Annual report 2014 and final evaluation from the UNIK Expert panel

Throughout the funding period of UNIK, the international UNIK Expert Panel has reported to the Danish Minister for Higher Education and Science on the status and progress of the granted UNIKs. For 2014, the report in hand also constitutes the final evaluation.

Summary of findings
In general, the four UNIK initiatives that are the subjects for this report have excelled in both quantity and quality in a wide range of parameters such as novel approaches, high quality research, internationalisation and promotion of cross-disciplinarity. In this way, the financial foundation and instrumental flexibility provided by the UNIK grants have underpinned excellent research activities, new cross-departmental synergies and they have not least played a markedly role in profiling and promoting the supported research agendas both externally and internally. Below is a list of the panel's main findings, policy learnings and recommendations:

- UNIK has fostered **sustainable and excellent cross-disciplinary research undertakings**.

- UNIK has furthered the **internationalisation of the host institutions** by encouraging high researcher mobility and by raising the international reputation of the funded environments.

- UNIK has boosted the growth layer of **young researchers** within the research areas of the initiatives, and many young talented scientists are continuing their carrier in research positions at the involved universities or at other Danish or international research institutions.

- UNIK has laid the ground for professionalisation and advancement of the research administrations at the host universities, leading the initiatives to be optimal platforms for **strategic planning** and **attraction of third-party funding**.

- UNIK has provided the right amount of **trust and instrumental flexibility** to allow for the individual initiatives to adapt and structure the organisation in accordance with their ambitious strategies and the main principles of UNIK e.g. cross-disciplinarity and internationalisation.
- UNIK has had a substantial organisational impact on the host institutions and contributed to forming **new synergies** by encouraging the universities to prioritise their research agendas and carry out their main priority.

- UNIK has secured **continuity and progress** in the initiatives by tying the funding to the initiative instead of the researcher.

- The grantees’ **experience in academic leadership and management combined with scientific excellence** is a pivotal premise for the successful outcome of the initiatives.

- UNIK initiative would have benefitted considerably from a longer **funding period**.

- UNIK is in **coherence** with the surrounding Danish research funding landscape, e.g. as a continuation of the centres of excellence funded by the Danish National Research Foundation.

**Background**

UNIK originates from a government strategy for Denmark in the global economy. The funds were allocated through competition between universities. With the UNIK initiative each university could submit proposals for major long-term research projects that were considered to hold an exceptional and strategic potential for the university and for Danish research as such.

In 2008 and 2009 the state budget allocated DKK 240 m each year for UNIK, i.e. a total of DKK 480M (approx. EUR 64 m). Four initiatives (UNIKs) were chosen by the Minister from a total of 28 proposals from the Danish universities who were each invited to submit a limited number of applications. The minister’s decision was based on an evaluation and ranking of the proposals carried out by the UNIK Expert Panel.

The four UNIK’s are:

- **CASE** - Catalysis for Sustainable Energy at the Technical University of Denmark.
- **MINDLab** at Aarhus University
- **Synthetic Biology** at University of Copenhagen
- **Food, Fitness and Pharma for Health and Disease** at University of Copenhagen

The universities have received approximately DKK 120 million for each of the UNIKs (including a 44 percent overhead) to cover a five-year period of funding. During this period, the UNIK expert panel has followed the initiatives closely with regular meetings and site visits. In 2011, a mid-term review from the panel concluded that the UNIKs have led to a new culture of collaboration within host universities, but also with national and international network partners. The UNIK universities have strengthened their international competitiveness, e.g. through infrastructure improvements supported through the initiative and the UNIK centres had an influence on policy deliberations leading up to the European Union’s eighth Framework Programme on Research and Technological Development, Horizon 2020.
The status-report at hand is the fourth and final report from the panel to the minister on the progress and results of the UNIKs. The report is based on the final reports from the UNIKs and a final meeting held 28 November 2014 in Copenhagen.

