



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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

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Date: 04.01.2021

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1. What is TODOS?

Doctoral Students and Postdocs at UiT – The Arctic University of Norway (TODOS) is an interest organization for PhD candidates & postdocs at UiT. We focus on three important aspects of being a successful PhD candidate & postdoc: good academic work environment, healthy social life, and representation of our interests on university's boards, committees, and events. We accomplish this by organizing academic seminars and social gatherings throughout the year as well as joining committees, meetings, and events with various contact persons in key positions around the whole university. Through this, we hope to contribute to improving your PhD & postdoc experience.

2. The TODOS Board 2021

The TODOS board gets elected twice per year in the general assemblies.



During Spring 2021, the board consisted of the following members (from left to right):

Chair of Academic Affairs: Koen van Greevenbroek

Chair of Social Affairs: Miroslav Bobrik

Board Chair: Steffi Schenzle

Chair of Communications: Laura Schulte Werning

Accountant: Pietro Randine

Vice Chair: Barbara Stein



During Autumn 2021, the board consisted of the following members (from left to right):

Chair of Academic Affairs: Koen van Greevenbroek

Chair of Social Affairs: Nadine Jacques

Board Chair: Steffi Schenzle

Chair of Communications: Seshathiri Dhanasekaran

Accountant: Pietro Randine

Vice Chair: Barbara Stein

3. Letter from the Board Chair

Dear fellow PhD candidates and postdocs at UiT – and our research colleagues and friends around the world - Happy New Year!

I wish you a wonderful new year with new opportunities, beautiful moments and fruitful experiences. I hope you had a joyful start to the year and were able to fill your energy levels during the holidays to get ready for a new and exciting year! For some of you, this year will be the beginning of your projects and full of planning for your research – I wish you a lot of curiosity and joy with this! Some of you are in the middle of your projects and are trying to keep up with your time schedules – keep up the good work! For those of you who might finish and deliver their projects this year – you are amazing, stay strong until the end!

2021 gave us another year of living with the Covid-19 pandemic – which for many of us might have turned out like another rather challenging and tiring year. Gladly, TODOS was able to restart the face-to-face monthly gatherings during this past semester. It was so great to see so many of you in person in our different events. These events were also a good reminder of how important it will be to regain our social contacts and some normalcy back into our everyday lives in the coming year. TODOS will maintain physical meetings as much as is possible going forward so that you can continue to get to know your peers at UiT.

I am very glad to present this following report to you – and very proud to be able to present so much of our work in this second year of the pandemic. As I am not running for re-elections, I want to thank my board for this great time and all of the work and effort we have put in to TODOS this year. I especially want to thank Pietro and Koen for their great contribution to the TODOS board this year – and I want to wish you successful re-elections! Our three members who will continue, Barbara, Seshathiri and Nadine, I wish you another great and fun semester with TODOS.

Furthermore – thanks to everyone at UiT who is supporting our work, and finally to all of our members: you are doing a great job, keep up the spirits and have another successful year!

All the best! Steffi Schenzle, Board Chair

4. Organized events and activities for PhD candidates and postdocs

4.1 Shut up and work! sessions

This semester, we were able to continue our digital "Shut up and Work!"-sessions. These sessions provide a platform for the participants to focus on their work and stay motivated. In total, we were able to hold 32 Shut up and work!-sessions in 2021 in Tromsø, and we also established weekly sessions at our campus in Harstad.



We are meeting on Mondays on Zoom from 8:45 to 12:00. This semester we were able to add short sessions about "writing advice" in the beginning of each session. TODOS changed the name from "Shut up and write!" to "Shut up and work!" to be more inclusive of our members who are currently not writing but working on other parts of their projects. In the beginning of each session, we start with setting our goals for this day and continue with three working periods of 50 minutes each, followed by a 10-minute break.

4.2 CV Workshop

On the 21.01.2021, TODOS organized a CV workshop in collaboration with the High North Academy. Around 15 of our members attended. This included a three-hour online workshop program, including presentations and a review of the CV.

4.3 ISK seminar on impact of Covid-19

The department of language and culture (ISK) invited TODOS to hold a workshop about the impact of Covid-19 on the 29.04.2021. 12 PhD candidates and 1 postdoc attended the seminar. The most important lesson learned here was in regard to the need for a platform for PhD candidates and postdocs to meet and have the opportunity to discuss the issues which are making our lives harder in the current situation.

