



ANNUAL REPORT DION  
ACTIVITY 2020-2021

## Contents

<b>Summary</b> .....	2
<b>Board Composition</b> .....	6
<b>Activity Highlights 2020/2021</b> .....	6
<b>DION Events</b> .....	8
<b>DION Grants</b> .....	10
<b>Representation and Engagement at NTNU</b> .....	10
Presentations at Faculties .....	10
Central Research Committee .....	11
As of March 2020, DION was granted a permanent position in the central research committee at NTNU. During the 2020/2021 board period the DION president Idd Andrea Christensen has attended 14 board meetings with the central research committee, 3 of which were extraordinary meetings due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and 11 of which were ordinary board meetings. ....	11
Other Attended Events .....	11
Outreach to NTNU Ålesund .....	12
Collaboration with NTNU Board Representative for Temporary Scientific Employees.....	12
Collaboration with NTNU International Researchers Support (NIRS).....	12
<b>Engagements outside NTNU</b> .....	13
Media .....	13
Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge (SiN) .....	13
PRIDE Collaboration with NTNU Lgbtq+ .....	13
Pint of science festival .....	13
<b>DION Projects</b> .....	14
Mental Health Awareness week .....	14
DION merchandising .....	14
Coronavirus and confinement consultation .....	14
<b>Open Points for the Next Board</b> .....	17
<b>Appendix – DION Board Meetings (Irina)</b> .....	18

## Summary

The DION board 2020/ 2021 was elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The AGM took digitally on Zoom to include all the three nodes at NTNU; Trondheim, Gjøvik and Ålesund. This report covers the board period since the previous AGM.

### Transition Workshops

In May 2020, there was a board transition workshop, where the previous board members shared their experiences with the successive board members. In addition, the president and vice president met with the former president/ vice to share experiences and prepare for the tasks ahead.

These meetings proved to be very helpful, as the board consisted of mainly new and unexperienced members. Three members have been in the DION board 2019/2020 and their knowledge was very valuable, especially in the first few months. It is highly recommended to be in the DION board for longer than one term, if possible. This way, organizational knowledge is not lost, and the proverbial wheel does not need to be invented every year anew.

### Board Meetings

As of April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020, DION has had nine board meetings. The meetings were held once a month apart from June and August. Each meeting lasted for about three hours. Most of the meetings were held digitally on Microsoft Teams due to the uncertain situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Two of the board meetings were a hybrid between physical and digital meetings where the board members in Trondheim (5) and Gjøvik (3) meet physically at their respective campus and conducted digital meetings from conference rooms. Even though urgent cases and tasks that demanded immediate decision were communicated in many emails, the board meetings were a much welcome area to discuss past and future events in person and make decisions on the spot together.

### Inquiries

DION has continued to put significant efforts into responding to inquiries from temporary scientific employees seeking advice and support as well as inquiries and requests from others. DION received 57 (as of 27.03.21) inquiries during the board period 2020/2021. Most inquiries were related to topics such as disseminating information, invitation for collaboration, employee contract and salary, mental health, supervision and improvements for PhD candidates.

### DION as part of NTNU's democratic processes

As previous boards, DION has continued the work on making the organization more visible to temporary scientific employees as well as administrative bodies at NTNU. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic DION has not mostly given online presentations during the 2020/2021 board period. DION has held seven faculty PhD meetings. DION has also participated in seminars and conferences arranged by NTNU and other collaborators. DION has also had a continuous dialogue with the NTNU board representative for temporary scientific employees. Finally, DION was asked to find representatives for both the NTNU ethics committee

and the ENHANCE board. Our board member Aida Akbarzadeh joined the ENHANCE board while the position for the NTNU ethics committee was advertised through our Innsida page.

### **DION as connecting point between unions and NTNU leadership.**

As interest organization, DION is a connecting point between Labour unions and the NTNU leadership. In the board year 2020/ 2021, this role was especially relevant to disseminate how the Covid-19 pandemic with the initial 6-week lockdown period of Norway (12.03.2020- 26.03.2020) and the following restrictions resulting in reduced research activity across NTNU. From the start of the Covid-19 pandemic DION has received multiple emails from concerned temporary research staff at NTNU, mainly PhD students. DION responded quickly and teamed up with the Association of Doctorial Organizations in Norway (SiN), and temporary research staff representatives at UiO, OsloMet, and UiT. Together we created a survey to investigate how the Covid-19 pandemic have affected the research activity of temporary scientific staff and their need for contract extensions to make up for the delay. DION has disseminated the result of the survey through several features in Universitetsavisa (UA) ([1](#), [2](#)), Forskerforum ([3](#), [4](#), [5](#)) and Khrono ([6](#), [7](#)). The results of survey were also presented to the ministry of education by SiN. DION has also disseminated the results of the survey to the pro-rector of research and the vice deans at NTNU through meetings in the central research committee, and to the Rector of NTNU and the deans at the deans meeting.

