

Articles of Association for the Norwegian Association of Researchers (Forskerforbundet)

Adopted by the Congress at its meeting of 21–22 October 2021, applicable from 22 October 2021

Object

§ 1

The object of the Norwegian Association of Researchers (NAR) is to improve salary and employment conditions within the research and higher education sectors, and to protect its members financial and professional interests.

Members

§ 2

Membership of the NAR is open to employees in scientific, technical-administrative, or other professional positions that normally require a tertiary qualification and who work in

- research and development
- higher education
- museums and cultural heritage management
- public administration related to research and higher education

Students may also become members, and retirees may retain their membership.

In the event of any dispute, membership is determined by the Executive Board.

The NAR's Executive Board may award honorary membership to members or others to whom the NAR wishes to pay particular tribute.

Organisation

§ 3

The NAR is made up of the following organisational entities:

1. Congress
2. Executive Board
3. National Council
4. Local branches
5. Professional networks
6. Central Office

Congress

§ 4

The Congress comprises delegates from the local branches. One representative from each of the professional networks, as well as the Executive Board's members are entitled to attend, address, and submit proposals to the Congress.

The local branches are represented in accordance with the following scale:

Up to	25	members:	1 delegate
	26–75	members:	2 delegates
	76–125	members:	3 delegates
	126–300	members:	4 delegates
	301–600	members:	5 delegates
Over	600	members:	6 delegates

The local branches have one vote per member who is part of the active labour force.

The number of members is calculated on the basis of the last quarterly overview prior to the Congress being convened.

Where there is no local branch, individual members may authorise a local branch to vote on their behalf. The proxy authorisation must be in the hands of the Executive Board no less than eight weeks before the ordinary Congress meeting, or that date determined by the Executive Board with respect to extraordinary Congress meetings.

§ 5

Ordinary Congress meetings are held every third year no later than to 1 December and convene as notified by the Executive Board.

Notice of the Congress meeting shall be issued no less than eight weeks in advance. No less than four weeks prior to the Congress meeting, the Executive Board shall distribute a proposed agenda and, as far as possible, a brief account of the agenda items tabled. Proposals for matters to be considered at the Congress meeting must be received by the Executive Board no less than six weeks prior to the meeting.

The Congress may be summoned to an extraordinary meeting at the behest of at least four members of the Executive Board or at least six local branches – representing on aggregate at least 15% of the members. At least one week's notice is required before any extraordinary meeting can be held.

§ 6

At each Congress meeting, two individuals shall be selected to chair the proceedings. Two representatives are selected to approve the minutes.

§ 7

The Congress decides all matters of principle and considers other matters presented to it by the Executive Board, the National Council or any of the local branches or professional networks. The Congress adopts guidelines for the work of the Executive Board. For the performance of specific tasks, the Congress may appoint other elected officials or committees than those mentioned in these articles of association. Such elected officials or committees shall keep the Executive Board informed of the current status of their work.

Ordinary Congress meetings shall address the following matters:

1. Report on the activities of the Executive Board and Central Office.
2. Audited financial statements.
3. The NAR's Work Programme.
4. Membership fees and budget.
5. Election of the President, Vice President, Executive Board members and their deputies, election of the National Council, selection of authorised public accountant and a two-person Audit Committee.
6. Election of the Nomination Committee.

National Council

§ 8

1. The National Council is the highest advisory body with regard to overarching political and strategic issues between meetings of the NAR Congress. The National Council normally meets once a year, including the year in which a Congress is to be held.

2. The National Council comprises 45 ordinary representatives:

- Two from each of the five largest local branches.
- One from each of the sixth to tenth largest local branches.
- 30 representatives from the remaining local branches, elected by constituencies at the Congress.

Members of the Executive Board are entitled to attend, address, and submit proposals to the National Council.

The Central Office are entitled to attend and address the National Council in consultation with the General Secretary.

One representative from each of the professional networks is entitled to attend the National Council as an observer, with the right to address and submit proposals to the meeting.

3. The National Council's members are elected in the following way:

The ten largest local branches are automatically represented on the National Council, cf. section 2. The local branches themselves decide who will attend the National Council on their behalf.