**Plans for final evaluation**
Every year, the UNIKs have provided a cost statement and a brief progress report in writing. In addition to the progress reports, the UNIK Expert Panel has carried out several site visits at the UNIKs. The Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation (DASTI) has held the legal responsibility for supervising the correct use of the funding. The political agreements establishing the UNIK initiative are found in the Strategy for Denmark in the Global Economy (2006) and the subsequent Danish Finance Act for the year 2007. From these documents the following overall intention with the initiative is foreseen:

"Each university’s management should be required to take part in a competitive bidding process in which they submit proposals for large-scale, long-term research projects. The proposals should be evaluated on the basis of their quality and relevance."

Against this background, the performance description of the UNIK initiative from 2007 puts forward three main targets for the UNIK-initiative as a whole (translation from Danish):

- To support excellent research of highest international standards
- To further international interaction and cooperation
- To train and support young researchers

The final evaluation is mentioned in the performance description of the UNIK initiative. The following is stated: "The target audience of the final evaluation is primarily the Danish parliament, in order for the politicians to observe and reflect upon the impact of this novel type of research funding instrument" (translation from Danish). In the same document it is also foreseen that a final external evaluation of the initiative as a whole may be carried out following the final evaluation by the expert panel.

**Conclusions and general comments on the UNIK initiative**
The UNIK funding instrument was originally intended to be as flexible as possible, in order to pave the way for pioneering, cross-disciplinarity and scientific breakthroughs. In continuation, the number of prescriptive elements in the call text and the funding agreements was kept to a minimum. This has allowed for each of the UNIK’s to develop in a very diverse and unique way both in terms of organisation, embedment and strategic targets.

The expert panel considers this to be a true strength of the funding scheme, but it also constitutes a challenge in relation to making generic conclusions for the initiative as a whole. Furthermore, the special, cross-disciplinary nature of the initiative means that it is very difficult to make any comparative assessments of the impact compared to a scenario where the same grants had been allocated to the involved researchers and teams in a more conventional way. Even so the panel wishes to use this chapter to address key issues that despite the many differences between the
UNIK's can be regarded as general to most or all four of the UNIK initiatives. Specific comments to the individual UNIKs are stated in the forthcoming separate chapters. In accordance with general principles of the initiative and the original performance description of UNIK, the expert panel will evaluate the overall impact of the initiative with an emphasized focus on: Novelty and quality, recruitment and training of young researchers, relevance, international outreach, and added value and acknowledgement.

**Novelty and quality**
In several ways UNIK has succeeded in fostering excellent research, cross departmental synergies and boosting promising and relevant scientific themes. On a general level, the UNIKs are scientific hotspots and administrative frontrunners in terms of facilitating modern cross-disciplinary research collaboration.

One of the most remarkable general results achieved by the UNIK initiative is the amount of high quality cross-disciplinary research. The UNIK grants have laid the ground for many multifaceted and holistic research projects with participation of researchers from various scientific backgrounds. This has been the rule rather than the exception across the UNIKs. Furthermore, the UNIKs have deployed cross-departmental initiatives generating new synergies, e.g. through shared research facilities and networks of young investigators. In this way, the initiative has succeeded where many other research programmes have failed: to generate cross-disciplinary science on sciences own conditions.

The emphasis on cross-disciplinarity does not appear to have had a negative effect on the research output. All of the four initiatives are able to present several excellent case-studies with promising new findings. In addition, the UNIK grants have been highly productive in terms of scientific publications as well. With more than 1000 publications, of which around 100 has been in high level journals (impact above 10), the initiatives have certainly delivered in terms of sheer quantity. In the mid-term review of UNIK, the panel expressed the point of view, that the publishing results of the UNIKs where partly build upon the already existing research excellence of senior researchers. This point may still hold true to some extent, but nonetheless it is the clear impression of the panel that many of these scientific achievements would not have been made without the economic and cross-disciplinary support from the UNIKs. In light of this, the panel holds great expectations for the future and presumes that significant scientific output of the UNIK grants is yet to be seen.

**Recruitment and training of young researchers**
The four initiatives have honoured the original educational intentions by training more than 150 PhD students and employing 110 postdocs. Furthermore, in several of the initiatives the number of international students is almost half of the total number of PhDs. By educating and training this vast amount of young researchers, the UNIKs have prepared the ground for future progress within the respective scientific fields and themes.

