

The Joint Committee for  
Nordic Research Councils  
in the Humanities and Social Sciences  
(NOS-HS) Workshop Grant

**EVALUATION REPORT 2020**

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Author **Riitta Launonen**

Academic rapporteurs **Snaefridur Thora Egilson, Frans Gregersen**

Commissioned by **The Joint Committee for Nordic Research  
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## Executive Summary

*The NOS-HS Workshop funding instrument* is aimed at promoting the development of new research areas and programmes within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries. The grant is given towards the organisation of a series of two or three Nordic workshops, with a focus on research and collaboration between researchers from the Nordic countries. The workshop proposals are expected to show ambition and novelty by aiming at establishing new research projects and at the preparation of research proposals to international research programmes. The involvement of early-career researchers and non-academic stakeholders in the workshops is encouraged.

In their October 2019 meeting the NOS-HS committee decided to conduct *an evaluation of the NOS-HS Workshop funding scheme*. The aim of the evaluation was to provide NOS-HS committee with evidence and grounds for assessing how the Workshop funding instrument meets its objectives.

The empirical data of the evaluation consists of *the final reports of completed projects from Workshop calls 2013-16*.

The evaluation was *implemented in two phases*: first gathering information from the submitted final reports from Workshop grant calls 2013-2016, 70 reports in all. Science adviser Riitta Launonen (recently retired from Academy of Finland) conducted *the first stage of the evaluation* between January and May in 2020 and reported to the NOS-HS committee in April 2020.

*At the second stage*, two senior academics from the Humanities and Social sciences, were invited to give recommendations based on the findings of the first-stage evaluation report. A 'formative evaluation' approach, looking ahead and making suggestions for future actions, was prompted by the NOS-HS committee. Professor Snaefridur Thora Egilson, University of Iceland, and professor emeritus Frans Gregersen, University of Copenhagen conducted the second-stage evaluation in May-June 2020.

The final evaluation report includes the findings and recommendations from both phases of the evaluation.

The *overall objective of the Workshop funding* has remained the same throughout the four years 2013-2016 and up to the present. The same applies to *application evaluation criteria* over the years. There are slight changes in the emphases of the objectives and evaluation criteria, and a close reading of the final reports of the Workshop projects shows a variety of concrete results and outcomes from the NOS-HS funded workshops.

*All Nordic countries are participating equally* in the funded Workshops, either as PIs or collaborating investigators.

When looking at the primary discipline of the Workshop project final reports, *Social sciences and Humanities are equally represented* in the funded projects. Furthermore, the workshops bring together researchers from a number of different disciplines, and *interdisciplinary*

*approaches and network collaboration* is one of the defining characteristics of the workshops, contributing to the new research ideas and Nordic added value generated in the course of the workshop collaboration and networking.

Findings from the final reports suggest that there are *two different starting points* for organising workshops, in *'Mature' networks* the field is already mapped out and senior expertise known, and the workshops take a step further, usually into substantial international publishing or applications to international research programmes (e.g. ERC or other H2020 calls). In *'Formative' networks* the field is more fragmented or otherwise in a more formative stage, and consequently the workshops are more exploratory in nature, less mature for peer reviewed publishing or completed joint research applications, and the outcome is more in line with continued networking and organising more workshops in order to prepare joint publications or application writing.

On the basis of the outcome of the workshops, *both starting points seem well motivated* and point to NOS-HS Workshops as a funding scheme, which is flexible in responding to the needs of the Nordic research communities.

The NOS-HS Workshop grant final reports display *a variety of different outcomes of the workshops*. Reflecting the primary objective of a strong research focus and novelty and new curiosity-driven research areas, most workshop projects report the *theoretical, methodological and (inter)disciplinary development and research agenda-setting* as their most important outcome. For many projects their most important result is the *publication record*. The different 'rationale' of the workshops, depending on the maturity or previous history of the network in question, bring out a variety of concrete outcomes. The 'formative' networks report the *networking* as their main outcome: the establishment of a new Nordic research network and continued collaboration as a basis for future collaboration and potential joint publications and new research projects. In the 'mature' networks the concrete results of the workshops include new ambitious *proposals to international publishers* (Special journal issues, edited collections) and new *grant applications to international research programmes* (Horizon 2020, ERC).

The primary objective in organising the workshops is reported in terms of *a research interest*, developing new approaches, concepts, methods, and empirical studies. In many cases the novel approach is in introducing and building on a Nordic or a wider European or international collaboration for a comparative study. *There is thus a strong element of novelty and renewal written into the projects already at the application stage, and the final reports reflect this.*

New phenomena and new research questions call for new concepts and theoretical and methodological development. The state-of-the-art research questions, too, when put under the lenses of different disciplinary approaches, result in renewal, new research questions and novel areas of research. Combining methodologies from different approaches is characteristic of the NOS-HS Workshops. When this is achieved through Nordic collaboration, it can be concluded that *all three are connected, the novelty, the interdisciplinarity and the Nordic added value.*

Overall, the NOS-HS Workshop funding appears versatile in supporting the networks with various ways of achieving renewal and Nordic added value and thus in responding to the needs of the Nordic research communities.

## Comments and recommendations from the two appointed academic rapporteurs

Two academic rapporteurs were assigned to comment on the evaluation report and to draw conclusions in the form of recommendations as to the future of the NOS H/S instrument of Exploratory Workshops.

Three general conclusions were drawn from the report:

1. the instrument of the Exploratory Workshops has proved its value for the stated aims, and the assessment report convincingly demonstrates that the instrument is well suited in its present guise both for collaboration across borders of science and across borders in general. It is strongly recommend that *the instrument be continued, that the present flexibility in the interpretation of it be retained and that all efforts be taken to increase the visibility of this unique instrument for Nordic researchers within the broad field of H/S so that more researchers use the instrument in the future.*
2. to highlight the importance of the *formative* workshops which often lay the ground-work for more *mature* work. It is recommended that *the NOS H/S discuss how to open up a possibility for a small follow-up grant to the most successful of the formative network applications. This stepping-stone grant should be given immediately after the end of the Exploratory Workshop grant.*
3. the follow-up on a general scale for successful Workshop grantees. It is recommended that *steps be taken to allocate means to finance at least five joint Nordic projects coming from Exploratory Workshops each year.*

*In sum: The appointed academic rapporteurs consider that the instrument of Exploratory Workshops has not only proved its value for the Nordic research community but has proved it to such an extent that it is recommended that it is kept as a most valuable asset for the NOS H/S collaboration, which in itself is uniquely valuable, and furthermore that the instrument be developed further to the benefit of Nordic comparative research.*

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background of the evaluation

*The Joint Committee for Nordic research councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NOS-HS)* is a body of co-operation between the research councils in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. NOS-HS aims to enhance the exchange of information between the Nordic research councils. The committee also supports collaboration between Nordic researchers by funding Nordic exploratory workshops.

*The NOS-HS Workshop funding instrument* is aimed at promoting the development of new research areas and programmes within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries. The grant is given towards the organisation of a series of two or three Nordic workshops, with a focus on research and collaboration between researchers from the Nordic countries. The workshop proposals are expected to show ambition and novelty by aiming at establishing new research projects and at the preparation of research proposals to international research programmes. The involvement of early-career researchers and non-academic stakeholders in the workshops is encouraged.

In their October 2019 meeting the NOS-HS committee decided to conduct *an evaluation of the NOS-HS Workshop funding scheme*. The evaluation was to be done based on the final reports of completed projects from Workshop grant calls 2013-16.<sup>1</sup>

*The aim of the evaluation* is to use the information from the final reports to provide NOS-HS committee with evidence and grounds for assessing how this funding instrument meets its purpose. In accordance with the primary objective of the Workshop call, a strong focus on research and novel research areas, the evaluation is to provide insights into *new researcher- and curiosity-driven research* and, if possible, *formative trends in the Humanities and Social sciences research agendas*, and reflect on the appropriateness of the Workshop funding scheme in responding and supporting these. Reflecting the research focus of the calls, the evaluation will look at the concrete results of the Workshop projects, including new research projects and funding proposals, as well as scientific publications.

Another interest in the evaluation, reflecting the objectives of the funding instrument, is the *'Nordic added value' of research*, and how it has been defined and realised in the Workshop projects and documented in the final reports.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A previous evaluation of NOS-HS Exploratory workshops has been conducted in 2012, based on the 2007-09 calls, "Evaluation of the Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (NOS-HS) Exploratory Workshops", by Hege Rudi Standal, Centre for Technology, Innovation and Culture, University of Oslo, 2012 (25 p.)

<sup>2</sup> In the latest 2020 Workshop call, the NOS-HS committee refer to the NordForsk definition of 'Nordic added value'. Link to NordForsk's webpage, <https://www.nordforsk.org/en/news/how-does-research-cooperation-lead-to-nordic-added-value>. Nordic added value has figured in the review of the applications in the 2013-16 calls as well, see chapter 2 below.

The evaluation is *implemented in two phases*: first gathering information from the submitted final reports from Workshop grant calls 2013-2016 (70 reports in all). The final reports include information about project objectives and implementation, most important results of the project, scientific publications derived from the workshops, and important questions and areas for further research, as well as the costs covered from the grant.

Science adviser Riitta Launonen (recently retired from Academy of Finland) conducted the first stage of the evaluation between January and May in 2020 and reported to the NOS-HS committee in April 2020. *At the second stage*, two senior academics from the Humanities and Social sciences, were invited to give recommendations based on the findings of the first-stage evaluation report. A 'formative evaluation' approach, looking ahead and making suggestions for future actions, was prompted by the NOS-HS committee. Professor Snaefridur Thora Egilson, University of Iceland, and professor emeritus Frans Gregersen, University of Copenhagen conducted the second-stage evaluation in May-June 2020. The final evaluation report includes the findings and recommendations from both phases of the evaluation.

## 1.2 Methods and data of the evaluation

The aim of the current evaluation is to provide NOS-HS committee with evidence and grounds for assessing how the Workshop funding instrument meets its objectives. The aim regarding the 2013-2016 calls is similar to the earlier evaluation of calls 2007-2009. The 2012 evaluation report refers to a 'programme theory', according to which the concept of workshop funding is based on the assumption that "bringing researchers together in relevant and pre-defined workshops will create spin-offs and added value for future research within the Humanities and the Social sciences" (2012, p. 7). Like the earlier evaluation, the current assessment aims at describing "whether or not the exploratory projects achieved goals in line with the scheme's objectives and in relation to added value".

In the current evaluation, the empirical data consists of the final reports of completed projects from Workshop calls 2013-16. In the 2012 evaluation, also project proposals and a questionnaire to project managers were included as data for the assessment. Altogether 83 Workshop grants were made from the 2013-2016 calls. Final reports for 70 of these have been available and thus make up the data of the current evaluation. The remainder of the final reports were either incomplete or still in the process of being submitted.

**Table 1. Number of NOS-HS Workshop grant applications, funded projects and final report available for the evaluation by call year, 2013-2016**

Call year	Applications	Funded projects	Final reports available (n=70)
2013	70	14	7
2014	86	20	18
2015	65	23	22
2016	63	26	23
<b>total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>70</b>

## 2 Workshop Calls 2013-2016

### 2.1 Call text regarding the objectives and application evaluation criteria of the call

The current evaluation covers NOS-HS Workshop grant calls from the years 2013-2016. The overall objective of the workshop funding remained the same throughout these four years and up to the present, that is, *NOS-HS wishes to promote the development of new research areas and programmes within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries.*

Looking at and comparing the call text regarding the objectives of the call and the application evaluation criteria from the four years, there are slight changes of wording, if not emphases, in the objectives of the funding instrument. This kind of "refinement" of the NOS-HS workshop funding scheme was reported also in the 2012 evaluation of the years 2007-2009 (2012 evaluation report, p. 5-6).

