



# Annual Report 2008

# Functional genomics (FUGE) at NTNU



Large-scale Programme  
The Research Council  
of Norway



NTNU

Norwegian University of  
Science and Technology



# FUGE Mid-Norway

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**FUGE coordinator in Mid-Norway:** Janne Østvang (Adviser at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology)

**COVER PAGE :** Photo: Wacek Kusnirczyk



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## **Introduction – Another good FUGE year**



**By Magne Børset  
Head of FUGE committee in mid-Norway**

Again we can celebrate a successful year for activities related to functional genomics (FUGE) in Mid-Norway. All the FUGE platform nodes located in our region are up and going, and offer services to scientists who need cutting edge technology in their research.

The platform nodes are all briefly presented in this annual report. Many of the research papers from these platforms and from research groups within this field have appeared in highly ranked journals and some have even been awarded prestigious prizes. The 2008 Cozzarelli Prize, an award for the paper of the year in biological sciences in PNAS, a prestigious American journal, was recently given to a joint paper from two departments at NTNU, the Trondheim-based bioinformatics company Interagon and a research group from Duarte, California.

Furthermore, research groups from our region have again succeeded in attracting substantial external funding. Six projects from NTNU were granted funding in 2008 from the Research Council of Norway under the open research programme FRIBIO-BIOMED, despite a total funding rate in this programme of merely 10 %. Regrettably, funding for independent scientist-initiated research in Norway is very scarce. It is therefore extremely important that groups from our region have the standing and

quality to be able to compete successfully for such grants. This is only possible thanks to substantial support from NTNU and other local sources.

Success creates success; and we need to build our activity around groups that have already proved their excellence. New groups will then emerge budding from these excellent groups.

To attract competent people is an important challenge in our region. Viewed from more densely populated areas of the world, our corner seems exotic but maybe more suitable for exciting tourism than for career building. For a couple of our FUGE nodes, lack of competent applicants to positions has reduced the possibility to exploit their resources. This emphasizes the importance of excellent FUGE-related graduate programmes at NTNU and at the colleges in our region. We know that Trondheim and NTNU are very popular among students. Each year many of NTNU's graduate programmes recruit a proportionally higher number of excellent students than similar programmes at other universities in our country. We should more actively present the opportunities in FUGE-related activities to students and incorporate functional genomics in educational programmes. Also we need to convince bright students that Mid-Norway is attractive also as a permanent place of residence.

2008 was the first full year of the FUGE II period. However, we already need to focus on the future beyond FUGE II. In the Research Council of Norway, the planning for the period after 2012 is already well under way. "Biotechnology" might be the keyword for the next period. What will then become of the FUGE platforms? Only those platforms that are dynamic, creative and able to provide indispensable service will survive. Given the performance and merits of our local nodes so far, I think many of them will be able to meet this challenge.

## About FUGE in Mid-Norway

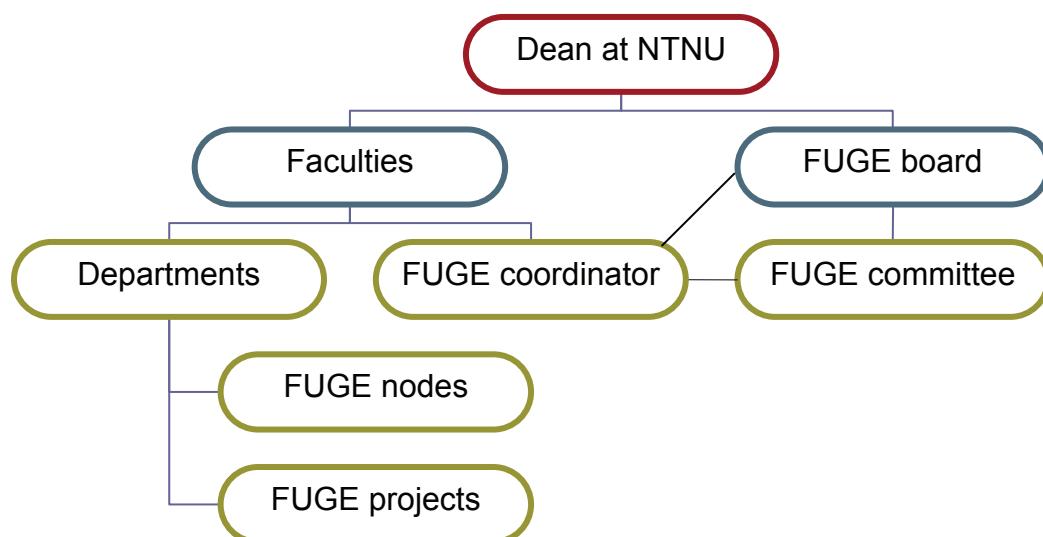
The successful mapping of the genomes of humans and selected animals, plants and micro-organisms has opened new doors for scientists who study biological processes in the field of functional genomics. FUGE is a national plan designed to enhance the quality and activity of functional genomics research in Norway, funded by the Research Council of Norway.

