



**BOARD MEETING 3/2009**

**25.5.2009**

***MINUTES***

**Title:** Meeting of the Board of FIMM 3/2009  
**Time:** 25 May 2009, at 15.05—17.15  
**Place:** FIMM Meeting Room D307a, Biomedicum Helsinki 2U (3<sup>rd</sup> floor),  
Tukholmankatu 8, Helsinki

**Chair:**

Research Director, Professor Anna-Elina Lehesjoki, Neuroscience Center, University of Helsinki;  
Vice Chair of the Board of FIMM

**Attendees:**

Vice Director General, Professor Juhani Eskola<sup>1</sup>, THL  
Dean, Professor Kimmo Kontula, Faculty of Medicine, University of Helsinki  
Director, Professor Heikki Mannila, Helsinki Institute for Information Technology, HIIT  
Research Director, Professor Hans Söderlund, VTT  
Vice President, Business Development, MD, PhD, EMBA Aino Takala, Orion Corporation  
Research Director, Professor Lasse Viinikka<sup>1</sup>, HUS  
Docent Elisabeth Widén, FIMM

**Permanent Expert:**

Professor Olli Silvennoinen, Biocenter Finland

**Experts:**

Research Director, Professor Leena Peltonen-Palotie<sup>1</sup>, FIMM  
Research Director Janna Saarela, FIMM

<sup>1</sup> Left in item 10

**Invited:**

Vice Rector, Professor Matti J. Tikkanen, University of Helsinki  
Dr Iiris Hovatta<sup>2</sup>, Faculty of Medicine, University of Helsinki, FIMM National Network for Molecular Medicine  
Dr Krister Wennerberg<sup>2</sup>, Drug Discovery Division, Southern Research Institute, Birmingham, Alabama, USA

<sup>2</sup> Present in items 4—5

**Presenter:**

Director, Professor Olli Kallioniemi, FIMM

**Secretary:**

Administrative Manager Reetta Niemelä, FIMM

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**Meeting of the Board of FIMM 3/2009**

- 1 Opening of the meeting and presence of a quorum**
- 2 Approval of the agenda**
- 3 Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting**
- 4 Presentation by Dr Iiris Hovatta, Member of the FIMM National Network for Molecular Medicine**
- 5 Presentation by Dr Krister Wennerberg, FIMM International Group Leader Applicant**
- 6 International Group Leaders**
- 7 Next Group Leader Call with the Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine**
- 8 Renewal of the name of the Finnish Genome Center, FGC**
- 9 Discussion on the collaboration with Helsinki Biomedical Graduate School, HBGS**
- 10 Announcements**
- 11 Other business**
- 12 Date of the next meeting**
- 13 Closing of the meeting**

### **1 Opening of the meeting and presence of a quorum**

**Proposal:** It was proposed that a quorum be present when the Chair of the meeting as well as at least half of the other members are present (FIMM regulations 7 §).

**Decision:** It was recorded that a quorum was present.

### **2 Approval of the agenda**

**Proposal:** It was proposed that the agenda be approved.

**Decision:** As proposed.

### **3 Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting**

**Proposal:** It was proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 March 2009 is approved (Annex 1).

**Decision:** As proposed.

### **4 Presentation by Dr Iiris Hovatta, Member of the FIMM National Network for Molecular Medicine**

Dr Iiris Hovatta (Faculty of Medicine, University of Helsinki), Member of the FIMM National Network for Molecular Medicine was invited to the Board meeting to give a short presentation of her FIMM specific research plan.

### **5 Presentation by Dr Krister Wennerberg, FIMM International Group Leader Applicant**

Dr Krister Wennerberg's (Drug Discovery Division, Southern Research Institute, Birmingham, Alabama, USA) second visit to Helsinki took place on 17—26 May 2009. Krister Wennerberg was invited to the Board meeting to give a short presentation of his research plan.

### **6 International Group Leaders (presenter: Kallioniemi)**

The deadline for the third call for FIMM International Group Leaders was on 17 October 2008. The Search Committee, comprising of international experts, interviewed the top applicants in Helsinki on 25 February 2009. The Search Committee recommended to the Board of FIMM that PhD Denis Kainov, PhD Alexander Zelikin, as well as PhD Krister Wennerberg should be considered as qualified for the group leader positions.

