

Doktorgradsstipendiatenes
interesseorganisasjon ved NTNU

Annual Report 2015/2016

*DION – Doktorgradsstipendiatenes
interesseorganisasjon ved NTNU*

*The interest Organization for Doctoral
Candidates at NTNU*

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1 Summary

The last annual general meeting (AGM) was held on 22nd April 2015. This annual report covers the period since the last AGM.

Since the last AGM, DION has had ten board meetings and participated in several committees, seminars and meetings at NTNU. DION has also met with the NTNU board representatives for temporary scientific staff and the students on a regular basis to discuss NTNU board issues.

The board has continued the work of the previous board in making the organization more visible, through the use of our website, social media channels and NTNU's Innsida. The monthly newsletter DION News has been continued and DION has participated in several introduction days for new PhD candidates.

DION has had nine social events during this board term. During the autumn semester of 2015 DION had screenings of the two "PhD Movies", a "welcome event" for new PhDs and a two "social meet-ups". DION started receiving an annual allocation of funds for the welfare of PhD students and Post Docs in 2016, which has led to an increase in both the number of events and event budgets. The successes "Love your research – Research Speed Dating" and "Bowling with DION" were both very popular events among temporary employees.

DION has put a significant effort into the handling of enquiries from temporary employees in need, and has overall worked with 26 such cases.

DION has also, in cooperation with SiN (Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge), responded to two hearings from the Ministry of Education and Research.

Two reports were published by DION in 2016, on the topics of duty work and PhD budgets across the different faculties at NTNU Trondheim. The reports highlight some important differences in how these topics are handled at the different faculties/departments.

The merger between NTNU and three university colleges was an important topic at NTNU during the board term. DION has followed this merger closely with the interests of PhDs and Postdocs in mind.

On behalf of the 2015/2016 DION Board,

Trondheim, 10.05.2016,



*Øyvind Storesund Hetland,
President DION*

2 Board Composition

During the board year 2015/2016, the board had the following members:

- Øyvind Storesund Hetland (President)
- Kam Sripada (Vice President)
- Hammad Majeed (Board Member)
- Mohammad Saud Afzal (Board Member)
- Vegard Stenhjem Hagen (Board Member)
- Elli Verhulst (Board Member)
- Shareq Mohd Nazir (Board Member)
- Alexander Busch (Board Member)

Andreas Noteng was employed in a 25% position as DION's administrative support until December 2015, when Kine Sørli took over his responsibilities. DION would like to use this opportunity to thank Andreas Noteng for his support, passion and initiatives for improving DION.

3 Activity highlights 2015/2016

During the board period 2015/2016, DION has:

- Responded to and followed up around 26 enquiries from PhD candidates in need of assistance
- Hosted 9 social events.
- Participated in several committees, meetings and seminars arranged by NTNU, including the revision group for the PhD handbook.
- Collaboration with SiN (Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge): Participated at the Annual General Meeting of SiN, SiN strategy workshop in Oslo, (February 2016), and contributed to its AGM workshop on work seniority.
- Participated in the NTNU matriculation of Autumn 2015 and the NTNU conference/workshop "National workshop "Living and learning. Building a researcher career development framework".
- Provided support to the NTNU board representatives for temporary academic staff and students during DION's board meetings. DION was part of the election committee for the NTNU Board Elections Autumn 2015.
- Commented on the new suggested regulations regarding the 4-year rule on seniority for governmental employees in Universitetsavisa, and co-authored a hearing reply to KD with SiN. Participated in SiN's hearing reply to KDs proposed changes of the university board model.
- Continued the collaboration with Studenttinget and the temporary scientific staff's representatives in the faculty boards.
- Increasing our visibility: Updated our webpages, actively use of Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/DION.NTNU>), Twitter (@DION_NTNU), NTNU Innsida, organized events, and issued a semi-regular DION newsletter.

- Presented DION at introduction events for new PhD candidates at the following faculties: NT, IME, HF, DMF and SVT. Presented rights and regulations relevant to PhDs at an informational meeting at Dept. of Biology and later for IPM.
- Applied for and received increased and specific funding for social and thematic events organized by DION. The funding is an annual allocation of NOK 100k. The funding is dedicated to "Felles møteplasser for midlertidig ansatte".
- Issued a survey to all Post Doctoral researchers at NTNU. Out of ~400 recipients, 140 active Postdocs answered the survey with information on their work position, inclusion in the work environment and suggestions for what DION can do for them. This was the first time DION reached out to request information specifically from post-doctoral fellows.
- Mapped the regulations and practices regarding duty work and PhD working capital at the different faculties. This work began as an Ephorte request to all faculties in summer 2015 and resulted in two reports that were presented for the University Research Committee on the 29th of April 2016.