30 representatives from the remaining local branches are elected by constituencies during the Congress. The local branches selected to represent the constituency decide themselves who will attend the National Council on their behalf.

The constituencies are made up as follows:

- Universities and scientific university colleges
- University colleges – publicly funded
- University colleges – privately funded
- Institutes – publicly funded
- Institutes – privately funded
- Archives, libraries, and museums
- Health trusts and hospitals
- Local and county councils
- Other undertakings

The constituencies' membership figures are calculated on the basis of the last quarterly overview prior to the Congress being convened and determine the number of representatives to be elected from each constituency. No local branch in a constituency may be represented by more than one person.

4. The number of votes commanded by each National Council representative depends on how many members they represent. The votes from one local branch or one constituency may not be divided.

5. Within one Congress period, the number of votes commanded by the constituencies is determined on the basis of the last quarterly overview prior to the National Council meeting being convened. Any change in the number of votes has no impact on the number of representatives during the period.

6. Local branches which change their type of activity during a Congress period also change the constituency to which they belong. Local branches which are elected to represent a constituency, and which change the constituency to which they belong during the Congress period, lose their seat on the National Council. Based on proposals from the constituency

concerned, the Executive Board will appoint a new local branch to take over this seat for the remainder of the period.

New local branches which are established during a Congress period are included in the established constituencies.

7. The National Council sets its own agenda and order of business and appoints vote counters and an editorial committee as required. Within the Congress period, the National Council elects a chair and a two-person working committee for the next National Council meeting. In consultation with the constituencies, these will propose matters for consideration at the next National Council meeting to the Executive Board.

8. The National Council's term of office corresponds to the Congress period.

Executive Board

§ 9

The NAR's Executive Board comprises the President, the Vice President, five ordinary board members and three deputies. All are elected for periods of three years at a time.

The President and the Vice President are elected through separate ballot. These elections require an absolute majority of attending representatives' votes. If no candidate receives an absolute majority at a second ballot, a run-off election is held between the two candidates who received the most votes at the last ballot. In the event of a tie, the matter will be decided by a draw.

Deputies are elected separately as numerically ordered substitutes.

In connection with the composition of the Executive Board, emphasis shall be placed on achieving gender balance, cf. Section 28 of The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, and ensuring that different regions, institutions, and job categories are represented. The Executive Board may establish various subcommittees, including working committees. In connection with the composition of its subcommittees, emphasis shall be placed on achieving gender balance. A new Executive Board takes office at the start of the year.

§ 10

No one may serve as President, Vice President, board member or deputy board member for longer than six consecutive years in the same position.

§ 11

The Executive Board leads the NAR's activities between meetings of the Congress.

The Executive Board holds meetings as often as is required to deal with the matters at hand, or when at least two board members so request. Meetings are called by the President. The deputies always attend as observers, with the right to address and submit proposals to the meeting, but without the right to vote. A complete Executive Board comprises ten members, of whom seven are entitled to vote. The Executive Board is in quorum when at least four members are present.

The Executive Board shall:

1. Prepare meetings of the Congress.
2. Prepare meetings of the National Council.
3. Prepare the annual report, year-end financial statements, and budget.
4. Employ or appoint Central Office personnel, determine the remuneration payable to Central Office staff, and, if necessary, draw up instructions for the work performed by the Central Office. The board itself employs the General Secretary, editor, and heads of department at the Central Office. The board may delegate the employment of other positions to the General Secretary.
5. Publish the NAR's journal.
6. Appoint representatives to the trades union confederation to which the NAR belongs.

Resolutions passed by the Executive Board are valid when at least three members have voted in favour thereof. In the event of a tie, the President has the casting vote. In the event of dissent, the minority may submit a written appeal to the Congress, unless the matter relates to a decision taken in connection with ongoing negotiations. The minutes of all meetings of the Executive Board are distributed to all local branches and professional networks as soon as possible after each meeting. NAR representatives on the board of the trades union confederation to which it belongs are entitled to attend and address Executive Board meetings.