The vice-president of DION Anne Kristin Kvitle has through the 2020/2021 board period also been a member of the Tekna NTNU board and has functioned as a link between the union Tekna and DION. DION has also kept in regular contact with other unions through email.

Anne Kristin Kvitle has also been a part of the nomination committee for the NTNU board 2021/2022 as the temporary scientific staff representative.

### **DION as part of the Research Committee**

Through the 2020/2021 board period DION has continued their permanent position in the central research committee at NTNU. The president has attended all the monthly meetings in the central research committee in addition to being a part of two working groups together with members in the central research committee, “Forskerlinjer” working to establish integrated PhD educations across NTNU and “Ph.d.-workshop” which are working to organize two workshops where central management at NTNU will discuss how to improve various aspects of NTNU’s Ph.d.-program.

### **DION Information Channels and Social Media**

DION has throughout the year invested time and resources to gain increased visibility through social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and other channels (Innsida, website, newsletter, email etc.). These channels have been actively used to inform about DION board meetings, to promote events initiated by DION and to share relevant activities and information. This year, DION also got access to an Innsida page meant for all PhDs and Postdocs at NTNU. The number of people who have seen and liked our posts as well as those who have attended events has therefore increased.

The information channels and social media were most helpful during the so-called CoVid 19 crisis. Information given by the NTNU leadership was shared and distributed through all our channels. On our website we updated new information frequently, almost daily, and collected all news comprehensively, so that relevant information could be found quickly.

### **Mental Health Awareness Week**

In 2018, DION conducted a mental health workshop that was met with significant feedback about conducting similar events on a larger scale. The board had planned to conduct one week of events related to the subject in March 2020 that had to be postponed due to the lockdown. In November 2020, the restrictions were eased briefly, which allowed us to organize the Mental Health Awareness Week. Comprised of 9 different sessions spread throughout the week in Trondheim, Gjøvik and online, the events included meditation workshops, physical fitness workshops, stress management seminars, information sessions on services among others. Most of these took place digitally and were accessible from all the three campuses. The events received a lot of positive feedback and were attended by around 100 people in total.

In addition, a feedback survey was conducted to evaluate the reception of the event, wherein 81% of the respondents claimed that it was beneficial to them. There were also requests for such events in the future, along with suggestions for improvement. These are also useful for the next board to take into consideration.

### **PhD and Post-Doc conference at NTNU**

On the 4th and 5th of November 2020, NTNUs online PhD and Post Doc conference took place. The conference was focused on giving PhDs and Post Docs an idea about how their career pathway could look if they decided to leave academia and take a career in the private or public sector. A wide range of speakers spoke on different topics, gave testimonials about their own career pathways and shared insights into how to get a job outside of academia. One of the highlights of the conference was the guidance regarding marketing oneself to potential employers when one has a PhD. In 'Putting Word on Competencies', three speakers illustrated how to express the general transferable skills acquired during a PhD in a meaningful manner. DION president Idd Andrea Christensen closed the conference with some thoughts on PhD career opportunities outside of academia. DION helped organizing the event together with people from NTNU HR; PhD program, NTNU videre and more. The immediate feedback that the organizing committee received was positive, so we hope that this event will happen again in the future.

### **DION events**

The annual funding provided by the pro-rector has led to 19 events during this board period. Due to the pandemic restrictions this year, several of the conducted events took place digitally. The events took place mostly in Trondheim and in Gjøvik, and all the digital ones were accessible in Ålesund too. Moreover, DION Trondheim participated in the PRIDE parade together with NTNU LGBTQ+, and organized a Mental Health Awareness Week, to provide the members with tools and resources to improve their mental health. Other events in Trondheim included BBQ evenings, movie nights, improv etc. In Gjøvik, the events consisted of bowling and hiking, among others.

### **DION E-events in times of CoVid19**

Since the lockdown of the university in March 2020, DION has been organizing some events online. These include virtual game evenings, quizzes, casual hangouts, and photo competitions. We also had our first social media takeovers, where the members gave a glimpse of their lives during the lockdown. These events were accessible from all campuses and gave a platform for people to connect socially, in times where other form of gatherings were prohibited.

### **Cooperation: Trondheim, Gjøvik and Ålesund**

DION has continued close collaboration with NTNU Gjøvik through three board members. This board period, DION has also reached out to NTNU Ålesund where contact is now established temporary scientific employees with hope of closer collaboration in the future. Ideally, a DION board should have board members from each location, and it is strongly recommended to recruit candidates from Gjøvik and Ålesund.

