

DION Annual Report April – December 2023

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Summary

This report gives a general overview of DION's activity from April 2023 to December 2023. It includes an overview of the events, collaborations, and representation of temporary scientific staff's interests in various councils.

It also includes an overview of finances and the budget for next year and recommendations to the new board.

Board overview

The board for the period of April 2023 – December 2023 was elected after DION's elections that started during DION's AGM meeting on the 18th of April 2023. The results of the elections were made public on the 21st of April 2023, and the new board was called in for the transition meeting on the following Monday, the 24th of April 2023. The board composition is presented in Table I.

Table I: DION Board members for the period of April 2023 – December 2023.

Name	Affiliation	Position
Davit Gigilashvili	IE – IDI, Gjøvik	Post doc, Board member
Shubham Jain	IE – IDI, Trondheim	Post doc, Board member
Diana Giovanni Magnano	ØK – IIF, Ålesund	PhD, Vice-president
Mobina Mobini	IE – IDI, Gjøvik	PhD, Board member
Anastasia Skarpeti	IV – IHB, Ålesund	PhD, Board member
Fei Song	IV – EPT, Trondheim	PhD, Board member
Gabriel Szalkowski	IE – IIK, Gjøvik	PhD, Board member
Gabriela Kazimiera Warden	NV – IMA, Trondheim	PhD, President

Throughout the board period, seven board meetings have been organized, one of which was a physical meeting in Trondheim. The DION board members based in Gjøvik and Ålesund travelled to Trondheim. The dates of the meetings are summarized in Table II.

Table II: Overview over DION board meetings between April and December 2023.

Date	Type of meeting	Form
24.04.2023	Transition meeting	Hybrid
05.05.2023	Board meeting	Hybrid
02.06.2023	Board meeting	Hybrid
26.08.2023	Board meeting	Physical
13.09.2023	Board meeting	Hybrid
12.10.2023	Board meeting	Hybrid

14.11.2023	Board meeting	Hybrid
30.11.2023	Board meeting	Digital
7.12.2023	Annual general meeting	Hybrid
11.12.2023	Transition meeting	Hybrid

The DION board decided on the task distribution among its members during the board meeting in May, and the board has tried to keep the initial distribution the best way possible. The following table summarizes the main areas of contribution by the respective members, but it is important to emphasize that event organization, discussing inquiries and cases was a collective effort.

Table III: Task distribution between the board members.

Name	Main area of contribution
Davit Gigilashvili	Representation in Innovation Council, Norwegian language courses survey, PhD supervision training working group, helping with organizing and hosting events in Gjøvik.
Shubham Jain	Responsible for website, newsletter, helping with organizing and hosting events in Trondheim.
Diana Giovanni Magnano	Responsible for grants and contests, helping with organizing and hosting events in Ålesund.
Mobina Mobini	Responsible for social media, helping with organizing and hosting events in Gjøvik.
Anastasia Skarpeti	Responsible for contacts with other organizations in Ålesund, helping with organizing and hosting events in Ålesund, help with the Norwegian language courses survey, create posters for the events.
Fei Song	Treasurer, main responsible for mental health awareness month events and other events in Trondheim.
Gabriel Szalkowski	Responsible for email inquiries, helping with organizing and hosting events in Gjøvik.
Gabriela Kazimiera Warden	Representation in NTNU Research Council, contact with other organizations and collaborators, contact with media, representation in language policy council, helping with organizing and hosting events in Trondheim.

DION activities and events

Trondheim:

Pride Walk and debate on “Queer in academia”

2023.Sep.09, DION joined the Trondheim Pride Walk to show solidarity and support towards LGBT+ community. The Pride walk last few hours, and participants felt touched and cheerful to be part of the supporting force for LGBT+ community

On September 5th, DION co-hosted the debate on the topic “Queer in academia” together with Trondheim Pride and NTNU LGBTQ+ employee network, and the DION president was part of the discussion. The event was attended by around 30 participants, it sparked discussion and we received positive feedback.