FUGE's backbone is the technology platforms that offer service and research related to specific technologies that are useful for functional genomics. There

are seven nodes connected to different technology platforms in mid-Norway.

While a portion of the region's functional genomic projects have received funding from the Research Council of Norway, many research groups at NTNU conduct functional genomics research. These groups are found at the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology, the Faculty of Information Technology, Mathematics and Electrical Engineering, as well as the Faculty of Arts.

FUGE's mid-Norway group is governed by a board and a committee, and has an adviser who coordinates FUGE activities.



**Figure 1. Organization of the FUGE activity in Mid-Norway.**

FUGE Mid-Norway is governed by a board and a steering committee. In addition, there is an adviser who coordinates the FUGE activity in Mid-Norway. The technology nodes and the FUGE projects are administrated by different departments at NTNU.

## The FUGE nodes in Mid-Norway

Nationwide there are ten different FUGE Technology Platforms with nodes distributed all over Norway. In the region of Mid-Norway, there are seven nodes. The activity of these nodes will briefly be presented here:

### The Norwegian Proteomics Consortium -NorProteomics

In 2008, the proteomics laboratory was appointed a node within the Norwegian Proteomics Consortium, NorProteomics with service responsibility for research groups in Mid-Norway and NTNU. Services offered are protein identification, de-novo sequencing and analysis of post-translational modifications.

Through 2008 the node has performed proteomics service analyses within several projects at NTNU/SINTEF as follows:

#### Service:

*Marit W. Anthonsen, NTNU:* Analysis of phosphorylation status of IRF3 and potential implication in signalling of viral infection. This has been a large project that will continue in 2009. It includes a large number of MS and MS/MS scans subsequent to TiO<sub>4</sub>-purification of phosphopeptides, and manual interpretation of spectra.

*Iciar Martinez, Sintef:* De novo sequencing of proteolytic activities isolated from pelagic fish subject to belly bursting.

*Hans Krokan, NTNU:* Analysis of post-translational modification in the active site of oxidative demethylases of the AlkB-family.

*Marit Otterlei, NTNU:* Analysis of post-translational modifications in PCNA and its function in protein:protein interactions.

*Kurt I. Draget, NTNU:* Analysis of Insulin oligomerisation.

*Augustin Arukwe, NTNU:* Quantitative analysis and identification of fish proteins by 2D-PAGE.



Researchers in activity by the MALDI TOF-TOF in the proteomics lab.

#### Other research activities:

*Ole-Jan Iversen NTNU:* Analysis of psoriasis-associated proteins.

#### Geir Slupphaug, NTNU:

- i) The interactomics of DNA repair (Channel 3, FUGE 2)
- ii) Proteomic profiling to identify biomarkers associated with treatment with the cytostatic drugs melphalan and 5-FU (2D-DIGE, and SILAC)
- iii) Regulation of mammalian DNA base-excision repair by phosphorylation and ubiquitinylation

#### Courses:

MOL3007. Laboratory course in proteomics  
Tutoring and teaching of researchers in 2D- and MS-based proteomics.

#### Other:

Implementation of new equipment and software in 2008: Robotic spotpicker, DeCyder Software for 2D-DIGE quantification, MASCOT Distiller 2.2  
Finally, the laboratory has undergone rebuilding (DMF financing) to make more room for benchwork, as well as streamlining 2D-gel analysis.

## The Norwegian Bioinformatics Platform

The FUGE Bioinformatics technology platform is organized as a national network with nodes in Bergen, Oslo and Trondheim and they have a close collaboration with Tromsø. The platform is responsible for a helpdesk service providing bioinformatics support to projects and research groups, and also contributes bioinformatics competence as an active partner in research projects. At NTNU the platform is associated with the research group for Bioinformatics & Gene Regulation, which provides a strong research basis for the technology services provided by the platform.

The technology platform is based on a close collaboration between the network nodes, where each node will contribute its specialized bioinformatics competence towards research projects, coordinated through the national helpdesk. The NTNU node has particular responsibility for services associated with gene regulation, including both transcription factor (TF) based regulation and regulation through non-coding RNA molecules (ncRNA / microRNA). We have developed improved tools for identifying regulatory TF modules (Compo) and for benchmarking such tools. Benchmarking is a standardized approach for comparing the performance of different tools, and is essential for identifying optimal methods. Our benchmarking tools are available on the web, and have been used by other groups for benchmarking. We are now using these tools for developing methods for improved mapping of gene regulation, both through research collaborations and as master's projects. MicroRNAs regulate genes by interaction with messenger RNA (mRNA) thereby blocking translation. We are developing improved methods for identifying target genes of microRNAs. Through international collaboration we have also shown that microRNAs may regulate gene transcription by affecting the gene promoter, rather than the mRNA. This knowledge is important for understanding the regulatory potential of microRNAs.

The NTNU node also has a close collaboration with the FUGE Proteomics technology platform through a shared position. As part of this collaboration the platform is developing improved tools for large scale analysis of proteomics data from mass spectrometry.

