

**The Norwegian Association of  
Researchers:  
Work Program  
2016–2018**

# 1. Introduction

This work program together with our “vision and values” are NAR’s foremost policy documents and detail NAR’s overall objectives and main tasks.

The term “research and knowledge sector” includes universities, university colleges, research institutes and university hospitals, public administration, along with museums, archives, libraries, and industry. NAR aims to ensure that all our members in the research and knowledge sector are given the opportunity to develop their identity and sense of community.

The work programme covers the period from 2016–2018 and sets the overall frameworks for the goals that will be prioritised. The Executive Board is responsible for the implementation of the work programme, while it is also intended as a tool for local and central union representatives for clarifying the union’s policies.

Framework conditions and public policy will change over the course of a three-year period. During this period, the Executive Board must be in a position to meet new challenges. The National Council, sectoral seminars, professional networks and ad-hoc expert groups will provide important input in policy development throughout a board period. NAR has specific policies that go into more detail on various areas. Policy documents are under continuous development and are available on the NAR website.

## 2. Competitive wages

NAR strives to ensure that wage conditions are competitive, both nationally and internationally. Wage levels should reflect members’ expertise, responsibilities and efforts. This is a prerequisite for the sector to be an attractive career path, able to recruit and retain the best qualified in competition with alternative career opportunities. Increased efforts should translate into a higher salary.

Despite the fact that wage growth in Norway over the last decade has given employees greater purchasing power, wages in the research and knowledge sector must see development that is at least on par with corresponding groups in both the public and private sectors. The relative wage difference between comparable groups in the public and private sectors is an obstacle to recruiting and retaining qualified staff. There are difficulties recruiting staff in a number of disciplines because the salary is not competitive.

Models for wage determination and negotiation arrangements may change during the period. In the public sector, the system of central negotiations for wage adjustments is under pressure, while employers want wage determination to take place locally in individual institutions to a greater extent. This means that institutions will have to develop a local salary policy based on consensual and specific criteria. NAR will focus on ensuring that our members achieve good wage development regardless of the wage determination models that are established during the period.

In order to improve the wage level for NAR’s member groups, the individual member as well as the local and central union representatives must take advantage of all elements of the existing collective wage agreements in the sector. The economic situation that will be facing Norway in the years ahead, and what leeway this will give the parties during wage settlements, are factors that will also affect the outcome of our efforts.

NAR will continue to put the focus on the importance of quality teaching, research and higher education, and to create awareness among members, the public and politicians of the benefits of prioritising wage levels and working conditions for employees in the sector.

## **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Wages and working conditions will be attractive enough for the institutions to recruit the best qualified and motivated knowledge workers.
- The wage gap between employees in the higher education sector and comparable groups in the public sector is closed, and the wage gap to comparable groups in the private sector is reduced.
- Wage systems in all sectors give all of our members, both as a group and individually, the opportunity for local wage improvement.
- New collective agreements are established centrally and locally, and existing agreements are developed further.
- Productivity gains at institutions are extracted in the form of pay increases.
- Additional workload as a result of mergers and restructuring should provide a basis for higher wages.
- Efficiency gains through mergers and structural changes must be realised.
- Employers in bargaining areas where funds are centrally allocated to local negotiations should normally allocate additional funds to the local negotiations within their own budget.
- The Brain Power Campaign is evaluated before it is possibly continued and further developed.
- Temporary employees are ensured equally good wage conditions and wage development as permanent employees.
- The union maintains its position as the leading union in the state.
- Local union representatives follow up their institutions' wage policies in accordance with the development of collective agreements.

## **3. Working conditions**

### **3.1 Permanent employment as a general rule**

Permanent employment is the general rule under Norwegian law, and the use of temporary employment should be kept to a minimum. As a rule, new appointments should occur after announcement, to ensure observance of the qualifications principle. Permanent employment and job security are of great importance for the individual, for the academic quality and for the working environment at the enterprises. It is important to continue the strong employment protection for employees in governmental agencies to ensure an independent academic administration and safeguard the academic freedom of academic staff in the higher education sector. However, the Norwegian Civil Service Act allows too much temporary employment and weaker rights for employees in externally funded positions. The number of employees in externally funded positions has increased considerably since the legislation was drafted, and there is a need to examine how we can better protect their rights.

The use of temporary employment is a major issue in the research and knowledge sector. In 2015, about 18,5 per cent of the scientific staff at public universities and university colleges were temporary employees (excluding recruitment positions). The number of temporary employees in this sector is more than twice as high as in other employments, and this makes it less attractive to choose a career in research. During the same period, the corresponding figure for technical and administrative staff in the higher education sector was about 14 per cent. Within the field of cultural heritage protection, between 30 and 50 per cent of FTEs related to archaeological research are conducted by temporary staff. We also know that many researchers at the health trusts are working on temporary contracts. The statutory registration and examination work for Norwegian cultural heritage sites is carried out mainly by field archaeologists on short-term contracts.