Foraging trip for edible plants and mushrooms

From 2023.Aug.31 to 2023.Sep.07, DION organized 3 foraging trips in collaboration with Naturopplevelse Bösch (Org nr 929497686). Among these foraging trips, 1 is edible plants and 2 are mushrooms.

The foraging trips have gained great popularities as the signing up slots were filled up within short time. And the small amount of sign-up fee has improved the show-up rate greatly. Around 50 ppl joined in total, and they all managed to bring some food back to their dinning table at the end of the trip.

Participants are generally very satisfied with the foraging experience, many were inspired to discover and utilized more of the nature. Majority expressed the wish to join such events next foraging season.



Board Game Night

On Friday 13th of November, we organized a board game event at Work Work in Trondheim.

Around 10 DION members joined, the atmosphere was very nice, and the participants reported that it was a nice way to spend time with colleagues in a non-scientific context.



Nidar factory visiting

2023.Oct.30, DION brought 30 chocolate lovers to the factory of Nidar. With the guides, many different chocolate and candies have been provided for tasting/sampling. The production line was also toured.

This event was very popular, 30 spots was signed up within one day with many left on waiting list. The event also have 100% show up rate.



Mental health workshop (co-hosted with Sit)

On 2023.Nov.1st and 8th, 2 mental health workshop were hosted in Gløshuagen and online. Kristian Drøsshaug from Sit facilitated the workshop.

Many participants found the content relatable to their own experience and feeling, and they believed Kristian's tips useful in handling stress during research.



Tekna Seminar

On Tuesday 14th of November, we organized a seminar with Tekna on the Norwegian working model in auditorium S4, Sentralbygg, Gløshaugen. It was attended by almost 50 participants and was well-received.



Yoga and meditation (co-hosted with Fritidhus)

On 2023. Nov.15th and 22nd, 2 Yoga & meditation events was held in Gløshugen and Dragvoll. Gløshugen campus had more sign-ups and show-ups. Each event last ca 1.5 hour, with 45 min yoga and 45min meditation.

The majority of the participants expressed their satisfaction towards the events, stating the experience was relaxing and helpful with handling stress. Some suggested the level of yoga should be modified to a more beginner-friendly level.



Lunch seminar: occupational health (co-hosted with BHT)

On 2023.Nov.10th and 24nd, 2 seminars with BHT were hosted. One physical and one digital.

During the seminar, many purposed suggestions towards how to better handle challenging situation and conflict for the system. Many current issues were addressed.

2. Mental health

A person's ability to:

- Cope with stresses in life
- Deal with others and build relationships
- Adjust to change and deal with diversity



Scientific presentation workshop with Michael P. Alley

On June 5th DION organized a seminar/workshop with Michael P. Alley with streaming available in both Trondheim and Gjøvik where snacks and soft drinks were offered to the participants.

The engagement from the audience was very high, and the feedback we have received was solely positive.

No pictures.

Gjøvik

Quiz Night and Pizza in Gjøvik

On June 1st, 25 DION members gathered to test their trivia quiz skills. The quiz was created specifically for this event, and in addition to common knowledge questions, included questions about NTNU, Gjøvik, and most importantly about DION – to raise awareness about DION and its activities in a fun and gamified way. Pizza was served at the event, and the three winners received gift cards from DION.



Skibladner Trip – 09 July 2023

The event was a trip to Hamar from Gjøvik, on board the ship Skibladner, with a return by public bus. The time spent in Hamar was decided individually, with various activities available. The event was initially proposed as a DION grant, but co-organized by a DION board member. We had 24 participants.



Board Game evening - Gjøvik

The event was board games with snacks. We gathered on campus and played board games for 4 hours. We received a lot of positive feedback on this event.



Mental health workshops – November 2023

Two workshops with psychologist Ric Lugo, PhD. We discussed the most pressing issues surrounding mental health of PhDs and postdocs, how to communicate about them, and strategies to deal with them.

We have no pictures as these were intended to be safe spaces and we wanted to ensure that the privacy of the participants was respected.