The Mental Health Week event had a separate facebook page dedicated for Ålesund and Gjøvik.

On behalf of the 2020/2021 DION board,

•

Idd Andrea Christensen (DION President), Trondheim April 8, 2021

## Board Composition

During the board period 2020/2021, the DION board had the following members:

Position	Name	Faculty-Department
President	<a href="#">Idd Andrea Christensen</a>	NV-IBT
Vice-President	<a href="#">Anne Kristin Kvitle</a>	IE-IDI
Board member	<a href="#">Elodie Besnier</a>	SU-ISS
Board member	<a href="#">Lisa Tietze</a>	NV-IBT
Board member	<a href="#">Aida Akbarzadeh</a>	IE-IIK
Board member	<a href="#">Faiga M. Alawad</a>	IE-IIK
Board member	<a href="#">Masab Khalid Annaqeeb</a>	IV-EPT
Board member	<a href="#">Irina Mihaela Ciortan</a>	IE-IDI

The DION board 2020/2021 had not had a permanent consultant but has had administrative support from Kine Sørli. Her assistance was valuable, and we would like to thank her for her support.

## Activity Highlights 2020/2021

DION has maintained high activity throughout the board period. The activity highlights are outlined below.

- Responded to and followed up 57 inquiries from temporary scientific employees in need of assistance across NTNU plus invitations by collaborators.
- Hosted 24 events in total.
- Invited applications and provided 4 support grants for social and scientific activities initiated by temporary scientific employees at NTNU.
- Actively used Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/DION.NTNU>) and other social media channels to increase visibility and reach as many temporary scientific employees as possible.
- Renovated the use of DION Forum on Facebook as a low threshold group to get in touch with other temporary scientific employees.
- Kept using the media strategy called “Did you know...” which involves posting relevant information about issues such as worker’s rights, sick leave, supervision and so on.
- Renovated the layout of the main website, which is now more accessible, neater and better looking.
- Gave seven presentations on several faculties to make DION more visible and to reach more temporary scientific employees.

- Participated in several committees, seminars and conferences arranged by NTNU such as Forskningsutvalget, faculty seminars for new PhD candidates and the NTNU PhD and Post Doc conference.
- Continued the collaboration with SiN (Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge) and participated at the SiN Annual General Meeting on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2020. Prior to the AGM Lisa Tietze was a member of the SiN board and during the AGM she presented the results from her working group for career outside of academia for PhD students. At the AGM Idd Andrea Christensen was elected as part of the new SiN board, and joined the career outside of academia working group.
- Continued the representation on NTNU Gjøvik with three board members.

## Email Inquiries

DION has received **57 inquiries** during the board period 2020/2021. This excludes inquiries relating to DION-grants, research ethics committee applications and other types of inquiries people were explicitly requested to make to us.

Broadly speaking, inquiries were either personal or institutional. Requests for personal assistance were dominated by contract/employment issues, specifically in relation to Covid-19. Most personal assistance inquiries were resolved in a short amount of time by disseminating information and clarifying rules. Some inquiries have required following up on cases over extended period of times, attending meetings and giving guidance.

Institutional inquiries were primarily concerned with requests for DION board members to give presentations and invitations to collaborate/participate in various matters. Additionally, there were several requests for DION to disseminate information via our social media channels.