The pilot project on tenure track positions was insufficiently documented, and it has been introduced without enacting restrictions on temporary employment elsewhere in the law. It is important that the system be evaluated to ensure that it does not entail extended use of temporary positions.

All knowledge workers – whether they are working in scientific, technical or administrative positions – should have job security and career development opportunities.

### **NAR strives to ensure that:**

- Permanent employment remains the general rule for positions in both the private and public sectors
- Restrictions are imposed on temporary employment under both the Working Environment Act and the Civil Service Act.
- The use of temporary employment in the education and research sector is reduced down to the level in working life in general.
- Job protection is strengthened in legislation and collective agreements.
- External funding does not weaken workers' rights.
- The institutions' freedom of action to use permanent appointments is strengthened by a more predictable, longer-term funding policy.
- The statutory tasks under regional administration related to archaeological surveys are safeguarded through internal financing.
- The tenure track pilot scheme should not increase the use of temporary positions, but lead to more predictability and be considered as a substitute for postdoctoral fellowships. The pilot scheme must be evaluated on an ongoing basis.
- The tenure track pilot scheme must be fully funded.

## **3.2 Maintaining and developing co-determination**

Local co-determination constitutes the basis for tripartite cooperation and the Norwegian model. NAR feels that the model is under pressure and will seek to ensure that co-determination schemes are strengthened and that funding is increased for union representatives in all sectors. NAR will maintain and further develop established and contractual rights to co-determination. In cases of transition from the public to the private sector, co-determination must be maintained at the same level as in the State.

In processes of reorganisation, separate agreements should be drawn up to ensure co-determination for local union representatives at all levels and throughout all parts of the reorganisation. Co-determination should lead to genuine influence, and sufficient resources must be allocated to carry out reorganisation processes in a satisfactory manner.

Government funding for training and development ("T&D funds") are crucial for the training of union representatives and members, and NAR is working to strengthen this scheme.

NAR will strengthen training in co-determination in all sectors by providing training in collective agreements and bargaining processes and in how to deal with practical issues. NAR will provide instruction for our local union representatives in the regulatory framework associated with the working environment, in conflict resolution and in the adaptation of jobs for employees on sick leave.

### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Staff co-determination according to collective agreements is strengthened at every level.
- Adequate funding is allocated to the training and development of union representatives.
- The training and development scheme with T&D funds is strengthened and expanded to include all bargaining areas.
- Training in the field of co-determination is strengthened through central and local courses.
- The Working Environment Act's requirements in respect of the working environment and the Inclusive Workplace Agreement are strengthened.
- Reorganisation agreements should be drawn up for all reorganisation processes.
- The regulations that refer to reorganisation and downsizing are strengthened, and co-determination and genuine influence are ensured for the union representative during reorganisation processes.
- The union is updated on international agreements which could have a major impact on the Norwegian workforce and unions.

### **3.3 Academic freedom as a fundamental premise**

Intellectual freedom is a fundamental prerequisite for all truth-seeking business and for all artistic creation, and it is important for safeguarding and strengthening democracy. Academic freedom must therefore be a normative right.

The individual and institutional academic freedom established by law in the Universities and University Colleges Act must also be complied with in practice. Collegial bodies with influence over academic matters and priorities are crucial for safeguarding institutional independence. Individual academic freedom gives academic staff the freedom to ask questions, to choose materials and methods in their research and teaching work and to publish research results.

The trend towards increased external funding is putting academic freedom under stronger pressure. Obstacles to real academic freedom are often experienced in the form of a lack of resources and time or uncertainty about future funding and employment. Ensuring academic freedom in practice presumes that both the institution and the individual employees are given the conditions and freedom of action to be able to fulfil their social responsibilities in a manner that ensures quality and legitimacy.

#### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Legally-mandated academic freedom is observed in practice in the higher education sector.
- Research institutes, health trusts and the archive, library and museum sector incorporate the principle of academic freedom in their regulations and planning documents.
- Research institutes with governmental basic funding comply with the intentions regarding academic freedom in the Research Council's guidelines.
- The standard contract for research projects and studies is used for the projects for which it has been adapted, by both public and private clients.
- The work of the Research Ethics Committees is strengthened and further developed.

### **3.4 Whistleblowing and freedom of expression**

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. This also applies in employment relationships, but the duty of loyalty between employees and employers may place certain constraints on their freedom of expression.

In the higher education sector, academic freedom gives people broad rights to express themselves on academic matters, see Section 3.3. Academic freedom.

The Working Environment Act gives workers a right, and in some cases a duty, to report unsatisfactory conditions at the workplace. Health professionals also have a reporting duty under the Health Personnel Act. For the reporting institution to function, it is important that this is not misused and that institutions have good routines for dealing with such cases.

A good, safe climate with regard to freedom of expression can help to avoid difficult and conflict-filled whistleblowing cases, which are a major burden on the working environment, the institution, the whistleblower and on the quality of services. NAR wants to put the focus on a good climate for freedom of expression, good whistleblowing routines, and on protecting the whistleblower and the person who has been reported, in practice and in legislation. All employees should be able to report censurable conditions without fear of reprisal.

