

**The Norwegian Association of
Researchers:
Work Program
2019–2021**

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1. Introduction

This work program and our “Vision and values” document are NAR’s foremost policy documents and detail NAR’s overall objectives and main tasks. The object of the Norwegian Association of Researchers (NAR) is to improve wages and employment conditions within the research and higher education sectors, and to protect its members’ financial and professional interests.

The term ‘research and knowledge sector’ includes universities, university colleges, research institutes and 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 Executive Board is responsible for the implementation of the work program, 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. Wages and career development

The labour market demands more and more knowledge workers. This makes it harder for education and research institutions to recruit, develop and retain skilled employees. Demands for strengthened research efforts and better follow-up of students, in a situation with increased influx of students and a historically high proportion of staff retiring, makes recruitment to research and higher education one of the most important challenges for the institutions in the years ahead.

NAR strives to ensure that wage conditions are competitive, both nationally and internationally. Wage levels should reflect members’ expertise, responsibilities and efforts.

Large groups of NAR members have had lower pay rises than the average for public sector employees, and lower salaries than comparable job categories. The starting wage for scientific positions is low compared to other educational groups. Surveys among members reveal a disturbing dissatisfaction with the wage level, among both academic and administrative staff.

2.1 Competitive wages

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Wages and working conditions will be attractive enough for the institutions to recruit, develop and retain the best qualified and motivated knowledge workers.
- Education, knowledge, competence, responsibility, efforts and results provide the basis for wage increase.
- The wage gap between employees in the public sector and the private sector is reduced.
- An academic career development and a leader career give equally good wage opportunities.
- The wage level for academic positions is at least on par with comparable groups in the public sector.
- New collective agreements are established centrally and locally, and existing agreements are developed further.
- Wage systems in all sectors give all of our members, both as a group and individually, the opportunity for local wage improvement.
- The starting wage for PhD candidates and assistant professors should be raised to at least the same level as the starting wage for high school lecturers.

- The starting wage for positions at professor level should be raised to at least NOK 700 000,-.
- Efficiency gains through mergers and structural changes should provide a basis for wage increase.
- Employers in bargaining areas where the economic framework is negotiated centrally should allocate additional funds to the local negotiations.
- Temporary employees are ensured equally good wage conditions and wage development as permanent employees.
- Local union representatives can contribute to the design and follow up of their institutions' wage policies in accordance with the development of collective agreements.
- Elected union representatives are ensured real wage growth during their election term.
- Employees in particularly independent posts are compensated in the form of higher basic wages.

2.2 Career development

All knowledge workers – whether they hold scientific, technical or administrative positions – should have career development opportunities. This is a prerequisite for the research and knowledge sector to be an attractive career path, and able to recruit and retain the best qualified in competition with alternative career opportunities.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Employment structures and opportunities for career development are established, based on expertise and well-known criteria for promotion in all sectors.
- The scheme for personal promotions for academic staff in the state sector is retained and expanded to other relevant bargaining areas.
- The enterprises have good arrangements for professional and personal development for employees.
- The enterprises offer leadership training to employees with management functions.
- Incentives for commercialisation of research results are established which ensure that patenting, licensing of inventions and contributions to the establishment of businesses are financially recognised.
- Elected union representatives are ensured through agreements to have the necessary time and resources for professional update after their term.
- The position as elected union representative is emphasized in the individual's further career.

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.

One of the goals of the Act Relating to State Employees (2017) was to limit the use of temporary employment in the state sector. Following the new act, employees in externally funded positions did not get stronger employment protection. With increasing external funding, the work to better the employment protection for this group will be important this period.

The use of temporary employment is a major issue in the research and knowledge sector, and a significant obstacle to good recruitment. The struggle to reduce the use of temporary employment will therefore be important during the period.

NAR strives to ensure that:

- Restrictions are imposed on temporary employment under both the Working Environment Act and the State Employees Act.
- The State Employees Act does not entail extended use of temporary positions or terminations of contracts in the state sector.
- The use of temporary employment in the education and research sector is reduced down to the level in working life in general.
- External funding does not weaken workers' rights. Employers take their share of the risk by establishing financial support schemes between funding periods.
- Two years of employment as a research fellow/PhD candidate are included in calculation of the service period.
- Employers at all levels follow the intentions of the legislation.

3.2 Working hours

The provisions on working hours in the Working Environment Act and collective agreements are under pressure. Employers want their employees to be more flexible with regard to what is defined as normal working hours. For instance, employers try to enter into collective agreements on average calculation of working hours without sufficient compensation and rest periods for deviating working time arrangements.

