

**The Norwegian Association of  
Researchers:  
Work Program  
2022–2024**

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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 Norwegian Association of Researchers (NAR) strives to improve wages and working conditions within the research and higher education sector, and to safeguard 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.

## 2. Wages and Career Development

The ambitions to strengthen the research effort and provide better follow-up of students, combined 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. The increasing competition for knowledge workers reinforces the need for educational and research institutions to be able to offer attractive pay and working conditions so that they are able to recruit, develop and retain skilled employees.

Studies show that large groups of NAR members have had lower pay rises than the average for state 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:**

- Wage terms reflect the societal significance of the members’ tasks, and are competitive locally, nationally, and internationally.
- The research and knowledge sector must be attractive as a career path and be able to recruit, develop and retain qualified and motivated knowledge workers in competition with alternative career opportunities.
- Education, knowledge, competence, responsibility, efforts, and results must provide basis for wage increase.
- Wage levels between the public and private sectors are harmonized.
- An academic career should provide equally good wage opportunities as a management career.
- The wage level for scientific and professional positions must be at least on par with comparable positions 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 the three competence levels bachelor, master and PhD is raised.
- The starting wage for PhD candidates and scientific positions at the level of assistant professor should be raised to at least the same level as the starting wage for high school lecturers.
- The starting wage for positions at associate professor level is raised to at least NOK 650 000 during the period.
- The starting wage for positions at professor level (professor, researcher 1183) should be raised to at least NOK 750 000 during the period.
- Efficiency gains 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 positions are compensated in the form of higher basic wages.
- 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.
- The employees in private enterprises shall be allowed to take part in the financial profits of the enterprises.

## 2.2 Career Development

No one should be outdated due to lack of competence. All knowledge workers – whether they work in scientific, technical, or administrative positions – must have career development opportunities. This provides a health-promoting and meaningful work situation.

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

- The research and knowledge sector is an attractive and competitive career path, for the benefit of society.
- 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 scientific career paths are made more flexible with the possibility to switch between the paths.
- The enterprises have good arrangements for professional and personal development for employees.
- The enterprises offer leadership training to employees with management functions.

## 2.3 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 by entering into collective agreements.
- 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.

## 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. There is no reason why there should be more temporary employees in the research and knowledge sector than in working life in general, where the proportion over time has been below 9%. 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. At the same time, efforts must be made for more long-term and predictable research funding.

The use of temporary employment is still a major issue in the research and knowledge sector, and a significant obstacle to good recruitment. This is especially true in the university and college sector, which is still the worst in this area. Studies show that job insecurity is the main reason why young researchers, and especially women, do not want to recommend other young people a research career.

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

- Restrictions are imposed on temporary employment under both the Working Environment Act and the State Employees Act.
- The right to use fixed-term employment under the Universities and University Colleges Act is limited.
- 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.
- 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

Several surveys show that NAR's members must use their free time to get their work done, and that there is generally too much cross-pressure between requirements and expectations related to research and teaching and other tasks.

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 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.

#### **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 must be realistic, the workload factors in the work plans should be negotiated, and the work plans should form the basis for assessment and compensation of additional work and overtime work.
- Additional work shall be compensated with pay and / or time off according to statutory and contractual agreements.
- Increased workload as a result of extraordinary events is compensated for everyone, including employees in particularly independent positions.

### **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, that many employees experience less influence over their own work situation, and that employers do not respect the co-determination arrangements of the Basic Agreement. Downsizing, restructuring and changes in work processes are occurring more frequently than before. This increases the need for a real dialogue between the individual employee, union representatives, safety representatives and the employer. NAR will maintain and further develop established and contractual rights to co-determination.

Transparency is fundamental to the opportunity to exercise co-determination and participation. Openness and transparency in public enterprise is an important tool for employees and citizens to have the opportunity to investigate that everything is going well, that equal treatment takes place, that resources are managed correctly, and not least so that leaders and politicians can be held accountable.

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

- The Basic Agreement's intentions of equal parties and co-determination are followed.
- Staff co-determination according to collective agreements is evaluated and strengthened at every level.
- Adequate resources are allocated to the work of union representatives.
- Joint training in the agreement framework for the parties locally is carried out regularly.
- 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.
- All enterprises practice the greatest possible transparency about their own activities and decisions.