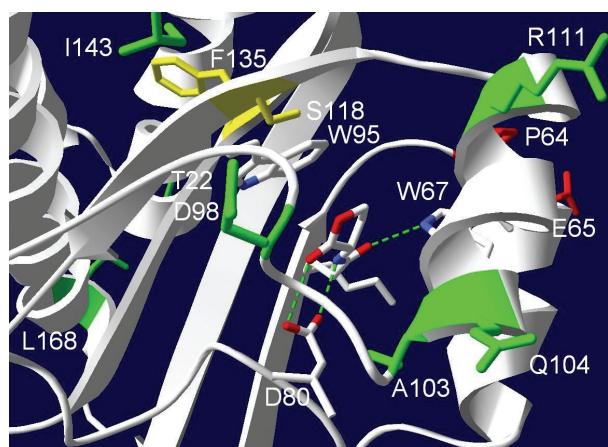
Through the helpdesk as well as direct collaboration the NTNU node has contributed to several research projects. Relevant examples are mapping and analysis of transcription factor binding sites in genes involved in immune response (Marit W. Anthonsen, NTNU) and proliferative response (Katarina Jørgensen,

NTNU), structure prediction of bacterial gene regulators (Svein Valla, NTNU) and viral proteins

(Siri Mjaaland, Norwegian School of Veterinary Science) and analysis of bacterial quorum signalling components (Live Nesse, National Veterinary Institute)

The NTNU node is responsible for the course MTEK3001 Applied Bioinformatics and Systems Biology, which is part of the specialization in bioinformatics in the International Master in Medical Technology. It is also involved in BT8102 Molecular and Cellular Bioinformatics, TDT4287 Algorithms for Bioinformatics and other courses. It has been responsible for the Programme for Bioinformatics guest lectures in 2008. In 2009 the NTNU node will be responsible for several courses, seminars and meetings, including the national bioinformatics meeting for PhD candidates and postdocs (BFYS 2009).

<http://www.bioinfo.no/>  
<http://tare.medisin.ntnu.no/>



Ligand binding in bacterial cell-cell communication.

### BIOINFORMATICS

is the application of information technology to the field of molecular biology.

Bioinformatics nowadays entails the creation and advancement of databases, algorithms, computational and statistical techniques, and theory to solve formal and practical problems arising from the management and analysis of biological data. (*Wikipedia*)

## **Biobanks for Health – BioHealth Norway**

The FUGE technology platform Biobanks for Health (BioHealth Norway) is a joint collaborative project between NIPH (Mother and Child), UiB, UiO, UiTø and NTNU together forming a large population based cohort established for genetic epidemiologic research. The cohort consists of biological samples and standardized health and exposure data from ~ 500 000 Norwegian individuals of all ages, corresponding to approximately 1/10 of the Norwegian population. BioHealth comprise of CONOR (Cohort of Norway – Tromsø, HUNT 2, HUSK, HUBRO, OPPHED, TROFINN, HUNT 3 and Tromsø 6) and MoBa (Mother Child Cohort) of which samples from CONOR are stored at the National Norwegian Biobank (HUNT Biobank).

The biobank is specially designed for this purpose and is offering state-of-the art infrastructure for sample handling and processing. In addition, a completely automated sample storage and retrieval facility for DNA samples operating at -20°C (installed by REMP AG, Switzerland) will be operational within the first half of 2009.

The Biobank is using the Nautilus LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System) developed by Thermo Electron Corporation for cold chain logistics and management and as sample inventory system. The LIMS is integrated with a fully automated sample fractionation and aliquotting system operating at 4°C developed and implemented by RTS® (Robotic Technology Systems, UK). This unit was initially used for processing the HUNT3 samples.

DNA has been extracted from 120 000 samples from the CONOR biobank. Standard protocols for DNA extraction and quality control has been developed on and implemented. The Biobank has manual as well as automated DNA isolation facilities with a throughput of 200-300 samples per day. A robotic system (Biomek NX from Beckman Coulter) for assessment of DNA quality and yield with the same throughput is used. DNA concentration is determined by pico green / standard curve measurements and concentrations normalized to either 5, 25 or 50 ng/µl. In addition, every 8<sup>th</sup> sample is measured spectrophotometrically to determine the OD260/280 ratio for quality assessment and for an independent concentration determination. On every 8th sample SNP analyses for quality control are also performed with either Roche's Light Cycler System or with a high-throughput 7900HT FAST real time PCR System from Applied Biosystems.

For the other regional cohorts, the same procedures are followed regarding processing, quality control and storage of samples. However, the final step involving DNA measurements and concentration normalization of each sample are done on a project basis before delivery.

The Biobank has established standard protocols for the selection, quality control and delivery of samples for internal and external projects. In 2008 the Biobank was occupied with 16 projects involving the delivery of ~ 26 000 samples of which ~ 2000 were serum samples and the rest DNA-samples from HUNT 2 and Tromsø 4.

The 7900HT system located in the Biobank is suitable for analysing few SNPs on a large number of samples. At the present set-up the throughput in the Biobank is approximately 5000 genotypes a day. In addition to quality testing of DNA, this system is used for SNP genotyping on a project related basis. In addition to internal projects the systems was used in 3 external projects in 2008 involving from 1- 4 SNPs on ~ 7000 samples.