In its meeting on 19 March 2009 the Board authorised Olli Kallioniemi to start the recruitment negotiations with Dr Zelikin and Dr Wennerberg. However, the Board wanted a more detailed research plan from Dr Kainov and a second visit to Helsinki before making the final decision. Dr Kainov's visit to Helsinki took place on 13—14 May 2009 when he also gave a presentation entitled "Molecular basis for group A trichothiodystrophy" in FIMM Seminar. Dr Kainov's detailed research plan was sent to the Members of the Board prior the meeting.

According to the Regulations of FIMM, the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) issues statements on research groups to be appointed to the Institute. The statement of the SAB on Dr Wennerberg and Dr Zelikin was available in the Board meeting (Annex 2).

- Proposal:**
1. It was suggested that based on the recommendations of the Search Committee and the SAB the Board decide on the selection of Dr Krister Wennerberg and Dr Alexander Zelikin FIMM International Group Leaders.
  2. It was suggested that the Board decide on whether to continue the negotiations with Dr Denis Kainov.

- Decision:**
1. As proposed.
  2. The Board supported plans to recruit Dr Denis Kainov and authorised Olli Kallioniemi to continue the recruitment negotiations. Statement of the SAB will be requested by the next Board meeting.

### **7 Next Group Leader Call with the Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine (presenter: Kallioniemi)**

The representatives of the Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine met in Oslo in February and discussed among other things that the Nordic nodes will launch joint calls for group leaders, post docs and doctoral students. The plan is to have a common advertisement for the three nodes on new group leader positions in August-September.

- Proposal:**
1. It was suggested that FIMM will participate in the joint call and that FIMM's focus in the call will be biomarkers, personalised medicine and population genetics.
  2. It was suggested that the Board discusses whether FIMM will exclusively continue with international recruitments or could also local recruitments be considered in exceptional cases.

- Decision:**
1. As proposed.
  2. The Board decided that local recruitments can be considered in exceptional cases in the joint call with the Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine. FIMM will follow the EMBL model and the aim will be to recruit group leaders who are not yet fully established as independent group leaders.

### **8 Renewal of the name of the Finnish Genome Center, FGC (presenter: Kallioniemi)**

The Board decided in its first meeting on 7 March 2007 that the Finnish Genome Center (FGC) that was merged to FIMM, would continue its activities as before until the Director of FIMM has been nominated and the activities of FIMM planned in more detail.

FIMM has continued to maintain and strengthen FGC as a national facility for genotyping, sequencing and data analysis. In the Final Report of the Steering Group of the Finnish Research Infrastructure Survey and Roadmap Project the Finnish Genome Center (FIMM FGC) is nominated as one of the eight existing bio and biomedical research infrastructures of national importance.

The activities now also include high-throughput genotyping, biobanking and biomarkers and associated bioinformatics. The working title of the Center has been FIMM Genome and Technology Center describing the development and expansion of the Center towards new and related fields and novel technological possibilities in the ongoing transition towards the post-genome era.

The new name of FGC is proposed to be FIMM Technology Centre consisting of the following units:

- Genomics
- High-Throughput Screening
- Informatics
- Biobanking and Biomarkers

**Proposal:** It was suggested that the Board approve that the name of the Finnish Genome Center will be renewed to FIMM Technology Centre (FIMM Teknoliakeskus).

**Decision:** As proposed.

### **9 Discussion on the collaboration with Helsinki Biomedical Graduate School, HBGS (presenter: Kallioniemi)**

Helsinki Biomedical Graduate School's (HBGS) and FIMM's representatives had a meeting on 20 March 2009 and discussed their collaboration on local, national and international level (Annex 3). It was agreed that based on a proposal of the Board of FIMM the Board of HBGS could discuss the current admission practices in its meeting. It was also agreed that HBGS will arrange a special seminar for students in August-September. The aim is to increase awareness of FIMM's new group leaders and to give students a possibility to discuss in person with FIMM group leaders.

FIMM was involved in an application for a national graduate school programme with HBGS. HBGS was appointed altogether 27 graduate school positions for 2010—2013, but no new positions were allocated, although several new initiatives were suggested, including FIMM providing the national and international dimension to HBGS. In the evaluation report of the Academy of Finland it was stated that it would be desirable that HBGS takes FIMM into account when deciding on graduate school positions.