For groups of employees whose working hours are controlled by work plans, it is essential that the work plans are realistic so that the tasks assigned can be carried out within normal working hours. The factors that form the basis for calculating the time spent on the various tasks must reflect actual time spent, and must be subject to co-determination so that the employer cannot unilaterally make changes to the factors. In several cases, administrative cuts are camouflaged by the fact that scientific staff receives more tasks.

This period, it will be important for NAR to increase the expertise of local representatives and members on working hours and compensation for work performed.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- The duties of employees can be completed in the course of ordinary working hours, in order to make it possible to combine full-time work, family and leisure in all phases of life.
- Work plans for academic staff must be realistic, and should form the basis for assessment and compensation of additional work and overtime work.
- The workload factors in the work plans should be negotiated.
- Additional work shall be compensated with pay and / or time off according to statutory and contractual agreements.

3.3 Maintaining and developing co-determination

The Norwegian model of tripartite cooperation, both locally and centrally, has contributed to ensuring Norway's increased productivity, economic growth and good welfare development. Local co-determination constitutes the basis for tripartite cooperation and the Norwegian model.

Surveys indicate that working life is moving in a more authoritarian direction, and that many employees experience less influence over their own work situation. NAR representatives often receive feedback that employers do not respect the co-determination arrangements of the Basic Agreement. During the program period, it will be important to enter into closer cooperation with the employers' organisations on joint education of employers and local union representatives, where the Norwegian model and the value of the employees' co-determination are the main themes. NAR will maintain and further develop established and contractual rights to co-determination.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- The Basic Agreement's intentions of equal parties are followed.
- Staff co-determination according to collective agreements is strengthened at every level.
- Funds are set aside for training of union representatives in all bargaining areas.
- Adequate resources are allocated to the work of union representatives.
- 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 union representatives during reorganisation processes.

3.4 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 for anyone involved in research. 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.

However, several impulses and trends are putting academic freedom under renewed pressure: the increasing emphasis on utility values, strategic specialisation and external funding, the disappearance of collegiate bodies, the growing number of scientific personnel employed in temporary positions, changes in public administration's use of research and several cases involving distrust in and misuse of research. The undermining of academic freedom not only compromises the quality of research, but also weakens informed and critical societal debate and confidence in research-based knowledge. Consequently, the Norwegian Association of Researchers believes it is important that these challenges are highlighted and that dilemmas and areas of particular concern are singled out for discussion.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- The government and the political parties respect the independence of research, and strive for an enlightened, knowledge-based public debate.
- The 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.
- All research projects must be based on contracts that safeguard the academic freedom of researchers and their right and duty to publish their findings.
- Academic staff shall be free to choose publication channel.

3.5 Immaterial rights

NAR strives to protect members' intellectual property rights to works created in the employment relationship. Clear rules are needed to ensure that employees' works are not misused or exploited in such a way that infringes on the originator's rights. Employees' ideal 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 innovation processes. Contact with business and industry must be safeguarded in such a way that research remains independent and in line with current competition concerns in society in general.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Enterprises have an IPR policy that protects the intellectual property rights of academic staff.
- 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.
- 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' intellectual property rights in connection with innovation activities, patenting and entrepreneurship must be safeguarded in a good and satisfactory manner.
- National guidelines for open access to scientific journals are followed up with satisfactory funding for serious scientific journals. The terms for financing the journals must be in line with Norwegian copyright law.
- The enterprises offer training in publishing channels to their employees.

3.6 Discrimination

Diversity implies a width of perspectives, innovation and expertise. A working environment with different competencies provides better task solving, and will be better equipped for future challenges. Experience has shown that staff with diverse backgrounds is more creative over time and have a greater ability to solve complex problems than more uniform groups. Therefore, ethnicity, functional ability or one's background should not hinder recruitment. Skewed recruitment can result in a loss of talent, and thus loss of competitiveness.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Unequal treatment is uncovered.
- Employees should not be discriminated against on any grounds.
- Local union representatives are trained in legislation and collective agreements regarding discrimination.
- Institutions should have strategies for the recruitment of persons with impaired functioning and ethnic minorities, among students and employees both.