### **FUGE II nodes in Mid-Norway:**

- The Norwegian Bioinformatics Platform
  - Node leader Mid-Norway: Finn Drabløs
- Biobanker for Helse – BioHealth Norway
  - Node leader Mid-Norway: Kristian Hveem
- The Norwegian Microarray Consortium – NMC
  - Node leader Mid-Norway: Arne Sandvik
  - Node leader Mid-Norway (plants): Atle Bones
- The Norwegian Molecular Imaging Centre – NorMIC
  - Node leader Mid-Norway (sub cellular imaging): Catharina De Lange Davies
  - Node leader Mid-Norway (whole animal imaging): Olav Haraldseth
- The Norwegian Proteomics Consortium – NorProteomics
  - Node leader Mid-Norway: Geir Slupphaug

## The Norwegian Microarray Consortium - NMC

Microarray is a powerful technology that allows simultaneous measurement of expression levels for up to tens of thousands of genes. With the technology of today you can measure the expression genes in almost any kind of species on earth.

### Service provided by NMC at NTNU in 2008:

**RNA inn Data out service.** For gene expression analysis service, three platforms have been offered (spotted arrays, Affymetrix and Illumina). The general service includes RNA quantity and quality control, labelling, hybridization and scanning of the arrays. Initial data analysis includes image analysis, quality control and generation of list of differentially expressed genes. About 40 different groups/people have used this lab service and about **1150 RNA samples** have gone through our service (Illumina app. 900, Affymetrix app. 20 and spotted arrays app. 230 samples). Thirty of these projects are related to different departments at NTNU, three projects related to St. Olavs Hospital, one project from HiST, one from Sintef, three projects from the University of Bergen (including Haukeland University Hospital, Institute of Marine Research in Bergen and NIFES), one project from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health in Oslo, and one project from the University of Tromsø.

In 2008 we also have established a new microRNA (Illumina) service and about **464 samples** have been run through this system. This is related to three projects, two at NTNU and one at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health in Oslo.

**DNA in Data out service.** New this year is also that we have set up an Illumina whole genome SNP service. About **500 DNA samples** have been run through this pipeline with excellent results. The project was related to NTNU and HUNT.

### Illumina CSPro certification:

During 2008 our lab has been working to certify our RNA and DNA service, and in March 2009 we successfully completed the Illumina CSPro™ certification for Gene Expression and SNP genotyping, gaining entry to an elite group of Illumina genomics service providers globally. Illumina CSPro is a collaborative service provider partnership dedicated to ensure the delivery of the highest-quality data available for genetic analysis applications.

### Microarray printing service:

During 2008, the NTNU node of the NMC FUGE platform, has take over the national responsibility for microarray printing. We have printed about 400 Arabidopsis arrays and 20 cod arrays for groups at NTNU, and been involved in two projects, printing two microbe genomes (200 arrays), for a group at the University of Oslo and one project printing 200 cod arrays for NIFES in Bergen.

### Bioinformatics data analysis service:

Our group offers an extended bioinformatics data analysis service. Most of the service has been aimed towards practical analysis, summary and presentation of gene expression microarray data for researchers present at NTNU, according to the project described in section RNA/DNA in Data out lab service. Establishing microRNA microarray technology as a part of our service has been a major goal during this period and development of analysis methods for quality assurance, pre-processing and statistical analysis of microRNA data has been undertaken. In-house software for quality assurance and pre-processing of microRNA data was developed in order to deliver microRNA analysis to customers.

### Courses:

In 2008 our personnel have been responsible for organizing lectures and lab training at the NTNU PhD courses Mol8003 and Mol8004 (Microarray technology and data analysis). About 35 students participated on these courses. We also participated with lectures at other master's and PhD courses at NTNU (e.g. Mol3011 and Mol3006). In addition, two of us have also participated at platform related courses in Oslo and Tromsø in 2008.

### National FUGE II Platforms:

- The Norwegian Bioinformatics Platform
- Biobanker for Helse – BioHealth Norway
- The Norwegian centre for integrative genetics – CIGENE
- The Norwegian Microarray Consortium – NMC
- The Norwegian Structural Biology Centre – NORSTRUCT
- The Norwegian Molecular Imaging Centre – NorMIC
- The Norwegian Proteomics Consortium – NorProteomics
- The Norwegian Zebrafish Platform – ZEBRAFISH
- Ultra-High Throughput Sequencing Platform - UTSP

## The Norwegian Microarray Consortium - NARC

The NTNU Cell and Molecular Biology (CMB) group is host to the Norwegian Arabidopsis Research Centre (NARC). The NARC lab at NTNU is equipped with state of the art equipment for microarray analysis. We have to our disposal a semi-automatic hybridization station (Advalytix ArrayBooster TM) and an Agilent microarray scanner.

The Microarray node has in 2008 conducted transcript analysis for a number of research groups both at NTNU and nationally. Most of the analyses have been done on the model plant *Arabidopsis thaliana*, but we have also been running analyses on other plants, *Lemna minor*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Brassica napus* and *Phaeodactylum tricornutum*.