Share your Culture Event - Gjøvik

Share your culture was another successful event in Gjøvik, where DION members presented their culture by sharing their country's food, music, traditions, and so on. This event was very lively with a lot of laughter and enjoyment. 11 countries were represented at the event, and overall, more than 30 people participated in the event.



Visit to Kistefos Museum - Gjøvik

DION, in collaboration with IDI and IIK departments organized a 1-day family-friendly excursion to the Kistefos Museum. Thanks to generous contributions from IDI and IIK, DION arranged transportation and covered admission tickets for DION members and their families. The event was the most popular one DION has ever organized in Gjøvik, where 45 people joined the excursion.



Ålesund

Yoga - June

After the first time that we tried yoga on our campus, many people continued asking to organise new sessions. DION organized a yoga event before the summer vacation



Climbing with Trident - November

DION and Trident coordinate a climbing event with pizza. It was very successful, and we had many people in the queue list.



Mental Health month in DION and Trident - November

Caring about our colleagues, we collaborated with Trident to organize a visit at bybadet. It was an enjoyable visit, but we forgot the pictures because of the water :)



DION mental health event- November 2023 - November

DION was happy to allocate a sauna event because of the mental health month. Norwegians love saunas and we had a nice evening at the floating sauna :)



Kriya Yoga meditation

As part of DION's Mental Health Month initiative, we organized a free introductory course in **Kriya Yoga meditation** twice in September and November.



DION Grants

This chapter presents an overview of the grants offered by DION to PhD candidates, Postdocs, and other temporary scientific employees at NTNU for various activities. The grants, which amount to a maximum of 2000 NOK, are intended to cover expenses related to organizing summer activities that provide opportunities for PhD students and post-docs to network, learn, and enhance their experience. All eligible candidates at NTNU campuses are welcome to apply for the grant. DION prioritizes granting one in each of the three cities: Trondheim, Gjøvik, and Ålesund. Applications that target an open audience are given preference. However, applications for the exclusive benefit of one department or faculty are still accepted, but applications accessible to all DION members are prioritized.

DION Fall Grant 2023

DION received four grant applications from each of the cities Trondheim, Gjøvik, and Ålesund. After a thorough selection process and taking into account the budget allocated for the fall grant, we decided to award grants to two applicants: Hikaru-Cageball in Sluppen and Luigi- a climbing gathering at Buldrehallen.

DION Summer grant 2023

DION received six grant applications from Trondheim, Gjøvik, and Ålesund. After a thorough selection process and considering the budget allocated for the fall grant, we awarded grants to three applicants: Yu for organizing a Werewolves of Miller's Hollow game evening, Safa for arranging a Skibladner trip to Hamar or other available destinations, and Julia for conducting a Kirya meditation session.

DION communication

This chapter gives a general overview of the activities of DION on social media and other communication channels.

Innsida

During the board period, Innsida was our most active communication channel with over 66 entries. This channel should remain the main channel in the coming year, and all messages should be announced there. This includes information about the upcoming events, grant calls, collaborative events etc.

Social media

DION has been active on different social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp. Events are usually created on Facebook and shared with the public. We are happy to announce that during the last year, we have increased engagement through our social media channels. For example, on Instagram, only in the period between Sep2 to Nov 30, we interacted with 94 accounts (42.4%) and reached 375 followers (5.3% increase). In the mentioned period, we created 26 posts and 57 stories.

If you are not following us on social media already, you can find us here:



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[X \(Twitter\)](#)

DION website

The Website was maintained as usual. The tasks included updating the pages with events and information, and general maintenance of the WordPress platform.

Newsletter

A newsletter was put out in November reporting activities and addressing the members of DION. A new design was initiated to make the document more readable and interesting. The newsletter was sent out to the subscribers as well as uploaded to the website.

Email inquiries

This year we have received over 30 inquiries, 35 to be precise. We have answered all of them to the limits of our knowledge and capabilities, always referring to the relevant resources and authorities when possible. The most pressing topics were problems with supervision and inadequate work environment, working regulation about sick leave and salary, and union membership. The fact that we received many emails about unresolved conflict, even after HR and union intervention, highlights the need for a PhD-ombud / stipendiatombud.