#### Objectives of the call

In the 2013 call text, the objective of the call is given as:

*"NOS-HS wishes to promote the development of new research areas and programmes within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries. The workshops should have a strong research focus. It is not possible to apply for already established and on-going activities. NOS-HS would prefer that preparation of proposals to Nordic and/or international research programmes is a part of the objective of holding a series of workshops. NOS-HS hereby wishes to support and strengthen the opportunities for Nordic researchers to get Nordic and international funding in order thereby to develop and improve the international competitiveness of Nordic research."*

In the 2014 call text, European Commission's next framework programme Horizon 2020 is given as an example of international research programmes, which the networks should aim at and which NOS-HS wishes to promote. Otherwise the call objectives are the same. Supporting and strengthening the Nordic networks to develop and improve their *international competitiveness* is a NOS-HS key goal in both years' calls.

In the 2015 call text, 'new research areas' changes into 'new researcher- and curiosity-driven areas and programmes' in the description of the objectives. A strong research focus and focus on novel research areas is continued. While it is stated as before that it is not possible to apply for already established and on-going activities, a 'however' has been added leading into the statement that "it is considered an advantage if a series of workshops aims at preparing ambitious research proposals to Nordic or international research programmes". It is often the case, as the findings from the final reports will show, that a relatively well-estab-



lished network will be required for a fully-fledged ambitious application to an international programme (such as Horizon 2020) or indeed for Special issues of international journals as a form of peer reviewed publications. It will be shown that there is in fact a range of different 'rationale' or organising principles of the workshops, depending on the maturity or previous history of the applicant network in question.

The 2015 call text introduces also *secondary objectives for the NOS-HS workshop funding*, including "encouraging the inclusion of junior scholars in Nordic social sciences and humanities networks, mobilizing researchers into doing active research policy work and involving actors from outside the academia. Inclusion of such aspects in the workshop proposals will be considered positive."

In the 2016 call, the primary and secondary objectives of the workshops to be funded remain the same.

Thus, in the latter two calls, 2015 and 2016, promoting researcher careers as well as research impact and stakeholder involvement are spelled out in the call text for the first time as objectives of the workshops to be funded. This is reflected in the way that the projects report workshop objectives in the final reports. Similar secondary objectives have in fact been implied in the previous years' calls as well, which can be seen by looking at the evaluation criteria of the applications.

## Evaluation criteria of applications

The objectives of the Workshop calls are reflected in the application evaluation criteria described in the call announcements. In the 2013 call the assessment criteria of the applications were given as:

- *Added value of the research initiative in relation to the research community and society at large, as well as development opportunities*
- *Nordic and, where relevant, foreign strengths and competencies within the research initiative*
- *Scientific qualifications of applicant and co-applicants*
- *Expected benefits and outcome, including possible plans for participating in Nordic and/or international research programmes*

In the 2013 call the workshops were, first, expected to make an impact both in the research community and beyond the academia. This kind of added value is the first criterion also in the 2014 call.

In the 2015 and 2016 calls,

- *Novelty and originality of the research initiative*

has become the first assessment criterion. A strong research focus is thus required of the workshops to be funded: "The proposed series of workshops should have a strong research focus and focus on novel research areas" (2015 call text).

- *The added value of the research initiative in relation to the Nordic research community and society at large*

follows this. 'Nordic' has been added here (2015, 2016) compared to the previous years' assessment criteria, which anticipates the use of the current concept of 'Nordic added value'.

In the latest 2020 NOS-HS Workshop call, the NOS-HS committee refers to the NordForsk definition of the concept of 'Nordic added value' in the review of applications, which is helpful also when assessing the previous years' workshops:

*"Nordic added value can be defined or described in various ways, depending on the sector in question and the focus of cooperation. NordForsk defines two main categories of Nordic added value: added value generated because the research can only be carried out in the Nordic region, and added value generated because the research collaboration is taking place in the Nordic region."*

<https://www.aka.fi/globalassets/noshs/appendix-3-nordforsks-definitions-for-nordic-added-valuea-in-research.pdf>

'Scientific qualifications of applicant and co-applicants' has remained the same as an application evaluation criterion throughout the 2013-2016 calls.

As the question about *the concrete results of the NOS-HS Workshops* is central in the assessment of the success of the Workshop funding scheme, it is important to note some changes in the formulation of the 'Expected benefits and outcome' assessment criterion.

- 2013, 'Expected benefits and outcome, including possible plans for participating in Nordic and/or international research programmes'
- 2014, 'Expected concrete benefits and outcome, e.g. submitting a proposal for Horizon 2020, books, articles, etc.'
- 2015, 'Expected concrete benefits and outcomes, including books and articles, preparation of a proposal to Nordic or international research programmes (e.g. Horizon 2020), research policy impact, and inclusion of early stage researchers in Nordic SSH networks.'
- 2016, 'Expected concrete benefits and outcomes, including books and articles, preparation of a proposal to Nordic or international research programmes (e.g. Horizon 2020), inclusion of early stage researchers in Nordic SSH networks, and research policy impact.'

As described above in the objectives of the calls, supporting and strengthening the opportunities for Nordic researchers to get Nordic and international funding, in order thereby to develop and improve the international competitiveness of Nordic research, is an important objective of the 2013-2014 Workshop calls. International funding refers to EU's framework programme for research Horizon2020 in particular.

In the 2015-2016 calls the same objective is formulated as "it is considered an advantage if a series of workshops aims at preparing ambitious research proposals to Nordic or international research programmes". At the same time, reflecting perhaps a change in emphasis, the application evaluation criteria for 2015-2016 for the concrete outcomes include publications alongside new funding proposal preparation, as well as results related to the secondary objectives of the calls, inclusion of early stage researchers and research policy impact.

It will be discussed below how the different 'rationale' of the workshops, *depending on the maturity or previous history of the network in question*, bring out a variety of concrete outcomes. It will be interesting to compare new ambitious proposals to international research programmes (e.g. Horizon 2020) with ambitious proposals to international publishers (Special journal issues, edited collections, monographs). Some Workshop projects report explicitly that the publication record is their main result. Others report their main outcome to be the establishment of a new Nordic research network as a basis for future collaboration and

potential joint publications and new research projects, leading also to future large project applications to Nordic and international programmes. Reflecting the primary objective of a strong research focus and novelty and new curiosity-driven research areas, most Workshop projects in fact report the content of the theoretical, methodological and (inter)disciplinary discussion and research agenda-setting as their most important outcome.

## 2.2 The grant

The budget for the annual NOS-HS Workshop call in the period 2013 to 2016 was about 350 000 euro per call for the first two years and rose to over 1 000 000 euro per call in the latter two years. The budget increase in 2015 in the Workshop funding scheme coincides with the NOS-HS decision to discontinue another funding instrument (NORDCORP research project funding) and instead invest more in the workshops.

**Table 2. Data from NOS-HS annual reports, committee meeting minutes and call texts, date of the list 9.3.2020<sup>3</sup>**

Call year	Applications	Funded	Success rate	Budget for the call	Total amount granted	Average amount granted	Max. Amount to apply for
2013	70	14	20 %	3 100 000 NOK	3 142 000 NOK	224 429 NOK	240 000 NOK
2014	86	20	23 %	3 100 000 NOK	4 638 000 NOK	231 900 NOK	240 000 NOK
2015	65	23	35 %	1 200 000 EUR	1 041 610 EUR	45 287 EUR	50 000 EUR
2016	63	26	41 %	11 000 000 SEK	10 768 079 SEK	414 157 SEK	450 000 SEK
	<b>284</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>29 %</b>				

In the following table the budgets and granted monies are given in euro currency, using the rate at the end of each year respectively:

**Table 3. Budgets and amounts granted for the NOS-HS Workshop calls 2013-2016, in Euro**

Call year	Budget for the call	Total amount granted	Average amount granted	Max. Amount to apply for
2013	367 000	372 000	26 600	28 400
2014	344 000	514 000	25 700	26 600
2015	1 200 000	1 042 000	45 300	50 000
2016	1 142 000	1 118 000	43 000	47 000

Overall, 83 projects were funded out of 284 applications submitted over the four years 2013-2016, which gives an overall success rate of 29 per cent. The numbers of applications per year have varied between 63 and 86 and the numbers of funded workshops between 14 and 26. There is a slight decrease in the number of applications submitted, at the same time with an increase in the number of workshop grants, and the success rate went up from 20 per cent in 2013 to 41 per cent in 2016. Due to the increase of the call budget from 2015, there was

<sup>3</sup> Notes: Average amount granted numbers will not add up, since it is an average and not the actually granted sums. For call 2015 only EUR sums were found, although the call was administered in SEK. The information in this table was gathered by Tiina Aliranta.

a substantial increase also in the average grant from 25 700 euro in 2014 to 45 300 euro in 2015, an increase of 76 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

As reported above (Table 1, p. 3), for the 83 Workshop grants made from the 2013-2016 calls, final reports for 70 projects have been available for the current evaluation. Thus, the following tables show the distribution of grants by call year and country, first for the main applicant (Principal investigator) and then for the co-applicants (collaborating investigators) in the data of the 70 final reports submitted.

**Table 4. NOS-HS Workshop grants (PI) by call year and country in the final reports included in the evaluation (n=70)**

Call year	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	total
2013	2	1	0	2	2	7
2014	7	3	1	4	3	18
2015	6	10	2	0	4	22
2016	10	6	0	2	5	23
total	25	20	3	8	14	70

One of the requirements throughout the Workshop calls is that the proposal be submitted by a principal applicant together with at least two co-applicants from two different Nordic countries, thereby representing at least three institutions in three different Nordic countries. NOS-HS recommendation is that the participants be evenly distributed between the participating Nordic countries. In addition, it has been possible to include one co-applicant from a non-Nordic country, though not as a principal applicant.

**Table 5. NOS-HS Workshop participations (Co-applicants) by call year and country in the final reports included in the evaluation (n=70)**

Call year	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Faroe Islands	Greenland	total
2013	4	5	3	6	5	1	1	25
2014	12	12	5	15	14	0	1	59
2015	12	11	5	16	23	1	0	68
2016	10	7	1	15	17	0	0	50
total	38	35	14	52	59	2	2	202

It is useful to look at the two tables together, as PIs from Denmark and Finland are leaders in 64 per cent of the projects, whereas Sweden and Norway lead in the numbers of co-applicants. There is variation between the years, and when looking at the numbers of PIs and co-applicants for a single year, the differences between the countries are not remarkable.

<sup>4</sup> A closer look at the spending of the grant within a Workshop project is excluded from the current evaluation. The *Financial report* part of the Workshop final reports provides information on this.

## SUMMARY

The overall objective of the workshop funding remained the same throughout the four years 2013-2016 and up to the present, that is, *NOS-HS wishes to promote the development of new research areas and programmes within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries*. The proposed series of workshops should have *a strong research focus and focus on novel research areas*. The same applies to application evaluation criteria over the years. There are, however, slight changes in the emphases of the objectives and evaluation criteria, and a close reading of the final reports of the Workshop projects will show a variety of concrete results and outcomes from the NOS-HS funded workshops.

All Nordic countries are participating equally in the funded Workshops, either as PIs or collaborating investigators.

## 3 Findings from the Workshop grant final reports

The Workshop grant final reports have been submitted to NOS-HS by the Principal investigator after the funding period has ended. In the following, findings from the final reports will be presented first looking at the project leaders' and participants' disciplinary background and how different disciplinary approaches are brought together in the Workshop projects.

In the next two sections the presentation of the 'rationale' or objectives of the workshops, including different starting points of the grant receiving networks for organising the workshops, will show a variety of functions of the workshop funding for the participants. The objectives of organising the workshops will be reflected further in the presentation of the outcome of the funding, including concrete results in the form of academic publications and new research grant proposals to international programmes.

In two concluding sections the final reports will be assessed in relation to novelty and renewal in the topics and areas of research, as well as the Nordic added value.

### 3.1 Social sciences and Humanities: participating disciplines and interdisciplinary collaboration in the Workshops

The NOS-HS Workshop funding instrument is aimed at promoting *the development of new research areas and programmes within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries*. Table 6 below shows the distribution of the Workshop grants by the *primary discipline or field of research*, as indicated in the final reports included the evaluation (n=70). Overall, the final reports were quite evenly divided between the Humanities (53%) and the Social sciences (47%). In some cases, the delineation could arguably go the other way, and the division thus should be taken as indicative.