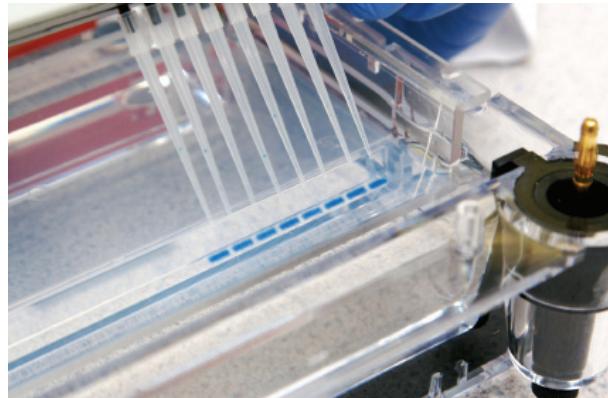
### Services at the NARC node for 2008:

#### *Researchers at IBI/NT:*

Ishita Ahuja  
Ole Petter Thangstad  
Anna Kusnirczyk  
Jens Rohloff  
Per Winge  
Ralph Kissen  
Marianne Nymark  
Tore Brembu  
Ann-Iren Kitang  
Brita Kvaløy  
Margrethe Jørstad

#### *National researchers:*

Melinka Butenko, UiO  
Anna Levadowska Sabat, UMB  
Paul Grini, UIO  
Rolf Selset, Calcus AS  
Muath Alsheikh, Graminor.  
Ralf Westling (Germany)



## The Norwegian Molecular Imaging Consortium - NorMIC - Subcellular Interactions and Imaging

The unique aspect of the “Subcellular Interactions and Imaging” node is that it provides a broad assembly of experimental methods for imaging and for studies of inter- and intramolecular interactions.

The node is a collaboration between the Faculty of Medicine: Dept. of Cancer Research and Molecular Medicine, and the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology, Dept. of Biology and Dept of Physics.

The instrumentation includes: 2 confocal laser scanning microscopes (CLSM) and 2 CLSM for fast image acquisition used in dynamic studies, two-photon microscope, fluorescence correlation spectroscopy (FCS), as well as atomic force microscopy (AFM). In 2008 a new setup with combined AFM and total internal reflection optical microscope was installed.

In 2008 the following projects have benefitted from the service and instrumentation of the node:

### **Delivery of nanomedicine in tumour tissue**

CLSM has been used to localize nanomedicine extra- and intracellular. FCS and fluorescence recovery after photobleaching (FRAP) have been used to study diffusion of macromolecules. FCS has also been used to study interactions between DNA and chitosan which is a potential carrier in DNA delivery.

### **Clinical applications of multiphoton microscopy**

Multiphoton microscopy and the second harmonic signal are used for 3D imaging of atherosclerosis and valvular fibrosis without exogenous staining. Mechanical properties of the tissues are characterized.

### **Angiogenesis**

CLSM was used to study formation of vessels in scaffolds implanted in dorsal window chambers in athymic mice.

### **Signalling mechanism of Toll-like receptors**

A variant (TAG) of the adaptor molecule TRAM has been identified.

CLSM imaging of TAG has revealed that the molecule is expressed in endoplasmic reticulum in resting cells. Lipo-polysaccharide stimulates translocation of TAG to late endosomes and inhibits IFN- $\beta$  production. Also expression and intracellular trafficking of Toll-like receptor 2 have been performed in close collaboration with the NorMIC platform in Oslo.

### **Selective photobleaching as a tool for studies of intracellular transport**

High-speed confocal microscopy has been used for selective photobleaching of ER exports sites in *Arabidopsis thaliana* to study intracellular transport through ER-Golgi. A quantitative method has been established and used to study the role of the regulatory protein AtSAR1. AtSAR1 has been shown to be a marker for ER-export sites at the interface between ER and the Golgi apparatus.

### **The role of AtRAC7 in auxin signalling and root development**

CLSM in combination with yeast two-hybrid interaction analysis has been used in functional studies and to localize AtRAC7 and other components involved in auxin signalling during root development. Various constructs have been made, plants transformed and analysed.

### **Polyelectrolyte complex formation in developing gene-delivery vectors and excipients**

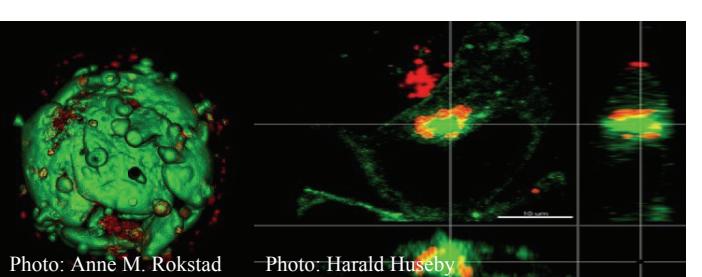
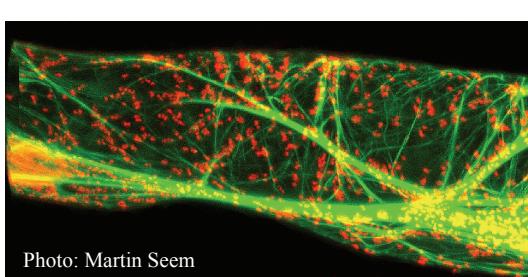
The AFM instrumentation has been employed for characterization of structure of polyelectrolyte complexes related to gene delivery, material formulations for drug delivery, polynucleotide-polysaccharide characterization, and structure formation of CpG DNA.