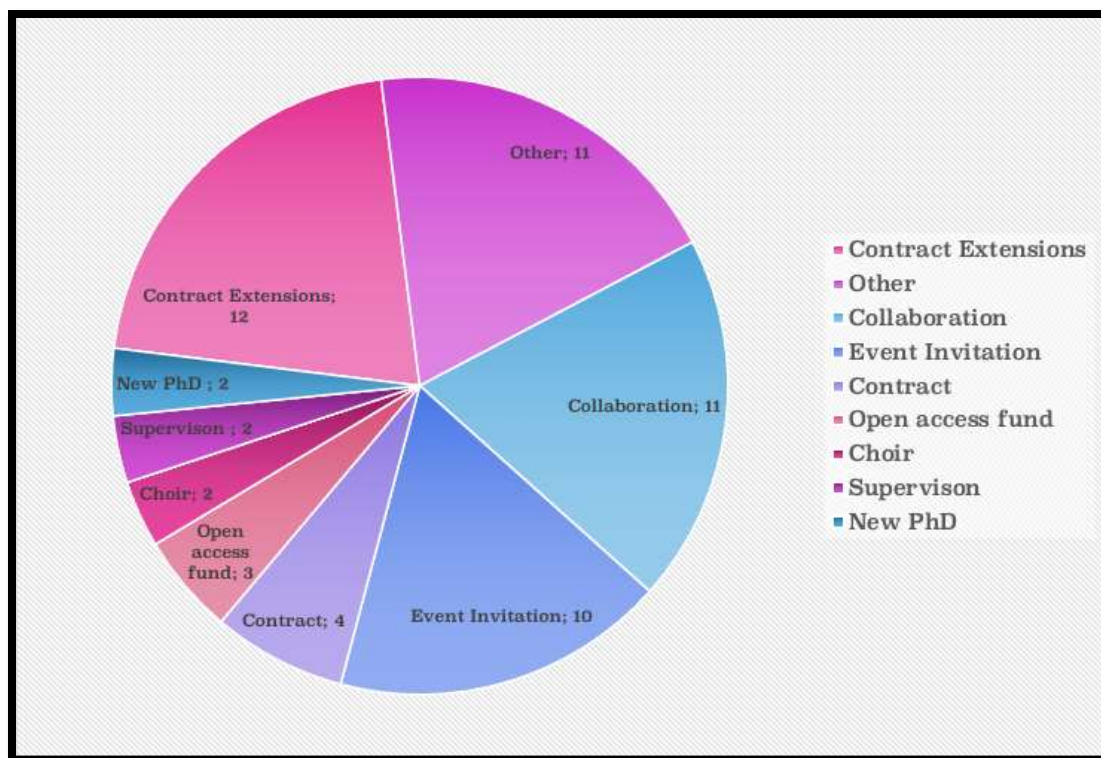


Figure 1: Chart showing distribution of cases that DION responded to and followed up in the board period 2020/2021.

## DION Events

This board period, DION hosted 24 events (this list excludes grant events, which can be found in section 6):

Date	Event
08.06.2020	A day in the life of PhDs/Postdocs at NTNU
10.07.2020	BBQ Evening with DION
28.08.2020	Semester Kick-off with DION (Kahoot and Pictionary)
12.09.2020	Pride Gathering with NTNU LGBT+ staff network and DION
16.11.2020	(MHAW) Work-Life Balance: A Mental Health Approach

16.11.2020	(MHAW) Services Available at NTNU
17.11.2020	(MHAW) Strength Building Class - Trondheim
17.11.2020	(MHAW) Yoga for Grounding and Stress Relief - Gjøvik
18.11.2020	(MHAW) Meditation Workshop for Stress Relief - Trondheim
18.11.2020	(MHAW) Services Available at Gjøvik Campus
19.11.2020	(MHAW) Workshop on Stress Management
19.11.2020	(MHAW) Tolerance, Understanding, and Peace of Mind
20.11.2020	(MHAW) Improv Workshop - Trondheim
21.11.2020	Walk to Eiktunet
01.12.2020	DION Christmas baking Photo Competition
12.12.2020	Christmas Movie Night at Cinemateket Trondheim
18.12.2020	Bowl Free Afternoon with DION - Gjøvik
19.02.2021	Virtual Game Evening: Among Us
27.02.2021	Happy Hour at Bowling 1 Gjøvik (25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of DION)
05.03.2021	Visit to Hunderfossen Winter Park (with NTNU Gjøvik)
14.03.2021	Movie Night at Cinemateket Trondheim: DION's 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
24.03.2021	Gjøvik Happy Hour
25.03.2021	I have a PhD – now what? (with Tekna Forskerne)
28.03.2021	DION Nowruz Table Photo Competition

The events were made possible by the yearly allocation of funds for events approved in January 2020 by the NTNU pro-rector for research. Invitations to each event can be found in appendix.

## DION Grants

During 2020/2021 term, four grant-funded events approved by the previous board took place:

1. **"Meditation for stress relief workshop"**, Alicia Vallejo-Olivares and Haakon Robinson, Faculty of Natural Sciences / Materials Science and Engineering Department.  
*Grant amount: 1100 NOK.*  
The workshop was held on 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 Trondheim Meditasjon & Yoga center with 12 attendees in total, split into 2 sessions with 6 people each.
2. **"Meditation for Stress Management & Inner Peace | 4 weeks course"**, Lisa Sandal and Regina Abreu, department of Biology and department of languages and literature, respectively.  
*Grant amount: 2400NOK.*  
The event is held at Trondheim Trondheim Meditasjon & Yoga center on the dates: 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2021.
3. **"NTNU Science & Wine"**, Martin Ellegaard, Vitenskapsmuseet, dept. of Biology.  
*Grant amount: 2000 NOK*  
The event is to be held in summer of 2021.
4. **The Persian New year (Nowrooz)**  
As part of supporting the cultural activities in the campus, DION funded individual grant application targeted a group of international temporary staff from regions which celebrate the Persian new year (Nowrooz) on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2021. *Grant amount: 2500 NOK.*

## Representation and Engagement at NTNU

### Presentations at Faculties

DION held seven presentations at information days for new PhD candidates and on other occasions at several faculties across NTNU.