3.7 Equal opportunity

A heterogeneous and diverse working environment provides better task solving. Skewed recruitment can result in a loss of talent, and thus loss of competitiveness. The research and knowledge sector is still characterised by gender imbalance, in several disciplines and in academic executive positions. 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 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 that tasks can be solved within normal working hours are important from a gender equality perspective.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Unequal treatment is uncovered.
- Local union representatives are trained in legislation and collective agreements regarding equal opportunity.
- There is gender balance in all positions.
- 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 recruitment of the underrepresented gender among both students and staff.
- Institutions have strategies for dealing with harassment and sexual harassment.

3.8 Personnel policy

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.

All employees should experience good and safe working conditions as well as good physical and mental working environment. It is important to create a working environment with respect for diversity and where preventive attitude work is conducted. Employees who experience unwanted attention and unacceptable behaviour should know how to report such incidents.

NAR will follow the development of digitization and robotics and the consequences for the knowledge and research sector. Furthermore, the association will follow up the development of workplace organisation in new constructions and upgrading of building stock, with emphasis on what creates inspiration and good working conditions for the individual employee.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- As far as possible, employees are given a chance to adapt their responsibilities to their life situation.
- Good mentoring schemes and systems for the transfer of competence and networks are established by all institutions.
- The intentions and goals of creating an inclusive working life are realized.
- All institutions have an open, positive and safe climate with regard to freedom of expression.
- No one should be prevented from reporting, or fear the consequences of reporting, censurable conditions in the workplace.
- The rules on whistleblowing are practiced in accordance with the intention of the legislation.
- The institutions establish good routines for reporting and following up on reporting of censurable conditions.
- Employees in research and knowledge institutions are ensured satisfactory and suitable workplaces adapted to the work tasks. New construction and modernization of buildings must take place through active user participation in the planning.

3.9 Pensions

The pension system is under pressure due to increased life expectancy and fewer working people behind each pensioner. This makes pensions a current topic in all negotiating areas, whether it's transition to a new and possibly inferior pension plan, or negotiations on a new pension scheme for the public sector.

It is important for NAR to ensure that the new public service pension scheme safeguards the members' wishes and needs; both to be able to stay in work and continue to earn occupational pensions, as well as the opportunity to take out pensions with an acceptable level at retirement age.

At enterprises that want to change their retirement plans from a defined-benefit plan to a defined-contribution plan, the challenges are to negotiate best possible defined-contribution or hybrid schemes and safeguard the pension rights already earned.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Members are ensured the best possible pension terms.
- The new law on public sector occupational pensions is followed up.
- Members' pension rights are safeguarded in connection with research stays abroad.
- Members' rights are safeguarded in the transition to a new pension scheme.
- Study time is credited in the all years rule in the National Insurance Scheme.

4. Research policy

4.1 The need for increased research efforts

Research, education and research-driven innovation are fundamental in order to meet the future needs for knowledge and restructuring and to maintain a sustainable welfare society. National and global challenges require a stronger focus on knowledge development. However, Norway is still investing less in research than our neighbouring countries Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

Research efforts must be based on a holistic research policy. The Government must take a stronger responsibility for strengthening research efforts in the business sector, while ensuring good coordination of public sector research efforts. The ministries' sectoral responsibilities must be maintained better. All ministries must take responsibility for research-based policymaking and resource management in their areas.

In recent years, the growth in research efforts has generally taken place within directed research. Specialisation and strategic prioritization is necessary, but should not come at the expense of basic research and width. Basic funding is crucial for the knowledge institutions' freedom of action and for their core activity. For many institutions, the de-bureaucratization and efficiency reform has resulted in zero growth or a real decline. Additional cuts will not lead to more efficiency, only reduced quality.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Norway increases its research spending to 3 per cent of GDP by 2030 and a plan to step up the efforts is developed in which the public sector's share is increased to 50 per cent.
- The long-term plan for research and higher education provides a longer-term perspective for the entire knowledge sector through planned escalation of efforts in line with proven needs.
- The public sector requests longer-lasting R&D assignments.
- Funding for long-term basic research is given a substantial increase.
- The basic funding for universities, colleges and research institutes is strengthened.
- Archives, libraries and museums are given better conditions in order to fulfil their responsibilities for research, collections and dissemination.
- The Research Council increases funding for research projects for archives, libraries and museums.
- 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 government and the ministries follow up the sector responsibility for research and better coordination of public research efforts.
- Academic activities are shielded from the de-bureaucratization and efficiency reform.

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 the institutions to be able to carry out their social mission. Knowledge workers feel that they do not have sufficient time or resources to carry out R&D work and knowledge production. Demands for research quality and expectations of research-based higher education presuppose that academic staff has research time as part of their working time. Similarly, researchers and knowledge workers in all sectors must be ensured time for R&D work.

