



# NFOG Board meeting October 2022

## Minutes

**Date:** October 24 – 25

**Place:** Copenhagen

### **NFOG Board members:**

#### **Present:**

NFOG officers: Oskari Heikinheimo (President), Kristina Renault (Treasurer), Sebastian Gidlöf (Secretary General).

National societies: Annemette W Lykkebo (DSOG), Aðalbjörg Björgvinsdóttir (FÍFK), Michael Algovik (SFOG), Hannele Laivuori (SGY) (October 25 only), Ragnar Kvie Sande (President NGF) (ad hoc secretary of the meeting).

NFOG Committees/Activities: Niels Klarskov (Scientific Committee), Lars Ladfors (Webmaster), Ganesh Acharya (AOGS), Arushma Imran Nasqah (NFYOG) and Pepe Salvesen (Congress President, NFOG Trondheim 2023).

#### **Absent:**

NFOG officers: Sebastian Gidlöf (Secretary General) was ill and had asked to be excused.

### **1. Opening, approval of invitation and agenda**

Oskari Heikinheimo opened the meeting and welcomed all participants. The meeting agenda was approved with slight modifications due to board members schedules.

### **2. Approval of minutes NFOG Board**

Minutes of the meeting held in Trondheim March 24–25, 2022 were reviewed and approved without comments.

### **3. Scientific Committee and NFOG Fund Applications October 2022**

Niels Klarskov gave the report of the Scientific Committee and provided a review of the grant applications.

Two applicants did not meet the criteria and were rejected. Applications for reimbursement of the Malmö course in advanced gynecological ultrasound varied considerably and the Scientific Committee suggested all applicants should be granted DKK 12 000. The board approved the proposed decisions of the Scientific Committee without changes.

There were fewer applications to visit foreign clinics which was regarded as a welcomed development by the NFOG board. The board would still like to see more applications for Nordic scientific collaborations.

The NFOG board wants to take a pragmatic and flexible approach to the use of funds granted for activities canceled due to covid.

The Scientific Committee has made suggestions on how to prioritize applications. Suggestions are made to include also funding for dissemination of the results from Nordic collaboration studies at international scientific meetings. Changes will have to be approved by the General Assembly.



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### 4. Webmaster

The webmaster has solved the problems with the thesis registry.

The dissemination of the grant applications to the members of Scientific Committee were discussed. It was decided to continue as before, and the Scientific Committee may share the applications using a cloud service.

### 5. EBCOG

The relation between NFOG and EBCOG was discussed. It was noted that collaborations regarding guidelines and among younger doctors are beneficial. No Nordic representatives are involved in planning of the EBCOG meeting in Krakow in March 2023.

NFOG should

- (i) encourage Nordic delegates to attend the EBCOG council physical meetings,
- (ii) promote Nordic representatives in the EBCOG congress planning committees,
- (iii) use the opportunity to gather delegates from all participating countries to exchange experiences, and
- (iv) improve further collaboration between Nordic EBCOG delegates.

Further, Lars Ladfors will coordinate a pre-congress strategy meeting between the Nordic delegates and NFOG encourages its delegates in EBCOG to suggest ways to improve the collaboration between NFOG and EBCOG.

### 6. Prizes

Prizes for posters, oral presentations and papers at national and Nordic meetings were discussed. The NFOG board is not certain of how much or who should decide who gets the prizes. The board asks Sebastian Gidlöf to go through the minutes and find what our statutes and traditions are in this area. A presentation of this rules for prizes will be held by Sebastian Gidlöf at the next NFOG Board meeting.

### 7. FIGO

NFOG has been asked to submit suggestions for themes for a session at the upcoming FIGO congress in Paris (October 9–13, 2023). Several potential themes were discussed.

The NFOG board suggested two sessions, both with the headline “Choosing wisely”, one with an obstetrical theme (e.g. cesarean section rates), and one with a gynecological theme (e.g. Manchester operation and/or management of abnormal uterine bleeding).

The deadline for submitting suggestions for the program is November 21, 2022. Further suggestions are to be sent to Oskari no later than November 14. Oskari, Lars and Niels will work on the proposal. A draft for hearing will be circulating among the board members within two weeks.

### 8. NFYOG

Arushma Imran Nasqah gave the NFYOG report. The NFYOG board held a meeting in Stockholm.



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NFYOG plans a webinar for March 2023 on female genital mutilation.