History and archaeology (11) and Linguistics and literary studies (7) are the largest groups in the Humanities, and Sociology together with related fields (10) and Political science (9) in the Social sciences. Taking into account the decisive role of multi- and interdisciplinary collaboration in the workshops, the smaller disciplines and fields figure out in many more projects than the table suggests.

For instance, *Gender studies* is reported here as a primary field of research only once, but it is essential in interdisciplinary workshops in at least seven other cases. Examples of these topics are 'A new Nordic Model of Sustainable Transport for all? Gendering knowledge, methodology and innovation', 'The Future of Feminisms in the Nordic Region', 'Feminist Peace Research Network', 'Rethinking Youth Employment – Work, Policy and the Changing Welfare State in the Nordic Countries', 'The embodied self, health and emerging technologies: Implications for gender and identity', and 'Multiculturalism, cultural homogeneity and societal security in the Nordic region and Estonia'.

Most, if not all projects show *a combination of approaches from different disciplines or fields of research*, and the networks are highly multi- and interdisciplinary. When a project is more

confined to one broad discipline, it is still a combination of, or bringing into dialogue, two or several smaller areas of specialisation within the field in question.

**Table 6. Workshop grants by discipline or field of research in the Humanities and Social Sciences in the final reports included in the evaluation (n=70)<sup>5</sup>**

Humanities		Social Sciences	
History and Archaeology	11	Sociology, Social Policy, Social Work, and Social Anthropology, Indigenous Studies	10
Linguistics and Literary Studies	7	Political Science	9
Philosophy	5	Law	4
Education	4	Business Studies	3
Religious Studies and Theology	3	Environmental Economics	2
Cultural Studies and Ethnology	2	Health Research	2
Information Sciences, Media and Communication Studies	2	Area Studies	1
Psychology	2	Gender Studies	1
Design Studies	1	Sport Science	1
total	37 (53%)	total	33 (47%)

*Multi- and interdisciplinarity is one of the defining characteristics of the NOS-HS Workshop grants.* Well over a third of the projects bring together both Humanities and Social sciences, and five projects combine Humanities and/or Social sciences with Natural sciences (Medicine, Genetics, Zooarchaeology, Ecology). Most of the rest of the projects are multi- and interdisciplinary within either the Humanities or the Social sciences.

As an example of *collaboration across the Humanities and Social sciences*, a combination of approaches from History, Criminology and Social work proved especially useful for methodological openings in one of the projects. The Nordic added value was shown in the focus on verifying the uniqueness of the Nordic family and welfare policies based on the distinct styles of policy making and attitudes to violence, compared to other European countries.

In one of the *collaborations across Social sciences and Natural sciences*, the aim was to develop a new analytical framework for an original international, interdisciplinary research project, while the Nordic added value was argued through strengthening Nordic solidarity-based health care, taking into account recent developments in Genetics.

Workshop topics related to *health research* is a convincing example of interdisciplinary projects. Several workshops have identified themselves to represent 'Health research in the Humanities', or likewise could be characterised as 'Health research in the Social sciences' (Social epidemiology, Public health, Occupational health, and Health economics). The topics include for example 'Exploratory workshops on health care systems and health economics in the Nordic countries', 'Nordic network on alcohol's harms to others', 'Population Whole Genome Sequencing: Implications for the Nordic Solidaristic Health Care', 'Mental Illness

<sup>5</sup> Note: The Independent Research Fund Denmark delineation of disciplines into the Humanities and the Social Sciences respectively has been applied here, <https://dff.dk/en/application/call-for-proposals-of-independent-research-funds-a2018-s2019.pdf>

The distribution of the disciplines includes only the primary discipline or field of research from the final reports included in the evaluation (n=70). Most workshops were reported to have been multi- and interdisciplinary.

and Social Class: A Study of the Role of Social Inequality in Nordic Mental Health Research from the 1950s to the 2000s', and 'The embodied self, health and emerging technologies: Implications for gender and identity'.

Examples of more mono-disciplinary projects are some workshops of Legal studies scholars, but even among these there is a variation of specialisations and topics, such as Civil procedural law, Mediation studies, Criminology and European law. One project combines Criminology with History, in a project about family violence.

A Biblical studies workshop is an example of a specialised text-based field of research within Theology, which nevertheless makes use of Linguistics and History.

The NOS-HS Workshop final reports indicate that interdisciplinary research approaches and workshop collaborations are indeed closely connected to the new ideas and renewal of research as well as with the Nordic added value, both key objectives of the Workshops. These connections will be highlighted below in the discussion of the 'rationale', novelty, and Nordic added value of the projects.

## SUMMARY

The NOS-HS workshop funding instrument is aimed at promoting *the development of new research areas and programmes within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries*. When looking at the primary discipline of the Workshop project final reports, Social sciences and Humanities are equally represented in the funded projects. It should be noted, however, that the workshops bring together researchers from a number of different disciplines, and interdisciplinary approaches and network collaboration is one of the defining characteristics of the workshops, contributing to the new research ideas and Nordic added value generated in the course of the workshop collaboration and networking.

### 3.2 'Rationale' of the Workshop funding: the focus of the cooperation

The next two sections (3.2 and 3.3) on the findings from the workshop final reports connect the 'rationale', or the setting of the objectives and the focus of the workshop collaboration, and the 'outcome', or what the most important results were reported to be and what concrete results have been reported.

The *primary objectives* of the workshops are reported in terms of the focus on science or an academic interest. They relate to theoretical-methodological or conceptual development in a specific field of study and strengthening of a discipline or intersection of disciplines. The 'rationale' of a workshop may be for instance mapping out on-going research in a certain field, identifying new research questions, and research agenda-setting. It may also be putting the state-of-the-art research questions under the lenses of different disciplinary approaches, thus aiming at renewal, new research questions and novel areas of research. This is in line with the requirement of *a strong focus on science of the call*.

*Secondary objectives* include integrating collaboration between Nordic scholars as well as between junior and senior scholars in the field, recruiting young scholars to do comparative



research within Nordic and transnational networks, training junior researchers to deal with Nordic experiences and provide them connections to global issues, as well as mobilising researchers into doing active research policy and involving actors from outside the academia. These are also in line with the stated objectives of the calls.

For examples of the formulation of *primary and secondary objectives* from the Workshop grant final reports, see EXAMPLES (1) AT THE END OF THE REPORT.

Comparing the reported objectives of the workshops with their reported concrete outcomes, a picture of different 'rationale' for organising the workshops, depending on the maturity or previous history of the network in question, emerges. This comparison suggests that there are *two different starting points for organising workshops*:

- *'Mature' networks*: the field is already mapped out and senior expertise known, and the workshops take a step further, usually into substantial international publishing or applications to international research programmes (e.g. ERC or other H2020 calls)
- *'Formative' networks*: the field is more fragmented or otherwise in a more formative stage, and consequently the workshops are more exploratory in nature, less mature for peer reviewed publishing or completed joint research applications, and the outcome is more in line with continued networking and organising more workshops in order to prepare joint publications or application writing

On the basis of the reported outcome of the workshops, both seem well motivated and point to NOS-HS Workshops as a funding scheme, which is quite flexible in responding to the needs of the Nordic research communities.

According to the final reports, *research agenda-setting* and *interdisciplinary collaboration and networking* are, in one way or the other, common features in all NOS-HS workshops. Most project reports also include plans for publishing as one of their objectives. The different kinds of publications will be described in more detail in the section on outcomes.

Regarding *publishing*, there are however a few projects, which state that they did not see publications as a goal of this particular grant. These include some of the formative networks, which are still in the process of finding sufficient coherence for joint or co-authored publications, or indeed for joint large research grant applications. Also a few of the more mature networks around preparing an application for a major international call state that their workshops were not aimed at working on joint publications.

*Preparing new research grant applications* includes networking grant applications for the formative networks and large EU programme funding applications for the more mature networks. In between are numerous workshops projects with plans to prepare new grant applications to national and Nordic funding agencies. Some of these networks have also a shared interest in developing new joint large research projects and applying for funding from major international programmes, when a suitable call is available. The latter networks can thus be described as having potential for more ambitious international projects, but as yet they have not submitted any proposals for new international research grants.

Some of the mature networks are built around ambitious international publication plans, for instance guest-editing a Special issue of an academic journal or proposing an edited collection to a prestigious international publisher. The workshops organised by these networks were not aimed at research grant preparation.

For the purpose of showing the variety of functions of the NOS-HS Workshop funding, as reported by the grant recipients in the final reports, a selection of actions has been listed in Table 7 (below), together with four different starting points for organising NOS-HS workshops, in a scale of 'formative' and 'mature' networks:

- *Networking*: the establishment of a new Nordic network, continued collaboration within the network, involving junior scholars: 'Formative networks' (1)
- *Expanding the network*: from the NOS-HS workshop and Nordic networks to European and international networks and joint publications, and from co-authoring to future joint research projects which may lead to future large research grant applications to Nordic and international programmes: 'Formative networks' (2)
- Solid network collaboration as a basis of *ambitious publication proposals* to international publishers and publishing with prestigious international publishers: 'Mature networks' (3)
- *New projects, programmes, and research grant applications* to national, Nordic, and international (EU) calls: 'Mature networks' (4)

These are descriptive and heuristic categories, and as such to be taken as indicative. In practice and in terms of their concrete outcomes, many projects combine the activities in their own unique way.

**Table 7. Different starting points for organising NOS-HS workshops: 'Formative' and 'mature' networks (1-4)**

<b>Workshop activities</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Research agenda-setting	X	X	X	X
Interdisciplinary collaboration	X	X	X	X
'Exploratory' nature of the Workshops	X			
New networking grant applications	X			
Organising international conference panels		X		
Peer reviewed articles (journals, edited book chapters)	X	X	X	X
New project grant applications to national and Nordic calls		X		
Potential for or intended ambitious international publication proposals		X		
Potential for or intended ambitious international research grant proposals		X		
Publications proposals to international publishers (Special Issues of journals, edited collections)			X	
New research grant proposals to European and international programmes (ERC, Horizon 2020)				X
'No new funding applications'	X		X	
'No publications'	X			X

It is worth noting that NOS-HS call their Workshop funding instrument ‘*exploratory*’, in that new researcher- and curiosity-driven research areas are to be explored and the projects are to contain novel elements and breaking new ground. In the sense of research agenda-setting, which was common to all workshops included in the current evaluation, they are exactly this. In the final reports though, those grant recipients, who reported the ‘networking’ as their most important outcome (category 1 in the table), referred to their workshops as distinctly ‘exploratory’, and thus not having as yet peer reviewed publications or new research grant applications as concrete results. This meaning or use of ‘exploratory’ comes close to the use of the term ‘formative’ in this report.

For examples of a variety of ‘*rationale*’ for applying the NOS-HS funding from the Workshop grant final reports, see EXAMPLES (2) AT THE END OF THE REPORT.

In most of the final reports, the objectives and intended outcomes are closely connected with the actual outcomes and concrete results of the Workshops, for instance, “the three workshops explored exactly the themes as proposed in the application text: a significant shift in the ethical discourse within the history of Western philosophy”. Next, the variety of the functions of the NOS-HS workshop funding will be assessed by looking at the outcomes of workshops.

#### SUMMARY

There are two different starting points for organising workshops: In ‘*Mature*’ networks the field is already mapped out and senior expertise known, and the workshops take a step further, usually into substantial international publishing or applications to international research programmes (e.g. ERC or other H2020 calls). In ‘*Formative*’ networks the field is more fragmented or otherwise in a more formative stage, and consequently the workshops are more exploratory in nature, less mature for peer reviewed publishing or completed joint research applications, and the outcome is more in line with continued networking and organising more workshops in order to prepare joint publications or application writing.

On the basis of the outcome of the workshops, *both seem well motivated* and point to NOS-HS Workshops as a funding scheme, which is quite flexible in responding to the needs of the Nordic research communities.

