

Doctoral Students at UiT – The Arctic University of Norway (TODOS)

Activity Report 2018

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1. About TODOS

Doctoral Students at UiT – The Arctic University of Norway (TODOS) is an interest organization for PhD Candidates at the UiT. We focus on two important aspects of being a successful PhD candidate: a good academic working environment and a thriving social life. We accomplish this by organizing academic seminars and social gatherings throughout the year as well as joining committees and meetings with various contact persons in key positions around the whole university. Like this we hope to contribute to an improvement of your PhD experience.

2. Note from the Board Chair

Dear fellow PhD candidates and postdocs,

It has been an honor and joy to occupy the position of TODOS board chair for this year 2018.

This time has been learn-intensive and rewarding for me and I hope and think we were also able to present you with some memorable activities and learn-incentives during the year. If you decided to join one of our events I hope you enjoyed the time and were able to take something home with you. If you have never joined one of our events, I hope to inspire you to do so in the future!

I did enjoy seeing so many new faces on our events and especially, when I did not only see them once but more than that!! I also learned a lot about the university structure, how things work and what is important. I am grateful for the people I met there, who helped me and the board on our way so far and who are for sure also going to support the board in the years to come.

For me, the main driving force to join the TODOS board was to bring people together, make them talk to each other and learn from each other. Together, I am convinced, we are able to find solutions and support fellow PhDs, to learn from each other's experience and thus know what to do ourselves to avoid critical situations. For myself, I have had the chance to talk to and learn from a lot of interesting and exciting people and I hope I have been able to also make that possible for some of you.

Thank you very much to all my colleagues in the TODOS board, to all our contacts around the

university, to the new TODOS volunteers who are willing to support us and to everybody who does not get annoyed but excited when one of the dozens of TODOS mails arrives in their postbox.

I hope we managed to contribute to your PhD time being a little bit nicer than it would have been without us.

Yours sincerely,

Lena Lachner

TODOS Board Chair 2018

3. The TODOS Board

Board-Chair – **Lena Lachner**, The Norwegian Arctic and Marine Biology (BFE)

Vice Board-Chair – **Aakash Sharma**, Department of Computer Science (NT)

Chair of Social Affairs – **Inger Therese Enoksen**, Department of Clinical Medicine (MH)

Chair of Academic Affairs – **Mikkel Christensen**, Department of Chemistry, MarVal (NT)

Accountant – **Dipesh Sigdel**, HHT (BFE)

Board Member – **Yannik Schneider**, Marbio (BFE)

Board Member – **Marte Jenssen**, The Norwegian College of Fishery Science (BFE)

4. The Activities of the TODOS Board 2018

Overview

TODOS board members are part of several committees. They participate in different committee meetings, meetings with various contacts throughout the university, as well as our own board meetings to identify and represent the PhD candidates' views and needs. TODOS is getting feedback from its members and can thus identify and work on several topics where we see room for improvement. Our network of contact persons throughout the university can be used to achieve the necessary changes. Additionally, TODOS is organizing events for PhD candidates at UiT of social and academic nature.

Meetings, committees and contacts throughout the university:

1. TODOS is represented in ***Forskningsstrategisk utvalg*** (*Research strategic council*) which serve as a guiding meeting arena for UiT leadership, faculty leaders and employee groups. We participated in all 2018 meetings with 1 or 2 board members, representing the PhD candidates' perspective on issues relevant for us, such as
 - a. Harmonization of High North Academy course credit policy for the different faculties (June)
 - b. Evaluation of Norwegian PhD Research Schools (Sept)
 - c. UiT digitalization strategy (Sept)
 - d. Norwegian government's long-term plan for research and higher education (Nov).

Since all meetings and minutes are in Norwegian, the AGM can consider if it should be a priority to send out information/news after each meeting to all PhD Candidates and Postdocs.

Agendas and minutes of all meetings accessible here

https://uit.no/om/enhet/artikkel?p_document_id=381847&p_dimension_id=88199&men=28927

2. Since October 2018 TODOS has had a representative in the newly formed ***Polarkomitee***. The first meeting of the polar research committee took place on the 30th of August 2018. The polar research committee has been established to improve the coordination and strategic development of the polar research environment at UiT.

The defined tasks are:

- a. To have an overview about UiT's polar research operations.
- b. Contribute to the coordination of polar research related activities including research cruises, infrastructure, generation of competence, strategic initiative and input to external processes.
- c. To be a consulting organ for leaders within strategic matters related to polar research e.g. regarding resource allocation.
- d. To formulate an action plan and coordinate its follow up in order to strengthen UiT's position as an international leading polar research institution.