Date	Faculty	DION board member
08.09.20	NV	Masab
18.11.20	MH	Masab

07.10.20	IV	Lisa
27.10.20	OK	Faiga
25.09.20	SU	Elodie
22.02.20	IV	Idd
07.04.21	MH	Masab
05.05.21	Department of public health and nursing; Scandic Nidelven	New board (Elodie back up)

### Central Research Committee

**As of March 2020, DION was granted a permanent position in the central research committee at NTNU. During the 2020/2021 board period the DION president Idd Andrea Christensen has attended 14 board meetings with the central research committee, 3 of which were extraordinary meetings due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and 11 of which were ordinary board meetings.**

DION was also invited to participate in two working groups within the central research committee: “Forskerlinjer” (which was previously attended by Angelina Penner during the 2019/2020 board period) were a report on the development of intergraded PhD-master programs across several facilities were developed, and “PhD workshop”, planning two workshops to be attended by the leadership at NTNU were aspects of the PhD education will be discussed.

### Other Attended Events

March to November 2020: Meeting with planning committee for the PhD and post.doc conference in (Lisa Tietze was part of this committee)

04-05/11/2020: DION board members Idd Andrea Christensen and Masab Khalid Annaqeeb attended the digital conference “Making PhDs visible” where DION members Lisa Tietze had been a part of the organizing committee. Idd Andrea Christensen held the closing remarks of the conference.

26/11/2020: Lisa Tietze and Idd Andrea Christensen attended a meeting with Bjarne Foss (pro-rector for research at the time the meeting took place) and Janne Østvang to present the results of the Covid-19 survey created in collaboration with SiN.

15/12/2020: Idd Andrea Christensen attended the deans meeting at led by rector Anne Borg to orient the leadership of NTNU of how the Covid-19 pandemic was affecting temporary staff at NTNU.

18/01/2021: Idd Andrea Christensen attended a meeting together with the temporary staff representatives at the faculty level (level 2) led by the temporary staff representative in the NTNU board Ingvill Stuvøy and the deputy representative in the NTNU board Håvard R. Karlsen to discuss how the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic were affecting the temporary staff across NTNU.

21/01/2021: Idd Andrea Christensen attended the “NTNU ledersamling” this year organized digitally on zoom.

09/03/2021: Idd Andrea Christensen attended a meeting with all the temporary staff representatives at the faculty level (level 2) led by the temporary staff representative in the NTNU board Ingvill Stuvøy and the deputy representative in the NTNU board Håvard R. Karlsen to discuss relevant issues affecting temporary staff across NTNU.

### **Outreach to NTNU Ålesund**

Efforts have been made towards including NTNU Ålesund as part of DION. The overall aim is to include and represent all parts of NTNU. The 2020/2021 had initially hoped to travel to Ålesund and try to establish a closer connection with the temporary staff and temporary staff representatives working at campus Ålesund. This was unfortunately not feasible with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The 2020/2021 DION board would strongly encourage future boards to continue the work to include the temporary staff working at NTNU Ålesund.

### **Collaboration with NTNU Board Representative for Temporary Scientific Employees**

DION has worked closely with the NTNU board representative for temporary scientific employees Ingvill Stuvøy and her deputy Håvard R. Karlsen during the 2020/2021 board period. Ingvill Stuvøy was invited to and attended one meeting with the DION board.

Ingvill and Håvard later created a Microsoft teams' channel for the temporary staff representatives on the faculty level (level 2) were Idd Andrea Christensen was also invited as the president of DION. The members of the temporary staff representative channel have also had two digital meeting on teams during the 2020/2021 board period. The purpose of both the teams' channel and the meetings has been to create a common platform where the representatives can discuss issues affecting the temporary staff across NTNU and exchange useful information. The next temporary staff representative and deputy representative will be elected during the NTNU board election on 22-24 March 2021. A cooperation between DION and the NTNU board is highly recommended. It is also recommended that new board will continue to be active on the temporary staff representative teams' channel and help this channel grow. For example, it could be beneficial to also include the temporary staff representatives in various unions in the team's channel.

### **Collaboration with NTNU International Researchers Support (NIRS)**

DION continued its exchange with NIRS, focusing on a good mutual dissemination of event and relevant information to our members.