### 3.3 The outcomes of the NOS-HS Workshop grants

The NOS-HS Workshop grant final reports display *a variety of different outcomes of the workshops*: establishing a new Nordic research network, continued collaboration within a network, widening Nordic collaboration into European and international networks, organising panels and symposia in international conferences, mapping out research in a certain field or study, new theoretical, methodological, and (multi)disciplinary perspectives, creating new research agendas as a basis of collaborative networks and research projects, data inventory, mapping infrastructures, joint publications, including academic articles, Special

journal issues, edited collections, books, and other dissemination of workshop/research results, and preparing and submitting new proposals to research funding programmes. Reflecting the primary objective of a strong research focus and novelty and new curiosity-driven research areas, most Workshop projects in fact report the *content of the theoretical, methodological and (inter)disciplinary discussion and research agenda-setting* as their most important outcome.

The different 'rationale' of the workshops, *depending on the maturity or previous history of the network in question*, bring out a variety of concrete outcomes. The 'formative' networks report as their main outcome the networking: the establishment of a new Nordic research network and continued collaboration as a basis for future collaboration and potential joint publications and new research projects, leading later also to large project applications to Nordic and international programmes. Participating in international conferences or annual meetings of European or international academic associations and organising research panels in these have also been reported. In some cases conference participation leads to joint publications, co-authored articles or an edited volume based on the conference presentations for instance. Some projects have reported the publication record as their most important outcome. The Workshop grant final reports also show that co-authoring may be a basis for future joint research projects. The reports thus show a variety of different routes to large international collaboration projects.

In the 'mature' networks the concrete results of the workshops include new ambitious proposals to international publishers (Special journal issues, edited collections) and new grant applications to international research programmes (Horizon 2020, ERC). The participants of these networks build on sufficient knowledge of each other's on-going research in order to be able to rely on sufficient coherence as a basis of the new proposals. The novelty of the collaboration comes from identifying new shared research questions or looking at familiar questions through the lenses of new approaches. This is the exploratory aspect of the workshops organised by the more mature networks.

For examples of how *the different starting points for organising the NOS-HS workshops illustrate the variety of outcomes of the NOS-HS Workshops*, see EXAMPLES (3 to 6) AT THE END OF THE REPORT. As explained above, the categories are descriptive and heuristic, and to be taken as indicative. In terms of their concrete outcomes, many projects combine the different kinds of outputs in their own unique way.

The following sections give more details of the numbers of the publications and new research grant applications as a result of the workshops. Stakeholder involvement and outreach will briefly be discussed, as well as what kind of 'changes of plan' have been reported.

### **3.3.1 New projects, programmes, and applications to national, Nordic and international (EU) calls**

One of the key functions of NOS-HS workshop funding is preparing applications to Nordic and international research programmes. This was discussed at some length above in 2.1 regarding the objectives and evaluation criteria of the calls 2013-2016, regarding what relative weight the new international project proposals have for the NOS-HS funding instrument, or to what extent the NOS-HS workshop funding is geared to the preparation of new interna-

tional project proposals. In the 2013 call, there was a clear expectation that the workshops lead to researchers' and their networks' participation in Nordic and/or international research programmes. In the 2016 call, the application evaluation criteria for the concrete outcomes include publications along with new funding proposal preparation, as well as results related to the secondary objectives of the calls. On the basis of the workshop final reports, preparing applications to Nordic and international programmes is one of the concrete results of the workshops and an important one. When looking at the number of workshop grant recipients who report it as their most important result, it appears to be on par with the publications record as the main outcome.

Two thirds of the projects (46, or 66 per cent) report having either submitted or prepared new research proposals to either national, Nordic, European or other international calls. A third of the projects (24, or 34 per cent) report no grant applications. In the latter projects either publications or the establishment of the research network as such are reported as the main outcome. Furthermore, several grant recipients in the category of 'No new grant applications' report that they are on a lookout for a suitable call to open, or that their intention is to apply later.

National funding organisations include the Research Councils in all Nordic countries, as well as Research Foundations, such as Carlsberg Foundation, Finnut, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, Norsk kulturråd, and Finnish Cultural Foundation. The other Nordic and international programmes include Nordic universities, NordForsk, the Nordic Council of Ministers, Belmont Forum, and the EU framework programme for research (Horizon 2020, HERA, ERC, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, and Erasmus Programme).

Table 8 shows a summary of research proposals submitted to various kinds of research funding agencies that have been mentioned in the final reports.

**Table 8. New research proposals as outcome of the NOS-HS workshops in the final reports included in the evaluation (n=70)**

Research proposals to national funding organisations	24
Research proposals Nordic funding organisations	4
Research proposals to European funding organisations	15
Other, international	3
No new grant applications	24

Preparing new research proposals to international calls is a way of enhancing the international visibility of Nordic research networks. However, the projects report working out new research agendas together with their international collaborators also when the workshops did not yet develop into a research funding application.

Several workshops opened participation to non-Nordic scholars, either as invited keynote speakers or commentators on workshop presentations or participants. International participants have been included in the workshops for 'comparative coverage' in some cases, and 'the findings of Nordic researchers closely integrated with international research' through the workshops. Several projects report 'an interest in pursuing joint [ERC] funding' with their non-Nordic workshop participants and seeking for potential EU partners, even when the workshops did not lead directly into a joint proposal to an international call. International publishing together with colleagues from Europe and beyond, as well as exposure through

conference participation have been reported as ways of enhancing international visibility. The non-Nordic collaborators have been participating in the workshops as well as contributing to the edited volumes for instance.

The countries most often mentioned in international collaboration include UK, Germany, USA, Canada, Russia, France and Australia. Most if not all European countries have been mentioned, as well as several Asian and some African countries. From Asia the collaborators come for instance from India, China, Japan and South Korea.

Another form of enhancing international collaboration as a result of the workshops has been in the area of academic teaching and exchange programmes.

For examples of *the connection of research and teaching* from the Workshop grant final reports, see EXAMPLES (7) AT THE END OF THE REPORT.

### 3.3.2 Peer reviewed publications

Publications as a concrete outcome of the workshops are reported in the final reports under ‘Scientific publications derived from the workshops’, where the required information has been authors, title, journal/issue, publisher and year.<sup>6</sup>

A majority of the grant recipients, that is 59 projects (84 per cent), report publications as their outcome. Over 68 per cent of the projects report the publication of peer reviewed articles and over 35 per cent of one or several edited collections, including books by international publishers. About 27 per cent of the workshops have resulted in a Special Issue of one or several peer reviewed journals in the field in question. Five projects report a monograph among their publications and six report conference papers. The latter are from other international conferences, not from the NOS-HS workshops, and many more conference papers are likely to have turned into articles in Special Issues or the edited collections and are thus reported as articles.

Other reported publications include dissertations, working papers, policy briefs, and websites.

Table 9 below shows the distribution of the publications as an outcome of the workshops in publication categories arising from the final reports included in the evaluation (n=70).

**Table 9. Peer reviewed and other publications in WS final reports included in the evaluation (n=70)**

	# 1-2	# 3-6	# 7+	None	N/A
Scientific articles	15	14	19	8	3
Special Issues of Journals	21	2			
Edited collections, including books by international publishers	25	1			
Monographs	5				
Conference papers	1	2	3		
Other, including dissertations, working papers, policy briefs, websites	8	2	2		

None = No publications during or as a result of the workshops

N/A = Information missing

<sup>6</sup> The PIs have generally not used any categorisation of publications, which made gathering and summarising figures for publications from the final reports rather cumbersome and may have left room for the evaluator’s interpretation.

As indicated earlier, some of the final reports state that, because of their ‘exploratory’ nature, the workshops were not aimed at publishing. In all, eight projects (11 per cent) report *no publications among their outcome*. In five of these, the main outcome was preparation of new research grant proposals, and in three the networking as a first step to future collaborations. Information about publications is missing in three final reports.

For examples of *the results of projects with no publications* from the Workshop grant final reports, see EXAMPLES (8) AT THE END OF THE REPORT.

To conclude, *international publishing* appears to be the main concrete result of the workshops, or at least on par with preparing proposals to international programmes. In volume, publications as the main outcome outnumber new research grant applications. It could be suggested, however, that *ambitious proposals to international publishers* are comparable with *ambitious grant proposals to international research programmes*. There appears also clearly to be a link *from co-authoring articles and for instance Special Issues of journals to later joint research projects*. NOS-HS Workshops function as a platform for the groundwork for both publishing and grant proposals.

### 3.3.3 Stakeholder involvement and outreach

Some grant recipients pay attention to stakeholder involvement and outreach in their final reports, whereas others don’t mention it. In about a dozen projects the topic of the workshops imply a strong focus on stakeholders, either directly as participants of the workshops or as targeted in dissemination. Stakeholder involvement has been integrated in these projects from the planning of the workshops and into the workshop agendas.

In the following, examples from the final reports illustrate *the range of different ways of involving stakeholders in the workshops or in the dissemination of their results*. The examples are not exhaustive but serve as an indication of the active role of the stakeholders in the projects.

A topic of *democratic experiments* (crowdsourcing, public consultation and epistemic democracy) dealt with public participation in policy and decision-making, and the project is an example of strong stakeholder engagement. The workshops aimed at interaction with policy makers, or between academia and policy making, in an effort to discuss how direct democracy may be an input into traditional policy making rather than a challenge or a threat. They brought together researchers, activists and public officials who have been engaged in democratic innovations academically and professionally, with the aim of sharing experiences and research results and discussing new approaches in channelling public influence into legislation, policy- and decision-making.

A project on *the design of user-friendly public services* produced a short video for public use, to meet the interest from the public and to share the researchers’ knowledge of working with participatory theatre methods with varying stakeholders. It aimed at engaging professional actors and designers in every workshop, as the research field demands systematic experiments in practice.

In a project about *how new technologies are and can be incorporated in lived experience of disability*, people with disabilities and artists/performers were invited to participate in the workshops. The workshops aimed at further theoretical work and conceptualisation, as well as opening up discussion beyond social welfare and policy issues.

Each of the workshops on *transnational migration and the conditions of migrants* have involved academic scholars from the fields of philosophy and political science and practitioners dealing with migrants and migration (NGOs and activists). These workshops involved presentations of lived-experiences and film-screening related to migrants and migration.

An empirical study on experiential literary reading aimed at launching and consolidating Nordic research on experiential literary reading. One of the primary objectives was to increase awareness of educational relevance and mental health benefits of literary reading among stakeholders, including policy makers, teachers and educational practitioners, librarians, literary reading promoters, professionals and practitioners in mental health field.

A project on marine resource governance in the Arctic brought together interdisciplinary researchers to better understand the management of Arctic resources in an environmental and resource economic framework. It aimed at enhancing research collaborations, targeting the broad spectrum of academics, resource managers and policy makers. The issues discussed in the workshops included co-management and stakeholder participation, for instance enhancing community monitoring of marine invasive species.

A workshop series on welfare practices for young unemployed people dealt with restructuring process of welfare services strengthened through involving the group of people who are affected by the policies and practices, including employment policies of private firms and NGOs. Policy makers and people from public services were invited to participate.

A series of workshops on global financial crisis and the public sector involved dissemination of relevant information to key stakeholders, including research community, policy makers, practitioners.

A project on mapping out and analysing the challenges of feminist movements in the Nordic political gender landscape dealt with models and methods for gender equality and diversity politics. Workshop participants included feminist activists, researchers, and researcher-activists, with an aim of bringing activists and researchers together. This project focused also on engagement of early-career researchers, and it came up with plenty of dissemination of results.

A feminist peace research network project aimed at filling a gap in the recognition of the input of the feminist scholarship in the issues related to conflict, violence, peace, peace-building and security, bringing together different generations of feminist peace researchers, including junior scholars. It aimed at strengthening linkages between feminist peace scholars, activists and practitioners, including the global South. Policy linkages were enhanced through workshop presence of representatives of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

A legal studies project on current European trends in pre-trial procedures welcomed different actors to participate, in order to share best practices and experiences of similar problems. The workshop participants concluded that comparative studies and practical discussions between different actors would be welcome even in the future.