**Relevance**
Following the performance description, the panel considers relevance to be a rather broad parameter encompassing both scientific quantities as well as more qualitative evidence. Judging from citations and publishing impact, the initiatives have
proved themselves highly relevant to the surrounding research environments. In addition to this, the initiatives have demonstrated well thought strategic efforts concerning public outreach. All of the four UNIK’s have succeeded with these efforts and have managed to reach out to the public through e.g. frequent media appearances and contributions to primary education publications.

Another very important indicator of relevance is the level of collaboration with private industry. In general there has been an appropriate level of cross-sector collaboration at the UNIK’s. This is first and foremost evident from the varied lists of private collaborators and the 11 patents already obtained as well as the several pending patent applications. Even so, from the point of view of the panel, collaboration with industry could be further explored by the initiatives in the future, especially regarding cross-border collaboration with international companies. This would not only widen the impact of their excellent research but also enhance the possibility to attract additional new funding from external funding programmes such as Horizon 2020.

International outreach
Internationalization has been an important element of all UNIK’s from the beginning. In fact, this was one of the main criteria for selecting the original proposals. In general the UNIK’s have honoured this intention and by the end of the funding period all four initiatives can be said to have an international profile. This is most evident in the high level of cross-border research collaborations and international recruitments (see above). However, the outreaching activities of the UNIK’s are also reflected by the great amounts of third party funding attracted. The UNIK’s have had different strategies and different levels of ambition in this regard. Some of the initiatives have succeeded with elaborated funding and policy strategies while others have focused solely on project funding. Even so the initiatives have attracted more than DKK 200 million (€ 26 m) each with a total of approximately DKK 1100 m. (€ 150 m) from national and international research funding organisations. This is a very impressive level of external funding. It not only signals relevance but should also contribute to a sustainable continuation and embedment of the successful parts of the initiatives.

Added value and acknowledgement
The UNIK initiative was included as a case in the OECD report *Promoting Research Excellence: New Approaches to Funding* (2014). One of the main findings of the report was that major investments such as UNIK can lead to broad changes in the structure of the research system by pushing institutions to continually prove and develop their strengths. This perception is shared by the panel and confirmed by the final reports of the UNIK initiatives that demonstrate a high impact and added value at their respective host institutions.

An underlying premise for this successful outcome is the outstanding academic leadership and administrative management that have been displayed by the UNIK initiatives. It seems to be clear, that the high level of experience and capacity with leadership and management of the grantees has played a big role in both the successful strategic target-setting as well as the administrative and scientific implementation and organisation of the initiatives. This holds true for all the UNIK’s even though they have been organised and subsequently embedded in very different ways. In addition, some of the initiatives have experienced severe organisa-
tional changes during the funding period but due to their strong organisational set-
up and sustainable leadership they have continued their prosperous progress al-
most unaffected.

Academic leadership and administrative insight is also a pivotal factor in terms of
embedding and longer term preservation of the successful parts of the initiative.
Recognising that one-size does not fit all, the panel sees it as natural, that the
UNIK’s have been embedded in various ways at their host universities. Some have
been continued as regular university centres while others have led to a hiring of
staff and a more traditional integration of the successful research activities. How-
ever, looking into the future it is opaque whether all the initiatives will sustain as
top research environments without the funding from UNIK. This is a matter of
great concern to the panel. It judges it to be a shared responsibility of the research-
ers involved and the management at the host universities to find a solution that will
secure the successful outcome of the UNIK’s in a long term perspective.

Evaluation criteria for the individual UNIK’s
Throughout the funding period each of the individual UNIK’s has been subject to
evaluations and site-visits. From previous evaluation-reports, including the mid-
term evaluation from 2011 and the experience gathering from 2010, the success of
the individual initiatives has been measured in terms of 1) Science, 2) Organisation
and 3) Embedment.

Science
Scientific excellence is a core target for all the UNIK’s. In this final evaluation the
panel will review the scientific results of each of the UNIK’s primarily in terms of
publications, research impact and educational achievements.