#### **NAR will strive to ensure:**

- An open, positive and safe climate with regard to freedom of expression.
- That no one should be prevented from reporting, or fear the consequences of reporting, censurable conditions in the workplace.

### 3.5 Immaterial rights

NAR will protect members' intellectual property rights to works created in the employment relationship. NAR strives to ensure that members' works are not misused or exploited in such a way that infringes on the originator's rights. Employees' moral rights to their own works must be protected. There is a growing expectation for institutions in the research and knowledge sector to contribute to innovation and renewal. This highlights the need to safeguard employees' rights in connection with innovation processes.

NAR looks favourably on publishing in open access journals or open institutional records. However, it is important to emphasise that academic freedom grants authors the right to publish in any journals they wish.

NAR believes that all financial expenses related to the assessment and publication of academic papers through recognised publication channels must be covered by the employer or through funds earmarked for publishing. Such support must be provided without regard to whether the work is externally financed or originates in the individual researcher's own research time.

NAR is in favour of digital learning platforms, but on the condition that a common national rights policy be developed for the transfer of copyrights in line with NAR's adopted IPR policy.

#### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Institutions in the research and knowledge sector have a IPR policy that protects the intellectual property rights of academic staff, while ensuring that institutions can cover their genuine needs for the use of the material in question.
- There should be no conveyance clauses in contracts of employment that obligate employees to transfer more intellectual property rights than required to achieve the goals of the contracts of employment.
- All online teaching, both in terms of teaching materials and online lectures, must be based on time and project-specific agreements on the transfer of rights. Employees who publish self-produced material may withdraw their work in full or in part.
- All research projects must be based on contracts that safeguard the academic freedom of researchers and their right and duty to publish their findings.
- Financial schemes are established to ensure financial support for reviewing and publication in recognised publications.
- Inventor(s) are ensured at least 1/3 of the net income from the commercialisation of patents.
- The intellectual property rights of employees in connection with innovation activities, patenting and entrepreneurship are adequately safeguarded. This also applies to employees who provide technical support for research.
- Institutions offer wages and working conditions that promote generally accepted research ethics.

### 3.6 Discrimination and equal opportunity

NAR opposes all forms of discrimination in the workplace and strives to prevent it. All employees shall be ensured a good working environment, regardless of gender, religion, outlook on life, ethnicity, age, disabilities or sexual orientation, pursuant to legislation and collective agreements.

Qualitatively good research requires a good working environment and diversity in the workforce. Better gender balance and a more diverse working environment in academia will contribute to an increased breadth of knowledge production and boost the quality of research. Skewed recruitment can result in a loss of talent, and thus loss of competitiveness, in the Norwegian research sector.

The world of academia is still characterised by gender imbalance among disciplines and in academic executive positions. In 2014, women accounted for only 26.1 % of the professors in the higher education sector. In 2013, the proportion of newly appointed female professors sank from 36 to 33 per cent, but it increased to 35 per cent in 2014. Between 2008 and 2014, the proportion of women among newly appointed professors varied between 30 and 36 per cent at the sector level.

The reasons why women are less likely than men to reach the top in an academic career are complex. Research shows that women on average have less opportunity than men to use their free time to perform research and that women are also over-represented when it comes to temporary employment in teaching and research positions. Therefore, measures to reduce the use of temporary employment and to facilitate the tasks being solved during normal working hours are important from a gender equality perspective.

**NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Unequal treatment is uncovered.
- There shall be no discrimination based on gender, religion, ethnicity, age, disabilities or sexual orientation.
- Local union representatives receive training in the legislation and collective agreements regarding discrimination.
- The proportion of women in top positions is increased by 2 percentage points annually.
- The authorities and the institutions set target figures to increase the share of women in executive positions in research and academia.
- Institutions should have strategies for the recruitment of the underrepresented gender and population groups among both students and staff.

### **3.7 Stage-of-life policy and pension**

A good stage-of-life policy creates a more meaningful and inclusive working environment. Employees must therefore be assured working conditions that make it possible for them to use their work capacity and resources in the best possible manner throughout their working careers.

NAR strives to ensure that employees with extensive caregiving responsibilities are allowed flexible working conditions that enable them to combine caregiving and working, for example through flexitime schemes and home office arrangements.

NAR works to ensure that all institutions plan for and link job descriptions and tasks to phases of life. Collaboration and mentoring between older and younger workers can be particularly important. This ensures continuity and knowledge transfer while best utilising employees' expertise, experience and capacity.

There is reason to expect that the public pension schemes will be taken up for consideration during this period.

**NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- As far as possible, employees are given a chance to adapt their responsibilities to their circumstances.
- Good mentoring schemes and systems for the transfer of competence and networks are established by all institutions.
- Members are ensured the best possible pension terms.

## 4. Research and innovation policy

### 4.1 R&D efforts on par with the other Nordic countries

Research and development (R&D) is essential in order to solve key social challenges in both the public and private sectors, nationally and globally. Research efforts should at least be on par with countries we cooperate with, in order to maintain a sufficient level of quality and breadth in Norwegian research environments.