### **3.4 Union Representatives**

Local union representatives in the workplace are a prerequisite for the Norwegian model of co-determination and social dialogue to work in practice. The importance of the role as union representative must be recognized and it is important to facilitate good recruitment to the position.

Recruitment to positions as union representative is fundamental for NAR to be able to fulfil its role in the social dialogue at the workplaces. Recruitment of new union representatives is therefore a task that employers should also facilitate.

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

- Union representative work is safeguarded, valued, and prioritized by the management in the exercise of official duties.
- Schemes are established which make it attractive for knowledge workers and especially scientific staff to assume office as local union representatives.

- Funds are set aside for training of union representatives in all bargaining areas.
- The work as a union representative is made visible in the individual's position and working hours.
- Elected union representatives are ensured through agreements to have the necessary time and resources for professional update after their term.
- The position as union representative is emphasized in the individual's further career.

### **3.5 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.

Confidence in research depends on the researchers being free and without ties, and that research results are continuously the subject of critical testing by other researchers. There is a special responsibility on universities and colleges to ensure this, which requires that the research institutions are autonomous, that the researchers are given the opportunity to choose their topic and method, to publish research results, and that research and teaching take place according to established ethical and professional standards.

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.

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

- Parliament, 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.
- All research projects are based on contracts that safeguard the academic freedom of researchers and their right and duty to publish their findings.
- Academia is a place with freedom of expression, where discussions take place within the framework of a good and open debate climate for students and staff.
- The researchers' right to choose their publication channel is safeguarded.

### **3.6 Immaterial Rights**

NAR strives to protect members' intellectual property rights to works created in the employment relationship. With the transition to open research and increasing digitalisation come new issues related to licensing in the sharing of data and scientific publication, as well as rights to and reuse of teaching materials. 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. The transition to digital teaching materials has highlighted the need for national schemes that safeguard employees' rights in connection with the reuse of digital teaching materials.

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, also in professional cooperation between several institutions.
- Good conveyance clauses are established in contracts of employment that do not oblige employees to transfer intellectual property rights to a greater extent than is necessary for the employment contracts to achieve their purposes.
- All digital teaching, both in terms of teaching materials and online lectures is based on time- and project-specific agreements on the transfer of rights.
- Employees' rights related to the reuse of digital teaching materials are clarified at the national level, and a scheme is established for compensation for such reuse.
- Employees' intellectual property rights in connection with innovation activities, patenting and entrepreneurship are safeguarded.
- The objective of open research and open education presupposes facilitation of knowledge sharing that safeguards the rights and professional integrity of knowledge workers.
- The right to publish is not hindered by a lack of funding.
- Necessary training is provided to employees in connection with the transition to open research, within the framework of existing agreements and working hours.

### **3.7 Diversity and Equal Opportunities**

Diversity implies a width of perspectives, innovation, and expertise, provides better task solving and contributes to the enterprises being better equipped for future challenges. No one shall experience discrimination on the basis of sex, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion and belief, functional ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age.

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. Surveys show that women, on average, use their free time to work to a lesser extent than men, and that they are overrepresented 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:**

- The knowledge base on diversity and equality beyond gender is strengthened.
- Unequal treatment is uncovered.
- Employees and students are not discriminated against.
- The institutions have strategies for recruiting people with disabilities and ethnic minorities among both students and staff.
- 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 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 and Life Stage Policy

A good life stage policy involves employees being given working conditions that enable them to use their work capacity and resources in the best possible way throughout their 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 employees in 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. More and more people work from home and the employer's responsibility to ensure a good working environment at the home office thus becomes more important.

#### **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 enterprises have an open, positive, and safe climate with regard to freedom of expression.
- The enterprises have good whistleblowing routines and practice the rules on whistleblowing in line with the intention in the legislation.
- Employees in research and knowledge institutions are ensured satisfactory and suitable workplaces adapted to the work tasks.
- Design of new buildings and upgrading of building stock must take place through active user participation in the planning.
- The employer takes care of the health, environment and safety of employees who work from home and offers the necessary equipment to the employee.