## Engagements outside NTNU

### Media

DION has been featured in a total of seven media pieces during the 2020/2021 board period, most of which have been in relation to NTNUs handling of the Covid-19 pandemic in relation to the temporary staff. DION has since the beginning of the pandemic advocated to improve the possibility of temporary staff getting contract extensions to make up for delays caused by the pandemic.

Idd Andrea Christensen has been interviewed about the effect of the Covid-19 on temporary scientific staff in [Universitetsavisa](#), [forskerforum](#) and twice in Khrono ([1](#), [2](#)). She was also part of an [opinion piece](#) written by all the faculty representatives for temporary scientific staff at NTNU.

Board member Lisa Teitze was intervjued by [Universitetsavisa](#) where her own personal experience was used to demonstrate how many PhD-students were not granted contract extensions following the shutdown of Norway as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The story was later picked up by [Universitetsavisa](#).

### Stipendiatorganisasjonene i Norge (SiN)

DION board member Lisa Tietze joined the Norwegian umbrella organization for PhD candidates and Post-Docs (SiN) as a board member. SiN governs DION and similar organizations at different universities and works with the local organizations to realize Norway-wide projects. Lisas involvement in both DION and SiN lead to a close cooperation over the term period. In the SiN AGM on the 11<sup>th</sup> of september 2020 Idd Andrea Christensen was elected to the SiN board and has since then functioned as the link between SiN and DION. DION has also closely collaborated with SiN to create a national survey to assess how the Covid-19 pandemic were affecting PhDs and post-Docs in Norway.

DION has disseminated the results of the survey through media interviews in Universitetsavisa (UA) ([1,4](#)) and Khrono ([6](#)). The results have been sent out – and presented to all the members of the central research committee, presented to the rector Anne Borg and the deans at NTNU, and discussed with Bjarne Foss (pro-rector for research at the time of the meeting) in a separate meeting attended by Lisa Teitze and Idd Andrea Christensen. Through SiN the results of the survey has been presented to – and been included in a report by Universitet og Høgskolerådet (UHR).

### PRIDE Collaboration with NTNU Lgbtq+

DION participated in the PRIDE parade along with NTNU LGBTQ+ Staff Network

### Pint of science festival

*Pint of Science* brings scientists and researchers to discuss their latest research with the public in a casual setting. It is a reoccurring event all over the world and DION supported the local part in Trondheim in 2020. The event was supposed to take place at Habitat in Trondheim but was then moved to online.

“The Pint of Science festival aims to deliver interesting and relevant talks on the latest science research in an accessible format to the public – mainly across bars, pubs, cafes and other public spaces. We want to provide a platform which allows people to discuss research with the people who carry it out and no prior knowledge of the subject is required.” - <https://pintofscience.com/about/>

## **DION Projects**

### **Mental Health Awareness week**

At the suggestion of a PhD candidate from the Institute of Geography, DION scheduled a week-long campaign that took place on Week 47 across all three NTNU locations.

The week aimed to increase awareness about the mental health issues faced by PhDs, post-docs and temporary scientific staff, provide tips and advice on how to protect and promote mental health, and inform about the services available at NTNU.

The week included a series of presentations, discussions, workshops and activities alongside a social media campaign relaying key message (program available [here](#)). Follow-up messages and information were also posted on [DION's website](#).

### **DION merchandising**

To increase DION's visibility, merchandising materials were purchased. This includes T-shirts and roll-ups for Gløshaugen and Dragvoll. The roll-ups are intended to be used for visibility at events and could possibly be placed permanently at highly visible spots around campus.

### **Coronavirus and confinement consultation**

DION has continued to monitor the COVID situation and its impact on temporary scientific staff. Further to last year's consultation we have collect questions via Teams and emails and supported the dissemination of relevant information with its members but also relayed the feedback back to the NTNU Forskningsutvalget where DION is represented. We kept a collection of information and FAQ on our website.

In June 2020, DION reached out to other temporary scientific staff associations in Norway and to SiN, to coordinate our efforts and advocacy towards our universities and the government. The main issue in this collaboration was access to and information about contract extensions. The main goal of this collaborative effort was to first see how contract extensions due to Covid-19 are handled at the different institutions. As a first step, DION and its partners led the roll-out of a nationwide survey towards temporary scientific staff. 151 NTNU temporary scientific staff took part in this survey (findings are available on [DION's website](#)). As a second step, the collaborative wrote several articles which were published in different media outlets. Feedback was also brought to Universitets- og høyskolerådet (UHR) and to the department of education via SiN. The results from the survey have also been included in a report made by UHR (8) about how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected universities in Norway.

