

Mobilising the Nordics

A summary from webinar 1

- The following slides make up a **brief and concise summary** from round 2 of discussions at the first webinar under the *Mobilising the Nordics* project.
- The focus of the webinar was **Mission Orientation** with 10 groups discussing each their topic and selected question within an *AS-IS* and *TO-BE* framework.

Groups and themes for round 2 discussions

1. How do we work with **partnering**?

2. How do we **work with inter-disciplinarity**?

3. How do we **create missions**?

4. How do we **create urgent missions**?

5. How can we **work together across the Nordic region into the EU missions**?

6. How can we **work with user involvement**?

7. How are we going to **handle and share risk**?

8. How do we **build collaborative competences** in our organisations?

9. How do we **create/develop markets**?

10. How do we **become better at building a two-way research and innovation chain**?

See main points on last slide...



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 1: How do we work with partnering?

AS-IS:

- The system in the public sector/society does not fully support collaboration
- Partnerships should rest on both competition and collaboration
- Partnerships is embedded in social relationships
- There seems to be an institutional inertia in our system, and we do not move/adapt fast enough to changes
- Partnerships need to be relevant to partners.
- There seems to be Nordic collaboration within medico technology

TO-BE:

- Nordic collaboration/partnerships could make us stronger together in the EU
- We can probably learn from partnerships and competition in research also with respect to education?
- We need to know each other if we should be able to create partnerships, but how do we come to know more about each other across the national boundaries?
- There should be common grounds for entering into partnerships, and the Nordic Council could create frameworks for such partnerships
- Such frameworks could be designed and launched i.e. for the Nordic Hospitals and universities



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 2: How do we work with interdisciplinarity?

AS-IS:

- Doesn't come automatically. The planning phase is therefore important.
- The younger generation are more skilled in cooperating, which makes it easier to go into interdisciplinary work at, e.g., universities.
- In humanities and social science interdisciplinarity is important. The external pressure of combining.
- There is an inherent paradox in interdisciplinarity: In society it is fruitful, but for young researchers it is counterproductive. Harder to become published.
- When combining technical and social fields there is a risk for working in parallel.
- Long term funding is key, because getting to a common language takes time, but there is also some inertia within this.

TO-BE:

- Not a question of either/or, you need both.
- In the future, there must be more thematic journals that reflect the need for interdisciplinarity.
- “Interdisciplinaria” – a new kind of experts.
- You need to handle your own discipline first, and then you might be able to start working interdisciplinary. It is the way you cooperate with others. But here the assumption is that the fields will be the same in the future, and that might not be the case. New, future fields are taking expertise from different disciplines.
- How do you combine creating opportunities for scientific contribution to one's field *and* making social contributions/solving social problems. A dual-aim approach.
- A need for help for especially young researchers.
- Instead of hinder fame, interdisciplinarity should lead to fame
→ Thematic peer-review-groups as a way .



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 3: How do we create missions?

- There is a need to make missions more coherent – but how is this possible?
- Missions tells us where to go – but we also need to think about how to get there
- Important to rally around something. In DK we don't see the Nordics as an obvious arena – therefore we need compelling missions where especially the private sector needs missions where the Nordic focus is important (and can't be European or global)
- Missions should be “translated” into the private companies – why do we need Nordic missions in the private sector?
- Important to identify the natural and viable Nordic missions - something that ONLY makes sense on the Nordic level – ex. closer to where we live. But should the Nordic missions be a steppingstone for the European or global missions, or do they need to stand alone?
- The Nordic brand value could have great potential – it's easier to collaborate as Nordics when we look far away. How do the Nordics look from far away? We need the mass of the Nordics to go abroad – that gives purpose.
- Inherent dilemma of bottom-up vs. top-down



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 4: How do we create *urgent* missions?

AS-IS:

- In general, there are already too many missions, and we can't all own these mission.
- Many missions creating barriers to mobilize engagement from the citizens or create silos.

TO-BE:

- Topics that matter for the citizens – easier to communicate the urgency.
- Look to different directions to solve wicked problems.
- **Join forces** and not all develop new missions.
- **Private and public collaboration** is a strong hold to look at.
- The combination of top-down and bottom-up is the way forward.
- The agencies that are catalysts in processes should be trained in **working at the system-level**.
- Develop demonstrators within the mission defined by the EU.



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 4: How do we create *urgent* missions?

How do we create an urgent mission, e.g., in one of the four missions under Mobilising the Nordics?