NFYOG will arrange a social event for younger doctors August 27, 2023 at NFOG congress in Trondheim. The NFOG board suggests that NFYOG asks a pharmaceutical company to sponsor the event. NFYOG also suggested to have some sessions at the NFOG congress including a pre-congress course in sphincter rupture and a congress session on trauma and pregnancy. Pepe Salvesen stated that there is no room in the program for a congress session and suggested having both themes as pre-congress courses.

NFYOG works actively to increase its presence in social media, including accounts of the daily practice of young doctors in our field for learning across borders.

There are active plans for continuation and consistency despite upcoming board member turnover.

### 9. NFOG 2023

The Congress President Pepe Salvesen presented the plans of the NFOG 2023 congress.

#### *Timeline and program*

Date for abstract submissions will be December 10, 2022 – February 1, 2023

Early bird registration April 1, 2023.

The board recommends that the poster session and NFOG general assembly switch places in the afternoon August 29, 2023.

The NFOG board recommends the use of classic paper posters rather than electronic posters.

The pre-congress workshops were presented. NFYOG will run a sphincter rupture course with a maximum of 30 participants.

The thesis session will include the best thesis from the past 2 years from each country. It was decided that Sweden can present two theses, as SFOG awards two theses (one in obstetrics and one in gynecology), and Sweden has the largest number of gynecologists. There will not be a winner of the thesis session.

The NFOG board and the NFYOG board will have board meetings at the NFOG congress in Trondheim. The congress will waive the fee for the board members.

The elements that can be included in the dinner program, for instance prizes, were discussed.

#### *Meeting form and access*

The option of a hybrid meeting was discussed. The NFOG board does not recommend this, but it was decided that Pepe Salvesen investigates the possibility of having some lectures filmed and made accessible online after the congress.

Wiley will publish the accepted abstracts as citable publications in Acta. There will be a congress app and a small program-at-glance.

#### *Prizes*

Acta prize and NFOG young investigator was decided to be presented at the plenary session August 29, 2023, 08:30.



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The scientific committee decides the best posters and best oral presentations, three of each. At least one gynecology and one obstetrics winner in each category. Best poster and best oral presentation will be presented at the closing ceremony.

The prizes and awards may also be divided between the get-together, the congress dinner, and the closing ceremony. Presentation of next venue may be both at the dinner and at the closing ceremony.

### *Economy*

The planned budget of the NFOG2023 was presented and approved.

The suggested congress fees are NOK 4 500 for early bird, NOK 5 700 for regular attendees and NOK 6 700 for late registration. The NFOG board suggested increasing this by approximately 30% and offering reduced rates by approximately 50% to trainees and students.

### *Homework for the national societies*

The national societies should select the best thesis from the period 2020 – 2023 for the thesis session. The prize sum is DKK 2 500. Travel and expenses are not covered for awardees.

The national societies should also suggest candidates for the young investigator award minding that the awardee should be below 40 years.

## **10. Upcoming General Assembly**

The upcoming general assembly and changes in NFOG officers were discussed. Oskari Heikinheimo's tenure as NFOG president and Kristina Renault's position as treasurer will end at the NFOG2023 meeting. Both these positions are up for election and the national societies are made aware of this.

## **11. Investments**

Peter Ildahl was introduced to the board. Ildahl has been helping NFOG to manage our finances for the past 25 years. The last 15 years, NFOG have had an annual surplus varying from DKK 200 000 to 1 200 000. Currently the fortune is rather big for a scientific society. Therefore, NFOG risks being redefined as a business and become subject to paying taxes to the Danish authorities. Currently the fortune is about DKK 14 000 000. Kristina Renault is confident that there is a possibility of a negative balance in the years to come, due to the post covid effect and the switch to open access for AOGS.

NFOG has DKK 10 400 000 invested in Danish property bonds, which are shares in investments in physical properties. There are very strict rules governing such bonds, and they vary very little, with very low risk and limited possibilities for growth. Such bonds also represent ethically responsible investments.

Peter Ildahl clarified that the fund is not physically separate from the rest of the fortune, it is simply a fraction of our money that we may distribute for scientific purposes.

Ganesh Acharya discussed a possibility of acquiring an office space in Copenhagen for the society, as other similar societies abroad have done. Peter Ildahl does not recommend this course of action.