### **3.3.4 Changes in the plan and ‘what did not work’**

The projects report that the workshops have on the whole been conducted according to plan. Some report that there had been no deviations from the original plan or only minor changes regarding timing and locations of the workshops. With respect to people minor changes include some drop-out in participation because of senior experts’ other commitments or absences because of health issues. The project period has been prolonged, for



instance, because of the PI's parental leave. There have been some deviations in the actual workshop programmes due to staff turnover and availability of specific speakers.

Several projects report that it has been possible to organise an additional workshop. Initially, 2-3 workshops were planned, but a fourth workshop was arranged. This has been possible for instance due to a lower number of participants at some of the workshops. The additional workshop has been used in planning, discussing and finalising joint articles before submission to journals or working on book-length publications from the workshop proceedings.

Most changes of the original plan include additions and replacements in the workshop agendas, the planned outcomes or the participants. For example, three grant recipients report:

*"In the first workshop it was decided that the project should result in a common book in English, and the workshop consequently devoted to the development of the book's central ideas and its organisation, as well as to discussing the participants' contributions to it."*

*"One sub-theme area was only partly covered; a proposal for a broader European study on Group 3 theme was not realised; instead, Group 1 theme created a research proposal on under-age drinking, which was not included in the original plan."*

*"The second workshop focused on research questions which emerged during the first workshop. The aim was to formulate basic research questions and a draft for a research grant proposal. The list of the participants was modified and narrowed down to researchers who had actual interest in developing future projects based on the theme of the workshop."*

Some of the planned publications have been changed into others, for instance a planned Special journal issue into another edited book, or journal articles into a joint edited volume by an international publisher. A policy brief has been replaced by a panel at an international conference enabling outreach with practitioners, policy makers, and researchers in higher education sector. A half-day seminar for PhD students to engage in scholarly discussion with senior researchers and a PhD Summer school are other examples of new additions.

Concerning 'what did not work', most reports do not give any accounts of problems. Some report that the original project turned out to be too broad and unrealistic, and the focus of the workshops was consequently narrowed down on selected themes. In one project a planned submission of a research funding proposal was not realised.

Regarding publications one project reports that collaborative writing was planned but not completed. A couple of projects refer to an extension of the funding period, because of delays in publishing with international publishers, and related to this that "18 months is too short for publishing the project results, and it would be easier if the project could be a bit longer from the beginning". The extended funding period also made possible to organise a final seminar with dissemination of results in mind.

Some projects had wished for more stakeholder involvement, such as "practitioners have been included, but not to the extent intended and desired", or "unsuccessful attempts to involve biomedical professionals and related policy makers in workshops", or "connections between high level politics and grass-roots activism should be highlighted and carried on into future actions even more than here".

One project that built on parallel research funding from the national agencies reported that there was national funding for collaborative projects in Norway and Finland, but not

in Sweden and Denmark. Workshop participants from the latter nevertheless were able to take part in the planning and analysis phases of the collaboration.

Finally, one grant recipient reports that while there were some adjustments to the original ideas and reallocations to budget, creating a new network was harder than expected and took more time, and there should have been a third workshop.

## SUMMARY

The NOS-HS Workshop grant final reports display *a variety of different outcomes of the workshops*. Reflecting the primary objective of a strong research focus and novelty and new curiosity-driven research areas, most workshop projects report the *theoretical, methodological and (inter)disciplinary development and research agenda-setting* as their most important outcome. For many projects their most important result is the *publication record*. The different 'rationale' of the workshops, depending on the maturity or previous history of the network in question, bring out a variety of concrete outcomes. The 'formative' networks report the *networking* as their main outcome: the establishment of a new Nordic research network and continued collaboration as a basis for future collaboration and potential joint publications and new research projects. In the 'mature' networks the concrete results of the Workshops include new ambitious *proposals to international publishers* (Special journal issues, edited collections) and new *grant applications to international research programmes* (Horizon 2020, ERC).

*The variety of the reported outcomes of the workshops suggest that NOS-HS Workshops as a funding scheme is versatile in responding to the needs of the Nordic research communities.*

### 3.4 Novelty, renewal in the topics and areas of research

As stated above, the primary objective in organising the workshops is reported usually in terms of *a research interest*, developing new approaches, concepts, methods, and empirical studies. In many cases the novel approach is in introducing and building on a Nordic or a wider European or international collaboration for a comparative study. *There is thus a strong element of novelty and renewal written into the projects already at the application stage, and the final reports reflect this.*

Most workshop projects report '*scientific results*', the conceptual/theoretical, methodological and (inter)disciplinary development and research agenda-setting in the workshops, as their most important outcome. This reflects the 'focus on science' required in the calls and applies to both the more mature networks and the more formative ones. Workshop keynotes and presentations build directly into either the initial stages of forming a new research network or strengthening an existing one. A very real outcome of the workshops is *the continued networking and research collaboration* whether it leads to joint publications by international publishers or new research project applications to national/Nordic/European and international funding organisation or a potential of next steps into publications and new project applications.

New phenomena and new research questions call for new concepts and theoretical and methodological development. The state-of-the-art research questions, too, when put under

the lenses of different disciplinary approaches, may result in renewal, new research questions and novel areas of research. Combining methodologies from different approaches is reported frequently in the final reports. When this is achieved through Nordic collaboration, it can be concluded that *all three are connected, the novelty, the interdisciplinarity and the Nordic added value.*

One of the items in the final reports is a question about “Important questions and/or areas for further research”. As the overall range of fields of research and topics of the workshops is wide and varied within the final reports, they don’t offer any obvious conclusions about emerging new *trends* within the Humanities and Social sciences in the Nordic countries as such. The questions and areas for future research are often reported from the point of view of the group or network in question and go into some detail to the topic in question.

The final reports material nevertheless offers examples of research which promises to break into a new path, and thus can indicate novelty and new research areas. For instance, new phenomena and thus new research questions emerge in the context of change, whether of the welfare state or in society and culture from a particular angle.

Examples of the various *contexts of change*, as reported in the final reports include: a significant shift in the ethical discourse, sociolinguistic shifts, language change, demographic change, changes in population dynamics, the changed societal and policy frameworks in frontline practices in the Nordic countries, border changes, religious change, new legal development, cultural journalism in rapid change, capacities for innovation and change, continuous change interventions, organisational change, and climate change.

Some of the *new research questions* emerging from the workshops included:

#### EXAMPLES FROM THE FINAL REPORTS

*“important common questions did emerge, such as how does division by new borders affect national identities, what unexpected strategies do local populations devise in order to take advantage of border changes, what is the connection between border changes and migration; in addition, 8 areas identified as further common research questions; In spite of historical and cultural differences across the world, we found a remarkable similarity between different cases. These and other findings are being explored further and on a comparative basis as a result of the series of workshops” (2015 call)*

*“new legal development in ‘former East European countries’ as a context of emerging new research questions and Nordic/ East European comparison” (2014 call)*

*“the workshops aimed at establishing a Nordic research network that can play a leading role in the development of an international research agenda on cultural journalism in rapid change; current interconnected processes of commercialisation, professionalisation, digitalisation and globalisation in relation to the cultural and political role of cultural journalism” (2014 call)*

*“practising as a movement phenomenon” (2014 call)*

*“the changing nature of the public sector in Northern Europe; the impact of the global financial crisis on the dynamics of the public sector across the Nordic region, a list of 8 detailed research questions for future research” (2014 call)*

*“questions for future research: the human use of seals in the Nordic countries through time by comparing archaeozoological data on seal exploitation patterns from the Baltic Sea, Norway, Iceland and Greenland/ questions for future research: 1) reconstruction of foraging and migration patterns of different seal species, 2) impact of environmental changes on seal populations and humans, 3) investigation of (re) colonization events of specific regions from specific seal species, extinctions, changes in population dynamics and genetic drifts” (2014 call)*

*“socio-cultural aspects of climate change and mobility in the Nordic communities most affected (Arctic/ North Atlantic): 8 topics emerging from the workshops” (2015 call)*

*“an innovative research agenda built on new questions: faith-based organisations in care work, e.g. the impact of an operationalisation of care on the future of the welfare state and the role of religion and faith-based organisations in this” (2013 call)*

Looking at the important questions and areas for further research *in one field of research*, the health related projects give such topics/areas as, alcohol's harm to others as an approach, life-course perspective on alcohol consumption, further data collection and comparison on health care systems, making use of behavioural experimental economics, mental health benefits of literary reading, evidence-based research to support interventions in refugee and migrant adolescents' mental wellbeing, historical studies of the relationship between social class and mental health, general population studies across Europe, further theoretical work and conceptualisation, how new technologies are and can be incorporated in lived experience of disability, and connection between genome sequencing and personalised medicine, effects on health care and medicine and consequences for the Nordic conception of solidaristic health care and just society. These rise directly from the topics of the workshops.

Furthermore, the important question for future research were reported to relate to the need for new conceptual and theoretical tools, new methodologies including data development and comparative and interdisciplinary approaches, and new common infrastructures especially in sociolinguistics. In one project the need for new development is related to Area Studies (South East Asia), where the combined Nordic expertise would provide a knowledge base in a specialised field of study, where national resources otherwise are scattered and lacking resources. Renewal was also seen to emerge from the young scholars pushing a specialised field of study forward with their new ways of approaching prevailing conceptions.

Emerging trends could also be looked for *through the lens of 'innovation' or 'social innovation'* as reported in the final reports.

In a Linguistics and Media and communications studies series of workshops the focus was on *Nordic innovation and how genres of social media are constituted*. The project used *a multi-lingual perspective to explore digital data and the ethical and legal questions involved with its use*, especially in the Nordic countries. Digital tools in the methodological work were elaborated, with a special focus on qualitative research theories.

A Migration and Media studies project critically examined the ways in which contemporary forced migration is represented in various cultural products and media, which connect to the Nordic region. Theoretical background was developed *in the intersection of migration studies, media studies, cultural studies, memory studies and border studies*. Each of the three workshops included presentations and discussion among academics and cultural produc-

ers or migrant activists. The important questions for future research included *contemporary collecting practices in cultural historical museums, challenges involved in representing forced migration in museum exhibitions, transnationalising the notions of public sphere and “national” history and memory, Nordic exceptionalism in human rights, and participatory creative methods in Migration research*. As a result of the workshops, a teaching innovation resulted in a Pedagogical Innovation Grant to one of the courses.

A Political science and Political philosophy project about *democratic innovations and epistemic conceptions of democracy* sought to bring together researchers, activists and public officials who have been engaged in democratic innovations academically and professionally, with the aim of sharing experiences and research results and discuss new approaches in channelling public influence into legislation, policy- and decision-making, and to seek interdisciplinary connections beyond political philosophy and political science. Their new research questions included *epistemic democracy, the use and justification of mini publics, crowdsourcing and democratic participation as hotly contested issues in democratic theory, and approaches to creating interaction between academia and policymaking*.

A series of workshops on new research on genetic, genealogical and medical data about populations and the advancement of genetic technologies and how these have enabled scientists to undertake *full genome association studies of whole populations*, resulted in a new interdisciplinary research programme. The primary objective is to investigate *the ethical and social implications of genomic profiling of individuals for the practice of medicine and health care*. In order to develop arguments for strengthening solidarity-based health care systems in the light of recent developments in genomics, the workshops established twenty new research questions for the new programme. The collaboration includes Philosophy, Social science, Medicine, Genetics, Bioethics, Law, Information science, Health economics, and Science education.

A Gender studies, Sociology and Urban studies project on *sustainable transport for all* found as their important questions for future research to be *innovative solutions for transport, gendering smart mobility across Europe, such as smart cars, cycling, and walking*. The project was planned on both empirical and theoretical/methodological dimensions and connected to and created synergies with Nordic and EU projects and research areas in *innovative solutions for transport*.