4.4 Writing retreat

TODOS organized a writing retreat to Malangen Resort for 24 participants. We spent two nights in the resort, from the 5th to the 7th of November. During this retreat, we also held a mini-workshop with peer feedback on each other's work.



4.5 Workshop in supervision course

TODOS was invited in October to the PhD supervision course for supervisors at UiT. Here, we first conducted a short survey on how PhD candidates at UiT perceive their supervision. Based on the answers, we organized a course session. We also took part in an interview for a short film introducing the supervision course.

4.6 Monthly social gatherings

September: TODOS BBQ at Bak Olsen on the 9th of September with 15 participants



October: TODOS Movie Night on campus at UiT with 12 participants, watching 'Hunt for the Wilderpeople' as selected in our online Facebook poll.

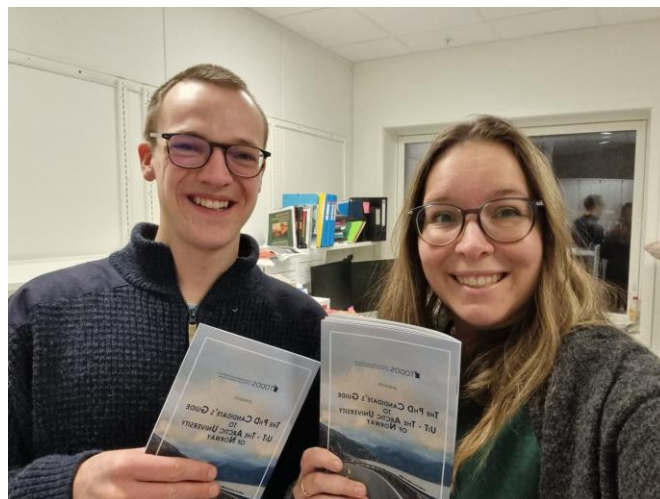


November: Minigolf event at Storgata camping with 15 participants



4.7 PhD booklet & webpage

This year, we renewed the webpage (todos.uit.no) and also our PhD booklet – a great guide about taking a PhD at UiT! The guide is available for download on our webpage. In December we started distributing the booklet to the different departments at UiT and got to meet many staff members!



4.8 Survey for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

During August, we conducted a survey on the situation of the pandemic. In the following picture, you can see the results. These were shared with the management of UiT.

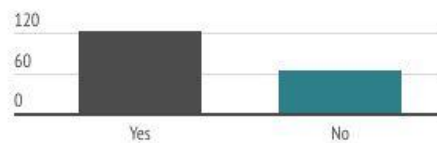
The needs of PhD candidates at UiT

- In the light of the pandemic

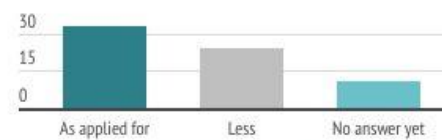
August 2021

Covid-19 related delays

Have you experienced Covid-19 related delays in your PhD progress?

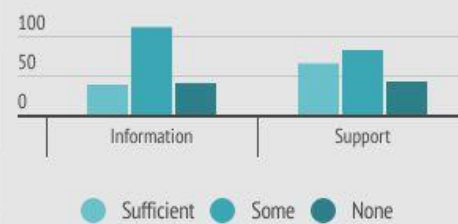


If you have applied for an extension (N=76), how much did you get?



Information & support received

How much information and support did you receive during the pandemic?

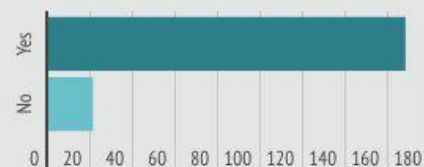


Missed activities

What activities did you miss most?



Should UiT organize more of such events after the pandemic?



What activities would you like to attend?

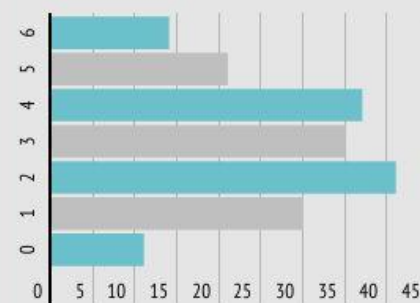
- Networking events (N=95)
- Courses in academic writing (N=90)
- Social events (N=90)
- UiT Conference (N=89)

Home office

Have you received facilitation to set up your home office?