It was suggested that the Board discuss the issues to be proposed to the Board of HBGS and whether FIMM should launch already in the autumn a call for doctoral students following the EMBL model.

**Decision:** The Board of FIMM will propose to the Board of HBGS that of the new 27 graduate school positions for 2010—2013 six (6) positions will be allocated to FIMM and that the doctoral students to these positions will be selected following the EMBL model:

- The Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine will publish a joint international call at the same time with EMBL.
- The applicants will apply to FIMM (they do not need to define the research group at the application phase).
- Following the EMBL model, doctoral students will initially rotate between the different FIMM groups (intramural) before selecting their primary group. Also international visits in the different Nordic EMBL nodes will be planned.

This will be a pilot project for international recruitment and training of researchers. This new initiative would further strengthen the high-quality profile of HBGS.

### **10 Announcements**

**10.1** The Board was suggested in an e-mail meeting to confirm by 13 May 2009 whether it approves the proposal that Professor Tomi Mäkelä, Director of the Institute of Biomedicine from 1 July 2009, will be nominated as the representative of the independent institutes (natural and health sciences) to the Election Collegium (Helsingin yliopiston vaalikollegio). The proposal was approved (Annex 4).

- 10.2** The Senate of the University of Helsinki approved the Strategy of the University for 2010—2012 on 11 February 2009 (Annex 5a). The implementation of the strategy is built on five policies/programmes:
- Human Resources Policy (approved 18 March 2009)
  - Research Policy (approved 15 April 2009)
  - Programme for the Development of Teaching and Studies (approved 15 April 2009)
  - Programme for societal interaction (approved 6 May 2009)
  - Programme for Leadership and Support Services (proposed to be approved 20 May 2009)
- The Research Policy is of specific interest for FIMM (Annex 5b). The draft programme was circulated for comments and FIMM sent comments on how it could be mentioned as an example in the programme, e.g. in promoting the internationalisation and researcher's career as well as public-private funding. One of the strategic development activities in the programme is to strengthen the funding of FIMM. In addition, FIMM is mentioned in the programme as follows:
- as a new joint research institute (page 2)
  - as an example of a national and international infrastructure (page 5)
  - as an example of internationalisation (page 9)
- FIMM will prepare its first Target Programme in autumn 2009. A template for the Programme as well as instructions will be sent to the faculties and institutes in the end of May. Draft template of 12 May 2009 in Annex 5c. The Programme will be prepared as follows:
- FIMM's Director, Research Directors, Group Leaders, Research Coordinators and representatives from Administration will meet on 8 June 2009. The draft action plan will be prepared in June-August.
  - The Board of FIMM will discuss the draft action plan in its meeting in September.
  - The draft action plan will be sent to the Rector of the University of Helsinki by 2 October 2009.
  - The negotiations with the Rector will take place between 26 October—18 November.
  - The Senate of the University will approve the budget of the University for 2010 in November.
  - The action plan will be signed in December.
- 10.3** FIMM Annual Report 2008. The Board of FIMM decided on March 19 2009 that the Annual Report is based on the report prepared for the Ministry of Education in February and that the final draft is circulated among the Members of the Board before it will be printed. The printed version of the Annual Report was available at the meeting. The logo and visual appearance of FIMM has been prepared by Markkinointiviestintä Dialogi Oy.
- 10.4** Rector Thomas Wilhelmsson has nominated Research Director, Professor Lasse Viinikka as the new representative of HUS to the Board of FIMM (Annex 6). HUS representative Professor Jaakko Karvonen retired on 1 February 2009.
- 10.5** Based on the Collaboration Agreement between Biocenter Finland (BF) and FIMM the Board of BF has nominated Professor Olli Silvennoinen as the Expert to the Board of FIMM until 28.2.2010 (Annex 7). Olli Kallioniemi is the Expert in the Board of BF.
- 10.6** Rector Thomas Wilhelmsson, Vice Rector Matti J. Tikkanen, Director and Academy Professor Mart Saarma (BF), Professor Irma Thesleff (Biocentrum Helsinki) and Olli Kallioniemi discussed BF-FIMM collaboration on 5 May 2009. At this stage the collaboration will continue as described in the BF-FIMM Agreement signed in March 2009.
- 10.7** After being founded in 2006, BF started with the support of the Ministry of Education to coordinate the restructuring of nationally important technology platforms in several areas. This process entails division of tasks, avoidance of unnecessary overlaps, and assignment of

priorities and responsibilities to different centers. Importantly, infrastructure networks were established in the different technology areas. Recently, the infrastructure networks have been renewed to reflect areas listed in the new national program of restructuring and development of biosciences in Finland (for years 2010-2012). FIMM also participates in the infrastructure networks.