The committee consists of 5-7 scientific associates or leaders of UiT and one PhD-candidate.

You can find more about the polar research committee here:

https://uit.no/om/art?p_document_id=588060&dim=179112

3. TODOS has been in contact with **Result** (Ressurssenter for læring, undervisning og teknologi) (Resource center for learning, teaching and technology) and represented the PhD candidates' view on what makes a good supervisor during a course for supervisors at UiT. A version of the presentation TODOS gave in January was recorded in a studio and became part of an obligatory online course for supervisors in June.
4. As the TODOS board is located at campus Tromsø, contact persons among the PhD candidates on the other campuses are needed to help include the TODOS members who are not located at campus Tromsø. The board wants to thank the contacts in **Harstad and Narvik** for starting the task to organize events there and is still looking for a contact person in **Alta**.
5. TODOS members are in regular contact and organize meetings with representatives from the **library**, the **university administration**, **High North Academy** and the **representatives of temporary staff** at the university level. These meetings contribute a great deal in keeping each other updated and collaborate on topics concerning PhD candidates (and Postdocs).
6. TODOS has held regular board meetings throughout the year, 18 in total to plan and coordinate activities, meetings and events.

Events organized for PhD candidates at UiT

March

PhD gathering – The PhD gatherings were launched in March 2018 as an informal opportunity to get together and socialize for PhD-candidates and postdocs at UiT. Since professional networks become ever more important, these meetings are an opportunity to enrich a PhD candidate's life and help new PhD candidates & postdocs to establish connections.

May

Lunch seminar: Career plan – TODOS held a lunch seminar featuring talks by Annette Bayer and Kenneth Ruud, preparing for a lifelong career. The topics of their lectures were "How to make a Career Development Plan" (Annette Bayer) and "A PhD is not enough" (Kenneth Ruud). After the speeches the audience got the possibility to discuss with the speakers and ask questions about the topic.

Presentation for the Welcome event for new PhDs – TODOS contributed to the welcome event for new PhDs, presenting itself as a welfare organisation and promoting TODOS.

June

General meeting (GM) – The TODOS board invited all PhDs and Postdocs to a general meeting

where the report about the last 6 months was presented and an election was held for 3 vacant positions in the board. The proposition to include Postdocs as members in TODOS was discussed and approved by the GM as a project for TODOS. The board was requested to gather information on the topic and propose the change for the next GM in December 2018. After the GM, TODOS provided free bowling for the participants to socialize. About 25 people joined the event.

August

TODOS Barbeque - TODOS organized the annual TODOS BBQ at the UiT Tromsø campus, outside the NFH building. This event was meant as a social get together after the summer break, before another year with scientific work begins. We were lucky with the weather and 50+ people showed up.

September

TODOS Volunteer Meetup - The TODOS volunteers are PhDs that are not in the TODOS board, but want to help with the planning and implementation of TODOS events, if needed. This is also a platform for the TODOS board to get closer to the PhDs, get feedback and be more visible. Before the summer, TODOS decided to activate the volunteer list again (after being inactive for some time) and this event was the official activation of the list. PhDs and postdocs who wanted to and were thinking of joining the TODOS volunteers, were invited to an afternoon with more information and pizza. They were briefed about the volunteer tasks and TODOS also got input from the participants about topics and things TODOS could organize and work with in the future. A little more than 20 people met, and about half of them joined the TODOS volunteer list. In total, TODOS now have about 20 volunteers. More are welcome to join!

October

Skibotn Cabin Trip - TODOS organized a weekend (one night) cabin trip to Skibotn feltstasjon. A social and academic event, where Benzin AS came and held an interactive workshop about visual presentation. Participants on the trip also had time to go for a hike in the beautiful Norwegian nature, take a sauna, sit by the bonfire, play games, make food together and be social. There were also a possibility to present your own project for the others, if you wished. 31 people attended and a survey was sent out afterwards to get feedback from the participants.

Two-Session Lunch Seminar - TODOS organized a Two-Session Lunch Seminar. The first session was “Research Commercialization” presented by Eirik Wasmuth Lundblad, the head of the department of Business Development at Norinova Technology Transfer AS. The second session was meeting “Trade Unions” where different trade unions were present to present themselves and what they have to offer for PhDs and Postdocs. The trade unions that were represented were Tekna, Forskerforbundet and Norsk Tjenestemannslag. Wraps and soft drinks were provided during the trade union session. About 20 people attended the program.