- Focus on a topic that **matters for the citizens** – making it easier to communicate the urgency.
- Look to a **different direction**, find wicked problems, involve different organizations, countries and governments.
- We can't all own the mission - **join forces** and not all develop new missions.
 - The quantity of missions - many missions creating barriers to mobilize engagement from the citizens or create silos?
 - Nordic missions may prevent silo-making
 - Develop demonstrators within the mission defined by the EU?
- Private and public collaboration** is a strong hold to look at. We should *build upon the experiences of handling the pandemic*.
- The agencies which is catalysts in processes should be trained in **working at the system-level** when developing and working with missions.
- Creating a stronger community by starting a movement in Scandinavia.
 - E.g., making Scandinavian TED-talks.
- The combination of top-down and bottom-up is the way forward.**
 - On the one hand, top-down created:
 - Somebody must lead the implementation, take the first step. E.g., political lead, with high ambition levels.
 - On the other hand, bottom-up created:
 - The market mechanism is important in creating urgent missions. A bottom-up approach, where missions emerges automatically.



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 5: How can we work together across the Nordic region into the EU missions?

AS-IS:

- Established senior science officer for Southern Sweden universities in Brussels. Presence in Brussels enables us to suggest members of the Mission Boards (but so far with no effect)
- KTH examples suggest that we (from the five technical universities approach) can try, but have not had impact so far.
- Regional people from in Brussels can provide information but not impact. Useful for spreading information to back home, but hardly having any influence
- NordHORC group meets to share information of what has happened, but is not addressing what is going to happen

TO-BE:

- More strategy discussions must be taken, before decisions are taken
- In the Nordic countries we should at least agree open on some subjects, where we would like to work together
- NCM should agree on items in which to make a joint influence in Brussels
- Could be a way to (re)establish a good Nordic dialogue
- We are not set up to do this type of influence in EU, but merely on the internal Nordic perspective



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 6: How can we work with user involvement?

Mission orientation – is it new or just new wrapping?

- Sometimes – new wrapping matters! Apple vs Nokia – both had same technological tools in place but didn't use it in the same way. Conditions have changed – harder 10 years ago, now we have a momentum for actually taking action.

User involvement – when designing interventions:

- Users 'own' the right to decide (kids have the right to decide what's on the school menu, Swedish citizens have the right to decide how the streets are designed or changed)

Conflicting views from the users – always arise, you shouldn't plan for avoiding them:

- Try to organize for the 'conflicts' to meet – to share perspectives, enable people to have discussions together.
- You let the conflict happen – you don't try to intervene; you let the project and the users have their views and let them express them.

- Behaviour change: Not about presenting data to people! It's about letting them try to ride a bike if they usually take the car, it's about bringing them "physical" experience with what we're trying to adjust them to.

Innovation in the future:

- We must look both at the demand side and the supply side, when we choose our users.
- We've been very focused on "professional" stakeholders – in the future we need to engage a lot more with citizens, patients, "normal" people → good examples on this transition: Streets, urban living-projects.

Ethical issues regarding using 'end-users' in the innovation process? i.e. in Health research?

- YES, and you should be careful! However, you may also ask: is it ethical NOT to involve them?



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 7: How are we going to handle and share risk?

AS-IS:

- We face a risk of ending up in silos of all kind.
- We face a risk where we do not have methods to reduce the lack of an interdisciplinary point of view.
- We are rewarded for not taking risks.
- We face a risk because we compete in the Nordics.
- We face a risk because we have a business model where we are focused on sending sent applications instead of delivering impact.
- We face a risk because we lack operative people in the missions.

TO-BE:

- We need to be willing to take more risks and to handle chaos.
- We need to handle risk within the Nordic countries.
- We need to collaborate more within the Nordics countries.
- We need to work with crowd funding.
- We need to talk less and have a more hands-on approach.
- We need to share gains and not only risks between the private and public sectors.
- We need to inspire people to collaborate.



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 8: How do we build collaborative competences in our organisations?