Organisation
This issue first and foremost refers to the internal set-up and outreach of the
UNIK’s and how the four individual initiatives have been managed by the responsi-
ble host institutions. In accordance with the original call-text and the funding
agreements, the focus will be on management, facilities, funding achievement, in-
ternational outlook and the ability to facilitate cross-disciplinary research activities
and cross-departmental synergy.

Embedment
On the issue of embedment, the following is stated in section 5 in the general
agreements on funding between the receivers of the grant (the universities) and
DASTI:

“After the end of the funding period, the Applicant is expected to be responsible for
ensuring that “the successful parts” of the initiative are embedded in the univer-
sity’s activities and ordinary budget. In the proposal (Appendices 2 and 4), the Ap-
plicant has stated any plans for such embedment. It is expected that these plans
will be specified year by year in the annual reports. Generally, “the successful
parts” are expected to comprise all parts of the initiative. This means that only
failed or pointless activities are not expected to be carried out.”
Final evaluation of MINDLab
The general impression is that MINDLab successfully has developed a truly cross-disciplinary environment centred on the available research infrastructures.

Science:
MINDLab addressed scientific problems within culture, music, language and memory. It combined this knowledge with research on novel technologies to examine the living brain, and on the most devastating neurological and psychiatric disorders. The aim has been to create new means to preserve and recover function and quality-of-life in relation to diseases.

MINDLab has been very successful scientifically speaking with 257 publications and 5 patents. Moreover, researchers affiliated with MINDLab have received a total of 17 grants below 0.5 M DKK and 15 grants above 0.5 M DKK, including grants from ERC and the Danish National Research Foundation. 25 PhD students have been trained as part of the MINDLab project. In addition it is noted that MINDLab has been successful in terms of establishing courses and degrees at level of BA and MA. Furthermore, the UNIK has strong international cooperation e.g. with partners in University of California Santa Barbara and in Canada.

Organisation
MINDLab has been organised into 5 streams with between 3 and 7 sub-projects. In total MINDLab involved 22 projects, led by 52 senior investigators from across 21 departments at Aarhus University and collaborating universities. Furthermore MINDLAB has contributed significantly to a cross-disciplinary science by enabling shared use of infrastructure. There have been substantial changes in the organisation of MindLab where responsibility has shifted back to principal investigators and different faculties. Moreover, according to MINDLab, cross-faculty collaborations such as UNIK served as an inspiration to the recent restructuring of Aarhus University where the cross-disciplinary approach has been central.

Embedment:
In relation to MINDLab, Aarhus University has considered embedment to be dealt with through opening of permanent positions for key scientists and maintaining administrative and experimental infrastructure. Aarhus University has opened the agreed permanent positions. However, there is an unresolved issue regarding access to the physical infrastructure. This issue should be dealt with by the involved parties, with the aim to preserve and continue the fruitful cross-disciplinary environment that has evolved around the infrastructure.

Table 1 - MINDLab in numbers

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers (involved as PI’s)</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research projects</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>PhD students (expected)</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post docs</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Departments involved</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal funding</td>
<td>30.5 m. DKK</td>
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<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>291 m. DKK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patents (additional applications)</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
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Final evaluation of CASE

At an overall level, CASE has successfully developed an emerging scientific area through exceptionally strong international collaborations. CASE has also contributed significantly to scientific outreach.

**Science:**
CASE has contributed to the development of solar fuels as a research area, which is considered to be an area of future importance. CASE has been very successful in doing so scientifically speaking. 212 publications, 37 in preparation, 4 patents & 11 patent applications. 33 publications are in journals with high impact > 10. Moreover, CASE has internationalised DTU with 129 invited international lectures, 7 summer schools and collaborations with Stanford University/SLAC, University of Tokyo, Caltech, MIT, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL), UCLA, UC Berkeley/LBNL, Chalmers University of Technology, The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), and Technical University Munich (TUM).

In terms of education CASE has trained 33 PhD students and employed 24 Post Docs.