R&D work must be seen in the light of a broad understanding of research quality that includes the distinctive character of each discipline and each institution. The tendency towards excessive use of quantitative indicators as a basis for resource allocation and recognition suggests a narrow and instrumental understanding of quality.

An improved long-term approach to research activities is necessary to build good academic environments and improve the quality of R&D work. Good administrative and library services are a resource that contributes to improved quality of education and research.

Research quality must be ensured through framework conditions and a broad public debate on the necessary strategic choices and priorities. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 highlight the need for holistic thinking and power to act in the face of societal challenges globally, nationally and locally. The long-term plan is an important strategic management tool, but must come out of a broader research policy discourse.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- The R&D work takes place in light of a broader interpretation of research quality than just quantitative parameters.
- 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 is guaranteed at least 30 per cent of their working hours for R&D work.
- Staff and students have access to updated and quality-assured scientific equipment and library resources and a competent technical and administrative support staff.
- Collections are preserved to safeguard the basic foundation and potential for research and knowledge development at museums.
- The tradition of White Papers on research should continue.

4.3 Qualifying and recruitment positions

There is a great need for research competence in working life in general. At the same time, the attractiveness of the research career is falling among doctoral candidates and younger researchers. Fewer people want a career in academia, and many young researchers will not recommend today's youth to pursue a career in research. The recruitment challenges must be met by developing attractive and competitive career paths.

PhD candidates and postdoctoral fellows must have special qualification paths. The institutions must put more emphasis on career guidance and make better provisions for the doctoral degree to be completed in the stipulated time. The postdoctoral position must be a real recruitment position with academic qualification at the level of professor as the main objective. Increased knowledge of the doctoral candidates' career paths is necessary for strengthening doctoral education relevance.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- PhD candidates' positions are fully funded.
- All employing institutions develop clear career plans and career guidance for PhD candidates and postdoctoral fellows.
- PhD candidates are given satisfactory working conditions and the resources to complete their doctorates, including the necessary resources for research stays abroad.
- 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 are drawn up.
- An extension of the PhD/postdoctoral employment period is granted for short-term absence (less than two continuous weeks).
- If bargaining areas outside the civil service are to use fixed-term employment of PhD candidates and postdoctoral fellows, they must at minimum offer the same terms as stipulated by 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.

- The pilot project on tenure track positions should not lead to extended use of temporary positions, and should be regarded as a replacement for postdoctoral positions. The pilot project must be evaluated.
- The Industrial PhD and Public Sector PhD schemes are strengthened.
- The content of the postdoctoral position is clarified and the employment period amounts to at least three years of pure research.
- The postdoctoral program must be evaluated with regard to whether it is a real recruitment position.
- All PhD candidates are offered compulsory duties.
- An ombudsman function is established for PhD candidates, postdoctoral fellows and tenure track positions.

4.4 Internationalisation

Knowledge production is increasingly international in its character, and cross-border mobility must be made as easy as possible for employees and students. Participation in the network Scholars at Risk (SAR) Norway is a signal that solidarity with persecuted researchers from all over the world is important for NAR.

All knowledge workers must have adequate funding possibilities for research stays abroad. Similarly, incoming researchers and students must be met with good information and flexible arrangements for their stay.

The institutions in the research and knowledge sector are increasingly recruiting staff from abroad. Increased diversity is enriching for the development of knowledge and for the academic communities, but also places particular demands on the management and the collegium. The institutions must have the expertise and resources to safeguard a more international staff and student group. Employees of foreign origin must be offered training in Norwegian as early as possible. They must also gain knowledge of Norwegian working life, tripartite cooperation and the value of being organised.

The Government's goal to increase the success rate for Norwegian institutions in the EU Framework Programme (Horizon 2020) will require special measures. Incentive and support schemes must be continued, and the institutions must have a basic funding that ensures the most equal conditions possible in order to succeed in the competition for international research funding. Good information and guidance services are essential to reduce the workload of the academic communities that are applying for funds.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Knowledge workers have framework conditions that enable them to participate actively in international cooperation and be interesting partners.
- Persecuted scientists from other countries are granted a temporary academic free port in Norway.
- 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).
- Knowledge workers who are internationally mobile maintain their rights (social security and benefits etc.), and that the regulations are simplified.
- Schemes are set up to facilitate research stays abroad for knowledge workers in all sectors.
- A national NAV office for researcher mobility is set up, with expertise in facilitating stays abroad.
- The institutions have the expertise and resources to safeguard a more international staff and student group.
- Foreign employees gain knowledge of the Nordic model and see the importance of union membership.