### **Target strategy of DNA repair proteins**

The AFM instrumentation has been applied for ultrastructural determination of DNA fragments and selected DNA repair proteins as the initial phase of project aiming at elucidating the target search strategy.

### **The logic of olfaction**

Small neural networks in invertebrates are perfectly suited for studying basic principles concerning brain processes in general. By performing intracellular recordings and staining combined with CLSM from the primary olfactory centre of the moth brain, the logic of olfactory coding mechanisms is studied



## The Norwegian Molecular Imaging Centre - NorMIC – Whole animal imaging

FUGE Molecular Imaging Centre Trondheim offers collaborating projects with national and international research groups that are interested in *in vivo* MR imaging and spectroscopy (MRI and MRS) of small animals. We facilitate in areas such as experimental planning, optimizing of MR protocols, running of MR experiments, post processing of MR data and writing of scientific papers.

Today's research activity is mainly concentrated around preclinical studies of animal models of diseases and transgenic mice in order to survey *in-vivo* effects of gene modifications, as well as monitoring the effect of new treatments. The future goal is to be able to transfer the best ideas into clinical use, thereby opening up substantial industrial opportunities.

### Activities in 2008:

- MRI monitoring of stem cells and cellular therapeutics. Project leader: Post doc Marte Thuen. Collaborator: Prof. Joel Glover, University of Oslo
- Water transport in Aquaporin deficient mice. Project leader: Post doc Tina Pavlin. Collaborator: Prof. Ole Petter Ottersen, University of Oslo.
- CNS injury caused by decompression. Project leader: PhD student Marius Widerøe/ Post doc Marte Thuen. Collaborators: Prof. Alf Brubakk, Dept. of Circulation and Medical Imaging, NTNU and Senior researcher Arvid Hope, NUI, Bergen.
- Manganese-alginate gels for controlled-release of manganese. Project leader: Researcher Christian Brekken. Collaborators: Prof Gudmund Skjåk-Bræk and Post doc Yrr Mørch, Dept. of Biotechnology, NTNU.

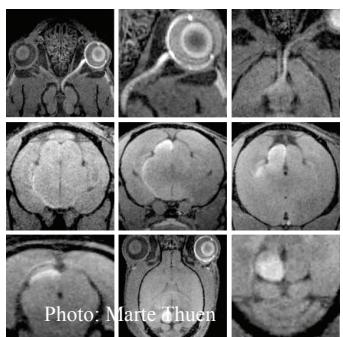


Photo: Marte Thuen

- High-resolution MRI of cardiac infarction. Project leader: Post doc Marte Thuen. Collaborator, Prof. Godfrey Smith, University of Glasgow and Post doc Brage Amundsen, Dept. of Circulation and Medical Imaging, NTNU.
- MR imaging of stem cells in transplant-mediated CNS repair. PhD project of Ioanna Sandvig. Supervisors: Post doc Marte Thuen, Associated Prof. Asta Håberg and Prof. Olav Haraldseth. Collaborators: Prof. Martin Berry, University of Birmingham. and MD PhD Axel Sandvig, St Olavs Hospital.
- Characterization of myocardial alternations in dysfunctional hearts using complementary MR techniques. PhD project of Kristine Skårdal. Supervisors: Post doc Marte Thuen, Prof. Olav Haraldseth and Physicist Pål Erik Goa (St. Olavs Hospital). Collaborators: Prof. Ulrik Wisløf, Dept. of Circulation and Medical Imaging, NTNU.
- Molecular and functional imaging of therapeutic macromolecules in tissue. PhD-project of Nina Reitan, Dept. of Physics, NTNU. Supervisors: Prof. Catharina Davies, Dept. of Physics, NTNU.
- Manganese-enhanced and diffusion tensor imaging of the normal, injured and regenerating rat visual pathway. PhD project of Marte Thuen. Supervisors: Prof. Olav Haraldseth and Researcher Christian Brekken. Collaborators: Prof. Martin Berry, University of Birmingham. and MD PhD Axel Sandvig, St Olavs Hospital. PhD defended in Aug 2008.

If not otherwise stated, the people involved in the projects are associated with Fuge Molecular Imaging Center and employed at Dept. of Circulation and Medical Imaging, NTNU.

