When uncertainty prevails – Research leadership and career paths for young researchers

Akademiet for yngre forskere
Ingeborg Palm Helland
Contents

• Young Academy of Norway - Akademiet for yngre forskere (AYF)
• AYF 2016 survey among young researchers in Norway
• Findings related to uncertainties of future career
• Suggestions from AYF to improve research leadership and carrier paths
• Founded October 2015
• At present 34 members
• Open for talented, young researchers from all disciplines
• Work with broader issues such as policy development and innovative research dissemination
Tenk nytt om tellekanter, Haugstad!

En siteringsindikator kan være positiv for å nå forskningskvalitet fremfor kvantitet, men vi trenger fornyelse av tellekantsystemet.

HUMANITARIA Begrensingen og graden av seleksjon er en realitet. Fra Haugstad (I) har nyttig informasjon om en fornyelse tilfredlig at idéer som har blitt plassert i nivå og deres effekt ikke må overføres

Norsk kunstforskning snubler inn i fremtiden

Kan kunst og vitenskap gå hånd i hånd i fremtidens Norge? Ja, mener kronikkforfatterne, men ikke hvis departementet får det som de ønsker.

Kronikk: Mobilitet i akademia - et liv som nomade?

I kampen om de beste hødene kan ikke mobilitet være et mål i seg selv, skriver de fem kronikkforfatterne.

Kampen om talentene

Det er hovedenhet av fordeling er nøkkelen for å lære mange store samfunn at forbedre og omstillingen musk og økonomi ikke overfører. Men før å leve med fordeling tror også betegnelsen.

http://akademietforyngreforskere.no/publikasjoner/
Hearings – input to policy

http://akademietforyngreforskere.no/publikasjoner/
Research communication
Debates and talks
2016:

✓ Researcher career and uncertain prospects
✓ Cross-sectorial mobility
✓ Career guidance and career development
✓ Differences between disciplines
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2018 additions:
✓ Research quality
✓ Internationalisation
✓ Diversity
✓ Work-life balance
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http://akademietforyngreforskere.no/publikasjoner/
Sample 2016

- **840 participants**, 38 or younger
- Around **75%** of the respondents are on a temporary contract
- **60 %** Norwegian, **40 %** foreign
- **56 %** women, **44 %** men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD students</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdocs</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior researchers</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discipline and type of institution

- MN: 30.7%
- HUM: 13.8%
- TECH: 13.6%
- MED: 19.2%
- AGR/FISH/VET: 2.3%

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University college</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research institute</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University hospital</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• Foreign citizens more often temporary

• Women more often temporary
Negatively affected by **uncertain working conditions**

- 60.4% of those in **temporary employment** experience this as problematic
- Affects different groups in different ways

Do you experience the lack of a permanent employment as problematic?

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<th></th>
<th>Senior researchers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.56%</td>
<td>31.48%</td>
<td>22.13%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>2.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Believe in permanent position?

Tror du med tiden at du vil få fast ansettelse som forsker?

**Kvinner**
- Ja: 9.5%
- Nei: 33.2%
- Kanskje: 16%

**Menn**
- Ja: 8.8%
- Nei: 24.8%
- Kanskje: 7.7%
Career guidance

- More than 8 out of 10 respondents have never received career guidance at their institution
Do you recommend a research career?

Ville du anbefale unge i dag en forskerkarriere?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ja</th>
<th>Nei*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Older to a lesser extent than younger
- Women to a lesser extent than men
- Temporary to a lesser extent than permanent

Looking more into the data, we find that **UNCERTAIN WORKING conditions** are the main reasons for this
Postdocs and senior researchers emphasize challenges in a life phase perspective; psychological/social burden

"I don’t want to continue at any price. I love my job, but I cannot withstand being temporarily employed in many years, without any prospect to a permanent position, when I already have so much relevant competence”

Woman (38), postdoc at university, HUM, 6-7 years of experience

"To work as a researcher is a privilege, but when I approach the age of 40, have children, a loan to pay off, etc., the question is whether a more stable working situation would not be preferable.”

Man (37), researcher, university, MED. At least 10 years of experience
...they also experience to have **fewer rights, feel less appreciated and less included**

”I have to ensure that the ones that have a permanent position are satisfied with my work/me. This is a barrier to an open and inclusive working environment (...) and can lead to a ”yes”-culture around more senior and temporary employed staff. (...) I experience that the university sector appreciates me less than its permanent employees.”.

**Man (36), postdoc, university, MN, at least 10 years of experience**

”Unsure working future affects how I feel and my everyday life at work. In a permanent position I would have been engaged differently in my working place, which I believe would have been good for my employer too.”

**Woman (34), researcher, institute, SS, 5-6 years of experience**
What is needed?

• More attractive working conditions and clearer career paths
• Career guidance
  – Clearer focus on career options and goals, reality orientation
  – Gain overview of lacking competences, both scientific and broader, more transferable skills
• Cultural change
  – Start treating temporary colleagues as assets
  – Create inclusive working environments
Investing in young researchers should not be considered a risk, but an opportunity!
We want to hear from you!

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