**Organisation**
Before the internal mid-term evaluation in 2012, CASE was organised into 6 projects that appeared to work quite independently from each other. After the mid-term evaluation CASE was reorganised into 3 projects. In addition CASE has applied a matrix project organisation characterised by cross-disciplinary collaboration and thinking at all levels. In this way CASE has achieved synergies and strategic coherence between the projects, that most likely would not have been achieved between independent and autonomously runned research projects.

CASE has changed leadership two times in the funding period. However, this does not seem to have had substantial influence on the quality of the academic leadership of CASE.

**Embedment**
CASE considers the question of embedment to solely be related to hiring of staff. DTU has provided basis for continuation of the CASE activities by hiring eleven new faculty members committed to the continuation of research activities.

**Table 2 - CASE in numbers**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers (involved as PI’s)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research projects</td>
<td>6 (3 since 2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD students (expected)</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post docs</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments involved</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal funding</td>
<td>33m DKK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>238 m DKK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patents (additional applications)</td>
<td>4 (11)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Final evaluation of Synthetic Biology (Synbio)
The UNIK initiative on synthetic biology has resulted in establishing an internationally recognized center of excellence. Through international outreach and excellent ground-breaking research aimed at providing science based solutions to the global societal challenges, the team behind the initiative has been able to produce extraordinary research results while at the same time attract substantial external funding that has secured the continuation of the initiative in the years to come.

Science:
In the words of Synbio, synthetic biology is an emerging and exponentially growing field of converging science that combines science and engineering to construct biological systems. Based on a strong standing within plant biochemistry and neurobiology and linked by the use of nanotechnology, the UNIK has carried out interdisciplinary research at the international forefront with expected future major applied impact in areas such as solar driven production of high value compounds. With 60 PhD’s, 45 Postdocs and 301 publications, Synbio has demonstrated their ability to converge the UNIK grant into a distinctive tangible research output while at the same time exploring the boundaries of modern science. Furthermore, Synbio has had a high level of public interaction and outreach through focused strategic efforts based on expertise within communication and ethics.

Organisation
Synbio has been led by a cross-departmental steering group and managed by a small secretariat based at the faculty of Science. The core activities in Synbio include researchers from 5 different departments from UCPH. Although this may be seen as a relatively small number compared to the other UNIK initiatives, Synbio has fostered remarkable cross-disciplinary synergy between very diverse research cultures within the natural and social sciences. Throughout the process, the initiative has benefitted from eminent academic leadership guiding swift and proper reorientation of the research focus of Synbio towards the most promising projects.

Embedment:
Due to the attraction of 445 million DKK (60 million €), most of the research activities of the initiative will be continued. Furthermore, the more strategic and administrative elements of the UNIK will be continued in form of the newly established "bioSYNergy" center for Synthetic Biology at University of Copenhagen. The vision as well the mission for the integration and prosperous development of synthetic biology at this new center has been clearly formulated by the Steering Committee of the UNIK.

Table 3 - Synthetic Biology in numbers (final reporting to be received)

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers (involved as PI’s)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research projects</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD students (expected)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post docs</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments involved</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal funding</td>
<td>46 m DKK</td>
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<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>399 m DKK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patents (additional applications)</td>
<td>9</td>
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</table>
**Final evaluation of Food, Fitness and Pharma**

During the UNIK funding period, Food, Fitness and Pharma (FFP) have excelled in gathering researchers from several departments and faculties at University of Copenhagen around the multifaceted societal challenges related to obesity. This has led to remarkable new findings and underpinned novel and sustainable cross-disciplinary research collaboration across almost the entire university.

**Science:**
FFP has been a very solid performer in terms of publications and research output. 29 research projects have resulted in two patents and a publication list including approximately 230 publications. In terms of education, FFP has been the training ground for 50 PhD students. This is more than acceptable, although the number of students recruited from a non-Danish university could have been higher with respect to the aim of internationalisation. In its mid-term review, the panel expressed a wish to see more involvement of PhD's from social science. The panel is pleased to conclude, that this has been achieved through the very inspiring cross-cutting young investigator network established by the UNIK to foster cross-disciplinary research between PhD's and young researchers.