DION has since the beginning of the Covid-19 advocated to include delays due to working in home office as a ground for contract extension in the NTNU guidelines and that all faculties should make their plans for handling future applications for contract extensions due to the Covid-19 pandemic (sure to increase over

the next 2-3 years) publicly available for temporary staff. It is our impression that few temporary staff members have been granted contract extensions because NTNU overall has been strict when reviewing applications.

DION has also pointed out flaws in the way NTNU communicated updated about how information about how to apply for contract extension due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The information on the NTNU wiki page [“How to apply for extension of employment period for PhD - due to corona”](#) has been changed since it was created (Figure 2). There have also been many examples where crucial information about updates in the infection control rules have not been provided in English despite NTNU having a large number of international staff.

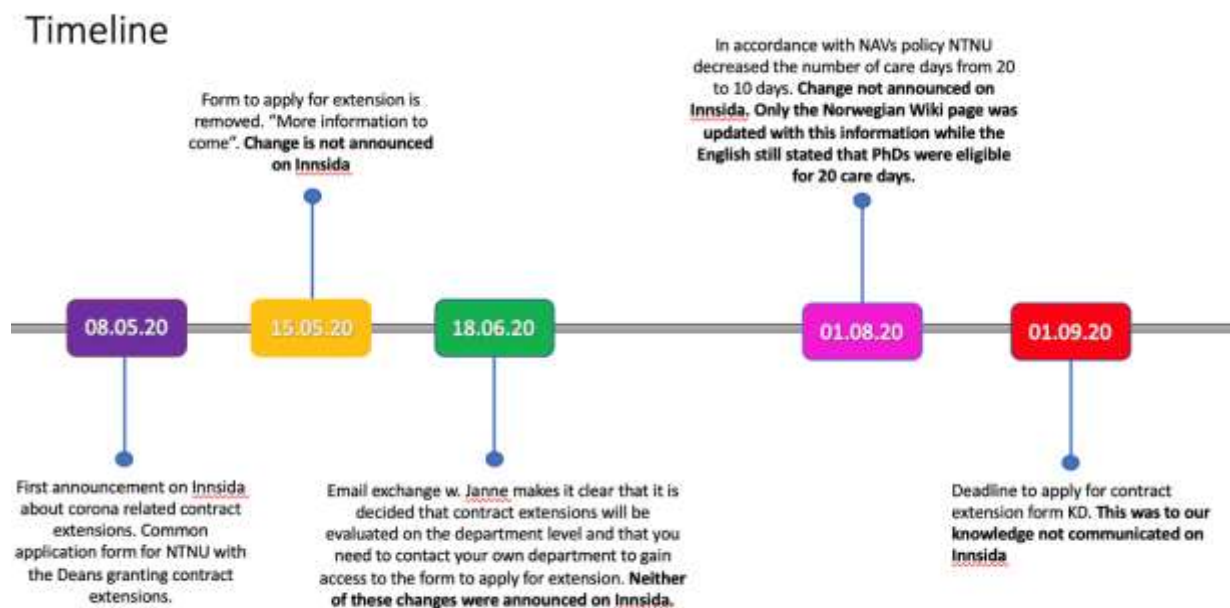


Figure 2: Timeline showing the changes made to the NTNU wiki page for contract extensions due to coronavirus.

## NTNU's funding of open access publishing

Further to NTNU library's announcement in January 2021 that it would no longer be possible to apply for support for open access from NTNU's publishing fund, DION has collected questions and feedback from its members about how this decision was affecting their work. DION raised the issue at the central research committee and consulted other stakeholders such as unions and NTNU board temporary staff representative. On 18 March 2021, [DION published a statement](#) calling for NTNU to provide an equitable solutions to all temporary staff, regardless of their faculty or department.

## Financial overview



The financial year of DION follows the calendar year, and not the board period. We therefore present a financial overview for 2020 (Table 1) along with a proposed budget for 2021. It should be noted that the accounting of individual items in 2020 is not done precisely, due to NTNU's system to keep the accounts and the reports we get from NTNU.

The budget for 2021 is shown in Table 2. Due to the pandemic and the related restrictions on in person meetings and events, DION did not spend its whole budget in 2020.