FIMM representatives in BF Infrastructure Networks are:

Bioinformatics: Dr Daniel Nicorici

Biological imaging: Dr Johan Lundin

Genome-wide methods: Dr Janna Saarela

Model organisms: Dr Sergey Kuznetsov

Proteomics and metabolomics: Research Professor Matej Oresic

Stem cells and biomaterials: -

Structural Biology and Biophysics: -

Translational Research Technologies: Professor Olli Kallioniemi, Dr Kimmo Pitkänen

Viral gene transfer and cell therapy: Dr Emmy Verschuren

The purpose of bioscience technology platform grants is to build, develop and maintain national technology platform services. The deadline for the applications is 20 August 2009.

- 10.8** FIMM applied for a Tekes Finnish Distinguished Professorship for Dr Jonathan Knowles and for a FiDiPro Fellowship for Dr Samu Melkko. In the internal evaluation the Research Council of the University of Helsinki prioritized both FIMM applications as number one. Tekes' deadline for the preliminary proposals (I stage) was on 27 February 2009. FIMM's both applications were successful and Tekes requested for full applications (II stage) with the deadline on 22 May 2009. Dr Samu Melkko has, unfortunately, informed that he withdraws from the call.
- 10.9** FIMM prepared a proposal for a five-year professorship (pooliprofessuuri) in the field of Translational Medicine for the University of Helsinki in November 2008. Decisions were made by the University Senate on 6 May 2009, but FIMM was unfortunately not successful (Annex 8).
- 10.10** Biobanking activities on Meilahti Campus. Olli Kallioniemi gave a presentation of FIMM and the biobanking plans for the University of Helsinki-HUS Steering Group on 9 March 2009. In order to promote systematic procedures, professional operations, quality control, sample/data safety, improved efficacy and cost and longterm value a Meilahti biobank has been established.

Based on the discussion in the Board's meeting on 19 March 2009 Vice Rector Matti Tikkanen and Olli Kallioniemi invited experts from the University of Helsinki, HUS/HUSLAB, THL and Folkhälsan to discuss the joint effort. The outcome of the meeting, held on April 24, was the decision to start an investigation of the needs of and possibilities for centralised biobanking on the campus (Annex 9). The work is overseen by a steering group: Matti J. Tikkanen (Chair; University of Helsinki), Juhani Eskola (THL), Kimmo Kontula (University of Helsinki), Olli Kallioniemi (FIMM), Martti Syrjälä / Lasse Lehtonen (HUSLAB), Per-Henrik Groop (Folkhälsan), Kimmo Pitkänen (Secretary; FIMM).

The work is performed by a working group: Kimmo Pitkänen (Chair; FIMM), Helena Kääriäinen (THL), Markus Perola (THL), Juha Pekka Turunen / Tuomo Timonen (HUSLAB), Johan Lundin (Folkhälsan), Janna Saarela (FIMM), Juha Muilu (FIMM). The working can invite additional experts, and will deliver its interim report on 8 June 2009.

- 10.11** Appointments at FIMM:
- Research Coordinator Imre Västriik, PhD, as of 14 April 2009
  - HTS (high-throughput screening) Coordinator Maxim Beshpalov as of 1 June 2009 (50 %).

- 10.12** The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health have decided to support coordinating activities at national level of the three biomedical ESFRI projects (BBMRI, EATRIS and ELIXIR).

**11 Other business**

There was no other business.

**12 Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting will be arranged on 7 September 2009 at 15.30.

**13 Closing of the meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 17.15.

Helsinki 7.9.2009

Anna-Eina Lehesjoki  
Research Director, Professor  
Vice Chair, Board of FIMM

Olli Kallioniemi  
Professor  
Director of FIMM  
Presenter

Reetta Niemelä  
Administrative Manager, FIMM  
Secretary