Norway is the only Nordic country that has not reached the EU objective of raising overall R&D investment to at least 3 per cent of GDP. Research investments in Norway also lag far behind the other Nordic countries when measured as per capita research investment. It is therefore necessary to strengthen investment in research, and government authorities must take greater responsibility for stimulating increased investment in research in business and industry.

In connection with the review of the long-term plan for research and higher education in 2018, Norway will develop an investment plan, a priority scheme for investments and major construction and maintenance projects in the higher education sector.

Norway participates in the EU framework programme Horizon 2020, and certain adaptations are necessary for Norwegian institutions and employees to play an active part. At the same time, the increased membership dues for the framework programme must not lead to reduced national R&D efforts in Norway.

In recent years, the growth in research efforts has generally taken place within directed research. Accordingly, there is a need to increase the resources spent on basic research and to reduce the micromanagement of research programmes.

#### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Norway increases its research spending to 3 per cent of GDP by 2030, that a plan to step up the efforts is developed and that the public sector's share is increased to 50 per cent.
- The Government Research Committee is chaired by the Prime Minister, and an advisory panel of active researchers is established for it.
- The allocation for independent basic research under the auspices of the Research Council is increased significantly, and the micromanagement of research programmes is reduced.
- The 'SkatteFUNN' tax relief scheme is strengthened and further developed in order to stimulate increased research efforts in business and industry
- Grant-based schemes are introduced for research projects in business and industry.
- Long-term research and higher education are further developed through the development of specific estimates for investment needs in the education and research sector.
- The membership dues for participation in international research programmes are divided between ministries so that it does not compromise on national research spending.
- In order to compete for funding from the Horizon 2020 programme, institutions must have multi-year plans and a long-term approach to their research, and building academic groups over time in line with their academic profile and strategy.
- National funding schemes to ensure Norwegian institutions' co-funding of EU research projects are further developed.

### 4.2 Quality in R&D work

Institutions and knowledge workers in the entire research and knowledge sector must be ensured the necessary framework conditions for professional development. This is necessary for institutions to be able to carry out their social mission, and it involves basic grants and a freedom of action that ensures uninterrupted time for research and development, working capital, appropriate work spaces and access to modern research infrastructure, as well as good managers and a competent support staff.

It is a major challenge that academic staff feel that they do not have sufficient time or resources to carry out R&D work and knowledge production. Various studies, within the higher education sector, research institutes, hospitals and the archive, library and museum sector, all indicate that knowledge workers work far more than normal working hours and exceed the frameworks legislated by the Working Environment Act.

Institutions must plan and prioritise academic activities over time. An improved long-term approach to research activities is necessary to build good academic environments and improve the quality of R&D work. Good research administration is essential to support teaching and research activity. Likewise, academic and research libraries are crucial for researchers and students to have access to updated and quality-assured information resources. Quality administrative and library services are a resource that contributes to improved quality of education and research.

Norwegian museums, libraries and archives are knowledge organisations where research work is one of the core tasks. R&D work is essential for these institutions to carry out their social responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. These institutions are stewards of unique artefacts and texts that form a platform for research and dissemination in a wide range of disciplines. Proper storage conditions must be assured for this material, which must be made widely available for research and dissemination. Accordingly, the institutions must have the financial resources to ensure such conditions and maintain a staff of competent academic personnel.

Research institutes play an important role in innovation and as a bridge between basic and applied research. Long-term funding solutions are a prerequisite for long-term competence building and a prerequisite for the institute sector to be able to offer relevant high quality research to both the private and public sectors.

It is perceived as a problem that the research and knowledge sector reports to several ministries which are often poorly coordinated.

#### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Employers ensure that the duties of all employees can be completed in the course of ordinary working hours, by adjusting the level of activity to the staffing situation.
- Agreements are established in all sectors that guarantee the right and obligation of a scientific employee to conduct research during working hours and a minimum of working capital.
- Sabbatical schemes for academic staff are ensured through local agreements.
- Professors and associate professors in the higher education sector are assured an individual right and obligation to have their working hours equally divided between research and teaching/museum work etc., (50/50) when other duties are deducted.
- Academic staff in other combined positions in all sectors are guaranteed at least 30 per cent of their working hours for R&D work.
- Performance-based allocation of time for R&D should be in addition to this minimum.
- Work schedules and results are adequate documentation of an employee's working hours.
- Staff and students have access to updated and quality-assured scientific equipment and library resources, as well as a competent technical and administrative support apparatus.
- Institutions in the archive, library and museum sector must be incorporated into the National Research Information System CRISStin.
- Collections are preserved to safeguard the basic foundation and potential for research and knowledge development at museums.
- Regional strategic institute programmes must be created for research institutes so that they can participate in the competition for strategic funding.
- The ministries must improve the way in which they coordinate their efforts towards the research and knowledge sector.

