

DION Workshop – minutes

Time: 16.45-20.30

Place: Hovedbygget rom H414

Present: Torbjørn Pedersen (TB), Evert Bouman (EB), Kristoffer Lund Langlie (KL), Philipp Spenhoff (PS), Clara Good (CG), Margrethe Nergaard (MN), Marthe Emelie Buan (MB)

Absent: Ahmet Tezel (AT)

1 Update of current activities

Last Wednesday

Wednesday September 18, is the coming Last Wednesday (LW). Unfortunately the quizmaster, Dougie from The Three Lions pub is unable to come. It is decided to not cancel the quiz, but instead to find a replacing quizmaster. The reason for LW to be earlier this month is due to conflicting activities of NTNU (Forsker Grand Prix). Next LW event are in October and November. After this, a short evaluation will be held regarding the success of the event. LW of the previous months were received with enthusiasm by the audience, but attendance remains low.

English language course

The NTNU rector's office has declined DION's request for funding of an integral language course in the UK. However, the board advised DION to send separate requests to the different faculties. DION will try first to approach the IVT faculty to fund a pilot project.

General obligatory course for all PhD students

TP has attended a workshop regarding the introduction of a course on how to communicate research to the general public. A pilot project will start next fall. The pilot project will not be mandatory. The course itself will likely consist of a 3 European Credit (EC) workload. It is not clear whether the will become part of the current 30 EC curriculum or not. At IVT, a mandatory general course (IFEL8000, 4 EC) already exists, that is not part of the 30 ECs. However, the rules per faculty with respect to course sizes and workload differ. In the current set-up, the pilot project course will have a 2x2-day structure. One day will focus on general science communication, another on scientific writing. Two more days will be spent on evaluating deliverables.

Attendance Eureka conference

TP and KL has attended the Eureka conference. This is a networking conference for companies with research related activities in Europe. Most of it was not of direct relevance to DION. However, it is possible that TTO/innovation will present itself in a talk to PhD students, perhaps as part of the Last Wednesday.

Presentation of DION

The NT faculty requested a presentation of DION for all new PhD students at the faculty introduction day October 4. MB or TP will do the presentation. We investigate whether it is also possible to brand DION at the other faculties in a similar way.

Central Research Committee (SFU)

SFU has a new mandate, which implies that DION (and other stakeholders) moved from active participating status to a more observing role. TP will have a meeting with the central administration to address the issue.

New campus alternatives

DION has been invited to contribute to the views on the new campus. A vision is being developed on how the campus can play a role in the development of NTNU as a university towards 2040-2050. Though DION can draft a vision by itself it is decided to contact the PhD and temporary employee representatives at faculty levels for a brainstorm session. CG will coordinate this. At the same time, this meeting will also be a good opportunity to make DION more visible to the representatives. The proposed date for this meeting is September 24, 16.00h.

Medarbeidersamtale

DION received a request with respect to the medarbeidersamtale. The sender disagreed with the current practice at many faculties that the medarbeidersamtale is carried out by the main supervisor. It should be noted that this is against university guidelines, but apparently many departments enforce other practices due to apparent lack of staff. We acknowledge the fact that in many cases, a 'samtale' with the main supervisor is preferable and efficient, but there must always be an option where the PhD student has the possibility to discuss his or her relation to the supervisor with another member of staff. The threshold for such a talk should be as low as possible, and a situation where it is common practice to have the 'samtale' with the main supervisor, can provide an atmosphere in which a student is less likely to talk to another member of staff due to perceived peer pressure. TP will draft a statement on DION's standpoint with respect to the medarbeidersamtale. It should be noted that all employees (including PhDs) have a right to meet with the closest leader with responsibility for employees w.r.t payment, competence, etc. (Hovedtariffavtalen with the government).

PhD specific cases

Due to the confidential nature of the cases, these are not included in the minutes. However, a separate discussion on membership of the union(s) developed. DION shall try to even more point out the benefits of membership of a union. MN takes up the responsibility of main contact liaison for Tekna. KL will do so for Forskerforbundet.

Mental health initiative

DION has been involved in the development of mental health support for PhD students, as is available for other students. This turns out to be quite complicated, since a view on the magnitude of the problem is not available. It is decided to contact HSE/HR department for information about the drop-out rate of PhD-students, and forward this to the student representative to the NTNU board (Magnus) with the request for an opinion.

Practice of duty regulation

DION has received signals regarding different treatment of PhD students with respect to duty work. Some students have to work considerably more others. Also, between faculties different amounts of duty hours are awarded for the same tasks. This is a question for the pro rector of research.

PhD budget

The PhD budget is unclear to many students. Especially with respect to acquisition of a PC, travel funds etc. EB will follow up.

Anonymous information to DION

DION got a request on how to submit anonymous information to DION. The DION mail box can be used.

2 Organizational structure of DION

A draft organization structure and statutes was created by Julien Bourelle (former president), TP, KL and PS. The organizational document under revision needs to be elaborated and updated. A working group (WG) consisting of TP, PS and KL is formed. The WG will update the organizational document and recirculate to the rest of the board members for comments. Updates are made on the basis of the work division and experiences of the current year. In addition, the WG will take the initiative of registering DION in the national registries. The organization document can also provide a basis for a board transition as it contains the DION mandate, history and tasks.

3 Work division of the present board

After the board transition in May, the limited availability for meetings caused a somewhat unclear division of responsibilities of the DION board. As the present board is large, we define the following roles and responsibilities (also based on the organizational structure document). The goal is that the following board transition is made easier with clearer division of tasks. A more detailed description of these roles will be presented in the new organizational structure document.

TP – President

KL – Vice-president, Forskerforbundet contact person

MB – External communications (ensuring fast response and follow up of questions, SiN representative)

CG – Content management (Facebook, website, etc.)

EB – Organization of events, including Last Wednesday

MN – TEKNA contact person

PS – Special initiatives (English course, improved duty regulation)

AT – not yet determined

4 TO DO

- EB organizes quiz for Last Wednesday September 18.
- EB will follow up PhD budget question
- EB will enquire whether we can brand DION at IVT
- PS follows up English language course in IVT faculty.
- PS follows up on improved duty regulation
- MB will present DION at NT faculty October 4.
- CG will send out an invitation to all PhD and temporary employee representatives at the different faculties to provide input for the campus development September 24.
- TP will draft a statement on DION's standpoint with respect to the medarbeidersamtale.
- TP will follow up on mental health initiative
- TP will meet with the rector's office regarding representation in SFU.
- KL will enquire at HF for a DION presentation moment