### 3.9 Follow-up of the Sustainable Development Goals

In the autumn of 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted an agenda for sustainable development with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 sub goals to be met by 2030. The sustainable development goals reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development: climate and environment, economy, and social conditions. The sustainable development goals are comprehensive and mutually dependent on each other and must be seen in context. All countries have committed themselves to working to achieve the sustainability goals.

Research-based knowledge is important for achieving all the sustainable development goals. Achieving the sustainable development goals through the work of promoting research, education, gender equality and a decent working life is part of NAR's core activity. This includes working to ensure that research-based knowledge is used, strengthening academic freedom and trust in research, integrating sustainable development goals in teaching at all levels where relevant.

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

- Sustainability work takes place within the framework of social dialogue and with the participation of employees.
- Responsibilities imposed on institutions and companies are manageable and specific.

## 4. Research Policy

### 4.1 Quality in R&D Work

Research, education, and research-driven innovation are fundamental to meeting future knowledge and adjustment needs and to maintaining a sustainable welfare society. Quality of research must be ensured through framework conditions and a broad public exchange of words about necessary path choices and priorities. The UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 highlight the need for holistic thinking and action in the face of societal challenges globally, nationally, and locally.

Long-term perspective in the research activities is necessary in order to be able to build good academic environments and increase the quality of the R&D work. Institutions throughout the research and knowledge sector must be provided with the necessary framework conditions so that knowledge workers have sufficient time and resources to conduct research, development work and professional renewal. Professional judgment and time for research and development work are under pressure for scientific staff in all sectors. Good administration and library services are a resource that contributes to increased quality in education and research.

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 knowledge and quality.

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

- The R&D work is assessed on the basis of a broad interpretation of research quality adapted to the individual subject area.
- Professional staff with research assignments are guaranteed time for R&D.
- 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 as well as technical and administrative services with high competence and quality.
- Professional employees in archives, libraries and museums are ensured better framework conditions for carrying out R&D work by giving all companies the opportunity to apply for research funding and partners, as well as ensuring access to collections, research literature and library resources.
- The collections are preserved, made available and disseminated so that the most important basis and potential for research and knowledge development at the archives, libraries and museums is secured.

### 4.2 Research Funding

National and global challenges require a stronger focus on research and knowledge development. It is still the case that public investment in R&D is far from the target of three per cent of GDP by 2030 and Norway is significantly behind Sweden, Denmark, and Finland as well as the OECD average.

Research efforts must be based on a holistic research policy where the Government must take a stronger responsibility for strengthening research efforts in the business sector. 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. Competition and strategic prioritization is necessary but should not come at the expense of basic research and width. Increasing organization of research into projects leads to short-termism, less willingness to take risks and temporariness. 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 research and 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, and to a greater extent distributed directly to the institutions.
- The basic funding for universities, colleges and research institutes is strengthened.
- Performance-based funding components have an open framework so that an overall increase in the performance component automatically provides an increased resource framework.
- 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.
- The government and the ministries follow up the sector responsibility for research and better coordination of public research efforts.
- The de-bureaucratization and efficiency reform must be discontinued.

### 4.3 Qualifying and Recruitment Positions

The attractiveness of the research career is declining among doctoral candidates and younger researchers. Fewer people want to pursue a career in the higher education sector and many young researchers will not recommend today's young people to embark on a research career. The scientific career paths must be made more attractive and competitive, at the same time as the career paths within and outside academia are clarified.

The degree of completion among all in research education has improved somewhat in recent years, but it is still the case that only two out of three have defended their dissertations 6 years after admission to the doctoral program (Condition Report for Higher Education 2020). The institutions must emphasize career guidance and make better arrangements so that the doctoral degree can be completed in the standard time. The dimensioning of the doctoral degree program must be in proportion to the need for researcher-trained staff in and outside the research and knowledge sector.

PhD candidates and postdocs outside the university and college sector and the state sector are not covered by the regulations concerning terms and conditions of employment and this means that the candidates have different framework conditions. The postdoctoral position was created to be a real recruitment position with qualification for a scientific top position as a goal but is largely used as a non-binding temporary employment in connection with externally funded research.