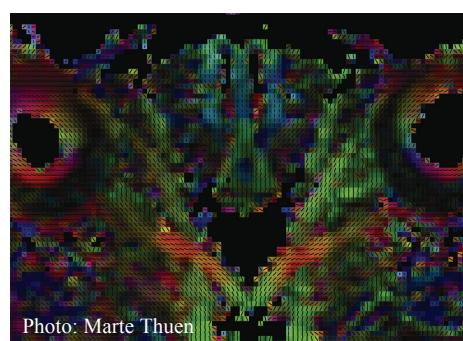


Photo: Marte Thuen

## Meetings and Seminar

Functional genomics researchers were invited to suggest speakers for the 2008 FUGE seminar series. The seminar series was intended to develop existing functional genomics contacts and establish new ones both nationally and internationally, and featured both guest lectures and seminars.

### Guest lectures 2008

- **Professor Ole Christian Lingjærde**, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway, "PLS Cox regression for genome-wide".
- **Dr. Thomas M. Halder**, TOPLAB Gesellschaft für angewandte Biotechnologie mbH in Martinsried, Germany , "New Developments in Quantitative Proteomics"

### Seminars 2008

- **Seminar i MR Metabolomics** – arranged by Ingrid Gribbestad.
- **Symposium in microbial biotechnology** – arranged by Sven Even Borgos and Magnus Steigedal. On the occasion of Professor Svein Vallas' 60-anniversary a symposium was held in microbial biotechnology.
- **First national user meeting for NorMIC** – arranged by Catharina de Lange Davies.
- **Conference on Systems Biology and disease** – arranged by Hans Krokan and Nils Baas.

### "Oppdalsmøtet"

In addition, FUGE Mid-Norway and The Norwegian Biochemical Society (Division Trøndelag) arranged a seminar at Quality Hotel Røros. The overall goal of the seminar was to present FUGE II projects funded by the Research Council of Norway. Sixty-five researchers from Mid-Norway attended the seminar.

### Information meetings 2008

The FUGE II-period had a kick-off early in 2008. In order to inform about the services provided for the FUGE II period. ,FUGE Mid-Norway arranged information meetings together with the nodes in mid-Norway throughout the spring. Altogether, we had five information meetings: Biobanks, Molecular Imaging, Proteomics, Bioinformatics and Microarray.

## FUGE Mid-Norway Award 2008

To celebrate the funds received for the FUGE II period, FUGE Mid-Norway arranged a mini-seminar followed by a Christmas lunch. Thirty researchers attended the seminar, which featured a great presentation by Professor Hans Krokan on "Forskning i Norge - Utsikt fra elfenbenstårnet". After the presentation the winner of the FUGE Mid-Norway Award 2008 was presented. The first FUGE Mid-Norway award was given to PhD candidate Ingvill Bjellmo Johnsen and Prof. Marit Anthonsen (IKMM/DMF/NTNU). In addition to a diploma and a work of art the award winners got NOK 30 000 to be used for their research. After the presentation of the award winners, a Christmas lunch was served.



### The FUGE Mid-Norway award winners 2008:

PhD candidate Ingvill Bjellmo Johnsen and Prof. Marit Anthonsen

## Action Plan

A new action plan for the FUGE committee and board was processed for 2009. The plan can be found on our website: <http://www.ntnu.no/fuge/organisasjon>

## Seed Funding

As a strategic action for developing and strengthening functional genomics research in Mid-Norway, FUGE Mid-Norway announced a variety of grants in 2008.

### Three post doc positions

FUGE Mid-Norway was given three post doctoral positions from the NTNU SO-funds. The post doctoral positions were announced and made available for all functional genomics researchers at NTNU. An international review panel was set up to review the applications. The positions were given to:

- Trond M. Kortner, "Molecular ontogeny of digestive capability in Atlantic cod larvae", project leader: Augustine Arukwe.
- Steven Vercruyse, "Fact finding in systems biology", project leader: Martin Kuiper.
- Anna Kusnierzycz, "A system biology approach to understand plant adaptive innate immunity", project leader: Atle Bones

### Engineer

In order to enhance functional genomics research areas outside the technology platforms, FUGE Mid-Norway announced SO-funds for an engineer (four years). All research groups at NTNU could apply for the funds. The engineer position was given to the system biology research group headed by Martin Kuiper.

### Adjunct Professors

Three Adjunct Professors were employed with the funds given to us by the Research Council of Norway:

- Ole Nørregaard Jensen
- Eicke Latz
- Jens Nielsen

### Travel grants

Funding from the Research Council of Norway made it possible to announce travel grants in order to support international networking. The grants were awarded to:

- Kirsti Kvaløy
- Carl-Jørgen Arum
- Maria Tunset Grinde
- Martin Seem
- Åsa Alexandra Borg
- Toril Holien
- Marit Sletmoen

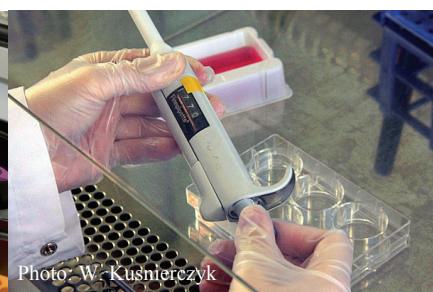
### Funds to use the technology platforms

The FUGE technology platforms offer researchers various services within specific technologies that are important to functional genomics research. To facilitate interaction between researchers and the technology platforms, FUGE Mid-Norway allocated money to researchers who planned to collaborate with and use the technology platforms. To that end, the following research grants were awarded:

- Kirsti Kvaløy
- Berit Johansen
- Frank Skorpen
- Gáute Brede
- Ralph Kissen
- Per Bruheim
- Marit Anthonsen
- Hans Krokan
- Turid Rustad
- Jens Rohloff
- Anja Bye

### WEB pages

Today's technology has made it important to have updated web pages. The funds given to FUGE Mid-Norway from the Research Council of Norway supported updating or establishing of web pages – and for 2008 financial support was given to the Microarray node in Mid-Norway (Prof. Arne Sandvik).