## 4.3 Knowledge-based innovation

An outstanding, well-developed research and education system is an important means of creating innovation. Innovation is critical in order to ensure future value creation for Norway and the best possible development of the welfare state. Both the private and public sectors must be renewed through research and innovation. Investing in higher education, research, and development yields a return in the form of increased GDP, more jobs, better health and welfare and improved conditions for democracy.

Research-driven innovation does not necessarily occur through applied research. It can just as easily be based on basic research and research-based teaching. Facilitating good working and framework conditions for R&D, and ensuring good conditions for basic research, are important prerequisites for creating innovation. Institutions must facilitate employees' innovation, and collaboration among research and education institutions, other parts of working life, and public administration must be promoted. It is necessary to stimulate more innovation activities within the humanities and social sciences to find untapped potential. The institute sector is an important instrument in this work, and especially for boosting innovation in the public sector.

In order to encourage innovation and commercialisation, originators must have financial incentives that will preserve the personal initiative to drive the innovation process forward. By guaranteeing the researcher's right to take the idea further, institutions will be encouraged to facilitate innovation. Furthermore, schemes must be set up to ensure the necessary capital during the risk phase when a research result is being developed for the market.

### **NAR will strive to ensure:**

- That research institutions develop routines for capturing good ideas and offering the best possible support in the further innovation process.
- Increased cooperation and mobility between research institutions and businesses and industry.
- The establishment of a national scheme for proof-of-concept funding for the risk phase of commercialising research results, in addition to further development of the existing seed funding scheme.
- Strengthening and further development of the FORNY and BIA programmes.
- That public administration becomes more active in innovation and involves the knowledge communities in order to improve public administration through changes in tendering and financial regulations.
- Establishment of incentives for commercialisation of research results which ensure that patenting, licensing of inventions and contributions to the establishment of businesses are financially recognised.
- The commitment to innovation and commercialisation by institutions must safeguard employees' rights and working conditions, so that this work does not take time away from R&D and teaching.
- Schemes for private and public sector PhDs are strengthened.

## 4.4 Recruitment of researchers

Population projections from Statistics Norway show that the number of people ages 20–29 will increase by about 30,000 over the period 2016–2018. There is therefore reason to believe that the number of students in higher education will continue to increase in the years ahead. Furthermore, there is broad political consensus that Norway's investments in research should be escalated. Meanwhile, a considerably higher number of employees at universities and university colleges will be retiring. The development of an increasingly specialised workplace will mean more attractive jobs for future knowledge workers. Institutions in the research and knowledge sector will face increased competition for knowledge workers. Accordingly, recruitment will be one of the biggest challenges in the years ahead. Development of attractive and competitive career paths is important to ensure the recruitment of knowledge workers in all sectors.

For academic positions in the higher education sector, schemes with the right to competence promotions based on eligibility assessments are important elements in the employment structure. This is an important way for academic employees to influence their wage development. In addition, the schemes encourage competence building and professional development.

Research fellows and postdoctoral fellows must have special qualification paths and must not be misused to perform ordinary work assignments. There must be better systems in place so that doctoral degrees can be completed in the stipulated time. Furthermore, analyses of the need for a workforce with a research background must form the basis for the dimensioning of doctoral education.

#### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- The scheme for personal promotions for academic staff in the government is retained and expanded to other relevant bargaining areas.
- Resources are allocated for maintenance and development of employee competence.
- Institutions implement recruitment plans for establishing clearer career paths for employees.
- Research fellow and postdoctoral positions are fully funded. New research fellow positions must be followed by additional permanent positions and the necessary infrastructure such as buildings, office space, laboratories, etc.
- Postdoctoral fellows are not given required duties unless their appointment is for more than three years, and clearer requirements for the contents of postdoctoral positions must be drawn up.
- Research fellows are given satisfactory working conditions and the resources to complete their doctorates, including the necessary resources to perform research abroad.
- If bargaining areas outside the civil service are to use fixed-term employment of research fellows and postdoctoral fellows, they must at minimum offer the same rights and duties provided for in legislation and collective agreements for the civil service.
- PhD candidates are entitled to unemployment benefits while finishing their thesis, as long as they are real job seekers and only working on their thesis in their free time.

## **4.5 Internationalisation of research**

Knowledge production is largely international in character and it is important to make mobility across national borders as easy as possible for staff and students. All researchers must have adequate funding possibilities for research stays abroad, such as for research projects, international practice, participation in international conferences, etc. Moreover, incoming researchers and students must be met with good information and flexible arrangements for their stay.

The Government's ambitions for a significantly increased success rate for Norwegian institutions in the EU Framework Programme (Horizon 2020) will require increased efforts to partner with international networks and collaboration with trade and industry. The Government must play a leading role in reducing the bureaucracy surrounding the EU framework programme and at the same time ensure that institutions have the best possible funding and are prepared to spend time and resources on compiling applications and project work.

NAR will actively respond to developments in international research cooperation – particularly in the common European Research Area (ERA).

To facilitate entry and exit to and from Norway for knowledge workers, regulations on social security, pension, income tax and career counselling through NAV must be simplified, reformed and improved.