**Table 1: Financial overview for 2020**

	Budget (NOK)	Account 2020 (NOK)
<b><i>Income</i></b>		
<i>Funding from NTNU</i>	100 000,00	
<b><i>Expenses</i></b>		
<i>DION GRANTS</i>	10 000,00	6 880,89
<i>AGM</i>	30 000,00	0
<i>DION Events</i>	45 000,00	20452,28
<i>Meeting expenses</i>	5 000,00	2 982,83
<i>Travel</i>	0	0
<i>Promotional materials</i>	0	0
<i>Administration (SiN membership)</i>	2 000,00	2 181,25
<i>Board social</i>	10 000, 00	0
<i>Total income</i>	100 000,00	100 000,00
<i>Total expenses</i>	102 000, 00	32 497,25
<i>Sum</i>	- 2 000	+ 67 502,75

**Table 2: Budget for 2021**

	<b>Budget (NOK)</b>
--	---------------------

<b><i>Income</i></b>	
<i>Funding from NTNU</i>	100 000,00
<b><i>Expenses</i></b>	
<i>DION GRANTS</i>	25 000,00
<i>AGM</i>	1 000,00
<i>DION Events</i>	45 000,00
<i>Meeting expenses</i>	10 000,00
<i>Travel</i>	4 000,00
<i>Promotional materials</i>	3 000,00
<i>Administration</i>	4 000,00
<i>Board social</i>	8 000,00
<i>Total income</i>	100 000,00
<i>Total expenses (as of 19 March 2021)</i>	9 979,00
<i>Sum</i>	+ 90 021,00

## Open Points for the Next Board

- We strongly encourage the next DION board to keep monitoring the **impact of the coronavirus situation** on PhDs, post-docs and temporary scientific employees and NTNU's policies in this regard. The current restrictions will most likely have long term effects on several DION members that will require support from the next board. At NTNU, unions and NTNU board representative for temporary staff are important partners in these discussions. At national level, supporting SiN action is DION's main recourse. Point of contact in previous board: Idd, Lisa, Elodie.
- We encourage the next DION board to work closely with the central research committee (Forskningsutvalget) to ensure that PhD candidates, postdocs and other temporary scientific employees are taken into discussions in matters regarding their rights and duties. Point of contact in previous board: Idd.

- Keeping contact to the temporary staff representatives at the different faculties/departments (there is a Teams channel for these)
- Taking up CV/motivational letter/career advice workshop. We reached out to NTNU karriere who said they used to offer this but were specifically told not to offer this to PhDs anymore.
- The president of DION has added to a Teams group together with the faculty representatives for temporary staff and the temporary staff representative in the NTNU board. The group holds regular meetings. We would strongly encourage the next board to be active on the teams channel and participate in the common meetings to facilitate a network between the temporary staff representatives.
- We strongly encourage the next DION board to stay in touch with contacts and continue to collaborate with **NTNU Gjøvik** and **NTNU Ålesund** to strengthen the organization across all NTNU campuses. Point of contact in previous board: Irina and Aida
- The current DION board also advises to continue the collaboration and renovate the involvement in **SiN** (Stipendiateorganisation i Norge). Contact point in previous board: Lisa.
- We encourage the next DION Board to continue using **social media channels and the website**. The website offers an important repository of information to address queries and keep record of activities. The Facebook page is our main way to reach out our target audience, and the page gets more visibility if the posts and events get many shares and comments. All board members are encouraged to share posts and events from the social media channels on their profiles and to invite their NTNU fellows to DION events. Special attention should be given to the Facebook group, **DION Forum**, which needs development, moderating and promotion. Boosting events, grant calls and a monthly newsletter have also proven to be efficient, and we recommend continuing this practice. Contact person in previous board: Masab Annaqeeb (social media and website), Faiga (grants and newsletter)
- It would be great if the **choir** could be taken up again. We have reoccurring requests to inquire what happened to the choir.
- As for events the previous board had good experience with having monthly **Happy Hours** and do both scientific and social **events**. For our board year, due to covid-19, this was more difficult to keep up. We also advise you to get started as early as possible after the election process and to keep the established routine (e.g. time and place for the Happy Hour).
- If the next DION board wants to participate in the **PRIDE parade**, we recommend collaborating with NTNU Lgbtq+. Contact person in the previous board: Masab Annaqeeb
- DION now has two roll-ups for use at Dragvoll and Gløshaugen. These should be used actively, and it should be looked into whether it is possible to place them permanently.
- Continue working with pint of science festival. It is about research dissemination to the public, which is a cause worthy supporting.

## Appendix – DION Board Meetings (Irina)

Date	Meeting
11.05.20	Board Transition Workshop

11.05.20	DION Board Meeting
09.06.20	DION Board Meeting
04.09.20	DION Board Meeting
14.10.20	DION Board Meeting
24.11.20	DION Board Meeting
25.01.21	DION Board Meeting
23.03.21	DION Board Meeting
09.04.21	DION Board Meeting
12.04.21	Annual General Meeting

The minutes from the board meeting are available here:

<http://org.ntnu.no/dion/documents/meetings/>