

Newsletter

from FUGE Mid-Norway

www.ntnu.no/fuge

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Editorial - BIOBANKS – GOOD OR BAD?

In Norway, we have a journal called Samtiden. This journal is the biggest and eldest Norwegian journal for discussion of social/cultural development and trends. In the last issue, on sale now, Camilla Stoltenberg is the author of an article called: SUSCEPTIBILITY & POSSIBILITIES. About genes, environment and health". She gives a short summary of the development within genetics the last decade, both with regards to insight and technology available. And she turns to the complex genetic diseases, explaining the complex interactions between susceptibility genes and environmental factors. And, at this point she demonstrates very skilled pedagogic qualifications, explaining why susceptibility genes may be present without effects if not environmental factors are putting stress on their functions. I really recommend everybody to have a look at this article, I consider it as really good public education.

Genes are apparently dangerous, at least after the Eia-discussions and at least if you belong to some fractions within social sciences. Morten Andreas Strøksnes (journalist and photographer) comments [Stoltenberg's article in Bergens Tidende](#). His comment is in summary an attack on Camilla Stoltenberg's position within genetics/biobanks in Norway (suggesting between the lines that this will make her attitude towards genetics more positive than the field deserves), her relation to the prime minister and her central role in various public reports on biobanks. Genetic findings (and biobanks) are of no use, according to Strøksnes, and he warns against the potential misuse by pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

Conclusion: Ola Nordmann does not have the insight required to make unbiased interpretations of new findings – unless FUGE researchers take dissemination and communication of scientific results seriously.

Best regards, Rigmor Austgulen
Leader of FUGE Mid-Norway committee

Evaluation of FUGE at NTNU

The level of technologies and knowledge in functional genomics research has increased as a result of FUGE, Norway's national functional genomics research programme. It is hoped that the programme will constitute an important research infrastructure to solve global challenges. At NTNU, the FUGE programme has contributed to a substantial increase in the quality of technologies in use and our understanding of them. NTNU's eight-year long FUGE initiative, from 2002-2010, is currently being evaluated. The end of FUGE is the start of the next era in biotechnology.

When the FUGE programme comes to an end in 2011 we will find ourselves at a crossroads. What will be the future of biotechnology at the university? Will we be able to maintain high professional competence and service at the nodes in order to support researchers who lack the expertise in advanced technology to produce research results at an international level? Will the nodes have the financial basis to operate a service? Are we willing to support new technologies and disciplines that have come out of the fundamental disciplines?

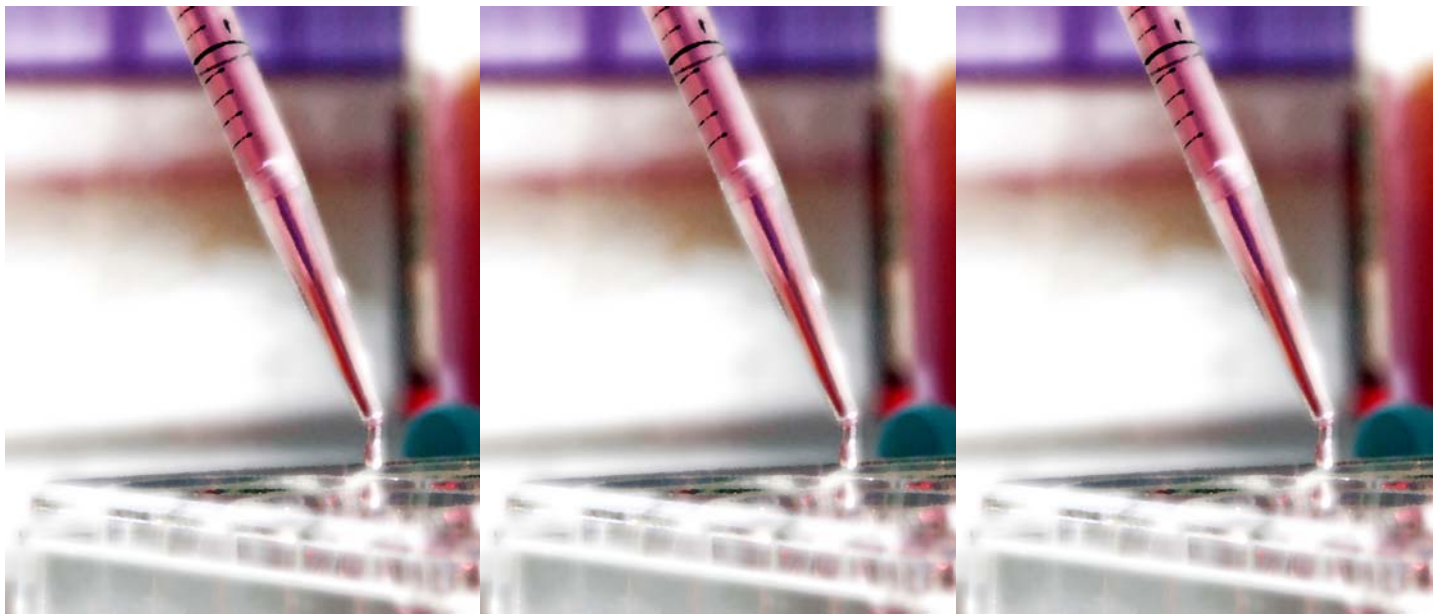
The technologies that were established during the FUGE programme have broad applications, and are equally important for biotechnologists, molecular biologists, physicians, and other researchers. Therefore, it will be important that we have a conscious awareness of how NTNU's future strategy will affect biotechnology at the university.