5. Education policy

5.1 Quality in higher education

Quality in higher education is about the students' experience and the needs of the working life, as well as about the employees' experience of providing good, research-based teaching and guidance. Surveys show that employees are concerned with and want to further develop the teaching, but that they are in a cross-pressure between tasks related to research, education and dissemination.

Ambitions for closer follow-up of the students, more varied teaching and learning forms, and student-active research all require time, resources, culture for cooperation and room for debates and experience sharing on the subject of teaching. The technical and administrative support functions must be sized according to these needs.

Higher education shall be research-based. 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 and for students to be introduced to, and given the opportunity to be involved in, research activities during their studies.

Universities and colleges must be dimensioned for continued student growth and have the skills to meet a more differentiated student group. A sufficient number of employees and a learning- and health-promoting working environment are needed to reduce drop-out and strengthen the completion rate.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- There are equal rights and access to education and the principle of free education is maintained.
- Higher education is research-based and academic positions as a main rule are combined, with the right and obligation to engage in research and development, teaching and dissemination.
- Scientific employees have the time and resources to quality assure their teaching, develop good teaching materials and apply new learning and assessment forms.
- The institutions facilitate collegial communities, colleague guidance and a culture of cooperation, exchange of experience and learning.
- The institutions free up time for the necessary skills development and academic updating for academic and administrative staff.
- The career path to 'dosent' professor is clarified and a qualification scheme for teaching is developed within national frameworks for all scientific positions.
- Students and staff should have a learning-and-health-promoting working environment with suitable teaching areas, workplaces, library resources, good digital solutions and necessary infrastructure.
- The institutions have highly qualified and adequately staffed research and administrative support functions and technical support structures.

5.2 Funding of higher education

The institutions must have a basic grant that ensures research-based teaching, academic breadth, long-term thinking and stability. This is necessary in order to build and maintain solid academic communities, and to be able to offer good working conditions. A funding model with a strong base funding and the current level of performance-based funding must continue. The institutions have a commitment to the students, and must have predictable resources for the subjects offered. In turn, the institutions have a responsibility not to take up more students than the allocations indicate.

The use of economic incentives or special measures to stimulate increased quality of education must be financed by fresh funds. Correspondingly, the institutions must have equal opportunities to be able to benefit from the performance-based financing components.

Research ambitions as well as goals for future-oriented education programs and working methods presuppose appropriate buildings, modern research infrastructure and facilitation for digitization. The large backlog in investments in buildings, research infrastructure, operations and maintenance makes it difficult to fully exploit the potential of the sector.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- The basic funding for the universities and colleges is raised in order to ensure employees the necessary time for R&D work, teaching and dissemination.
- Performance-based financing components have an open framework so that an overall increase within the performance component automatically increases the total resource frame.
- The overall framework allocation is not made more result- or competition-based.
- The institutions' student admissions are in accordance with the actual funding, in order to ensure the quality of education and research.
- The investment plan for maintenance, operation of buildings and infrastructure is followed by binding appropriations.
- Students have study financing that enables full-time studies, and which provides stronger incentives to complete studies at master's and doctoral level.

6. Organisation and administration of knowledge institutions

Institutions in the research and knowledge sector have broad and complex goals. In knowledge institutions, employees must be shown confidence and be involved through various forms of collegial bodies.

Universities and university colleges are important bearers of culture and should have academic and artistic freedom and be academically independent of the state. They must be governed through the broad involvement of staff and students. Collegial bodies are needed to ensure influence over academic issues and priorities.

The research institute sector accounts for a significant proportion of the research that is carried out in Norway, and fills an important function as a supplier of research-based knowledge to the business sector, public authorities and others. However, there is a large gap between the framework conditions and the breadth of tasks and opportunities for professional development. There is a broad, research-based knowledge base on the institute sector's distinctive features, framework conditions and potential that opens for more comprehensive policy.

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

Mergers and network formations in the research and knowledge sector must aim to improve the quality of knowledge production, and must be followed by research-based evaluations.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- Governance, organisation and management of the institutions in the research and knowledge sector must consider the complex objectives of the institutions and ensure the involvement of the employees.
- Universities and university colleges are public administrative bodies with special authorisations and are guaranteed institutional autonomy.
- In their choice of governance structure, universities and university colleges should ensure that both students and staff enjoy transparency and have real co-determination.

