

## Nat-Tech Research Committees

**Meeting date:** 6 October 2021, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. (Nat continues 2:30-3:00 p.m.)

**Meeting place:** Zoom – link in outlook invitation

**Attendees:** David Lundbek Egholm, Vice-Dean Nat (DLE, chair) Brian Vinter, Vice-Dean Tech (BV, chair), Edzard Spillner (BCE), Michal K. Budzik (MPE), Anders Møller (CS), Henrik Balslev (BIO), Christos Thomas Georgakis (CAE), Knud Erik Bach Knudsen (ANIS), Kurt Vesterager Gothelf (iNANO), Ove Christiansen (CHEM), Per Kudsk (AGRO), Steen Hannestad (PHYS), Søren Fournais (MATH), Søren Munch Kristiansen (GEO), Torben Heick Jensen (MBG), Luc Janss (QGG), Daniel Enrique Lucani Rötter (ECE), Kia Sofie Abildtrup (Dean's Secretariat, Tech), Astrid Klingen (Dean's Secretariat, Nat)

**Guests:** Kim Daasbjerg (CHEM) and Jørgen Olesen (AGRO) for item 2

**Apologies:** Peter L. Langen (ENVS), Toke Thomas Høye (ECOS), Derek V. Byrne (FOOD)

1:00 - 1:05 by chairs

### 1. Welcome and approval of agenda

David Lundbek Egholm welcomed members and the agenda was approved.

1:05 - 1:50 by chairs and guests

### 2. IFD's innomission-call: status for AU's partnership involvement

Guests: Kim Daasbjerg (CHEM), Jørgen Olesen (AGRO)

Link: <https://innovationsfonden.dk/en/programmes/green-missions/mission-driven-green-research-and-innovation-partnerships-innomission>

David Lundbek Egholm introduced the item. In general, it has been a very compromised and frustrating process with unreasonably short deadlines. Status was given on the partnerships for the four Innomissions with a deadline on 19 October:

- *Mission 1: Capture and storage or use of CO<sub>2</sub>, Kim Daasbjerg*  
Two roadmaps have been asked to merge in the call. One was led by DTU and GEUS, the other by all other Danish universities and Teknologisk Institut. Kim Daasbjerg has a lead on the topic non-fuel utilization. There have been a number of project proposal for the first pool in the Innomission, the partnership is in a process of selecting which should go in the application.
- *Mission 2: Green fuels for transport and industry (Power-to-X, etc.), Brian Vinter:*  
Primary representative from AU is Lars Ottosen, Head of Department, BCE. Before the Innomission call was launched, DACES (Danish Centre for Energy Storage) was established between universities, GTSs and industry. DACES is now engaged in the mission. The scientific content in the application seems to turn out satisfactory. Partners are working on a compromise for the governance model.
- *Mission 3: Climate- and environment-friendly agriculture and food production, Jørgen E. Olesen*  
All Danish universities and a number of other partners have written a joint roadmap (AgriFoodTure), which was selected for the partnership call. The

roadmap is based on input from 300 researchers and the work with the application is coordinated AU, KU, DTU and SEGES. The roadmap has been elaborated in more detail in a white paper (attached to the minutes). There are four tracks in the application: Land use management, animal based food, plant based food and biotechnology based food production. It will be possible to get involved in the partnership when it has been established.

- *Mission 4: Circular economy with a focus on plastics and textiles, Brian Vinter*

In terms of funding, it is the smallest mission and at the same time it is the mission of least interest to AU. In general, social sciences and humanities plays a larger role here than in the other missions. If you know of researchers, who is not involved but should be, contact Brian Vinter.

David Lundbek Egholm and Brian Vinter encouraged members to reach out to them, if they have input or need information.

1:50 - 2:05 by chairs

### 3. NNF-funded CO<sub>2</sub>-centre at AU: Update on status and work in progress

Link: <https://novonordiskfonden.dk/en/news/new-research-center-will-find-solutions-to-reduce-co2-in-the-atmosphere-and-convert-it-into-valuable-raw-materials/>

David Lundbek Egholm shared information on the future the CO<sub>2</sub>-center at AU. NNF has granted about 630 mio. DKK over 7 years to the center, which will focus on interdisciplinary research on CO<sub>2</sub> capture and recycling. The center budget includes 240 mio. DKK for strategic funding to be used on projects based on applications within the center mission. Biannual calls for this funding can be expected.

There are four research themes:

- CO<sub>2</sub> capture
- Chemical conversion of CO<sub>2</sub> for recycling
- Biobased conversion of CO<sub>2</sub> for recycling
- Systems analysis

The center involves both Nat and Tech faculty. The head of the center will be Alfred Spormann from Stanford. AU will be the main hub, while satellites will be at KU and DTU, Universities in Stanford, Tromsø, Tübingen, and Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research. Currently, there are detailed budget negotiations going on with NNF, which include looking at the departments' indirect costs. All scientific staff will be employed at the departments. The center is expected to be operational from beginning of next year and then Alfred Spormann will visit departments and centers to present the CO<sub>2</sub>-center.

For a number of reasons the work with the center has been limited to a few people at AU. Focus is now on involving more researchers at AU and to integrate the center in the faculty environments at Nat and Tech.

Kim Daasbjerg mentioned that industrial collaboration will be an important component and that the plan is to base the strategic funding on an open science concept.

Henrik Balslev said that it is excellent for AU to get a grant of this size. In general, the foundations play a bigger and bigger role. He suggested involving researchers in a systematic debate on what it means for the universities' independence.

2:05 - 2:20 by chairs and members

#### 4. **Horizon Europe, pillar 2 – demand(s) for masterclass?**

*How could a masterclass organized by the Research Support Office help researchers to succeed in the competition for Horizon Europe pillar 2 funds?*

David Lundbek Egholm introduced the item. The AU Research Committee has a small budget for research activities. The Research Support Office (RSO) has suggested to spend some of it to develop a masterclass on coordinating Horizon Europe pillar 2 projects in 2022. The background is that AU do not have many coordinators. It is a big task to take on the coordinating role, and it is important. David asked for input on the proposal.

Daniel Rötter and Per Kudsk mentioned that they have coordinator experiences at their department and that it is a good idea to share experiences, both for applying and for running the projects.

Per Kudsk added that it would be a good idea to discuss the set-up. There is good support at AU, but it does not compare to e.g. INRAE and Wageningen, where it is much more formal and there is more assistance.

Ove Christiansen pointed out that it should be focused on people planning to apply. Per Kudsk agreed and added that the timing should be right in relation to the deadlines and that departments should be involved in identifying who are likely to apply as coordinators.

Henrik Balslev asked if there is information about the resources AU spend on support compared to similar universities. David said it is worth looking into and that input or feedback on support is welcome.

2:20 - 2:30 by chairs and members

#### 5. **AOB**

- Review of thematic centres 1-3 Nov (cf. attachments)
- <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/informationsecurity/data-protection/for-scientific-staff/>. AU's Data Protection Officer will be invited to give a presentation for the Research Committees later this year.