In media

DION's new board was first mentioned in Universitetsavisa (UA) in an article from 24.05.2023. Since then, DION's president has been asked to give their opinion to the Universitetsavisa on several occasions. The interviews were related to the stipendiatombud debate that has been an important topic at NTNU throughout this year as well as the mental health aspect of PhDs, mainly on the loneliness reported by this group to the Occupational Health. Recently, DION's president appeared in UA due to their role in the NTNU Language Policy Council. In addition, the DION board has written one opinion piece on the stipendiatombud case, and DION's president has written an opinion together with the NTNU board representative for temporary scientific staff on the topic of local wage negotiations. The articles are available online, and here is the list (in chronological order):

- <https://www.universitetsavisa.no/dion-midlertidig-ansatte-regina-paul/new-dion-board-members-elected-eikrem-candidacy-may-have-increased-participation/379056>
- https://www.universitetsavisa.no/dion-forskningsutvalget-gabriela-kazimiera-warden/slik-vil-hun-trygge-stipendiatene-men-ntnu-tror-ikke-det-trengs/379200?fbclid=IwAR3DR5BX-Eb52P6ZBxZ1MUGnOLSq2CGxAvThICKZSyKgSgJA7W_HY1eX9Hw
- <https://www.universitetsavisa.no/dion-gabriela-kazimiera-warden-midlertidig-ansatte/why-do-temporary-scientific-employees-need-an-ombudsperson/381369>
- <https://www.universitetsavisa.no/gabriela-kazimiera-warden-lonnsforhandlinger-nicolai-winter-hjelm/the-importance-of-local-wage-negotiations/384795>
- <https://www.universitetsavisa.no/bedriftshelsetjenesten-doktorgradstipendiater-ensomhet/rapporterer-okende-ensomhet-blant-stipendiatene/386759>
- <https://www.universitetsavisa.no/norsk-kurs-ntnu-nynorsk/desse-tiltaka-skal-fiksespraket-pa-ntnu/393264>

DION collaborations

This chapter will give a summary over the collaborations we've had during the board period. It is important to mention that during the joint events, DION used short time to introduce our

organization and its role to the participants, as well as encourage the participants to get involved with the DION board. This practice should be continued by the next DION board.

NIRS

During the board period there was only one meeting together with NIRS regarding collaboration. Possible collaboration regarding språkkaffe, introduction seminar for foreign employees and similar events were discussed. However, due to the enormous workload for both NIRS and DION, we have not managed to organize any events together during this time. The collaboration is still active, and it is recommended that the new board re-establishes the collaboration.

SiN

SiN (Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge) is the umbrella organization for local organizations working with the rights of temporary scientific staff in Norwegian universities. This includes UiB, UiO, NMBU, OsloMet, USN, UiT, UiS, UiA and NTNU. The local organizations are invited to quarterly meetings with the SiN-board. During our board period, three such meetings were organized, one of them being also the SiN annual general meeting, in which new board members were elected.

SiN works with PhD and postdoc-related issues at the national level, having direct influence on the decision-making bodies in Norway by being asked for their opinions on the newly proposed laws etc. Therefore, the local organizations are often asked for contributions when forming these opinions. DION board would like to advocate for more involvement in the national debate on the issues related employment of PhD candidates from red-listed countries, and we would like to recommend that the new board tries to establish collaboration with SiN on that topic. Another important topic that we think should be of interest on the national level is the use of Norwegian vs. English at universities. We believe that working together with the other organizations in SiN could help make our case stronger.

StartUp Migrants

Collaboration with StartUp Migrants was established by the previous DION board, and the details regarding this collaboration can be found in the previous annual report. In short, StartUp Migrants offers entrepreneurship preschools for PhD and postdocs at NTNU, with focus on the foreign candidates.

DION's role in this collaboration is to file an application for the financial support from NTNU once a year (in the fall), and advertising for the preschools using our social media channels and innsida. It is recommended that the new board continues with this collaboration.

