

**Minutes from the Danish SDC Board meeting, February 18, 2014,
14.00 – 16.00**

MINUTES

Present in Aarhus, AU: Brian Bech Nielsen (AU), Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen (SDC), Morten Laugesen (SDC), Søren Walbum Høst (SDC)

Present in Copenhagen, AAU: Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard (CBS), Martin Bendsøe (DTU), Jørgen Staunstrup (ITU)

Absent with notice: Nils O. Andersen (KU), Lene Lange (AAU), Henrik Pedersen (SDU), Ib Poulsen (RUC)

1. Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of Minutes from SDC board meeting, December 17, 2013

3. Briefing from the Director

- 3.1 SDC staff in Aarhus and Beijing
- 3.2 Evaluation of the agreement between the eight Danish universities
- 3.3 Cooperation with CAS/UCAS on research and education

4. Accounts 2013

5. Budget 2014

6. House of the Danish Industry Foundation

7. Any other business

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of minutes from SDC board meeting, December 17, 2013

It was agreed that decisions made by the SDC board henceforth should be more clearly stated in the meeting minutes. Thereupon the minutes were approved.

3. Briefing from the Director

3.1 SDC staff in Aarhus and Beijing

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen has been appointed Danish Executive Director for SDC for a period of three and a half years on a part-time contract. He will be based in Denmark but will travel to China occasionally to participate in relevant activities and meet with partners. Morten Laugesen has been appointed deputy director and will continue to serve as daily leader of the Danish secretariat.

The Danish SDC-secretariat

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Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board that efforts had recently been made to employ another person at the Danish secretariat in a short-term contract due to the increasing workload. Unfortunately, the efforts came to no results.

The efforts to hire a person with extensive knowledge of China, education and industry to be posted in Beijing continue. A candidate with work experience from China has been identified and terms of employment are currently being negotiated. Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard reiterated his advice to employ a liaisons officer with thorough knowledge of China, possibly a Chinese individual educated in Denmark.

3.2 Evaluation of the agreement between the eight Danish universities

The agreement between the Danish universities on collaboration on the SDC does not have a fixed expiry date and thus there is no formal requirement to renegotiate the agreement. However, the signing partners can opt out of the collaboration with a twelve months' notice to the other partners.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board that the members of the Danish Rectors' Conference originally agreed to evaluate the collaboration after the first 4-5 years. The board agreed that the time is now ripe for this and suggested that an evaluation should serve as a basis for an assessment of the development of the collaboration with CAS/UCAS; the soundness of the economy; and the financial balance between the Danish parties. Some board members also recommended an assessment of the overall governance structure and called for a more clearly defined mandate for the board, which was decided.

Jørgen Staunstrup stated that although the IT-University has so far not been involved in any activities, ITU is still fully committed to the project.

If possible, the SDC secretariat will produce a memo outlining the scope of the evaluation to be submitted to the board in May for possible comments before presenting it to the Rectors' Conference.

3.3 Cooperation with CAS/UCAS on research and education

The board discussed the need of focusing research activities to a limited number of key CAS institutes in order to generate visibility and create more synergy between research and educational activities. It is important that all educational activities are based on true research collaboration between the two sides in line with the vision for SDC as described in the agreements.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen mentioned that future SDC PhD students from both sides should also contribute to the educational activities of the SDC in any possible way to generate a link between the MSc-students and research activities. The board fully supported this view and asked the SDC secretariat to draft a set of guidelines for future PhD activities.

The board discussed how to facilitate the need for more flexibility, including opening for short-term stays, in the Master's programmes as it has been suggested by some HEPs, teachers, etc. It is a complex matter and the consequences must be analyzed and carefully considered before any model can be presented to UCAS.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen stressed the importance of still being loyal to the original visions behind the SDC and accept the existing framework of the signed agreements when considering more flexibility for the Master's programmes. Students should be affiliated with SDC for a full two-year period.

The board asked the SDC secretariat to outline possible models to increase flexibility, including a model for exchange of students and a model for how parts of the programmes can be completed at Danish universities. In the short term, the board asked the SDC secretariat to look into the possibility of establishing SDC Summer Schools in Denmark as a precursor for formal exchange programmes.

Morten Laugesen informed the board about the unsolved issue of the Master's thesis procedure for the Danish SDC students. The SDC secretariat is working hard to solve the issue. The board took note of the information.

4. Accounts 2013

Morten Laugesen informed the board of the preliminary accounts for 2013. Expenditures related to research and educational activities are expected to be approximately DKK 9 million less than budgeted. As a consequence, the SDC-secretariat will implement new budgeting and accounting procedures to avoid big budgetary deviations in the future.

The board took note of the accounts and asked SDC to present the final accounts for 2013 as soon as possible.

5. Budget 2014

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board of the changes made in the budget for 2014, including the limitations set for research and educational activities. A new budgeting procedure will be implemented from 2015 and the process will start earlier to secure an approved annual budget is ready before the year starts. The budgetary limits and description of budgeting procedure will also be presented to the universities when the call for activities is announced.

The board approved the suggested model for funding future Danish SDC PhD projects and asked the secretariat to prepare a detailed set of guidelines. The budget for 2014 includes the start-up of 35 PhD stipends from September.

6. House of the Danish Industry Foundation

A detailed memo with preliminary design floor plans was presented to the board. The secretariat is still trying to obtain information about facilities at UCAS' Yanqihu-campus, where the House of the Danish Industry Foundation will be constructed.

7. Any other business

- A graduation ceremony in Beijing is planned to take place around July 5. More information will follow.
- A graduation ceremony is also considered in Denmark at a still to be determined date, possibly in the autumn.
- The board is positive to let a board meeting take place in Beijing, if possible to coincide with the graduation ceremony.

Danish SDC Board Meeting Schedule

2. Meeting: Tuesday, June 3, 16.30-18.30. The meeting takes place at Danish Universities, Fiolstræde, Copenhagen.

3. Meeting: Tuesday, September 23, 14.00-16.00. The meeting takes place in Aarhus. Video link will be available.

4. Meeting: Tuesday, December 16, 16.30-18.30. The meeting takes place at Danish Universities, Fiolstræde.

Minutes by Søren Walbum Høst