## SUMMARY

The primary objective in organising the workshops is reported in terms of *a research interest*, developing new approaches, concepts, methods, and empirical studies. In many cases the novel approach is in introducing and building on a Nordic or a wider European or international collaboration for a comparative study. *There is thus a strong element of novelty and renewal written into the projects already at the application stage, and the final reports reflect this.*

New phenomena and new research questions call for new concepts and theoretical and methodological development. State-of-the-art research questions, too, when put under the lenses of different disciplinary approaches, result in renewal, new research questions and novel areas of research. Combining methodologies from different approaches is characteristic of the NOS-HS Workshops. When this is achieved through Nordic collaboration, it can be concluded that all three are connected, the novelty, the interdisciplinarity and the Nordic added value.

### 3.5 'Nordic added value'

The added value of the research initiative in relation to the research community and society at large, as well as Nordic strengths within the research initiative were included in the application evaluation criteria in the 2013 and 2014 calls. In the calls of 2015 and 2016 the added value was formulated "*in relation to the Nordic research community and society at large*", anticipating the use of the current concept of 'Nordic added value', which refers to the NordForsk definition (see 2.1 above).

According to the NordForsk definition, *Nordic added value* is created either because the research can only be carried out in the Nordic region, or because the collaboration is taking place in the Nordic region – both of these, and in practice *combinations or these* are shown and documented in the NOS-HS Workshop final reports.

As examples of the former are 'Nordic research agenda', 'the Nordic model on', 'a new Nordic model of', 'the Nordic experiment', 'Nordic exceptionalism', 'Nordic welfare state', 'Nordic governance context', 'the public sector in the Nordic countries'.

As examples of the latter are extending Nordic networks and collaboration into Europe and beyond, sharing infrastructure and data, for instance creating a new common socio-linguistic platform based on the already unique data collections and corpora in the Nordic countries.

*The range of descriptions of Nordic added value in the final reports* also points to the flexibility of NOS-HS workshop funding in responding to the needs of the Nordic research communities.

#### A shared context

Where does 'Nordic added value' in the NOS-HS Workshop projects come from? The obvious answer from the final reports: a shared context, and closely linked with that, methodological development. From a shared context emerge such concepts as 'Nordic case' or 'Nordic model', or notions of 'Nordic exceptionalism'. These may function simply as descriptions in comparative research settings, when the Nordics are compared to the rest of Europe or some parts of it or more widely regionally or internationally. There are also cases where a Nordic model is presented as an ideal model, something which offers an example to others outside the Nordic countries.

There are a lot of references to the Nordic cases and Nordic models in the Workshop final reports, including critical questioning of such generalisations. One of the projects claims that "the Nordic countries' cultural homogeneity [is] portrayed as one of the central reasons for the countries' high level of social cohesion, and in extension to the high level of societal security in the region", and introduces Nordic diversity as a contrast to Nordic homogeneity and coherence.

A 'shared context' hides and displays both similarities in some aspect and differences in others. The Nordic countries, "with their relatively similar institutional context, offer a testing ground, where some — but not all — contextual factors will vary across countries".

The following examples have been extracted from the Workshop final reports, showing the range of descriptions of 'shared context' as Nordic added value in the projects:

### EXAMPLES FROM THE FINAL REPORTS

*"a shared context of Nordic welfare states under reform and transformation, a shift from welfare to workfare reforms; to have a clear idea of the current state of the art of research in the Nordic countries, to build a strong network of researchers and to connect with key international researchers in the field; strong Nordic networks needed and cooperation that can address the Nordic welfare states from a comparative perspective"*

*"refugee and migrant children living in Nordic countries/ research-based knowledge still fragmented/ systematic and comprehensive developmental studies warranted"*

*"welfare state interventions in the Nordic context; Nordic comparative milieu as a solid ground for comparison, building on on-going studies and discourses within the Nordic countries and in a European context"*

*"'Nordic welfare model' as a shared context; key issues pertinent to challenges to the Nordic welfare model and the particular role of faith-based organisations as part of civil society in the welfare sphere"*

*"the dynamics of the public sector across the Nordic region"*

*"a starting point from well-established participatory design methods, pioneered in the Nordic countries, that in this time are challenged to provide sufficient basis for sound decisions within the complex service networks in public sector; new thinking within the Nordic public sector about bringing the citizen in the centre of the interaction"*

*"the Nordic model in ethical-political education"*

*"the Nordic model'; the Nordic researchers in the workshops represent the highest concentration of consumer culture researchers outside of North America, meaning that the project has potential for making a significant impact on this discipline / a comparative approach to understand the centrality of consumption and market logics in the public debates around migration in Denmark and Sweden respectively; collaboration about branding in and of the Nordic context"*

*"the Nordic case', liberal values and social cohesion"*

*"a new Nordic model of sustainable transport for all"*

*"to apply theoretical and comparative perspectives from border studies to the Nordic region; by bringing together researchers from four Nordic countries, the workshops will enhance understanding of the impact of changing borders on the development of the Nordic region; additional value is created by creating synergies between universities which are at a distance from the national metropolis; enhance the place of the Nordic countries in global border studies"*

*“the workshops highlighted essential aspects of transnational migration and the conditions of migrants in three Nordic countries, established a platform for philosophical migration research in the Nordic countries; different dimensions of inclusion/exclusion practices, criteria for fair migration governance, a blend of empirical data”*

*“ ‘Nordic exceptionalism in human rights’; ‘the Nordic region’ vs ‘European bordering’; different borderscapes in Europe”*

*“Nordic perspectives on criminal law, “the much-discussed idea of Nordic exceptionalism”, identifying specific Nordic contributions to the current internationalisation of criminal law, cf the Nordics as “role models”, welfare models, relatively high levels of social cohesion, trust in public institutions”*

*“the case of the revision of the constitution in Iceland as an issue for democratic participation”*

*“fragmented and overlapping legislation and policy regarding Arctic resources governance in need of coordination; a need to bring together different disciplines focusing on living Arctic resources, interdisciplinary collaboration in Arctic research; special Arctic needs of living marine resource governance”*

*“the specific features in the Nordic countries with ‘high degree of equality’ regarding the role of higher education in face of growing societal inequality”*

*“the Nordic countries’ cultural homogeneity portrayed as one of the central reasons for the countries’ high level of social cohesion, and in extension to the high level of societal security in the region”; in the face of actual or imagined threats; --- hence national and regional identity/ies have become central in the understandings of societal security, the maintenance of which is seen dependent on the very preservation of the people’s social cohesiveness and togetherness in these welfare states; cf. Nordic diversity, e.g. late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century multiculturalism and the social, cultural and ethnic heterogeneity of Nordic societies”*

*“collaboration and comparative research on the Nordic game industry; making use of existing history of Nordic collaboration and connecting to international networks; emphasis away from the global game industry centres to the small but lively Nordic development environments and associated production networks”*

*“both wider networking and smaller expert groups/ archaeological genetics: migration, trade, environmental adaptation and the potential of multidisciplinary studies”*



## Data, statistics, registries, archives, infrastructures

Added value is produced when research activities utilise data from uniquely Nordic registries, share infrastructures or data or harmonise systems for utilising data and other resources in the Nordic region (NordForsk).

Ensuring future comparable data and collaboration has been mentioned in the reports, as well as building on the excellent condition of state and hospital archives in the Nordic countries, including regular collections of vital statistics on a national level from mid-18th century onwards, including statistics on healthcare.

A project on the Nordic health care system refers to a general problem in many areas of economic research that some important factors show very little within-country variation (or perhaps none at all). To investigate these factors, *data from different countries* must be collected. The Nordic countries, with their relatively similar institutional context, offers an interesting testing ground, where some — but not all — contextual factors will vary across countries. The importance of *the institutional setting* for the functioning of health care in a country suggests *new ways of analysing these issues at the macro level*. The project was planning to make use of behavioural and experimental economics and the extensive public registers of the inhabitants in the Nordic countries.

Another project in Linguistics was planning for *a new common sociolinguistic infrastructure* to facilitate comparative Nordic studies on societal conditions of language change. This would be a Nordic laboratory for comparative studies of international linguistic interest: answering traditional questions of the linguists on the basis of new, well-structured empirical evidence and enabling joint and comparative explorations of spoken language data possible on an internationally hitherto unknown scale.

## Nordic academic networks and traditions in European and global contexts

Finally, added value is produced, when research activities help to build critical mass and expertise at the Nordic level in important disciplines or research areas, lead to regional mobility and networking among the Nordic countries, and increase the chances of success for Nordic researchers in EU research activities or other international cooperation (NordForsk).

In some fields of research *Nordic traditions are strong and well-known internationally*, for instance alcohol research in Social and Health sciences or peace and conflict research in Political science and International relations. These networks were able to engage in analysing novel challenges, such as increasing digital connectivity in peace and conflict research, and to connect with and in some cases take a leading role in wider European and international networks in their field. The workshops were instrumental in maintaining and strengthening these research communities and the continuity of long-term collaboration.

For some of the 'formative' networks the most important result, and biggest added value of the workshop funding, was *the establishment of a new Nordic network*. For many of these networks as well as the more 'mature' ones, the series of workshops enabled also *expanding the collaboration from Nordic to European and international networks*. Continuity of longer-term collaboration is needed for the complex issues to be studied in a sustained systematic joint endeavour. Some of the comparative Nordic studies have provided a 'Northern dimension' to comparison across Europe.

Many of the workshops and publications have involved both Nordic and international scholars and the workshops have been open to scholars and graduate students in the local universities in the Workshop sites.

The richness and diversity of experiences across the Nordic countries has been reported to constitute fertile grounds for genuine exchanges of insights and knowledge and *a critical mass for Nordic researchers* to synthesize these insights and enable coordinated collaboration with important international research environments.

Nordic countries' combined expertise can be used for instance for the future of Area studies, like South East Asian studies, which may find themselves under pressure, lacking resources, in the academia in the individual countries. Possibilities of Nordic co-funding of a centre like the Nordic Institute for Asian Studies and the future of this kind of expertise in the Nordic countries on the whole was a concern in one of the projects.

Overall, Nordic added value is created in collaborations on an area of research where different Nordic research environments have developed excellence in complementary, yet different research agendas.

## SUMMARY

It could be suggested that 'Nordic added value' defines the NOS-HS Workshop funding instrument, and the funding instrument does not fulfil its purpose without achieving it, that is, if the research cooperation does not lead to Nordic added value. At the same time interdisciplinary collaboration is clearly in the very focus of organising the workshops, which on their part generally would not achieve their objectives without combining methodologies from different approaches. When this is achieved through Nordic collaboration, it appears that Nordic added value and interdisciplinary collaboration are closely connected and together define this funding instrument. A third dimension of the definition is the novelty and renewal of research, which through the focus on science or a research interest is written into the workshops projects already from the application phase. All three are connected, the novelty, the interdisciplinarity and the Nordic added value.

In sum, the NOS-HS Workshop funding appears versatile in supporting the networks with various ways of achieving renewal and Nordic added value and thus in responding to the needs of the Nordic research communities.