Unions

DION board keeps in constant contact with different labor unions, especially Tekna and Forskerforbundet. As a result of this cooperation, we are able to organize seminars for temporary scientific regarding their rights and possibilities. The events are usually well-attended and are positively received, therefore, we would encourage the new board to continue with these collaborations.

Brohode Havbruk

The collaboration with Brohode Havbruk was also established by the previous DION board. Brohode Havbruk is a collaborative project between the industry, research community and public administration working with in the various branches of the maritime sectors. DION's role in this collaboration is to distribute the information about the upcoming events and meetups for the members of Brohode Havbruk through our social media channels and innsida. This collaboration should also be continued in the coming year.

Akademiet for yngre forskere

A collaboration was done with Akademiet for yngre forskere to organize the Young Researcher's night 2023. DION co-organized the event and allocated 5000NOK for it. It has attracted an audience of around 50 participants. The current DION board recommends a reconsideration of DION's involvement in this event, especially the sum offered to the organizers.

Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA)

DION set up a collaboration with MCAA- Norway chapter for information and events. DION co-organized the Young Researchers Night 2023 in collaboration MCAA and Akademiet for yngre forskere, where MCAA co-sponsored the event as well. The collaboration is still active for future events and information sharing.

Michael Alley

The collaboration with Michael Alley was previously described in the section on events. We recommend future collaboration on other workshops with Michael, as it was very well received and useful for the participants.

Ric Lugo, PhD.

See Mental Health Workshops – November 2023 above.

IDI and IIK Departments

DION continues collaboration with IDI and IIK departments in Gjøvik to organize excursion events for their members. Generous contributions from the departments have enabled DION to arrange trips for several years in a row. Therefore, we recommend the new board to continue the collaboration and expand it to other departments, because the participants in the events usually represent a broad range of departments at NTNU.

Trondheim Pride

Trondheim Pride is a yearly festival organized in September by the members of the LGBTQ+ community in Trondheim. Since the president of DION was also involved with the organization of Trondheim Pride, a collaboration was established, leading to a panel debate with the title "Queer in Academia". 3 out of 4 members present in the panel were temporary scientific staff.

During the parade day, DION participated with our banner to show the support towards the LGBTQ+ community. The collaboration should be continued by the new board, as it shows that DION is open and supporting of all their members.

NTNU Include

DION was contacted by the leaders of NTNU INCLUDE in order to establish a possible collaboration in the summer of 2023. They are a new established network for NTNU employees with disabilities, neurodivergence and mental health issues. The collaboration involves distributing the information about their events, but also the network itself. It is important to continue with this collaboration, as it shows DION's support for all our members. It is recommended that the new board mentions the network to anyone contacting DION regarding disability care or other similar issues in their employment.

Network for LGBTQ+ employees at NTNU

DION has collaborated with the network during Trondheim Pride at the "Queer in Academia" panel debate. It has also shared information about the network. This collaboration should continue in the next board period, due to its importance of showing and giving support to DION's members.

Fritidshus

Fritidshus is a charity organization in Trondheim, they are happy to provide temporary employees more chance of yoga & mediation if DION can arrange the place (>30 ppl).

Trident

Trident is a local volunteer interest organization for PhDs and Postdocs in Ålesund organizing social events. It started at the IHB and now is open to all departments on the campus. Trident is a local volunteer interest organization for PhDs and Postdocs in Ålesund organizing social events. It started at the IHB and is now open to all departments on the campus. Our collaboration helped improve DION's visibility on campus and helped co-organise events.

Ålesund PhD forum

The PhD forum is an area trying to connect all the Ph.D.s on the Ålesund campus. They organize different events and have their own channel in TEAMS, giving space for all to share information. Recently, we had a meeting and decided to collaborate. They can support DION since they have their own funds and collaborating aid our visibility on campus.

DION's role at the university

This section will briefly summarize DION's role at the university, regarding laws and rights of temporary scientific staff.

Forskningsutvalget (FU)

Part of DION's mandate is to represent the interests of temporary scientific staff in NTNU Research Council/Committee (Forskningsutvalget). The president of DION has been appointed to follow this task during the board period.