**NAR will strive to ensure that:**

- The purpose of the doctoral degree program shall continue to be to ensure society's overall need for research competence and that the nature of the doctoral program is preserved.
- A research-based and independent survey of the need for research competence in various disciplines and sectors in Norway is carried out.
- The Industrial PhD and Public Sector PhD schemes are strengthened.
- Clear career plans and career guidance are developed for PhD candidates and postdoctoral fellows.

- PhD candidates are given satisfactory working conditions and the resources to complete their doctoral degrees in the stipulated time, including the necessary resources for research stays abroad.
- An extension of the PhD/postdoctoral employment period is granted for all legitimate absences.
- PhD candidates and postdoctoral fellows are guaranteed equal pay and working conditions regardless of where they work.
- PhD candidates are entitled to unemployment benefits while finishing their thesis.
- The pilot project on tenure track positions is replaced by a more binding use of the postdoctoral position.
- The content of the postdoctoral position is clarified, and the employment period amounts to at least three years of pure research.
- As a general rule, all PhD candidates are offered a four-year employment period with compulsory duties.
- An ombudsman function will be established for PhD candidates, postdoctoral fellows, and employees in 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. 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.

Higher education and research policy is largely subject to international influence. The Bologna process, the EU's goals for the European Education Area, the establishment of European Universities and major investments in the field of research and innovation intervene in the institutions' activities and the everyday lives of knowledge workers. NAR therefore actively cooperates with our Nordic sister organizations and in Education International (EI) / The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE). Furthermore, NAR participates in the network Scholars at Risk (SAR) Norway to contribute to the work of ensuring academic freedom and protecting persecuted researchers from around the world.

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

- All knowledge workers have framework conditions that enable them to participate actively in international cooperation and be interesting partners.
- Persecuted scientists and students 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, language training and homecoming).
- Scientific staff 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

Research-based education is a necessary prerequisite for quality in teaching and for students to be introduced to, and given the opportunity to be involved in, research activities during their studies. Quality in higher education is about good learning conditions for students, and about employees' opportunity to provide good, research-based teaching and guidance.

The National Teacher Survey shows that the teachers experience a significant time pressure, and that not enough time is set aside for teaching and supervision. The transition to digital education has reinforced this picture.

The number of students in higher education increased from just under 260,000 in 2015 to over 290,000 in 2020. Seen in connection with the competence reform's ambition that no one should become outdated, this indicates that the influx to higher education will continue during the period.

About half of the bachelor students complete within the nominal length of study, and 56% of the master's students. There is a need to continue the work for increased quality of education. Good teaching takes place in concrete meetings between people, and through student-active teaching methods and learning environments.

Lifelong learning is becoming an increasingly important part of the mission of universities and colleges. Continuing professional development must be developed with the same requirements for quality and research-based teaching as the ordinary offers, without this being at the expense of the degree educations.

#### **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 both R&D work and teaching.
- Scientific employees have the time and resources for quality assurance and quality development of their teaching.
- The institutions facilitate collegial communities, colleague guidance and a culture of cooperation, exchange of experience and learning.
- The institutions facilitate skills development and professional updating for administrative staff.
- The institutions have highly qualified and adequately staffed research and administrative support functions and technical support structures.
- 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.

### 5.2 Funding of Higher Education

The funding of higher education must ensure research-based teaching, academic breadth, long-term perspective, and stability. This is necessary to build and maintain solid academic environments, and to be able to offer good working conditions. This entails a funding model with strong basic funding and fully funded study places that ensure the institutions a predictable resource situation for the academic programs to be provided.

The institutions have a responsibility not to admit more students than the allocations indicate. Much of the increase in student numbers has come from the institutions admitting students who are only financed through the open results-based calculation, which is about 40% of the standardized student place cost.

An increasing degree of funding through various competitive arenas and grant schemes contributes to increased bureaucratisation, high use of temporary employment and weakens the institutional room for manoeuvre. The introduction of new financial incentives or special measures to stimulate increased quality of education and more flexible educational offerings must be financed with fresh funds.

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 higher education.

**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.
- The overall framework allocation is made less 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.
- A study funding that makes it possible for students to study full-time, and which gives those who complete master's and PhD degrees the right to write off part of the student loan.