4 Email inquiries

DION has received around 26 inquiries from PhD candidates at NTNU during the board period 2015/2016. The topics of the questions included residence, duty work, change of supervisors, right to overtime pay or compensation, maternity leave, PhD budget, salary, internships, personal conflicts, difficulty with PhD approval process, health insurance issues and soft skills courses.

In addition to the inquiries, DION also received some requests for information on how to apply to PhD positions, or where to find information about the application process.

5 Events

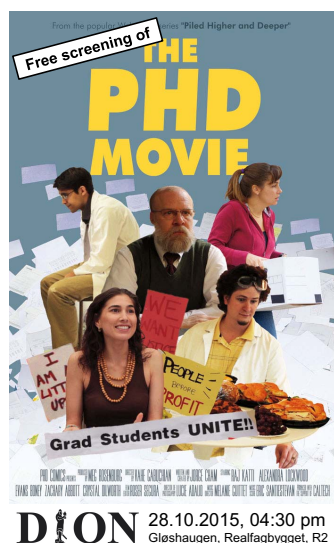
This board term, DION has focused on arranging social activities for PhD students and post-docs. 9 events were arranged:

- 2015-09-03 Happy hour at Cafe Løkka
- 2015-10-28 Screening of The PhD Movie @ Gløshaugen
- 2015-11-12 Screening of The PhD Movie 2, and "Welcome Event" for new employees
- 2015-12-07 Happy hour at Kieglekroa
- 2016-01-26 Happy hour at Work-work
- 2016-02-11 Love Your Research (Research presentations and speed-dating) @ DIGS
- 2016-03-03 Happy hour at Cafe Nim
- 2016-04-07 Happy hour at Work-work: Shuffleboard, board games and PlayStation
- 2016-04-21 Bowling at Centrum Bowling and Indian dinner buffet

The number of attendants at the happy hour evenings varied between five and around 35. DION had no dedicated budget for events in 2015, but events in 2016 were made possible by the yearly allocation of funds for events that was approved by the NTNU pro-rector of research in January 2016.

5.1 Event: Screening of “The PhD Movie”

The following was the advertisement text for the event:



“Free screening of "The PhD Movie (1)" at NTNU! Based on the popular comic "PhD Comics" (phdcomics.com) and backed by the author of the comic, the movie is a funny "must watch" for us who are trying to endure a PhD or PostDoc.

Haven't seen it yet? Welcome to R2, Realfagbygget, on Wednesday the 28th! (Movie playtime: 67mins)

Synopsis:

The PhD Movie 1 takes a humorous and poignant look at four graduate students as they grapple with research, being a teaching assistant and finding balance in their over-worked lives.”

Approximately 80 people attended the event.

5.2 Event: Screening of “The PhD Movie 2” followed by a “Welcome event” for new PhDs

The following was the advertisement text for the movie screening:

“Free screening of "The PhD Movie 2" at NTNU by DION! This is the follow-up on the success "The PhD Movie", and was released just a month ago. This movie is also based on the popular comic "PhD Comics" (phdcomics.com) and backed by the author of the comic, and is a result of a kickstarter project. The movie is a funny "must watch" for us who are trying to endure a PhD or PostDoc.”

The following was the advertisement text for the welcome event:

“Hi All New PhDs. I am writing to you on behalf of DION, an interest organization that works with issues related to PhD candidates at NTNU. It promotes the interest of doctoral candidates at NTNU by providing a low-threshold contact point for PhD candidates and representing NTNU PhD candidates' interests in local and national politics.

In this light, DION is arranging a welcome event for all new PhDs that have joined NTNU in 2015. We cordially invite you to this event along with a free screening of PhD Movie 2. The welcome event starts will run from 17:15 to 18:00 We will serve dinner and from 18:00 we will continue with the PhD Movie 2.”

Approximately 65 PhDs participated at the welcome event and movie screening.



5.3 Event: Love your research

The following was the advertisement text for the event:

Postadresse: DION
Høgskoleringen 5
N - 7491 Trondheim

E-mail: post@dion.ntnu.no
Internett: <http://www.dion.ntnu.no/>

“DION is happy to announce our upcoming Valentine's Day event Love Your Research 11 February, 5-7pm, at DIGS! It will be our first major event of 2016 --- all about the research of love and the love of research!

Short talks on the science of love by Leif Edward Ottesen Kennair and Trond Viggo Grøntvedt will be followed by (research) speed dating, where participants have 4 minutes to share their research experiences with each other, before switching partners. A fun way to meet young researchers from across the university!”

Approximately 35 people participated in the event.