“Science Through 250 years”

On 12 March 2010, the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology opened a large exhibition to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the Royal Norwegian Society of Science and Letters and the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Norwegian Institute of Technology. The jubilee exhibition includes four sub-exhibitions with the common theme “Science through 250 years”. The exhibitions show how beliefs, science and technological development have affected our social development.

FUGE Mid-Norway was invited to participate in the preparations for a sub-exhibition called “Research and the Future”. Together with the Kavli Institute for Systems Neuroscience, we created a brain that visitors may walk into and an exhibit that enables people to explore the wonders of a cell.

A family day was arranged at the exhibition on 6 June 2010. FUGE Mid-Norway was fortunate to have Anne Heidi Skogholt and Torunn Bruland available to answer questions from visitors about cells and genes. They showed visitors live cells through a microscope and visualized chromosomes during cell division.



PhD and postdoc positions in 2010

FUGE Mid-Norway announced the availability of one PhD and one postdoc. position for 2010. The applications have been evaluated by an external review panel, and the FUGE Mid-Norway committee and board. The two individuals who have been offered the positions are:

Susan Maleki, IBT/NT,
“Improved alginate production in *Pseudomonas fluorescens* using a model-based approach.”

Vidar Beisvåg, IKMM/DMF,
“The role of microRNA in cancer and carcinogenesis. with human gastric cancer as a model.”

80 million NOK to HUNT Biobank

The Norwegian Research Council has committed 80 million NOK to establish and develop “Biobank Norway”. The work is being managed and coordinated by Professor Kristian Hveem and the HUNT Biobank. This will strengthen the national biobank infrastructure.

FUGE Mid-Norway congratulates Hveem and the HUNT Biobank for the funding commitment!

MedTek award 2010

FUGE Midt-Norge congratulates Karin M. Gilljam, Per Arne Aas, Emadoldin Feyzi og Marit Otterlei for their selection as winners of the research award in Medical Technology 2010.

The prize was awarded for their outstanding efforts to identify the protein sequence APIM and its interaction with the protein PCNA, which is important in cell division and DNA repair (Giljam et al. JCB 2009, 186 (5) :645-654). The discovery is associated with high therapeutic potential in cancer treatment and led in 2009 to the establishment of a company called APIM Therapeutics AS.

News from NFR

(The Research Council of Norway)

The FUGE-NFR web page is constantly updated with news related to functional genomics. ([Link to FUGE-NFR](#)).

New opportunities for old businesses

“Increased value from marine resources” was the theme when groups in Møre og Romsdal gathered recently at a seminar on marine bioprospecting.

FUGE between the covers

Work on new biotech initiatives, genetic mapping of cod and salmon, marine bioprospecting, and dialogue to enhance the social relevance of biotech research are among the highlights found in FUGE's 2009 annual report.

ESF announces funding

The European Science Foundation has announced the availability of funding through the network programme called Frontiers of Functional Genomics.

Seminars in September

“How to increase cooperation between non-physicians and physicians at the new integrated hospital?”

September 16, at 09.00 – 13.00, Labororiesenteret

Preliminary programme:

Kl. 09.00 Velkommen v/ Magne Børset

Kl. 09.05 Informasjon fra FUGE Midt-Norge noder

Kl. 09.40 Øystein Kruger ”Suksessfulle integreringer av molekylærbiologer Helse-Øst”

Kl. 10.10 Arne Klungland ”Suksessfull integrering av molekylærbiologer ved Rikshospitalet”.

Kl. 10.40 Speed-dating: ”Møt en molekylærbiolog med sans for klinikken”.

Frank Skorpen, Ann-Charlotte Iversen, Trude Helen Flo

Kl. 11.00 Diskusjonspanel

Kl. 12.00 Lunsj.

More information and final programme will be announced after the summer vacation.

“The local bioinformatics network seminar: High-throughput –omics!”

September 28, at 09.00-18.00 at Ringve Gård.

Invited speakers:

Eivind Hovig, Dept. of Tumor Biology, Oslo University Hospital / Bioinformatics Group, University of Oslo

Guro Dalheim Olsen/Linda Tømmerdal, Department of Cancer Research and Molecular Medicine, NTNU

Tone Frost Bathen, MR Cancer / Department of Circulation and Medical Imaging, NTNU

Vessela Kristensen, Institute for Cancer Research, Oslo University Hospital Radiumhospitalet

Frode Berven, Proteomic Unit / Department of Biomedicine, University of Bergen

Eilif Lund, Department of Community Medicine, University of Tromsø

Watch the local PBI web <<http://www.ntnu.no/bioinformatics>>.

More information will be announced.