## The end notes: Examples from the Final reports in reference to the evaluation report topics

In the following, some examples of the formulation of *primary and secondary objectives* from the Workshop grant final reports:

### EXAMPLES (1) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS

*"The project aims to approach famine history transnationally and comparatively while focusing on conceptual connotations of famine terminology applied by either contemporaries or later historians. Therefore, a primary objective is to contents, nuances and references of famine history concepts in the countries under study, i.e. Estonia, Finland, Iceland, India, Ireland and Sweden. Our secondary objectives include recruiting young scholars to do comparative research within Nordic and transnational networks, training junior researchers to deal with Nordic experiences and provide them connections to global issues." (2015 call)*

*"The main objective was to create a consolidated research base within the areas of political psychology and European integration and to strengthen the field of political psychology in the Nordic countries. The second objective was to integrate collaboration not only between Nordic scholars but also between junior and senior researchers in the field, maintaining a gender balance. To reach these aims we have organized four workshops in Sweden, Denmark and Finland." (2015 call)*

*"In addition to the primary research interest, establishing a long-lasting research network across the Nordic region, including both senior and junior researchers; developing new empirical and conceptual accounts of the changing nature of the public sector in Northern Europe; disseminating relevant information to key stakeholders; preparing a joint research application to EU H2020." (2014 call)*

*"To bring together researchers engaged in related work on different parts of the world; the principal method of the workshops was comparative, across time and space; the workshops were exploratory in nature, research questions were not set in advance; joint work in border studies across the Nordic countries so far is "less developed"; creating synergies between the participating universities" (2015 call)*

In the following, examples from the Workshop grant final reports will illustrate *the variety of 'rationale' for applying the NOS-HS funding:*

### EXAMPLES (2) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS

*"A combination of approaches from history, criminology and social work proved especially useful for methodological openings in the project. --- For a larger project on the theme, funding has been applied from HERA and national funding agencies, so far unsuccessfully. --- [There are] plans to apply H2020 and NordForsk funding, when a suitable call opens." (2013 call)*

*“The basis and prerequisite of the project was the fact that we invited a very select group of senior health economists, usually two from each country, to participate in the project. This meant that for each Nordic country, a great many of the relevant facts were known to least some of the participants already before the project started. --- Against this background, it would be possible to skip the descriptive literary reviews originally planned as the next step, accelerate the process, and take a step further by writing instead a set of publishable articles about different aspects of the Nordic health care systems, to be presented at workshop #2. When an opportunity presented itself to collect such articles in a special issue of the Nordic Journal of Health Economics, this clinched the matter. Five such papers were planned at the end of workshop #1. Furthermore, for each paper a group of authors was identified and the lead author designated within each group. Drafts of these five papers were subsequently discussed at workshops #2 and #3.” (2013 call)*

*“The proposed workshops have aimed to consolidate comparable data in the field by making the first steps towards discussing research possibilities, data availability and comparability issues, and have furthermore facilitated two planned research projects and two new grant applications to EU’s Horizon 2020.” (2014 call)*

*“use of existing quantitative data for new comparative analyses and of nationally funded projects for collecting Nordic comparative qualitative data” (2014 call)*

*“The workshops aimed at establishing a Nordic research network that can play a leading role in the development of an international research agenda on cultural journalism in rapid change.” (2014 call)*

*“to formulate new understandings, questions and methods of research that can take into account the changing nature of global warfare, digital innovations, global connectivity and the effect of these developments on human psychology and emotions; to enhance collaboration between peace and conflict researchers in the Nordic region and beyond as expressed in the publications and dissemination of academic output and findings from the workshops; the workshops were platforms aimed to develop new research agendas” (2014 call)*

*“development of new analytical framework for an original, international, interdisciplinary research project; a new interdisciplinary research programme (a new analytical framework with research questions), applications to national funding agencies and a major international grant application, as an outcome” (2014 call)*

*“the WS as high-profile events featuring presentations by prominent political theorists, intellectual historians, and international relations scholars from the Nordic countries and a number of other countries; orientation towards future international collaborations” (2014 call)*

*“Nordic/ East European comparison in civil procedural law; extending an earlier Nordic project to include the East European comparison” (2014 call)*

*“The main objective was to create a consolidated research base within the areas of political psychology and European integration and to strengthen the field of political psychology in the Nordic countries. The second objective was to integrate collaboration not only between Nordic scholars but also between junior and senior researchers in the field, maintaining a gender balance. To reach these aims we have organized four workshops in Sweden, Denmark and Finland. The outcome of the workshops is a special issue in the journal Political Psychology, and a special issue in the journal European Security on the political psychology of European integration as well as an edited volume with the Palgrave Series of Political Psychology on the same theme.” (2015 call)*

*“a Sami Research Network to provide a platform and a space to discuss and network from the positions of Indigenous studies in academia” (2015 call)*

*“A starting point from well-established participatory design methods, pioneered in the Nordic countries --- to develop participatory forms of theatre that support the design of user-friendly public services; to engage professional actors and designers in every workshop, as the research field demands systematic experiments in practice; in the workshop series, four different research traditions combined as: participatory design (Denmark), organisation studies (Finland), innovation management (Sweden) and drama education (Norway)” (2016 call)*

*“bringing a core group of Nordic researchers together, to coordinate a joint research plan; developing a ‘Nordic model’ as a new perspective to international criminal law; contributions to a planned edited volume” (2016 call)*

In the following, examples (boxes 3 to 6) from the final reports of *the different starting points for organising the NOS-HS workshops* will illustrate *the variety of outcomes of the NOS-HS Workshops*. As explained above, the categories are descriptive and heuristic, and to be taken as indicative. In terms of their concrete outcomes, many projects combine the different kinds of outputs in their own unique way.

*Networking*: the establishment of a new Nordic network, continued collaboration within the network, involving junior scholars: ‘formative networks’:

### **EXAMPLES (3) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS**

*“new scholarly network as a result from the workshops, a potential basis for future applications for Nordic and international funding” (2014 call)*

*“the group will continue its fruitful co-operation and there has already been one international conference in Vilnius; plans to apply funding for further research and co-operation” (2014 call)*

*“preliminary discussions on a future research application to EU H2020” (2014 call)*

*“multidisciplinary networking (zooarchaeology, osteology, historical archaeology, history, linguistics, molecular and population genetics, domestic animal studies, animal genomics,*

*bioinformatics, isotope analysis, and lipid analysis) across the Nordic countries as the main outcome; researchers from the multiple disciplines and areas of study learn to know each other's research projects and results" (2015 call)*

*"intensified Nordic cooperation with Baltic countries; a workshop grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation; active participation in various international conferences; reapplying for workshop funding from the Rockefeller foundation; on-going work on a manuscript for an edited volume" (2015 call)*

*"The most important result of the project was the establishment of an ongoing and active network of researchers with shared ideas and interests. For the time being, the main coordination of the network is via the Facebook group; the network also led to the formation of a number of panels at this year's ABS World Congress in July 2018, and the BRIT conference in Nigeria and Benin in October 2018; plans made for publications, specifically a volume on bordering in the Nordic world; as yet no publications have appeared as a direct result of the workshops, given their exploratory nature" (2015 call)*

*"one academic article; several symposia at academic conferences; additional funding to conduct a concept mapping comparing researchers' and practitioners' understanding of how to design, implement and evaluate organisational change; additional network grants to continue the collaboration" (2016 call)*

*Expanding the network:* From the NOS-HS workshops and Nordic networks to European and international networks and joint publications; From co-authoring to future joint research projects which may lead to large project applications to Nordic and international programmes:

#### **EXAMPLES (4) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS**

*"continued Nordic collaboration within the framework of two international research networks, COST Action E-READ and the International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature; stakeholder awareness: policy makers, teachers and educational practitioners, librarians, literary reading promoters, professionals and practitioners in mental health field" (2013 call)*

*"the exceptionally interdisciplinary conference yielded a number of possible collaborations for future research; an interest in pursuing joint ERC funding and Erasmus programme" (2014 call)*

*"Nordic research projects using survey data, registry data and qualitative data; journal articles (2 published, 2 manuscripts to be submitted); an inventory of registry data available to the researchers and what use it can be put; mapping of the research interests of participating researchers; a popular scientific project summary to be published; collaboration to organise Kjetil Bruun society international conference; on active lookout for relevant Nordic or international calls" (2014 call)*

*“the whole Nordic group and the English partners to participate in an international conference, with papers out of the NOS-HS workshops; plans to apply for more extensive piloting of the method; the Velux foundation in Denmark and other possibilities considered; partnership with the university of New South Wales; training guidelines for [the method] have been developed; 2 co-authored journal articles in progress, one of them forthcoming in Ageing & Society” (2014 call)*

*“applications for national funding in Sweden, Denmark and Finland; international applications pursued later” (2014 call)*

*“the 2 NOS-HS workshops led to another two workshops for the development of a series of work packages; a joint application to Riksbankens Jubileumsfond; a further idea of launching a Nordic journal around politics and consumption; planning of a research anthology; applications under preparation to the Danish Ministry of Research and Innovation’s system of Innovation Networks” (2014 call)*

*“the network [workshop] activities have resulted in two main kinds of outcome: publications and research grants; 3 research grants from national funding organisations to projects within the area of cultural journalism and cultural critique, Danish Research Council, Swedish Vetenskapsrådet, and Norsk Kulturråd (2014 call)*

*“no new research projects/EU applications as yet; collaboration continued through joint sessions in national and international conferences; seeking potential EU partners, interdisciplinary collaboration beyond Historical studies is a challenge” (2015 call)*

*“organising several panels in international conferences, effective international networking and building of new collaborations; panels organised in international conferences, and contributions from international colleagues included in publications” (2015 call)*

*“preparing a conference in Rome in January 2019 that should lead to the publication of a book; future options: preparing a large ERC project, converging several national funding from various Scandinavian countries together, or working on an informal basis with the network built during the workshops” (2015 call)*

*“the workshops were a very fruitful platform for co-authoring and publishing; discussions of the possibilities of future collaborative research projects” (2015 call)*

*“the workshops made possible to widen the network of participating researchers, to establish an effective European network of nostalgia researchers, and produce a substantial amount of publishable research (see publications); opened up a new research area in the Humanities in the Nordic region and beyond; a multinational body of work on nostalgia applied to contemporary European (and global) culture” (2016 call)*

Solid network collaboration as a basis of *ambitious publication proposals to international publishers and publishing with international publishers: 'mature networks'*:

### EXAMPLES (5) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS

*"A combination of approaches from history, criminology and social work proved especially useful for methodological openings in the project. --- For a larger project on the theme, funding has been applied from HERA and national funding agencies, so far unsuccessfully. --- [There are] plans to apply H2020 and NordForsk funding, when a suitable call opens." (2013 call)*

*"the special issue of Nordic J of Health Economics provides an excellent basis for research that explores the mechanisms behind health care characteristics, and a basis for future joint research programmes" (2013 call)*

*"a special journal issue (5 articles) of the Scandinavian J of Public Administration; a policy brief; presentations in international conferences (EGPA, EGOS, ESPANET); preliminary discussions on a future research application to EU H2020" (2014 call) "the most important result is the publications record: 10 papers presented and discussed in the WS been published and more in progress in highly ranked international journals (Public Choice, Political Studies, Government and Opposition, International Political Science Review, Journal of Politics); presentations at international conferences (APSA, MPSA, ECPR, and the Norwegian and Swedish Political Science Associations)" (2014 call)*

*"publication cooperation between Nordic and non-Nordic scholars, submissions to the Special Issues, authoring book chapters to a forthcoming edited book by Springer; 3 publications by young researchers; the WS as a very fruitful platform for co-authoring and publishing; discussions of the possibilities of future collaborative research projects" (2015 call)*

*"2 books (one by Routledge, one proposed), 3 special issues, 6 articles, 1 book chapter in an edited volume by Routledge; drafting a funding application to secure the future of the network (COST Action)" (2015 call)*

*"a new network on youth employment studies; a special issue of European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology; a book proposal (edited collection) to Palgrave" (2015 call)*

*"the workshops have been of immense value for the young researchers who participated; a strong platform for philosophical migration research in the Nordic countries been established; a special issue on migration in the peer reviewed Nordic ethics journal "Etikk i praksis", with contributions from a large number of project participants; in addition, one article and one book review" (2015 call)*

*"Four scientific publications, two of which edited volumes by international publishers (Routledge, Brill) and two online publications; no new research projects/ EU applications as yet; collaboration continued through joint sessions in national and international conferences; seeking potential EU partners, interdisciplinary collaboration beyond Historical studies is a challenge" (2015 call)*



*"2 edited books, one forthcoming by Routledge, and the other under revision with Palgrave MacMillan; 3 research project applications (NordForsk, Östersjöstiftelsen, Horizon 2020/ERC) and other EU and other international calls under scrutiny" (2015 call)*

*"WS helped to move forward in innovative research initiatives; strengthening inter-Nordic collaborations; contributing to the systematic thinking of ethical-political education in the Nordic countries; bringing the Nordic model, experiences and innovations to bear on front-line international research and deliberations; contributions to international seminars, research networks and conferences, along with several international publications; several international publications, including 1 edited book by Springer (2019), altogether 64 publications by 21 authors listed" (2016 call)*