- The 2016 amendment to the Act relating to universities and university colleges, making an employed Rector the main model, is evaluated.
- Collegial bodies are maintained at all levels, and universities and university colleges are allowed to decide whether academic leaders should be elected or appointed.
- Managers with personnel responsibility are recruited through election or employment.
- A review is made to clarify the institute sector's future role in the Norwegian knowledge system.
- There is an appropriate division of labour between the research-performing sectors, where consideration is given to cooperation, complementarity and a level playing field.
- Mergers in the research and knowledge sector are voluntary, anchored in the institutions' social mission and have increased quality as a goal.
- Mergers are fully funded and the merged institutions are guaranteed frameworks that enable further development of the institution. Any synergistic effects must be seen over 7–10 years.
- The structural reform in the university and college sector must be the subject of a research-based evaluation.
- Governance, organisation and management of research institutes is based on the fact that the project collection is research driven, that the structure of the sector is largely adapted to the market and that the institutes have both a regional, national and international role.

7. 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 require 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.

The prerequisites for NAR's working methods are changing. Digitization affects where, when and how we work, and change and restructuring will have an increasing focus. In order to adapt faster and more efficiently, it is important to focus on digitization and the opportunities it offers.

7.1 Organisation

NAR's influence is closely related to its total number of members. A well-functioning organisation is crucial for rallying support for current issues and for providing all members with the assistance and service needed. 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 be able to play a central role as resource and expert bodies for the Executive Board in their respective areas.

The local trade union representatives are responsible for implementing the union's policies at the local level and for assisting members. Consequently, local union representatives must be ensured good working conditions and well-functioning training programmes. NAR as an organisation and the union's activities should contribute to ensure a more sustainable development.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- NAR's organisational structure should underpin the goal of being the largest and leading trade union in the research and knowledge sector.
- The number of members continues to grow, by recruiting new members and by retaining existing members.
- NAR is present at all institutions in the research and knowledge sector and is the primary choice for all employees in positions that require higher education.
- Recruitment among foreign workers and temporary employees is strengthened.
- Local branches in merged enterprises have an organisation that caters to all members.
- The organisation of students within the association is further developed.
- NAR must seek a broad collaboration across the trade unions to increase union density and strengthen the trade unions' place.
- There should be greater transparency about the association's work at all levels in order to stimulate engagement and involvement among members and union representatives.
- The training of and support for local union representatives is of high quality.
- Local union representatives are involved in the development of strategies and policies through NAR's regular bodies, ad hoc committees and in the central negotiating committees.
- Schemes are established which make it attractive for knowledge workers to assume office as local union representatives.
- Union representatives must be guaranteed good support locally and centrally, even after they have left their positions.
- 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.
- Work tools, including archive systems, which are used locally and centrally in the association are modern and up-to-date.
- As far as possible, the Association chooses environmentally friendly paper, equipment, gifts, hotels and travel. Meeting activities should be planned in order to promote environmentally friendly ways of traveling.

7.2 Communication strategy and public relations

Reputation surveys show that NAR is seen as a clear and credible voice in public debate, and that our members to a somewhat greater extent experience that the organisation is well known. NAR is both a trade union and a special interest organisation that expresses an important voice in the knowledge and research sector. Therefore, we are invited to participate in debates relating to the entire field of research and education. It is important to maintain the visibility and influence this gives us. We will continue to manage the wide confidence NAR has as politically independent societal actor.

During the period, it is a special goal to emphasize the connection between the importance of research and knowledge and the necessity of competitive wages and good working conditions. This work is closely related to the work for better researcher recruitment and predictable career paths for young researchers.

NAR will strive to ensure that:

- The communication profile is clear and in line with our political and organisational priorities.
- NAR is a leading societal actor and a trendsetting special interest organisation within the research and knowledge sector.

- Politicians and other decision-makers get relevant knowledge of the situation in the research and knowledge sector, among other ways through the dissemination of our members' experiences and needs.
- Our communication and influence work contributes to increased understanding of our demands for better wages and working conditions.
- Cooperation with other relevant actors is strengthened.
- NAR's media visibility increases, partly through more systematic use of social media.
- Local branches and local union representatives have knowledge of basic communication and influence work.
- The information given to members and union representatives is perceived as current, relevant and adequate.
- The organisational cohesion is strengthened by clear presentation of NAR's policies and priorities.
- The periodical *Forskerforum* maintains and strengthens its position as a leading news and debate forum in the in the research and knowledge sector.
- NAR's interests are safeguarded through international participation in Education International/ETUCE and Nordic cooperation.