TODOS Monthly Social Gathering - After a lot of feedback in favor of organizing monthly social gatherings, TODOS went back to the idea that had originally already emerged in the beginning

of 2018. For these events, TODOS organizes a place and time and people meet up and socialize. The gatherings will be held at different locations on campus and in town, where people are able to buy food and drinks, if they wish. The gathering in October took place on the University campus (Bazinga) directly after working hours. 9 people joined the event.

November

TODOS Monthly Social Gathering - The second monthly social gathering took place in downtown Tromsø at Blå Rock Café on the payday (The norwegian term “lønningsspils”). The location in town seems to be the preferred option so far. About 20 people joined the event.

Munin Conference - This event is scheduled for 30th November. Our speaker Corina Logan will be talking about research careers in a rapidly changing academic environment.

December

General meeting - The second general meeting along with election of 3 new board members (Board-Chair, Chair of Academic Affairs & Accountant) is planned. The general meeting is combined with the Julebord celebration at Tromsø campus.

Julebord - The TODOS christmas party (Julebord) will take place saturday December the 8th after the general meeting. As last year it will be at Driv (downtown) and there will be served Tapas. 100 people can participate and sign up forms will be sent out. During the night it will be played music and possible to dance.

Julebord at Narvik - Julebord at Narvik campus is planned for December 7, 2018. Board members from TODOS will join the celebration and discuss issues and get feedback from PhDs at Narvik campus. 14 PhDs from Narvik have signed up for the celebration.

Julebord at Harstad - Julebord at Harstad campus is planned for December 11, 2018. Similar to Narvik, members from TODOS board will join the celebration. An informal discussion about expectation from TODOS is planned. 10 PhDs from Harstad have signed up to attend the Julebord.

Movie Night - TODOS is looking forward to organizing a movie night before Christmas for the members who are staying in Tromsø during Christmas holidays. We hope to brighten the mood during these dark polar nights with this social event.

Others:

7. TODOS is a member of SiN (*Stipendiatorganisasjonene i Norge*), the national organization for PhD candidates, postdoctoral fellows and early career researchers, which aims to be a contact point both for each local interest organization in Norway as well as from the European level (Eurodoc). TODOS participated in their AGM held from 24th-25th May in Oslo. Eirik Myrvoll-Nilsen, of the board 2017/2018, was elected into the position of board chair of (SiN), while Dipesh Sigdel, from the TODOS board 2018 has been elected treasurer for SiN. SiN represents early career researchers' interest on a national level when it comes to policy making. TODOS also helped facilitate a board

meeting for SiN in Tromsø on March 10th.

8. TODOS is, through SiN, also part of Eurodoc. A former member of the TODOS board, is now a member of the Eurodoc board and acts as an advisor and contact person for TODOS.
9. TODOS carries a record of activities and events and keeps resigning board members in contact with the new board for reasons of knowledge transfer and to act as advisors.
10. Distribution of information to new PhD candidates/Postdocs: TODOS updated the information booklet for new PhDs and is working on improving its distribution.
11. TODOS has been actively using social media and email, as well as the info screens at UiT to promote all TODOS events and seminars.

5. The budget

Assigned budget 2018 – NOK 250,000.00

Transferred from 2017 – NOK 81,592.56

Total income – NOK 331,592.56

Total Budget – NOK 331,592.56

TODOS Board and SiN

- Compensation for Board members – NOK 162,500.00
- SiN membership and conference cost – NOK 2,000.00

Activities

- Social Events – NOK 21,720.43
- Academic Events – NOK 24,671 (NOK 19,671 + munin conference november)
- Team building and Board Meeting – NOK 3,134
- Other expenses (Julebord, promotional articles, general meeting, traveling expenses) - 68,713 NOK

Total cost – NOK 285,739.18

Balance – NOK 44,853.38

TODOS received 250,000.00 Kroner from UiT to host activities for the PhD candidates at the university in addition to the fund transferred from the previous board of NOK 81,592.56. Out of the amount received, the compensation for the board members is NOK 162,500. The compensation goes to work contract extension to compensate for time spent on TODOS activities. Each of the board members gets NOK 25,000.00 per year, which is approximately equal to two and a half weeks of work per year. The Activity costs are money spent on academic events and social activities, representation of TODOS at relevant events and meeting as well as team building costs. In an effort to incorporate doctoral students from other campuses (Harstad, Narvik, and Alta), TODOS has organized some social events and Christmas parties at those campuses too. Some board members are travelling to the campuses to attend Christmas events so as to build rapport with doctoral students and to hear their expectations



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from TODOS. The plan to travel to Alta has been planned for early next year for which NOK 6000 from the remaining balance of this year should be allocated. The total expenses for TODOS this year has been NOK 285,739.18. We have left NOK 44,853.38 for the new board.