AS-IS:

- Collaboration is the holy grail – across different domains of science and across sectors.
- There is a need for understanding each others' perspectives - system perspective
- It is a difficult albeit necessary mindset!
- We must see what our intra-organisational roles are in order to reach out across organisations.
- There is a need for role clarification.
- How do you feed back from the Nordic collaboration? How do you spread out the gained knowledge
- Organizational structure matters - how can we facilitate developing competencies. Line vs matrix organizations.
- Silos are emerging too easily
- It is a management task to secure external collaboration in networks
- Competition vs collaboration incentives - how do we come about that?
- Sharing the same values/vision -> create interest -> this provides support that is needed -> gain something together.
- Potential in Nordic university collaboration. Structural barriers: Working abroad, national vs. Nordic funding.
- We have good intentions for collaboration, but it is challenging in practice.
- Mix of bottom-up and top-down in missions is a useful way of looking at it.
- Major goals -> matrix groups working with sub-challenges + participation + intrinsic motivation + self-leadership.
- Solving pragmatic issues: budget and binding stakeholders



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 8: How do we build collaborative competences in our organisations?

TO-BE:

- Collaboration is a question of: Purpose, climate, motivation.
- It is necessary to develop a common goal, vision and purpose that can inspire the different actors on a personal level.
- Establishment of common rules for the journey – based on interaction, trust and common resources.
- Need for non-competitive environments – acting in non-judgmental way, being open.
- How do we do things in practice - using graphics, visualizing tools, creativity, driving collaboration
- You need to use a medium to get different sectors to collaborate
- Making synthesis instead of analysis.
- How do we get practical in analytical environments
- Training teams in systems instead of organisations - this is where missions orientation is handy.
- Authorities are flooded with demands that they maybe don't have resources to deal with
- It is an issue that there is not enough willingness to collaborate. The need for control is working against trust and open collaboration.
- We should promote the people who contribute by making *other people* great.
- Focus on serving the customers, stakeholders and broader society.
- The Nordics must also consider where it's most attractive to collaborate. A question of choosing to work in or collaborate with the Nordics above other regions.



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 9: How to develop/create markets

AS-IS:

- Focus on reducing emissions
- Technology push
- Europe is a start-up region
- Easy to create a company – not easy to serve the public markets
- Difficult to change the public sector
- Uneven distribution of skills and needs of skills between different line of industries
- Very different situation for highly-skilled and “un-skilled” then they are reskilled

TO-BE:

- Reducing emissions *and* creating jobs
- Technology push (opportunity) *and* societal pull (demand)
- Europe should also be a *scale-up region* – government/public sector is important for scaling up
- Sustainable markets – otherwise no markets
- Industry and public sector working much more together
- New models of sharing-handling risk
- *People skills and life-long learning on the next level.* More focused skill development – speed up! A common Nordic project/mission!



Focused group work II – Mission Orientation

...Group 10: How do we become better at building a two-way research and innovation chain?

- The innovation chain is not linear but should instead be considered a two-way process.
- We need to have a purpose with our research activity. It should be a common approach to be mission-oriented.
- The Nordic countries must facilitate the aims of the mission-oriented approach.
- Connecting and increasing transparency in social innovation is important. Technical and social innovation should be connected.
- It is often difficult to reach the people and areas of society that we are supposed to make an impact for. We need to connect with the most important stakeholders.
- We need to understand different sectors and knowledge areas´.
- This is an evolution. And there are never guaranties for how the society will adopt new ideas and products.
- Become better at involving stakeholders to provide feedback on whether new initiatives are useful/have an impact.
- The more challenging the mission, the more stakeholders are usually involved.
- *The risk-discussion* also makes up a significant problem
- Early dialogue with stakeholders. They must be brought onboard as early as possible. This will also create more ownership and meaning in the long run.
- The process should be more circular by design.



Main points...

1. How do we work with **partnering**?

Nordic Council of Ministers should create framework

2. How do we **work with inter-disciplinarity**?

Working with interdisciplinarity should give prestige

3. How do we **create missions**?

We should collaborate and find the Nordic take on the missions

4. How do we **create urgent missions**?

Topics that matter for the citizens – creates urgency

5. How can we **work together across the Nordic region** into the EU missions?

NCM should have joint influence in Brussels

6. How can we work with **user involvement**?

Engage a lot more with citizens and “normal” people

7. How are we going to **handle and share risk**?

Nordic collaboration to take more risk together

8. How do we build **collaborative competences** in our organisations?

We should promote the people who contribute by making other people great

9. How do we **create/develop markets**?

We should focus more on scaling-up innovation

10. How do we become better at building a **two-way research and innovation chain**?

Work across sectors





See you at the second webinar on 7 June
in the ***Mobilising the Nordics*** series

Read more on:

www.nordforsk.org/mobilising-nordics