§ 12

The Executive Board shall at all times keep the local branches and professional networks informed of its activities. Local branches and professional networks shall be consulted on major issues before a final decision is taken unless the matter relates to ongoing negotiations or for some other reason cannot be accomplished within a stipulated deadline.

In connection with matters which relate to only one single local branch or one single professional network, the Executive Board shall always keep the body concerned apprised and listen to its opinion before taking a final decision.

All communication between the Executive Board and the NAR's Central Office on the one hand and the various undertakings' administrations on the other shall be copied to the local branches and professional networks concerned.

Central Office

§ 13

The NAR's Central Office is under the control of the Executive Board. The Central Office assists the Executive Board in its day-to-day dealings and is entitled on its own initiative to propose matters it feels ought to be addressed.

As determined by the Executive Board, the Central Office also assists local branches, professional networks, and individual members with regard to matters falling within the scope of the NAR's operations. A Central Office employee shall attend, without the right to vote, all Congress and National Council meetings and record the minutes thereof.

Local Branches

§ 14

1. Local branches are created at all undertakings where the NAR has three or more members. Where there are fewer than this, members' interests are protected by NAR Head Office.

Local branches are integrated units of the NAR.

The local branches represent the NAR at the individual institution and comprise all members at the institution. The local branches are authorised to act on behalf of the NAR pursuant to the institution's legal and regulatory framework.

The local branches protect the members' interests at the institution and assist the members in respect of the legal and regulatory framework (cf. article 1 – Object).

The local branches use the name Norwegian Association of Researchers (Forskerforbundet) at ... (name of the institution concerned).

The local branches may adopt their own articles of association, which must be approved by the Executive Board. These must not conflict with the provisions of this article.

2. The annual general meeting (AGM) is the local branch's highest governing body. The AGM is convened by the board of the local branch, which also distributes the agenda and underlying documentation at least two weeks in advance. An extraordinary general meeting is called when the board of the local branch deems it necessary, or at the request of at least 1/3 of the members.

The AGM shall:

- elect the board of the local branch, approve the annual report, year-end financial statements, budget, and Work Programme.
- consider or make statements regarding matters presented to the AGM by the local branch's board or members.
- elect delegates to the NAR's Congress, if appropriate.
- determine electoral procedures (ballot, show of hands, etc).

3. The board of a local branch must comprise at least 2 people, one of whom to act as chair. The chair is the NAR's senior representative at the institution, and represents the NAR pursuant to its regulatory framework, unless the branch AGM decides on a different division of labour or grants other authorisations (cf. the Basic Agreement for the Civil Service and the Basic Collective Agreement for the Civil Service, as well as corresponding agreements in the local government and private sectors). If the local branch chooses to distinguish between the role of branch chair and that of senior representative, the senior representative shall be included as a member of the local branch board with the right to attend, address and submit proposals to meetings thereof.

The local branch board shall, as far as possible, comprise representatives from various employment categories (scientific, administrative, other positions), educational/professional specialisations, as well as gender and – if relevant – geographic distribution.

The local branch board shall:

- undertake the day-to-day management of the local branch.
- convene local branch meetings and the AGM.
- prepare proposals for the annual report, year-end financial statements, budget, and Work Programme for submission to the AGM.
- recruit new members.
- appoint representatives to offices, committees and councils at the undertaking concerned.

The local branch board shall consult NAR Head Office with regard to communication with central government authorities, civil service organisations or the main trades union confederations.

The local branch board is in quorum when at least half of the board members are present. In the event of a tie, the chair has the casting vote.

4. Should the local branch deem it expedient, union representatives may be elected, and sub-branches created at lower levels in the institution – e.g. at faculty or departmental level, or on the basis of location.

5. The local branches may apply for training and development (OU) funds within the respective collective bargaining areas, where such funds have been set aside. Local branches may not impose any financial obligation on the NAR over and above that which is placed at their disposal by the Congress or the Executive Board.
6. The finances of the local branch are included in the NAR's overall finances, and with effect from 1 January 2011, NAR Head Office keeps the accounts on behalf of the local branches. Upon request, the Executive Board may make an exception to this for large local branches with the resources to undertake these tasks themselves.
7. NAR Head Office must be notified of the composition of the local branch board, and shall also receive a copy of the approved annual report, year-end financial statements, budget and Work Programme.

