boards, the RCN wants to do an evaluation of the boards profile, competence, and mandate. And even more importantly, a survey will be executed during this autumn to ensure feedback from the boards members on how the Portfolio Board system works, which tasks they should and should not perform and how to organize the work better.

In order to ensure that the opinion of the PS Global are passed on to those making the survey and evaluation and to the RCN Executive Board, the board will be given the possibility to follow up on this both in the September and the November/December meeting.

- The administration informed about the Governments Panorama strategy and the RCN activities within. The Portfolio boards of the RCN are asked to look into their portfolios and reflect on how the portfolio can contribute to the strategies objectives. This will be on the Board's September agenda and the member's feedback on this will be highly appreciated.

Decision: *The updates from the administration were taken note of.*

Item PSGLOBAL 11/22

Symposium 2022

The Board discussed the outline of the symposium on Equitable Global Partnerships. Given resource restraints the administration has proposed to join forces with another RCN initiative on developing guidelines for Responsible International Cooperation for the research and higher education sector in Norway. The chair of the board will work together with the administration, Christopher Cramer and Nynke to try and find a win-win solution that is able to merge the different concerns.

Decision: The Portfolio Board awaits a follow-up and suggestion from the chair on the format and content of the October 21 Symposium on Equitable Partnerships.

Item PSGLOBAL 12/22

Investment decision Global Health

In total, NOK 96 million was available for global health applications submitted for the two calls Research Projects and Collaborative Projects in Global Health. The total amount was however reduced to NOK 74 million due to the overall financial situation at the RCN. The calls had the same priorities, but there was a requirement to have a minimum of two partners that are not research organisations of which at least one must be from an LLMIC for Collaborative projects. Applications submitted for both calls compete for the total funding available.

30 applications were submitted for the call, 2 were rejected. Out of the 28 assessed proposals, 12 had an average grade of 5 or higher and were assessed for relevance. All but one of these were highly relevant.

Decision:

The Portfolio Board have decided to fund the following proposals: 336566, 336422, 335495, 335889, 336383, 335788 and 335643.

Due to insufficient funds, the Portfolio Board rejects the proposals with number 336337, 336279, 336614. However, they are put on a reserve list and can be funded in case additional funds from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should materialize. The project numbers are in prioritized order. 336605 scored a 4 on the Excellence criteria but had an average mark of 5. Due to the low mark on Excellence it will not be part of the reserve list and thus rejected.

The Portfolio Boards rejects proposal 335614 due to low relevance.

The Portfolio Boards rejects proposal 335798, 334451, 335762, 335638, 334405, 336080, 334524, 336604, 336186, 335561, 336435, 336372, 335853, 335470, 334237 and 334094 en bloc due to an average score on the panel assessments below 5.

Item PSGLOBAL 13/22

Investment decision UTENRIKS

The UTENRIKS (International relations, foreign- and security policy) sub-portfolio announced two separate calls for proposals with deadline on the 2nd February 2022. One was NOK 20 million available for research on the topic of Social science research on the Arctic and the second was for research on international relations, foreign and security policy in Asia, NOK 46 million.

The call for proposals on research on the Arctic received only 6 applications. Three of these had an average score below 5 by the experts and are therefore recommended for en-bloc rejection.

Three proposals were assessed for relevance and all three received marks of 6 or 7 and are eligible for funding.

The call for proposals on research on topics related to International relations and security with geographical focus on Asia received a total of 14 applications. 8 of the applications received an average score below 5 by the experts and are recommended for en-bloc rejection. Six proposals were assessed for relevance, of which three are assessed to be relevant for the call. The other three proposals were on topics outside of the calls requirements.

Decision:

On the topic social science research on the Arctic the Portfolio Board decided to fund the proposals 335863 and 334428. The Portfolio Board transfers the remaining fund to the next call.

The proposals 335492 are rejected due to insufficient funds available.

The proposals 335603, 335113 and 335756 are rejected en-bloc due to an average score on the panel assessments of 5 or below.

On the topic of International relations and security with a geographical focus on Asia, The Portfolio Board have decided to fund the proposals 335422, 334820 and 224594. *The proposals no.*

334594 and 334820 are asked to elaborate on how the projects meet the ODA requirements before contracts are entered in to.

The remaining funds will be transferred to the next call for proposals.

The Portfolio Board rejects the proposals 334521, 225978 and 334153 due to low score on relevance and portfolio considerations.

The Portfolio Boards rejects the proposals 336033, 335065, 334742, 334741, 334503, 335736, 335703, 334122 en-bloc due to an average score on the panel assessments of 5 or below.

Item PSGLOBAL 14/22

Investment decision Norglobal2

The NORGLOBAL sub-portfolio announced a NOK 24 million call for proposals on the topic food security and climate-smart agriculture in developing countries. Projects eligible for funding must target small-scale food producers. This call received 9 proposals. Four of the proposals received an average score below 5 by the experts and are recommended for en-bloc rejection.

Five of the proposals were assessed for relevance and all proposals received the grade of 7 for relevance and were eligible for funding given sufficient funds.

Decision:

The Portfolio Board decided to fund the proposals 335008 and 336061.

The Portfolio Boards rejects the proposals 335026, 335032 and 335131, due to insufficient funds. However, they are put on a reserve list and can be funded in case additional funds from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should materialize. The project numbers are in prioritized order.

The Portfolio Boards rejects the proposals 336047, 335660, 335102 and 334083 en bloc due an average score on the panel assessments of 5 or below.

Item PSGLOBAL 15/22

Financial situation of the RCN and the Re-organisation

The administration, by Director Kristin Danielsen informed about the last financial situation of the Research Council, - its current situation and the previous and present budget challenges. Some of the RCN portfolios have overextended their budgets and will have to reduce their future calls for proposal. The Portfolio for Global development and International Relations has balanced their budget by reducing the last call for proposals and are currently on budget.

The reorganization of the Research Council have lead to a merger of departments and adjustments in number and positioning of staff. The department for [Global development and International Relations](#) is merged with parts of the Department of [Democracy, administration and renewal](#). New name for the department is Democracy and International Relations. The new department will have the responsibility to manage two portfolios and Portfolio Boards i.e. The Portfolio on Global Development and International Relations, and the Portfolio on democracy, administration and renewal. But given that the Portfolio Boards, its structure, mandate and line of work are up for evaluation, it might be some additional changes. This will be clear by April 2023.

Decision

The Portfolio Board took note of the information, and asked for an overview of the Portfolios and Portfolio Boards in order to be better informed of the possibilities for cross-portfolio cooperation.

Item PSGLOBAL 16/21

Any other business

There was no other business. Next meeting will be on the 29 September, at the RCN premises at Lysaker outside of Oslo.