How well did you manage to work at home during the pandemic?
(0 = not well, 6 = very well)



Mean: 2.93

Survey participants N=189

Start of the PhD: Year (N)

2021 (25), 2020 (49), 2019 (38), 2018 (41), 2017 or before (36)

Faculties: Faculty (N)

Health (66), NT (36), HSL (35), BFE (38), Law (2), IVT (11), Museum (1)

5. Internal work

5.1 Board meetings

Our TODOS board meets regularly to discuss current issues, plan events and explore what else we could do to make your PhD and postdoc lives better! This semester we met mostly digitally for our board meetings 7 times in total. A lot of discussion was had in these meetings regarding how we can improve the inclusion of the other campuses of UiT, in particular Harstad, Alta and Narvik.

5.2 Committees/Workgroups

TODOS is currently represented in several committees:

Forskningsstrategisk utvalg (Research strategic council): A committee with representatives from each faculty, discussing research strategy, meaning the most important questions are about funding and priorities. Acts as an advisory council to the University Board.

ARA workgroup (Arctic Resilience Accelerator): A group that is developing a school for research in the Arctic

UiT's Prize Committee

Forskningsetisk utvalg (Research ethics council)

5.3 Meetings with UiT

We continued the regular meetings with the representative for temporary staff at the university board and the administration section for research and education quality. This year, these meetings were focused mainly on the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on us and our members. A second pillar has been to collaborate on an annual PhD survey at UiT and negotiate the budget.

5.4 Quarterly meetings and general assembly with SiN

TODOS is a member of SiN (Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge), the national organization for PhD candidates, postdocs and early career researchers. We joined their three digital quarterly meetings and sent two delegates to the SiN Annual General Assembly in Bergen on the 27.11.2021.

5.5 Meeting for new international employees

We were finally able to continue the collaboration with the International Cooperation Office and presented TODOS at their two introductory meetings in January, April and September.

5.6 PhD conference in Narvik

Same to last year, TODOS again was invited to the PhD conference in Narvik in December 2021 to present our work and keep up the communication with PhD candidates and postdocs in Narvik.

5.7 Statutes

In preparation of the upcoming general assembly, we have drafted an updated version of the TODOS statutes. The biggest changes relate to including representatives from our various campuses other than Tromsø, in addition to a few smaller improvements.

6. Budget

In 2021, TODOS received a set amount of 250,000 NOK to host activities for PhDs and Postdocs and cover the operational costs. In addition, TODOS received 134,244 NOK from the budget of 2020. This money is used for the board member compensation, for activities and events and to cover the fixed bills.

- Our membership in SiN (Stipendiatororganisasjonene i Norge) requires a fixed membership fee of 2,000 NOK every year.
- 150,000 NOK per year are allocated for the compensation of board members. This is equal to a value of 25,000 NOK per year and board member, and the compensation goes either to a contract extension of two weeks, 100 hours of teaching duties or to the annum (project money).

In 2021, the board members' compensation was allocated as follows: 75,000 NOK for 2021 and 10,000 NOK for 2020. 25,000 NOK extra were spent due to the missing payment for the Chair of Communications in 2020.

During spring 2021, TODOS did not have any costs for events as they were all fully digital, and cabin trips/writing retreats were not possible.

The 2021 autumn activities cost as follow: 571 NOK for TODOS BBQ at Bak Olsen, 18,514 NOK for summer gathering with pizza and election, 3,000 NOK for printing the PhD booklet, and 982 NOK for business travel. Lastly, TODOS partially paid the writing retreat with 52,120 NOK, and the participants covered the remaining cost with 52,800 NOK.

By the end of 2021, TODOS has left 132,057 NOK for the new year.

From 2022, TODOS's budget increased to a yearly amount of 450,000 NOK.

7. Way forward

We are looking forward to a new year with great events and activities. The increased budget will allow us to organize more events such as writing retreats, cabin trips and regularly meetings.

One of our ambitions is to promote TODOS more among our campuses outside of Tromsø, especially in Harstad, Narvik and Alta, and to reach out more to our Norwegian members.

We will also continue the internal work, discussions and negotiations we started this semester with our partners at UiT, SiN and inside the committees.