Professional Networks

§ 15

1. Members of the NAR may establish networks to protect their professional interests. Such professional networks are integrated units of the NAR.
2. Professional networks which were members of the NAR prior to 1 January 1999 may continue to be networks within the NAR provided that the NAR's Executive Board approves their articles of association. New networks must apply to the Executive Board for inclusion. Inclusion presumes a 2/3 majority. Rejected applications may be appealed to the full Congress, where inclusion requires a 2/3 majority.
3. Professional networks may raise matters with the NAR and shall act as a resource and competence base within their field of specialisation. The networks are entitled to attend and address the Executive Board at the latter's request. The networks may act on behalf of the NAR when authorised to do so by the Executive Board.
4. Professional networks may apply for training and development (OU) funds. Furthermore, the networks may apply to the NAR for funds with regard to activity plans and budgets. The networks may not impose any financial obligation on the NAR over and above that placed at their disposal by the Congress or the Executive Board.
5. Professional networks may charge a separate membership fee.
6. The finances of the professional networks is included in the NAR's overall finances, and with effect from 1 January 2011 NAR Head Office keeps the accounts on behalf of the networks. Upon request, the Executive Board may make an exception from this rule for large professional networks with the resources to undertake such tasks themselves.

7. NAR Head Office must be notified of the composition of the professional network's board and shall receive a copy of the approved annual report, year-end financial statements, budget, and Work Programme.
8. Any amendment to the professional network's articles of association must be approved by the Executive Board.
9. All communication between a professional network and other trades unions or public authorities with respect to matters which the NAR has raised for consideration shall be channelled through the NAR's Central Office. The Executive Board will determine whether the communication should be passed on, and inform the professional network concerned of its decision.
10. The Executive Board has the authority to dissolve a network if it does not work according to purpose, or no longer has a functioning network board.

Membership Fees

§ 16

The Congress determines the annual membership fees, and the distribution of income therefrom between NAR Head Office, local branches, and professional networks. Individual members are responsible for payment of their own membership fees, which fall due as determined by the Executive Board. The Executive Board may demand additional membership fees if unforeseen expenditure, e.g. industrial action, make it necessary.

The NAR is entitled to deduct membership fees and, if relevant, insurance premiums from the member's salary.

Termination of Membership

§ 17

Members may terminate their membership of the NAR at any time, except during ongoing collective bargaining negotiations, mediation, or industrial action. Notice of termination must be given in writing to the NAR's Central Office.

Exclusion

§ 18

A member may be excluded by the Executive Board with immediate effect if the said member has acted in contravention of the NAR's object or articles of association. Any decision to exclude is valid only when supported by a 2/3 majority of votes cast after the member concerned has had the opportunity to provide a written explanation to the Executive Board.

A professional network may be excluded by the Congress with immediate effect if said network has acted in contravention of the NAR's object or articles of association. Any decision to exclude is valid only when supported by a 2/3 majority of votes cast after the professional network concerned has had the opportunity to provide a written explanation to the Congress. Exclusion of a professional network does not affect the individual members' membership of the NAR.

Amending the Articles of Association

§ 19

Proposed amendments to the NAR's articles of association must be sent in writing to the Executive Board no less than six weeks before the Congress meets. The Executive Board sends the proposal, along with any remarks, to the local branches and professional networks no less than four weeks prior to the date of the Congress. Any amendment to the articles of association requires a 2/3 majority of the votes cast at the Congress. Should the Executive Board unanimously consider it necessary, proposed amendments to the articles of association may be considered by the Congress irrespective of the above provisions, though any decision still requires a 2/3 majority of the votes cast to be valid.

Dissolution

§ 20

Any proposal to dissolve the NAR is treated as a proposed amendment to the articles of association, but a final decision to this effect requires a 2/3 majority of the votes cast at two consecutive meetings of the Congress. In connection with its dissolution, the Congress decides how the NAR's funds should be allocated.