## **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- The equipment and resource situation is strengthened so that all knowledge workers are able to participate actively in international collaboration and are interesting collaboration partners.
- Research and development collaboration between Norwegian and foreign researchers is enhanced through measures to promote mobility for Norwegian researchers going abroad and for foreign researchers coming to Norway (exchanges, study periods, collaboration, homecoming).
- Schemes are set up to protect knowledge workers' rights within international mobility.
- Schemes are set up to facilitate research stays abroad for knowledge workers in all sectors.
- Schemes are set up to trigger support from a national fund for the best projects that do not succeed in gaining funding from Horizon 2020. This will both encourage more institutions to apply and yield an academic benefit in that the work on the application will nevertheless be utilised in further academic work.
- A national network must be established connecting the various counselling services at the institutions so that researchers, businesses and other user groups get good, effective advice and research support for participation in EU framework programmes and international networks.
- Effective information and counselling services must be set up in order to increase participation in Horizon 2020 and reduce the workload for the academic communities interested in submitting an application.
- Teacher exchanges and joint development of educational programmes are encouraged. The terms of employment for employees residing abroad in an academic context are improved.

## **5. Education policy and knowledge management**

### **5.1 Research-based education**

Higher education institutions shall offer research-based teaching. This implies that, as a main rule, academic staff should hold combined positions with the right and obligation to engage in research and development. This is a necessary prerequisite for quality teaching. Students will be introduced to, and given the opportunity to be involved in, research activities during their studies. Evaluation methods must be adapted to the specific subject, and students should be closely followed up during the programme. It is important to ensure that students have general framework conditions that enable them to study full-time.

The Quality Reform that was introduced in 2003 was intended to result in increased quality through closer follow-up of individual students and faster throughput. However, the number of students who drop out of higher education, the number who complete their studies in the prescribed time and the number of students per teacher is virtually unchanged. There has also been a huge increase in efficiency in the form of awarded credits, and institutions have admitted far more students than they can fully finance. This results in poorer follow-up of students, a greater teaching load for the staff and less student-teacher contact than anticipated. There is therefore reason to further develop the quality of higher education by prioritising teaching itself, improving teaching conditions and giving it higher status. Good teaching materials are a prerequisite for good quality teaching, and employees must be encouraged to prioritise such work.

It is important to have a broad approach to quality in education. To get the best possible picture of the quality of education, in addition to having quantitative targets it is important to emphasise the perspectives of current and former students and future employers, as well as that of the staff who work with education and quality on a daily basis. Increased emphasis on educational qualifications and basic skills will help improve the quality of teaching in the higher education sector.

There is reason to expect that the number of applications for higher education will continue to rise throughout this period, and universities and university colleges must be guaranteed framework conditions that allow them to adequately meet the expected increase in the number of students.

Research administration, student administration and technical support functions are important factors for quality research and teaching.

Equal right to education implies that the government has the responsibility for funding higher education, providing necessary equipment for good teaching and maintaining satisfactory levels of financial support for students.

**NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- There is equal access to education in Norway. Access to higher education must be ensured.
- Higher education institutions shall offer research-based teaching. As a main rule, academic staff should hold combined positions with the right and obligation to engage in research and development, teaching and dissemination.
- High quality teaching is ensured through good follow-up of students during their programmes, including mentoring, adapted examinations and forms of assessment, good practices and involvement in research.
- The performance-based teaching component is changed by reducing incentives related to credit production.
- Institutions' production of credits is reduced to reflect the level of actual funding.
- Employees are ensured sufficient time for teaching and preparation, through the development of realistic work plans.
- Work plans are sufficient documentation of the employee's working hours.
- Institutions must facilitate conditions to enable employees to develop good learning materials and adopt new learning methods. Colleague mentoring is offered to improve teaching quality.
- Teaching expertise is emphasised in employment, promotions and salary placement.
- The Centres of Excellence in Higher Education scheme must be further developed, and there needs to be an education criterion as a condition for funding from the Centres of Excellence in Research.
- Institutions of higher education should have good administrative services for staff and students as well as modern and appropriate classrooms.
- Students are to be guaranteed financing that will enable them to study full-time.

## **5.2 Good financial frameworks**

Good working conditions attract talented employees and provide better quality. Accordingly, NAR would like to see financing systems that can encourage better working conditions and quality of knowledge production. Research institutions rely on sufficient basic funding to ensure academic development and academic independence from contracting entities.

Research and knowledge production is an activity with a long time horizon. It is a challenge that research funding in the national budget and particularly external financing are too focused on the short-term. Today's public tender rules with very low financial limits and demanding procurement procedures contribute to the announcement of many short-term projects and high uncertainty linked to many small projects, each with applications and reporting requirements. One consequence is that the number of working hours that are used to apply for funding has increased sharply.

Today's funding system in the higher education sector generally works well, and there is no reason to make any major changes. At the same time, there are weaknesses that can be improved, particularly relating to the need for more long-term and quality funding. To ensure a long-term perspective, predictability and stability, today's model with a strong base funding and the current level of the performance-based funding must continue. Basic grants must ensure that institutions can offer research-based teaching and are a prerequisite for institutions to be able to build up an academic environment over time.