5.4 Event: Shuffleboard, board games and PlayStation



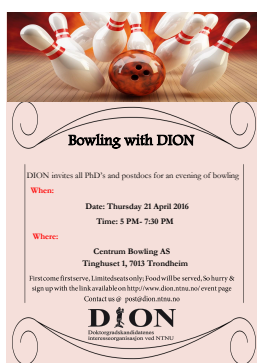
The following was the advertisement text for the event:

“For the April happy hour(s) we'll meet up at Work-Work for some shuffleboarding (optional)! We invite all PhDs, post-docs, and temporary scientific employees to get together, meet new people, and enjoy something to eat and drink. DION will pay for the shuffleboard, so if you haven't tried this

awesome miniature-curling activity this is your chance. Welcome!”

Approximately 25 people participated in the event.

5.5 Event: Bowling and dinner



The following was the advertisement text for the event: “DION is pleased to invite all the PhDs and PostDocs at NTNU for bowling @Centrum Bowling. Food will also be served after the event. More details are given in the poster.”

Approximately 65 PhDs attended this event for both 1.5 hours of bowling and then an Indian dinner buffet downtown.

6 Representation at NTNU

DION contributed to a seminar on research and employment ethics for faculty and department leaders on 2015.06.17. DION contributed with a presentation about PhD and supervisor relations.

DION has observer status (gets summons and minutes) in the Dean Meetings and the University Research Committee, and is called to the meetings in special cases. DION representatives participated in the NTNU Doctoral promotion ceremonies in November 2015 and March 2016.

DION had two participants in the central revision group for the PhD handbook in 2014 and 2015, which was finalized in 2015. DION was also active in the development of NTNU's new web pages for doctoral education, which was organized by Gro Lurås, and provided final feedback on the new web pages in January 2016.

The DION president participated in NTNU's leader seminar at Oppdal 26-27 January 2016.

The NTNU board representatives for temporary academic staff and for the students were invited to DION's board meetings, where the first hour typically was spent on discussing the upcoming NTNU board cases.

DION participated as NTNU PhD and Postdoc representatives at the event "NorAlumni – China: Collaboration and innovation" in March 2016. We translated our name into Chinese characters NTNU 博士生组织 (NTNU Doctoral Candidates Organization) and met with several students interested in China.

DION participated in a full day workshop on the future campus-structure of NTNU: "NTNU Fremtidsverksted" in April 2016.

7 Representation outside NTNU

Vegard Stenhjem Hagen has been the president of Norway's national doctoral organisation (SiN – Stipendiatorganisasjonene I Norge) from May 2015.

8 Collaboration

The collaboration with the faculty board representatives for temporary scientific staff was continued in this board term. The faculty board representatives were invited to all of DION's board meetings.

The student representatives in the NTNU board were also invited to DIONs meetings, and participated in several of them throughout the board term. Their insight and knowledge was very valuable during DION discussions, and it is hoped that this collaboration will continue.

DION met with NTNU International Researcher Support (NIRS) group in March 2016 where it was decided to continue the collaboration between the two organizations. DION will co-host the NIRS summer party in August 2016, and NIRS will continue to help promote DION and our events.

DION was invited to the Tekna Etat NTNU (workers union) annual general meeting, and will continue the collaboration with the Tekna representative for temporary employees at NTNU, Sigurd Vildåsen.

9 Presentations and projects

DION held several presentations at information days for new PhD candidates for the NT, IME, HF, SVT and DMF faculties. DION also presented rights and regulations relevant to PhDs at an informational meeting at Dept. of Biology and later for IPM.

9.1 Projects: Duty work (pliktarbeid) and PhD budget (driftsmidler)

During 2015-2016, DION conducted an analysis of the various PhD *duty work* (aka *pliktarbeid*, aka *teaching load*) and PhD budget (aka *driftsmidler* or *working capital*) related definitions, best practices and processes in place throughout NTNU. All NTNU Trondheim faculties were invited to respond to a questionnaire regarding PhD budget practices, and a total of 7 faculty and 10 department responses were received.

This work resulted in two reports that were presented for the University Research Committee on the 29th of April 2016. The reports will be published on the DION website.

In short, the reports conclude that there currently exists a great heterogeneity, and in some cases inconsistency and lack of transparency, regarding the different established PhD duty work and PhD budget processes at the different faculties and departments at NTNU.

In line with the ongoing fusion process and the restructuring of faculties and departments, DION believes that now is a good moment to consider streamlining and improving the current PhD duty work and PhD budget processes within the new structure of and processes at NTNU, including the new entities at NTNU of the former HiST and at the campuses in Gjøvik and Ålesund.

10 Information channels and social media

DIONs digital information channels are DIONs own webpage, the internal pages of NTNU (Innsida), Facebook and Twitter. In addition, we issue a semi-regular newsletter by email to temporary employees who have signed up for the newsletter on our website or through an event/presentation.