## Innovation

Innovation is important in functional genomics, as the discipline and its associated technologies are developing rapidly. Many of the FUGE technologies can be used for industrial and commercial development. Two focused business projects were supported by FUGE Mid-Norway in 2008:

- Vectron Biosolutions by Trond E. V. Aune
- Micronax AS by Jarle Kotsbak

## Disputations

The following candidates have successfully defended their theses for a PhD degree at NTNU in 2008 within functional genomics:

- Ottar Sundheim, PhD,  
“Structure-function analysis of human enzymes initiating nucleobase repair in DNA and RNA”
- Lars Hagen, PhD,  
“Regulation of DNA Base excision repair by protein interactions and post-translational modifications”.
- Nadra Jesmine Nilsen, PhD,  
“Toll-like Receptor 2, Expression, regulation and signaling”.
- Marte Thuen ,PhD,  
“Manganese-enhanced and diffusion tensor MR imaging of the normal, injured and regenerating rat visual pathway”.
- Line Elisabeth Sundt-Hansen, PhD,  
“Cost of Rapid Growth in Salmonid Fishes”
- Lena Neregård, PhD,  
“Growth Physiology and Behaviour in Salmonids: Focus on Growth Hormone-Induced Effects”
- Tommy Jørstad, PhD,  
“Statistical modelling of gene expression data”
- Kristin Spilker, PhD,  
“Assistert slektskap: Biopolitikk i reproduksjonsteknologienes tidsalder”.
- Torun Melø, PhD,  
“Neuronal Glial Interactions in Epilepsy”
- Irina P. Eide, PhD,  
“Fetal growth restriction and pre-eclampsia: some characteristics of fetomaternal interactions”.

- **Bratlie, Marit Skyrud, Johansen, Jostein, Drabløs, Finn.** Why do bacterial genes form operons? Computational Methods in Systems Biology, Rostock, Germany, October 12-15, 2008
- **Klepper, Kjetil, Sandve, Geir Kjetil, Abul, Osman, Johansen, Jostein, Drabløs, Finn.** Assessment of composite motif discovery methods. *BMC Bioinformatics* 2008, 9:123
- **Sandve, Geir Kjetil, Abul, Osman, Drabløs, Finn.** Compo: composite motif discovery using discrete models. *BMC Bioinformatics* 2008, 9:527
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- **Smith, D.D.; Saetrom, P.; Snove, O.J.; Lundberg, C.; Rivas, G.E.;Glackin, C.; Larson, G.P.** "Meta-analysis of breast cancer microarray studies in conjunction with conserved cis-elements suggest patterns for coordinate regulation" *BMC bioinformatics* 2008,9():63
- **Hung RJ, Mckay JD, Gaborieau V, Boffetta P, Hashibe M, Zaridze D, Mukeria A, Sziesznia-Dabrowska N, Lissowska J, Rudnai P, Fabianova E, Mates D, Bencko V, Foretova L, Janout V, Chen C, Goodman G, Field JK, Liloglou T, Xinarianos G, Cassidy A, McLaughlin J, Liu G, Narod S, Krokan H E, Skorpen F, Elvestad M B, Hveem K, Vatten L J, Linseisen J, Clavel-Chapelon F, Vineis P, Bueno-De-Mesquita HB, Lund E, Martinez C, Bingham S, Rasmussen T, Hainaut P, Riboli E, Ahrens**

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- **Asberg, A, Hveem, Kristian,** Screening fro haemochromatosis. *Blood* 2008 ;Volume 111.(7)
  - **Jansson C , Nordenstedt H , Wallander MA , Johansson S , Johnsen R , Hveem K , Lagergren J.** Severe symptoms of gastro-oesophageal reflux disease are associated with cardiovascular disease and other gastrointestinal symptoms, but not diabetes: a population-based study. *Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics* 2008 ;Volume 27.(1):. 58-65
  - **Sjodahl K , Jia CQ , Vatten L J , Nilsen TIL , Hveem K , Lagergren J.** Body mass and physical activity and risk of gastric cancer in a population-based cohort study in Norway. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention* 2008;Volume 17: 135-140
  - **Sjödahl K, Jia C, Vatten L Johan, Nilsen T I L, Hveem K, Lagergren J.** Salt and Gastric Adenocarcinoma: A Population-Based Cohort Study in Norway. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention* 2008 ;Volume 17.(8): 1997-2001
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