Representation in FU involves monthly 4 hours meetings, and the other members of FU are the faculty vice deans for research and the prorector for research. FU discusses issues related to research in the broader sense of the concept, infrastructure etc. For DION, it is important to remain the seat in the council, as it gives us a direct voice in the discussions regarding PhD and postdoc related issues at NTNU, such as the stipendiatombud discussion and others.

Innovasjonsutvalget

Another mandate that DION has is to represent the interests of temporary scientific staff in the NTNU Innovation Council (Innovasjonsutvalget - IU). The DION board member Davit Gigilashvili has been appointed to follow this task during the board period.

Representation in IU involves monthly and occasionally additional extraordinary meetings. IU discusses issues related to innovation, its instruments, value creation and societal impact, both locally as well as in a broader political context, covering topics such as “2% strategien” - government’s ambition to increase industrial R&D investments to 2% of the GDP by 2030, and what this means for academia and NTNU.

It is important for DION to remain the seat in the council, since it provides an instrument to provide the perspectives of the temporary scientific staff on innovation-related developments at NTNU.

PhD supervisor training working group

PhD supervisors and their skills play a critical role in PhD education. Pro-Rector for Research and Dissemination established a working group to investigate issues related to PhD supervisor training at NTNU. The working group was led by the Vice Dean of Research. DION was contacted to nominate a DION representative for the working group, and the DION board member Davit Gigilashvili was appointed to join the working group. The working group met 4 times in the period of 23.08.23 to 25.10.23, which included 3 meetings and 1 full day workshop on October 3rd in Trondheim, where DION representative participated in person. The objectives of the working group were to:

1. Investigate and survey existing PhD supervisor training opportunities at NTNU, including information collection from the faculties.
2. Propose future supervisor training opportunities and discuss distribution of organizing responsibilities.
3. Evaluate what desired and needed learning outcomes are of such training, considering perspectives of different stakeholders.
4. Assess the distribution of operating costs.

It is important that a DION board member was represented in the working group, since PhD candidates are central stakeholders in the PhD supervisor training, and the concerns and needs of the PhD candidates were an important part of the discussion. The report summarizing the working group activities was submitted to the Pro-Rector for Research and Dissemination in the beginning of November 2023.

We strongly encourage future boards to actively participate in similar working groups whenever needed.

NTNU language policy council

DION was contacted in May 2023 to appoint a PhD candidate to represent temporary scientific staff in the soon-to-be established NTNU Language policy council. After a short internal discussion, the DION board appointed the president of DION to represent the interests of temporary scientific staff in the council. Since then, three meetings have been held, in which the priorities for 2024 were discussed.

It has been agreed that DION's current president will continue in the council as the PhD representative, even though she will not continue in the DION board. She will be reporting back to the new DION board in the coming year. The decision was made due to Gabriela's personal background as a non-native fluent Norwegian speaker, which makes it possible to represent the complicated issues related to this part of employment at NTNU.

Survey on problematic situations with supervisors

In the period between October 10th to October 31st a survey on problematic situations with supervisors was conducted by DION by the request of FU-meeting on August 28th, 2023. The main objective of this survey was to gather information about the scope of the problematic situations between the PhD candidates and their supervisors. The full report will be available at DION's website before 31.12.2023, but some highlights include:

- 423 answered to the survey, which is more than 15% of all temporary scientific staff. This makes the presented numbers quite robust.
- 30% of all respondents reported having been in a problematic situation with their supervisor(s), and most of the conflicts were a mixture of academic and personal based, followed by academic based. Only 52% of the people reporting problematic situations have contacted someone about the problem. The report being afraid of speaking or lack of knowledge about the guidelines regarding this issue.
- 66% of all respondents were unaware of guidelines regarding handling of this type of situations.
- 73% of respondents were in favor of establishing a stipendiatombud position at NTNU.

