

Meeting on: 3. April 2020, 10.00-13.00
Conducted on Zoom
37th meeting of the Danish Board of SDC

Minutes

Present: Philip John Binning (DTU, Chair), Lars Bo Nielsen (AU, Vice-chair), Rasmus Antoft (AAU), John Renner Hansen (KU), Peter Kjær (RUC), Bjarne Graabech Sørensen (SDU), Dana Minbaeva (CBS), Georg Dam Steffensen (ITU), Morten Laugesen (SDC), Søren Walbum Høst (SDC)

Welcome

- 1. Approval of the agenda**
- 2. The corona virus outbreak and status of the current situation**
- 3. Evaluation of the Danish board of SDC**
- 4. Strengthening external funding**
- 5. Approval of the annual report for 2019**
- 6. Approval of annual accounts 2019 and forecast 2020**
- 7. The SDC building**
- 8. Agenda for the meeting of the Joint Managerial Committee of SDC 20 June 2020**
- 9. Orientation from the director**

Welcome

Philip Binning invited each board member to introduce themselves, how the institution they represent is involved in SDC and to point to ways to strengthen their institution's commitment to and involvement in SDC. Among the suggestions put forward by the board members were

- Dialogue with university management on how to strengthen participation. The strategy for SDC has strengthened the foundation for such dialogue.
- Change the way funding flows from SDC to the universities to ensure that the management is aware of the funding their institution receives from SDC.
- Develop more interdisciplinary collaboration across SDC's academic fields.
- Focus more on entrepreneurship and industry collaboration.
- Continuously review the educational portfolio.
- Increase the number of recruited students as it is pivotal to the commitment of the partner universities.

1. Approval of the agenda

The board approved the agenda.

2. The corona virus outbreak and status of the current situation

The board took note of the information in the memo concerning the actions taken by SDC to address the challenges and fall out caused by the outbreak. The corona outbreak has affected all areas of the SDC, including recruitment of Danish and International students to the SDC programs.

The board asked the SDC office to start planning for online courses for the autumn semester in case classes will continue to be suspended. The SDC office will present an alternative plan for start-up for the new students at the next board meeting in June or if needed, before then. The start-up plan should include scenarios to cover different possible situations in September. Morten Laugesen stressed that the Danish SDC office is in close communication with applicants and current students on the present situation and plans for the coming semester.

The board asked the director to present a proposal on how to assess and develop the educational portfolio of SDC at the next meeting in June. The proposal will serve as basis for a discussion on how to proceed. A key priority will be to look at possible tools to increase the intake of students from the Danish side, and different educational models than the current eight full masters programs.

3. Evaluation of the Danish board of SDC

The board noted that the evaluation is very positive. A few comments:

- The rules of procedure states that the board draft short-term actions plans, when in fact the board approves the short-term action plans. The rules of procedure should be changed accordingly.
- It is essential that the board continuously work to ensure the active involvement of all eight Danish universities in SDC.

4. Strengthening external funding

Morten Laugesen presented some of the initiatives by the SDC office to attract more external funding to SDC and the idea of allocating seed funding to SDC researchers to write funding applications. The board approved the suggestion and asked that:

- Research support units at the universities are included and involved.
- The SDC office reflects on how industrial partners can be included, e.g. by earmarking part of the seed funding for applications involving such partners
- The SDC office defines a few KPIs for future evaluation
- Involve the Chinese partners to ensure funding opportunities in China are not missed

5. Approval of the annual report for 2019

The board was very pleased with the annual report and made the following suggestions:

- Many of the features in the report would also work very well as standalone pieces on other platforms.
- The report could highlight the most impactful publications either in the publication list or in "selected publications"-boxes figuring on each research theme's page.

The annual report will be printed and distributed to SDC's stakeholders as soon as possible and uploaded as online version to SDC's own website. Philip Binning and Morten Laugesen expect to present the report to the Danish Rectors' Conference after the summer holiday.

6. Approval of annual accounts 2019 and forecast 2020

The board approved the annual accounts 2019.

The board asked the SDC office to present an updated forecast for 2020 at the coming meeting in June so that the board can adjust to the financial consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak if necessary.

7. The SDC building

The board took note of the information provided in the updated memo on the SDC building. Morten Laugesen will continue to keep the board updated on the development.

8. Agenda for the meeting of the Joint Managerial Committee of SDC 20 June 2020

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Morten Laugesen informed the board of the current situation at UCAS' campuses. It is unlikely that SDC students and faculty will return to campus before the summer holiday. Given the present situation in Denmark – and with the planned JMC meeting only two months away, the board agreed to suggest to UCAS to postpone the JMC meeting to a later date in 2020.

At the same time the board decided to cancel the scheduled board meeting in Beijing.

9. Orientation from the director

The Ministry of Higher Education and Science recently announced allocation of additional funding for COVID-19 related research. Funding for these activities comes from unused funding from different accounts at the UFM, including the SDC-account. It will not affect SDC's activities.