

Action Plan for Research Evaluation 2011-2012

The action plan contains an overview of the evaluations that the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation will initiate in 2011, but also evaluations expected for 2012.

26. september 2011

Evaluation overview

The following evaluations are to be initiated in 2011

Year	Evaluations
2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Humanities2. Postdoc funding as an integrated part of a larger research project3. The strategic research theme nanotechnology, biotechnology and information and communication technology.

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The following evaluations are expected for 2012

Year	Evaluations
2012	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Strategic research themes on energy5. Clinical research6. The funding instrument "centres"

Evaluations that are to be initiated in 2011

In the following, the purpose, target group and use of the individual evaluations are briefly described.

1. Evaluation of humanities

Research within humanities has undergone a perceptible change in recent years. For example, multidisciplinary cooperation is characteristic of the development that has been seen within modern humanities.

Increased globalisation puts demands on society and the focus has increased on the potential of research within studies of culture, communication, IT and innovation in order to meet the challenges of globalisation. At the same time, there is an ongoing discussion about the need for humanities graduates in the labour market. There is also a political wish to internationalise Danish research within humanities, e.g.

within scientific studies published. Both change processes as well as development trends are of interest from an evaluation point of view.

In the fall of 2009, the Danish Council for Research Policy (DFR) made an analysis of Danish research within humanities. The results of the analysis may contribute to qualify the evaluation of humanities. A quantitative, bibliometric data material can also be included in the evaluation.

The objective of the evaluation is to accumulate knowledge and increase visibility of research within humanities. A preliminary study including dialogue with stakeholders will be conducted in order to qualify the terms of reference. Dependent on the scope of the evaluation, it might be relevant to involve the Ministry of Culture. Consideration is also being given to conducting the evaluation in an international, comparative perspective.

2. Evaluation of postdoc funding as an integrated part of a larger research project

In 2010, the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation published an evaluation of instruments used to promote young researchers' careers. The evaluation concluded that career-oriented instruments are effective and have positive effects for grant recipients.

The evaluation dealt with postdocs who had received a personal grant from the Danish Council for Independent Research. But the evaluation didn't examine postdoc funding as an integrated part of larger research projects.

The objective of the evaluation is to assess how postdoc funding obtained through a larger research grant is doing compared to postdoc recipients of a personal grant from the Danish Council for Independent Research. The Danish Council for Independent Research can use the results to aid decision-making on the future configuration of individual postdoc grants and the grants which are part of a larger research grant allocated to a director of research.

3. Evaluation of the strategic research theme nanotechnology, biotechnology and information and communication technology

Nanotechnology is considered to have large industrial and societal perspectives nationally and internationally. It is therefore essential to strengthen the Danish nanotechnology environment even more and to intensify cooperation with foreign research environments. More research within biotechnology and ICT is also considered to be essential to consolidate the Danish research position and competitiveness within these fields.

In the 2005-2008 period, the Danish Council for Strategic Research contributed DKK 275 million to the strategic research theme

nanotechnology, biotechnology and information and communication technology to be shared among 31 grant recipients.

The objective of evaluating the strategic research theme nanotechnology, biotechnology and information and communication technology is to assess the results of the investments and to create more visibility of research efforts within the field. Evaluating the strategic research theme should clarify if it has fulfilled its objectives, among these use an problem-oriented approach, and focus on the results, e.g. regarding the quality, organisation, commercialization and internationalisation of the research. The evaluation could identify best practices and also highlight the Danish positions of strength in the field.

The target group of the evaluation is the political system and the Danish Council for Strategic Research. These can use the evaluation to develop future priorities.

Evaluations expected for 2012

1. Evaluation of strategic research themes on energy

Denmark has a pioneering role in the field of development and use of renewable energy. In order to maintain this position continued research is needed.

Since 2004, the Danish Council for Strategic Research has provided funding for energy research. In the period 2004-2008, a total of DKK 420 million was provided in 56 grants. Biofuels, hydrogen and fuel cells, energy systems and wind energy have been the most prioritised technological areas.

The objective of the evaluating strategic research themes on energy is to assess the results of the investments and to create more visibility of research efforts within the field. Evaluating these strategic research themes should clarify if they have fulfilled their objectives, among these use an problem-oriented approach, and focus on the results, e.g. regarding the quality, organisation, commercialization and internationalisation of the research. The evaluation could identify best practices and also highlight the Danish positions of strength in the field.

The target group of the evaluation is the political system and the Danish Council for Strategic Research. These can use the evaluation to develop future priorities.

2. Evaluation of clinical research

Clinical research includes the area of patients' research, which is designed to develop better methods for the implementation of diagnosis, treatment and care. Clinical research is important for society to meet challenges, such as an aging population, in the coming years. At the same time - clinical research has a considerable magnitude measured by expenditure.

Admittedly, there are no total exact breakdowns of the amount of public

funds invested each year in clinical research. However the part of the public expenditure for health sciences research, which takes place in hospitals, can be used as an indicator. In 2006, expenditure was approximately DKK 1.5 billion.

Clinical research in Denmark is today among the world's finest measured by the number of scientific studies published, but in spite of the good ranking it can be a challenge to maintain this position. There are a number of challenging areas, which may impact the quality of clinical research in Denmark. First, a growing production pressure, increased effectiveness in hospitals and a lack of doctors can have an impact on whether clinical research is prioritised. Secondly, some parties state that the pharmaceutical industry, which is a significant partner for the execution of clinical research, increasingly places research activities in Asia and Eastern Europe. Thirdly, the infrastructure necessary for clinical research is not available everywhere. And finally, a lack of career paths could be a problem for clinical research.

The objective of the evaluation is to assess framework importance for the Danish clinical research. The Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation analysed Danish pharmaceutical research in 2010, which has links to clinical research. The Evaluation can therefore build on the results of this analysis. Danish clinical research may also be assessed in an international comparative perspective, possibly with reference to the clinical research evaluation that was carried out in Sweden and Finland in 2009. In that case, the evaluations must have greater focus on research quality rather than framework conditions.

The target group for the evaluation is primarily the political system and the research councils in relation to prioritising funds. In addition, hospitals and the Danish Regions receive the results of the evaluation. The evaluation would also be relevant to Det Nationale Samarbejdsforum for Sundhedsforskning (The National Cooperation Forum for Health Research).

3. Evaluation of the funding instrument “centres”

The research funding councils provide considerable financial support to research, in particular through large, long-term investments, such as centres. The Danish Council for Independent Research, the Danish Council for Strategic Research and the Danish National research Foundation use centres as funding instrument. The definition and the actual structure of instrument centres vary between the various research funding bodies, but the instruments share the common objective to establish and develop focused environments of international quality in the field of research.

The purpose of the evaluation is to clarify the funding instrument “centres” in terms of establishment, implementation and potential embedment when

the research funds cease. The evaluation will assess both processes and results in relation to centres and in relation to environments, where centres are established. For example in terms of scientific profile and priorities, including infrastructure and staffing. In this context, the evaluation should assess different constructions of centres and various models of embedment. The evaluation should also include international experience. The target group for the evaluation is primarily the research funding bodies and universities.