Survey on Norwegian language courses

Our survey ran from 15.10.23 to 01.12.23. The objective of the survey was to understand the situation and build statistics regarding the Norwegian language courses at NTNU: what the current offers are, what are the needs of the temporary scientific staff, and whether or not they are happy with the quality of the offers, and whether the courses are equally accessible to all temporary scientific staff in all three NTNU cities.

We obtained quantitative and qualitative data that we have analyzed. In sum, the quantitative data showed:

The qualitative data revealed some crucial topics for the new board to discuss with NTNU after request from the participants:

1. All the campuses are facing issues with the language course, which does not meet the needs of the employees. There were comments about the new language policy showing the frustrations of the PhDs/postdocs.
2. It is time-consuming, structured for students and not for staff, and poor quality. Many suggested ways to make it more relevant for the scientific staff: online/out of working hours, close to the working environment, and sub courses of the levels (7.5 credits instead of 15), oral practice and more interactive, not many substitute teachers with different teaching approaches, inequivalent level among the participants
3. Workload, location and cost were the most reported. It is an expensive course, especially for non-EU citizens; some departments cover some levels, while others use money from the projects or do not allocate compensation so that the scientific staff cover the expenses.
4. Campuses facing different issues. In Ålesund, many reported that not all the courses are available, and they would like a språkkaffe. Trondheim needs courses outside of working hours and offered at the campus Gløshaugen. Participation from Gjøvik campus was relatively low to draw strong conclusions, but one of the concerns mentioned was the lack of access to the level 4 course.

Additionally, from the data, we identify issues, while many participants have given suggestions that can work for NTNU and the staff. Particularly, the crucial issues reported related to the NTNU's Norwegian language course are the following:

1. It is an intensive course
2. There are problems with admission
3. There is a high cost, particularly for non-EU students
4. It needs to adjust the syllabus for better feasibility.
5. The course lacks sublevels, making it difficult for students to concentrate on specific topics.
6. Current course levels do not align with the CEFR requirements, and the online version has lower quality compared to physical classes.

The suggestions from the participants include dividing the intensive course into sublevels, adapting courses for PhDs and Post-docs, enhancing online interactivity, and improving the structure of both physical and online classes. The emphasis is on oral practice, more interactive online sessions, and increased accessibility, with considerations for evening hours and hybrid classes.

The data is still being analyzed, and a separate report will be published at a later stage with detailed analysis of the language survey results.

DION promotion

DION has been asked to present the organization during the PhD seminars for new PhD candidates at different faculties. This activity is summarized in Table I. We hope that in the coming year more (ideally, all) faculties will request a presentation of DION at their onboarding seminars. This is something that the new DION board could be proactive about in the coming year.

Table IV: Overview over DION promotion requested by different faculties.

Date	Faculty
31.08.2023	SU
29.09.2023	HF
21.09.2023	IE
26.10.2023	IV

Financial overview

DION board had 80034.6 kr for the board period. The expenses are presented in Table V.

Table V: DION board's spendings for 2023

Type of spending	Date	Amount
National day picture prize	17.05.2023	320 kr
Quiz Night with pizza in Gjøvik	01.06.2023	3846.6 kr
Workshop on scientific presentations with Michael P. Aller – streaming with snacks	05.06.2023	668.7 kr
Yoga event in Ålesund	29.06.2023	2000 kr
Skiblander trip in Gjøvik (Grant)	09.07.2023	4830 kr
SiN membership		3000 kr
Physical board meeting in Trondheim (includes travel, accommodation, lunch, and dinner)	26.08.2023	28534.85 kr
Foraging trips in Trondheim	31.08.2023,	3500 kr