*"a joint edited volume by Palgrave MacMillan (to be published in open access) as the most tangible result; 2 panels in international conferences (European Higher Education Society); probably the most important result, however, was the workshop series itself and the discussions during the sessions, not least for the junior scholars" (2016 call)*

*"the most important result: a joint edited volume from discussions over the three workshops, bringing together the combined Nordic scholarship in the area, to be published in an edited collection with a major publisher (Oxford UP)" (2016 call)*

New projects, programmes, and applications to national, Nordic, and international (EU) calls: 'mature networks':

### **EXAMPLES (6) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS**

*"for a larger project on the theme, funding been applied from HERA and national funding agencies, so far unsuccessfully; plans to apply H2020 and NordForsk funding, when a suitable call opens" (2013 call)*

*"collaborations yielded successful grant applications (Belmont Forum, Carlsberg Foundation, International Network Development Program, Nordic Council of Ministers; Fulbright Arctic Initiative Grant)" (2013 call)*

*"Nordic infrastructures programme development: to establish a common infrastructure that will include existing sociolinguistic databases in all Nordic countries; parallel project applications for national research funding agencies; existing sociolinguistic databases that use modern technology in all Nordic countries, creating a new common platform based on the already unique data collections and corpora in the Nordic countries" (2013 call)*

*"joint research proposal to be submitted to ERC/Horizon 2020; the outcome of the WS to be published in the form of a themed book with the conference proceedings (in press with Signs and Wonders Press, Copenhagen) and a special issue of selected articles submitted to the peer reviewed journal Cooperation and Conflict (accepted, articles under review), 11 published papers from the WS" (2014 call)*

*“the submission of an EU Horizon 2020 grant application; a special issue in the journal Political Psychology, and a special issue in the journal European Security on the political psychology of European integration as well as an edited volume with the Palgrave Series of Political Psychology; succeeded in building a strong Nordic foundation for future research collaboration within the political psychology of European integration” (2015 call)*

*“a number of articles and book chapters, conference presentations; a strong network of researchers from the Nordic countries, UK, Ireland and France, several large grant applications and plans for collaborative projects; Workshop #3 functioned as a preparatory workshop for lasting individual and institutional collaboration, including teaching collaboration (2015 call)*

*“ERC consolidator grant application submitted; grant proposal submitted to Norwegian Research Council; 12 publications by 7 scholars listed: 1 journal article, 4 Nordic conference papers (NordMedia), 7 international conference papers” (2016 call)*

*“EU H2020 project with focus on gender and transport, 17 partners; an edited volume from Routledge CRC Press” (2016 call)*

In the following, examples from the Workshop grant final reports will illustrate *the connection of research to teaching*:

### **EXAMPLES (7) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS**

*“several large grant applications and plans for collaborative projects; lasting individual and institutional collaboration, including teaching collaboration” (2015 call)*

*“the workshops resulted in publications, invited lectures and talks, novel courses and teaching among the participating academics; a series of blogs edited by the PI and published by Border Criminologies, University of Oxford; one teaching innovation resulted in NTNU awarded Pedagogical Innovation Grant to one of the courses; further academic collaboration” (2015 call)*

*“a Sami Research Network to provide a platform and a space to discuss and network from the positions of Indigenous studies in academia; how can Sami/Indigenous people be better represented in the academia on all levels, Sami/Indigenous perspectives in research and teaching” (2015 call)*

*“to strengthen the relationship between research in and teaching of literary history in the Nordic countries; widening of national literary history writing and teaching into examining the future possibilities of literary history writing in the Nordic countries” (2016 call)*

In the following, examples from the Workshop grant final reports of *the results of projects with no publications*:

### EXAMPLES (8) FROM THE FINAL REPORTS

*“preparing a collective project application for a Norwegian call in the Finnut programme” (2013 call)*

*“two applications to relevant H2020 calls 2015 and 2016” (2014 call)*

*“a new interdisciplinary research programme (a new analytical framework with research questions), applications to national funding agencies and a major international grant application” (2014 call)*

*“Horizon 2020 application; several research projects are in progress and two applications been submitted to Riksbankens jubileumsfond and Vetenskapsrådet” (2014 call)*

*“plans made for publications, specifically a volume on bordering in the Nordic world; as yet no publications have appeared as a direct result of the workshops, given their exploratory nature: The most important result of the project was the establishment of an ongoing and active network of researchers with shared ideas and interests; as a result of the series of workshops, the (research) findings are being explored further and on a comparative basis” (2015)*

*“a publication proposal for a collection of articles in progress; it was not seen as an objective of this particular grant to develop publications but rather to strengthen a network of scholars whose work is connected to issues democratic innovations and epistemic conceptions of democracy; the workshops contributed directly to a Grant of excellency application in Iceland and indirectly to other projects and grant applications; PI's participation in a NordForsk funded project” (2015 call)*

*“the workshops were exploratory and thus not aimed out in scientific publications; research proposals to the Norwegian and Danish Research Councils, and in the year to come to the ERC” (2016 call)*

*“none yet, as project ended only recently; papers will be published with mentions of the project title and number; the different perspectives varied to an extent which made a common edited volume difficult for lack of coherence; the joint work will be published in a number of avenues as articles and form basis for future collaboration” (2016 call)*

## 4 Comments and recommendations from the two appointed academic rapporteurs

As stated in the evaluation report, two academic rapporteurs were assigned to comment on the report and to draw conclusions in the form of recommendations as to the future of the NOS H/S instrument of Exploratory Workshops.

First of all, the rapporteurs would like to welcome the excellent work done by Riitta Launonen in writing this thorough and informative assessment. The report is well structured, it highlights and synthesizes key aspects in relation to the workshop grants 2013-2016 and also provides relevant and detailed examples to substantiate and clarify conclusions drawn. We feel that all the questions we had beforehand have been answered, along with several questions we did not know we had. One of the central questions addressed by the report, concerns whether we actually get Nordic added value with this particular instrument. We find the assessment report very convincing in this respect too: the answer is an unequivocal YES.

Three general conclusions may be drawn from the report:

1. We welcome the fact that the H/S field is treated as one integrated whole, a feature which has proved fruitful and will surely become even more fruitful in the years to come. As stated in the report, both fields appear to benefit equally through funding. Furthermore, it is to be applauded that all the Nordic countries benefit from this particular instrument, as documented in the report. The spread of countries for the PIs and the collaborating researchers is impressive. Finally, the multi- and interdisciplinary collaboration is definitely one of the strengths of the NOS H/S instrument.

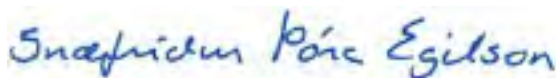
It seems to us that the instrument of the Exploratory Workshops has proved its value for the stated aims, and the assessment report convincingly demonstrates that the instrument is well suited in its present guise both for collaboration across borders of science and across borders in general. The report also nicely documents that the workshop instrument is able to take care of both starting networks (so-called *formative* networks) which often have as their stated objective to *start* a process of Nordic collaboration of researchers within a particular subfield or around a particular topic; and more *mature* networks who often have as their stated objective to make a voice for themselves in publication, e.g. by preparing a collaborative special issue, or to proceed directly after the workshop (or as part of the workshop process) to a joint grant application as envisaged in the calls. *We thus strongly recommend that the instrument be continued, that the present flexibility in the interpretation of it be retained and that all efforts be taken to increase the visibility of this unique instrument for Nordic researchers within the broad field of H/S so that more researchers use the instrument in the future.*

2. We particularly want to highlight the importance of the formative workshops which often lay the groundwork for more mature work. Formative networks have, in general, scarce possibilities of documenting a track record of collaboration and thus have to convince financing agencies on the basis of projects alone when applying for a grant. But this need not be so. We strongly believe it feasible to develop a funding instrument directed at formative networks (i.e. as a follow up on the Workshop grant) so that the most promising formative networks could develop into mature ones. Some of the money now allocated to the instrument could be used for such a *stepping stone grant* where exemplary formative networks would get the chance of developing into mature ones. The formative networks constitute the layer of growth for original excellent projects on a larger scale. As it is now, we leave the formative networks formed during the Exploratory Workshops to grow by themselves into mature networks. But they risk losing the original impetus along the way.

*We thus recommend that the NOS H/S discuss how to open up a possibility for a small follow-up grant to the most successful of the formative network applications. This stepping stone grant should be given immediately after the end of the Exploratory Workshop grant.*

3. The third main conclusion has to do with the *follow-up on a general scale for successful Workshop grantees*. As of now, most national funding agencies are very hard pressed by the sheer number of qualified applications and the lack of funding; in addition, we have the European funding agencies with their fierce competition; and some, but not nearly enough, funding at the Nordic and North European level (NORDFORSK etc.). This very positive Workshop evaluation might make a case for building up from this success so that within the H/S area there would be funds for joint Nordic projects which are comparative in nature and which would involve at least three of the five Nordic states. There is probably no need for a large new initiative to start with since we already have a pool of good candidates in the guise of Workshop grantees. *Thus, we recommend that steps be taken to allocate means to finance at least five joint Nordic projects coming from Exploratory Workshops each year.* That would surely also be beneficial for the future quantity – and perhaps also the quality – of applications for the Workshop instrument.

*In sum: We consider that the instrument of Exploratory Workshops has not only proved its value for the Nordic Research community but has proved it to such an extent that we recommend that it is kept as a most valuable asset for the NOS H/S collaboration which in itself is uniquely valuable and furthermore that the instrument be developed further to the benefit of Nordic comparative research.*



Snæfríður Þóra Egilson, professor



Frans Gregersen, professor emeritus

# Appendix 1. Terms of Reference

## Evaluation of NOS-HS Workshop grant (TOR), January 2020

*The Joint Committee for Nordic research councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NOS-HS)* is a body of co-operation between the research councils in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. NOS-HS aims to enhance the exchange of information between the Nordic research councils. The committee also supports collaboration between Nordic researchers by funding Nordic exploratory workshops.

*The NOS-HS Workshop funding instrument* is aimed at promoting the development of new research areas and programmes within the humanities and social sciences in the Nordic countries. The grant is given towards the organization of a series of two or three Nordic workshops, with a focus on research and collaboration between researchers from the Nordic countries. The workshop proposals are expected to show ambition and novelty by aiming at establishing new research projects and at the preparation of research proposals to international research programmes. The involvement of early-career researchers and non-academic stakeholders in the workshops is encouraged.

In their October 2019 meeting the NOS-HS committee decided to conduct *an evaluation of the NOS-HS Workshop funding scheme*. The evaluation will be done based on the final reports of completed projects from Workshop calls 2013-16. A previous evaluation of NOS-HS Exploratory workshops has been conducted in 2012, based on the 2007-09 calls.

*The aim of the evaluation* is to use the information from the final reports to provide NOS-HS committee with evidence and grounds for assessing how this funding instrument fulfils its purpose. 'Nordic added value' will be reflected on. The evaluation is also to provide insights into formative trends in the humanities and social sciences research agendas and reflect on the appropriateness of the Workshop funding scheme in responding and supporting these. The final report item on important questions and areas for further research may offer material for this.

The evaluation will be *implemented in two phases*: first gathering information from returned final reports from Workshop calls 2013-2016 (an estimated 75 reports in total). The final reports include information about project objectives and implementation, most important results of the project, scientific publications derived from the workshops, and important questions and areas for further research, as well as the costs covered from the grant. Science adviser Riitta Launonen (recently retired from Academy of Finland) has been commissioned to conduct the first-stage evaluation. She will also coordinate the organisation of the second phase of the evaluation. The first stage will be reported at the NOS-HS April meeting in 2020.

At the second stage, two senior academics, one from the Humanities, the other from Social sciences, will be asked to give formative recommendations based on the findings from the reports.

**Timeline of evaluation:**

- NOS-HS committee decision about commissioning the evaluation of the Workshop scheme October 2019
- Evaluation briefing and terms of reference January 2020
- Evaluation material (final reports of funded workshop projects) collected by the end of February 2020
- First-stage evaluation report by mid-April for NOS-HS meeting on April 23-24
- Second-stage evaluation in April-May 2020 and recommendations to NOS-HS committee by mid-June 2020