The result-based redistribution component (Norwegian acronym: RBO) is the same for all institutions within a zero-sum game. Increased production over time will thus weaken the incentive effect of the RBO if the framework is not increased. Moreover, institutions do not have the same opportunities to be able to benefit from the RBO when incentives are aimed at research and not balanced by corresponding incentives for development work, dissemination and public relations.

There is a large backlog in investment in buildings and modern research infrastructure, as well as in operations and maintenance. There is a tendency for new buildings in the research and knowledge sector to place employees in multi-person and open plan offices. When R&D work and student follow-up and counselling must take place in open plan offices, many feel that it is difficult to maintain the quality of their academic work.

### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Universities and university colleges must be guaranteed adequate funding to be able to provide research-based teaching with good follow-up of individual students.
- Research and knowledge institutions receive adequate basic funding to ensure stability and a long-term approach, as well as freedom of action both to implement research initiatives and to maintain their academic breadth.
- Research funding ensures an adequate long-term perspective for institutions and knowledge workers. The government must request more long-term R&D projects.
- The threshold for putting R&D contracts out to tender should be raised to NOK 1 million.
- Basic funding for universities and university colleges should be reviewed with the aim of removing obvious injustices. Basic grants for institutions must be increased so that the employees are guaranteed the necessary time for R&D.
- Research and knowledge institutions are ensured full salary and pension compensation.
- The RBO must be changed such that it does not have a closed framework.
- New assignments to the institutions are fully funded so that academic activities can be maintained at a high level.
- Adequate funding is earmarked for the maintenance and operation of buildings and infrastructures.
- The budgetary frameworks for new government buildings are increased so that employees can be offered satisfactory office spaces.

## **5.3 Organisation and administration of knowledge institutions**

The government and political authorities bear the overall responsibility for the higher education sector. Universities and university colleges are important bearers of culture and should have academic and artistic freedom and be academically independent of the State. The role of the government is to be a guarantor for the institutions' autonomy and academic freedom. This presupposes that the institutions' governing scheme ensures autonomy from the owner, whether it be a ministry or a private foundation.

The institute sector performs almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  of all research in Norway measured as a share of total investment in R&D. There is multiparty consensus that the institute sector fills an important function as a provider of research-based knowledge to trade and industry, government agencies and others. At the same time, there is no coherent policy for the sector. Consequently, research institutes have over time found themselves in a difficult financial situation with poor academic framework conditions.

Institutions in the research and knowledge sector have broad and complex goals. In knowledge institutions, employees must be shown confidence and be involved in governance through the collegial bodies. Management principles from other sectors cannot simply be imported.

Universities and colleges have the authority to set their internal management structure in terms of appointment or election of academic leaders, dual or unitary management and continuation or closure of collegial bodies. This is important in order to achieve a good governance structure adapted to the various institutions. Furthermore, universities and colleges are governed through the broad involvement of employees. This is necessary to ensure the proper administration of the academic freedom and assumes that institutions have collegial bodies with influence over academic matters and priorities.

To ensure the best possible use of research funding, there is a need for a clearer division of responsibility between the various research-performing sectors. Insofar as institutions are competing for the same research funds, a level playing field must be maintained.

Mergers and the formation of networks in the research and knowledge sector must aim to improve the quality of knowledge production. Processes related to mergers and the formation of networks must not be drawn out in time such that time and energy is drained from core activities. After a merger, a time- and resource-intensive work on consolidating the new organisation starts.

### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- Universities and university colleges remain public administrative bodies with special authorisations.
- A national strategy is developed for the institute sector's role in the Norwegian knowledge system, which clarifies both dimensioning and financing.
- The governance of knowledge institutions in the research and knowledge sector must consider the complex objectives of the institutions and ensure the involvement of the employees.
- There is a clearer division of responsibility between the research-performing sectors, at the same time maintaining equal terms of competition.
- In their choice of governance structure, universities and colleges should comply with laws and collective agreements so that both students and staff enjoy transparency and have a real opportunity to participate.
- Collegial bodies are maintained at all levels, and universities and university colleges are allowed to decide whether the Rector should be elected or appointed.
- Mergers in the research and knowledge sector must be voluntary, be motivated by the drive to improve quality and have support from the institutions.
- Mergers are fully funded and the merged institutions are guaranteed frameworks that enable them to further develop the institution. Any synergistic effects must be seen over 7–10 years.
- The structural process and the mergers must be subsequently evaluated.

## **6. Organisational and communication work**

NAR's work on organisation, communications, information and public relations is a policy instrument for achieving the union's objectives with a view to wage and personnel policy and research and education policy.

NAR's work on research policy, education policy and employees rights requires close cooperation between the union's central level and its local branches. For NAR to achieve its political and strategic goals, it is important that they are well anchored in the organisation.

### **6.1 Organisation**

NAR's influence is closely related to its total number of members. A well-functioning organisation is crucial for rallying support for topics of current interest and for providing all members with the assistance they need. Organising a high percentage of the staff gives NAR greater legitimacy, more influence and more financial freedom of action. Accordingly, the recruitment of new members will be given priority.