DIONs webpage has performed well during the last term. It served as a base of information, such that all activity on Facebook and similar links to the original content on the webpage. The website features an FAQ, Frequently Asked Questions, which is kept up to date with information as the board works with individual and political cases. The website was formerly hosted by NTNU IT, but was moved to the free alternative stud.org.ntnu.no in March 2016. Its functionality remains the same.

The Innsida information channel has few “followers”. A request to the IT department was made by the previous DION board to add the channel to the default channels for all new PhD candidates. This is still in process, however, and should be followed up by the new DION board.

DION's newsletter was restarted October 2014. "DION news" has been sent out approximately once every two months to the newsletter mailing list (*news@dion.ntnu.no*, formerly named *innkalling@dion.ntnu.no*). The mailing list currently has 253 subscribers.

DION's Facebook page has 621 followers, up from 442 at the beginning of the board period. Around 40 posts have been published during the board period. DION has so far had a limited presence on Twitter.

11 Finance

The financial year of DION follows the calendar year, and not the board period. We therefore present a financial overview of 2015, and a partial budget for 2016.

11.1 Financial overview for 2015

Income:	
Annual funding (2015)	NOK 15 000,00
Sum:	NOK 15 000,00
Expenses:	
Operating costs	NOK 9 033,12
Travel expenses	NOK -
Event expenses	NOK 5 400,00
Sum:	NOK 14 433,12
TOTAL 2015:	NOK 566,88
Balance:	
Equity per 01.01.2015	NOK 32 201,82
Equity per 31.12.2015	NOK 32 768,70

11.2 Budget and current status 2016

Budget 2016	
Income	
Prorector for research	NOK 100 000,00
Annual funding (2016)	NOK 15 000,00
Expenses	
Meeting places for the Phd-candidates*	NOK 90 000,00
Social expenses(board meetings)	NOK 10 000,00
Travels(meetings, conferences)	NOK 5 000,00
Operational expenses	NOK 10 000,00
Sum:	NOK 115 000,00
Expenses so far in 2016*	
Love your research	NOK 15 878,00
Happy hour	NOK 1 744,00
Bowling with Dion	NOK 16 500,00
Sum expenses per 09.05.2016:	NOK 34 122,00

*Full accounting for the DION Annual General Meeting in May 2016 is not available yet.

12 Open points for the next board

- Continue the collaboration with the University Research Committee on DIONs findings and suggestions regarding duty work and PhD budget (“driftsmidler”). Work closely with this committee as they revise the current regulations for the PhD education at NTNU in 2016.
- NTNUs new webpages with information for PhDs are a great improvement over the old ones, but DION should continuously use the webpages as resources and report whenever there are gaps or inconsistencies present.
- DION has received an annual funding of NOK 100k for “Felles møteplasser for stipendiater og Postdocs”. Make a plan for the annual use of the funds for balanced, varied events.
- Reach out to temporary employees at the former university colleges: HiST, HiÅ and HiG. Arrange presentations of DION for PhDs and Postdocs at former HiST and Gjøvik campus.
- Follow up on the efforts of NTNU IT in adding the DION information channel on “innsida” as a default for all new temporary employees.
- Possible project: Tekna NTNU has indicated that they want to collaborate in an initiative to make the annual employee appraisal interview “more required”, and that it should be a meeting not conducted by the PhD supervisor. DION has previously authored a statement on this issue.
- Possible project: Some PhDs have indicated that NTNUs current policy with regards to health insurance abroad is complicated and confusing, and that PhDs on research stays abroad are vulnerable.
- Possible project: A forum for Young Researchers will be formed within the strategic research area NTNU Sustainability. The forum is envisaged to help connect all the PhD’s, Post-Docs and Temporary Researchers who are working with the various aspects of sustainability (e.g. technologies, development, assessment, growth or designing) at NTNU. A question has come for discussing collaboration between DION and this new, thematic research forum.
- NTNU Alumni has initiated a collaboration with DION in order to further their connections with PhD alumni through events and projects. DION should follow up on this collaboration.
- Follow up: NTNU has currently no official design for Academic Regalia for persons holding a PhD from NTNU. A project has been initiated where the design of such an attire is formalized at an official level.

13 Appendix – DION Board Meeting dates

Date	Event
20.05.2015	Board transition workshop (present and previous board)
08.06.2015	Board meeting
13.08.2015	Board meeting
16.09.2015	Board meeting
20.10.2015	Board meeting
23.11.2015	Board meeting
20.01.2016	Board meeting
12.02.2016	Board meeting

07.03.2016	Board meeting
12.04.2016	Board meeting
10.05.2016	Annual general meeting