## **6. Organisation and Administration of Knowledge Institutions**

A characteristic of the Norwegian working life model is the employees' participation and co-determination in the administration and management of the companies. The knowledge institutions must be organized and managed in a way that ensures participation and co-determination, and where employees are shown confidence and are not exposed to unnecessary control and reporting systems. Government management must be superior and facilitate that the institutions can fulfil their societal mandate. The goal must be an overall policy that governs the research and knowledge sector in an overall way rather than in detail, and institutional leaders who give their employees the same professional room for manoeuvre.

The Co-Determination Barometer shows that the members of NAR are experiencing a growing distrust in the workplace in step with increasing eagerness to control and reform, bureaucratisation, top management, efficiency, and the de-bureaucratization and efficiency reform. This is detrimental to research and education as a core activity.

Universities and university colleges are important bearers of culture and should have academic and artistic freedom and be academically independent of the state. Gradually, it has become many government agencies that universities and colleges have to deal with. The sum of the control signals has become too large, and this makes the control indistinct and unnecessarily complex. The individual institution must be governed through the broad involvement of employees and students, and collegial bodies are necessary to ensure influence over academic issues and priorities.

The research institute sector fills an important function as a supplier of research-based knowledge to the business sector, public authorities, and others. The sector is diverse, and there are large gaps in framework conditions and employees' opportunities for professional development in the institutions.

In knowledge institutions where research is part of the social responsibility, such as archives, libraries, museums, and health trusts, it is important that the scientific staff are given framework conditions that make it possible to fulfil the research part of the institutions' social responsibility.

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.
- A trust reform is implemented in the research and knowledge sector that includes increased co-determination, fewer performance goals, less reporting, increased basic funding and stronger protection of academic freedom.
- 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 universities and colleges themselves decide whether the Rector should be employed or elected, and appointment of the Rector through election should be the normal arrangement in the Higher Education Act.
- Collegial bodies are maintained at all levels, and universities and university colleges themselves are allowed to decide whether academic leaders should be elected or appointed.
- 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 responsibility and have increased quality as a goal.
- Reforms and mergers in the research and knowledge sector must be followed by research-based evaluations.

## 7. Policy Instruments

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 strate-

gies 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 established in all enterprises within the association's membership area 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.
- A review of meeting places within the association is carried out to ensure the best possible compliance with the structure of local branches.
- 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 and covers the breadth of their tasks. This includes increasing expertise on harassment regardless of the basis, and how to put the sustainable development goals on the agenda through local co-determination.
- Local union representatives are offered training in the sustainable development goals to strengthen local co-determination in this area, including integrating sustainability into the union representative training where relevant.
- The association's contribution to key sustainable development goals such as good education, gender equality, decent work and investment in research and innovation is continued and clarified.
- 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.
- 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.
- The professional networks can still function as unifying and identity-creating bodies.
- 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 used locally and centrally in the association are modern and up-to-date so that the association more quickly and efficiently can meet the adjustment and change that digitalisation entails.
- The association follows up the UN Sustainable Development Goals in its work – including, as far as possible, choosing providers with collective agreements and orderly conditions for employees, choosing environmentally friendly alternatives and facilitating digital meetings and seminars in addition to physical gatherings.

## 7.2 Communication Strategy and Public Relations

NAR's communication must be accessible, clear, and credible. It is important to ensure our members and our local union representatives good information. The goal of the communication and advocacy work is the greatest possible political breakthrough for NAR's policy.

NAR is both a trade union and a special interest organisation. As “the voice of researchers”, we are invited to participate in debates that concern the entire broad field of research and education. The visibility and opportunities for influence this gives us are important to make good use of.

Reputation surveys show that NAR is seen as a clear and credible voice in public debate. We will continue to manage the wide confidence NAR has as politically independent societal actor.

### **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 public visibility increases.
- Local branches, local union representatives and leaders of professional networks have knowledge of basic communication and influence work.
- The information given to members and union representatives is perceived as current, relevant, and adequate.
- The periodical *Forskerforum* shall be a membership offer, an identity creator, and an arena for community between the members of NAR. *Forskerforum* shall maintain and strengthen its position as a leading news and debate forum in the research and knowledge sector.
- NAR's interests are safeguarded through international participation in Education International / ETUCE and Nordic cooperation.