An efficient, powerful organisation presupposes that the central levels, the local branches and the professional networks are all pulling in the same direction, and that all levels cooperate closely to promote members' interests. The Executive Board has a central role in formulating policy strategies and priorities and drawing up clear objectives for the strategic work of the local branches. NAR will strengthen the local branches and their role as active suppliers of the terms and conditions in the union's policy and strategic development, in addition to the work aimed at their own workplace. Furthermore, professional networks must still play a central role as a resource and an expert body for the Executive Board in their respective areas.

The local trade union representatives are responsible for implementing the union's policies and for assisting members. Consequently, local union representatives must be ensured good working conditions and well-functioning training programmes.

**NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- NAR's organisational structure should underpin the goal of being the largest and leading trade union in the sector.
- The union's organisational structure will be evaluated to consider whether a new structure may help rejuvenate organisational work and thereby make it more attractive for members to participate in organisational work both at local and central levels. We should consider setting up a broad-based National Board as a replacement for the existing National Council.
- As part of this organisational development, we will identify and clarify the function of the professional networks, their efforts and contributions to the union's overall academic policy and the need for operating assets.
- The number of members continues to grow, by recruiting new members and by retaining existing members.
- NAR is present at all higher education and research institutions and is the primary choice for all employees in positions that require higher education.
- NAR will strengthen its efforts to recruit students and, in this period, will consider how best to organise student members in the union.
- The National Council should be used actively as a policy and strategy body and to promote communication between local branches, the professional networks and Executive Board.
- The Sectorial Seminars should have a focused role as a forum for political and strategic debate and exchange of experience between the local branches.
- The training of local union representatives should maintain high quality through a relevant, professional and flexible series of courses. The courses are aimed at making the local union representatives capable of representing members' interests pursuant to legislation and collective agreements. The content of the courses should be anchored in NAR's goals.
- Local union representatives are involved in the development of strategies and policies, in NAR's regular and ad hoc committees, and in the central negotiating committees.
- The financial resources made available for the local representatives should be increased. Experience from local union work ought to be included in the criteria for local pay raises.
- Schemes are established which make it attractive for knowledge workers to assume office as local union representatives.
- The local branches efforts to recruit new union representatives are strengthened.
- Membership benefits such as insurance schemes and banking services are to be attractive, in line with the union's values and give the union a competitive edge compared with other organisations.
- The cooperation and influence within our confederation is developed further.

## 6.2 Communication strategy

NAR's communication strategy is a crucial policy instrument for achieving the union's political objectives, organisational development and strengthening our reputation. Our communication strategy should help promote the union's viewpoints and communicate its objectives to members, local union representatives, institution leaders, politicians and the authorities in higher education and research.

Media-related public relations will be used actively to facilitate the achievement of goals relating to wages and working conditions and to rally support for the union's viewpoints on education and research policy, as well as organisational objectives. This calls for the communication of a clear message, cogent argumentation. NAR's president plays a central part in this work.

NAR's position in current issues should be well known within the organisation, among local union representatives and to members and potential members. The information provided from NAR's central level should help ensure that all organisational units and local union representatives are familiar with the union's policies, priorities and results so that the entire organisation can work towards common goals.

### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- NAR's media coverage and presentation of cases improves, for example through targeted use of social media, and by using this actively in goal achievement efforts.
- Public opinion and decision makers are influenced by campaigns focusing on the wage levels and working conditions in our sector.
- Knowledge about the resource situation in research and higher education and the knowledge sector, and the consequences for society, is disseminated to the public, decision makers and the appropriating authorities.
- The local branches are well qualified for dealing with the media on local matters.
- The periodical *Forskerforum* strengthens its position as a leading news and debate forum in the sector.
- Members and union representatives should feel that the information provided from the central level is current, relevant and adequate.
- The organisational cohesion is strengthened by clear presentation of NAR's policies and priorities.

## 6.3 Public relations

To reach our political objectives, it is important that NAR stands out as a clear, high-profile and serious societal actor. The union's viewpoints and objectives should be made known to institution leaders, politicians and the authorities in higher education and research. NAR's public relations are intended to garner more support from the authorities and employers.

The union attaches importance to continuous contact with decision-makers and entering into political processes at an early stage to contribute knowledge and proposals for solutions. To rally support for its causes, NAR must engage in the public debate with a clear and distinct message. Extensive cooperation and alliance-building with other players, on the national as well as the international level, are important for achieving results.

### **NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- NAR is the leading societal actor and the trendsetting special interest organisation within research and knowledge sector.
- Our policies, especially regarding wage negotiations and research policy, gain support within the Confederation of Unions for Professionals (Unio).
- The cooperation and contact with other actors within the union's area of interest is further developed in order to garner as much support as possible for NAR's policies.
- NAR stays updated on international development trends of importance to the sector, through participation in the international organisations Education International/ETUCE and through Nordic cooperation.