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Lars Ladfors suggested a possibility of NFOG waiving the fees for the national societies. Peter agreed that this could be possible but recommended reducing the fees rather than waiving them completely.

Peter Ildahl was given a heartfelt thanks from the board.

### 12. AOGS

#### *Journal report*

Ganesh Acharya gave the report from AOGS. The impact factor has increased to 4.544 which ranks AOGS as the 4<sup>th</sup> highest among general obstetrics and gynecology journal. The number of published papers has increased.

Most of the papers in AOGS originate in the Nordic countries, along with the UK, Italy, and the Netherlands. There are few papers from Denmark applying for the fee reimbursement, an arrangement that was decided in the previous NFOG board meeting.

The submission rate has dropped by 50% to 800 papers per year since the switch to open access. The acceptance rate has risen accordingly, from 15% to 25%. The average handling times are good, in the range of 10–20 days. Despite the concerns related to APC payment, Denmark has submitted 23 papers so far in 2022, comparable to Finland (26) and Norway (21).

AOGS needs replacement for two Norwegian associate editors, one has already been appointed and the other position will be advertised shortly. Recently some new international editorial board members have also been appointed.

#### *Revised decision on open access reimbursement*

The NFOG board has previously decided that all NFOG members who are not affiliated to an institution covering the publication fees and that has no funding for publication costs will be able to apply for funding for half of the publication costs in AOGS from the board initiative. The NFOG board now decided that approved applications should be reimbursed for the full publication cost. The decision will be made effective November 1, 2022.

A total of DKK 300 000 is set aside for this purpose. When the allocated resources have been depleted, the arrangement ends. The option to apply for open access reimbursement runs until January 1, 2024. All papers accepted for publication in AOGS will have the application approved.

### 13. Guidelines at the NFOG website

Michael Algovik pointed out the high number of old guidelines still on the website, and proposed revision of this part of the NFOG website. It was decided to remove the outdated guidelines on the website and instead publish links to the national guidelines' websites. It is encouraged to include an abstract in English in the national guidelines.

### 14. Next meetings

The next NFOG board meeting will be held in Stockholm, March 27–28, 2023. The meeting will start 9:00 March 27 and end at lunchtime March 28. Michael Algovik will inform his successor Christer Borgfeldt to book rooms and a meeting venue.



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The subsequent meeting will be in Trondheim, August 26–27, 2023. The meeting will start 9:00 August 26 and end at lunchtime August 28. Kristina Renault aims to negotiate a good price with a hotel and Ragnar Kvie Sande will organize.

### 15. New from national societies

**SFOG** has just had their annual one-week meeting, which was in hybrid form. It was a great success to finally be able to meet again. There is an increasing shortage of midwives especially in the delivery wards in Sweden that complicates planning of work and procedural development. The national recommendation of inducing labor at 41+ weeks is also affecting work with an increase in inductions.

**DSOG** have participated in a peoples meeting (Folkemøde), discussing amongst other things abortion, women's rights as they apply to elective c-sections and gynecological surgery. DSOG will hold a strategy seminar in September focusing on improving the guideline work. Specialist training is changing, as many patients see private gynecologists training of residents will need to follow. Recruitment and retention remain an issue and teamwork and flexibility are possible solutions. There have been discussions on post term induction with national authorities and midwives but no consensus arrived at. A celebration coming up. DSOG is actively promoting the Danish departments to share their good practices among each other which will be arranged as a competition in Denmark.

**FIFK** report a shortage in midwives and nurses in Iceland. The work with setting up a website is ongoing.

**SGY** supports the proposed changes in abortion legislation in Finland. The amendments are based on a popular initiative in which SGY has been active. Abortion will probably be permitted up to 12 weeks on maternal request without a specific reason and approval by a one or two physicians. Abortions are also likely to be available outside of the hospital setting. Andrology is proposed as a new subspecialty.

**NGF** are changing their guideline work to the Danish model. Some growth aches, but people are optimistic, and spirits are high. Based on this, NGF have been invited to a resource group in the national medical association to discuss guideline work. Recruitment remains a challenge and NGF has written several articles on the subject. There are ongoing discussions on post term induction with national authorities and midwives, control 41+3 and induction on 42+0.

### 16. Closing of the meeting

Oskari thanked everybody for a good meeting. Michael Algovik was thanked for his time served on the board and given with a gift as a token of appreciation.