	06.09.2023 and 07.09.2023	
Meditation in Ålesund (Grant)	08.09.2023	2500 kr
Game Night Trondheim (Grant)	18.08.2023	940 kr
Roll up banner for Trondheim		2715.95 kr
SiT lunch talks for Mental Health Awareness month Trondheim	01.11.2023 and 08.11.2023	3000 kr
Yoga with Fritidshus Trondheim	15.11.2023 and 22.11.2023	2000 kr
Board Game Night Gjøvik	12.12.2023	531.3 kr
Share your culture in Gjøvik	03.11.2023	406.1 kr
Workshop on Mental Health Awareness in Gjøvik	01.11.2023	187.8 kr
Workshop on the communication of and about mental health problems	17.11.2023	399.72 kr
Tekna seminar in Trondheim	14.11.2023	421.4 kr
Cage ball in Trondheim (Grant)	21.10.2023 and 4.11.2023	1800 kr
Coffee in Gjøvik (for events)		667 kr
Sauna and bybadet in Ålesund (Mental Health Awareness Month)	Sauna: 24.11.2023 (initially organized) - 2.12.2023 (happened because of the weather) Bybadet: 28.11.2023	3500 kr
Yoga in Ålesund (Mental Health Awareness Month)	28.11.2023	252 kr
AGM	07.12.2023	Max. 6000 kr

The remaining budget as of the day of writing the report is 3333.18 kr. Note that the AGM expenses are allocated costs, and the final number can change.

For next year's budget, we propose the cost distribution presented in Table VI.

Table VI: Proposed budget for 2024.

Type of spending	Cost	Comments
Physical meeting	30 000 kr	
DION Grants	16 000 kr	4 grant calls, at least 2 winners in each call
AGM	6000 kr	For all cities
Mental Health Awareness month	12 000 kr	For all cities

Foraging trips	6000 kr	For all cities
Quiz, board game and other social evenings	12 000 kr	For all cities
Workshops, seminars	10 000 kr	For all cities
Collaboration with other organizations	7500 kr	
SUM	99 500 kr	

Recommendations for the new board 2024

The board of 2023 would like to offer the new board some recommendations regarding the organization and running the board:

- DION should try to become even more visible through activities on social media, insida posts, representation in various councils and committees. It is crucial to make DION's members about its job and influence. Therefore, it is important to continue to work with all faculties and present DION in their seminars for new PhDs.
- DION board should also consider organizing more casual events, such as hang outs, hikes, visits to museums etc. This is according to participants' feedback, since many participants reported appreciating the possibility of having an outlet for their difficulties with their colleagues that was happening outside of campus and at events that were not scientific. We see that there is a great need for this kind of events.
- In addition, DION should maintain the collaboration with the already established partners and be open to collaboration with others.
- Scientific and transferable skills events should be organized, with a frequency that is not too overwhelming.
- The new DION board should consider different approaches regarding the Mental Health Awareness Month.
- DION board should continue to represent the interests of temporary scientific staff at NTNU in the various councils and committees.
- The DION Grant system should continue, priorities should be given to new applicants. This is to avoid DION became someone's personal sponsor and to give other people more opportunities.

- DION board should ensure organizing scientific and collaborative events in all NTNU cities. This is to ensure equal possibilities of participation regardless of geographical location. Hybrid solutions should be considered.
- DION board should keep track of the hours spent on DION-related work.
- The task distribution within the board should be even, and every board member should be expected to follow the discussions through emails, Teams channels and attending the board meetings.
- DION should remain an organization that offers help to the temporary scientific staff at NTNU through email inquiries.
- When conducting a survey, the privacy and anonymity of the respondents must be the most important factor. Therefore, we encourage the new board to only use Nettskjema for the purpose of surveys and issuing a privacy and anonymity statement in the survey description.
- DION should follow up the discussion on stipendiatombud at the NTNU level, push for equal treatment of PhDs and postdocs regarding of their affiliation, and the Norwegian language course possibilities in different NTNU cities.
- During the event-planning, always have >20% surplus on waiting list as there are always people dropping out. Charging a small participation fee (e.g 50-100 NOK) in advance can not only help DION relieve the economic burden but also improve the show-up rate. Cash is not recommended because participants may not show up and fee wont be paid, which would lead to waste of spot and DION's sponsorship on events. The free events usually have a lower show-up rate than those to be paid.
- DION should start a discussion with NTNU about the language course topic. There are many suggestions from the participants that can guide this discussion.
- DION members should show empathy and understanding. Sometimes, we cannot take an action, but we can create the space for an action.