**Organisation**
FFP has been organised around a management unit based at the faculty of health but with contributing parties and researchers from 18 different departments from almost all of the faculties at University of Copenhagen. Throughout the funding process, there has been a marked focus on forward thinking and facilitating cross-disciplinary research activities across all the involved departments. In this way FFP has contributed substantially to smoothen the great mergers of the faculties involved and helped forming the University of Copenhagen as we now see it today.

**Embedment:**
The researchers involved in FFP have been successful in attracting a total amount of 200 million DKK (Approximately € 27 m.) in external funding, primarily from Danish research funding organisations and the EU. Furthermore, substantial internal funding of 96 million DKK (approximately € 13 m) from University of Copenhagen (UCPH) has been given to core research activities of the UNIK. This secures the continuation of most of the research activities deriving from FFP. The management unit will continue its work as a strategic platform based on the faculty of health.

**Table 4 - FFP in numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>230</td>
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<tr>
<td>Researchers (PI's)</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Research projects</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>PhD students</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Post docs</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Departments involved</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Internal funding</td>
<td>96 m DKK</td>
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<td>External funding</td>
<td>200 m DKK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patents</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>
Final remarks and further perspectives
The UNIK initiative was established in a time of change in Denmark. Following the merger of Danish Universities in 2007, the UNIK call brought departments and faculties together around a common quest. In this way, the UNIK instrument has not only fostered remarkable new findings and cross-disciplinarity through the funded research initiatives but has also been a bridging factor in its own. In continuation, it is the panel’s impression, that UNIK has left a positive mark on the Danish research landscape.

In addition UNIK seems to fit very nicely with the surrounding research funding landscape in Denmark and EU. With the underlying premises for experienced leadership combined with scientific excellence, the UNIK format is a logical continuation to the centres of excellence funded by the Danish National Research Foundation, and the initiatives have proven themselves to be an excellent platform for attraction of third party funding. Therefore the panel gives an unconditional recommendation for the Danish government to consider employing some of the many positive lessons learned from the initiative and use these in other initiatives.

From an organisational perspective, the funding period of five years is a weak point of UNIK. Establishing new collaborations across disciplines is a time-consuming process that is very fragile without the certainty of economic basis. Certainly, the new interdisciplinary collaborations could have benefited a lot from more time to establish a common ground and develop the synergies even further under the “protection” of a UNIK grant. Furthermore, in the case of UNIK it seems to have been a challenge for some of the initiatives to make proper use of the grants within the relatively short funding period. Therefore they have been granted a prolonged project-period. In future undertakings like UNIK it should be considered to widen the format of the funding period e.g. through a 5+2 model where the initiatives as a standard practice can be granted a prolonged funding period after the five-year evaluation.

Turning to a more administrative related aspect of UNIK, the panel would also like to comment on the process. Peer reviewers are often not given the chance to follow selected research projects over their entire lifespan. In the case of UNIK the expert panel has been continuously involved and engaged. This has not only allowed for new professional friendships to arise but seems also to have been a beneficial guiding tool for the UNIK’s, helping them to succeed with their missions.

In closing, the panel wishes to express its sincere thanks to the Danish government and the Danish Minister for Higher Education and Science for funding this prestigious project and to the Danish Agency for Science Technology and Innovation for being a very professional administrator for the initiative.

Credit should also be given to the involved PI's and outstanding management units in the participating universities; they have been able to unfold the highly ambitious proposals that were selected by the expert panel initially. No doubt a successful research initiative begins and ends with the persons involved, and in the case of UNIK, these persons where of the right calibre.
The UNIK Expert Panel:

- President, Professor Jarle Aarbakke (chairperson), Norway
- Professor Geoffrey Channon, UK
- Professor Emeritus Helga Haftendorn, Germany
- Professor Pirju Nuutila, Finland
- Professor Olli Ikkala, Finland
- Professor Martin J. Kropff, The Netherlands
- Professor Bart de Moor, Belgium
- Professor Pär Omling, Sweden
- President, Professor Harriet Wallberg-Henriksson, Sweden

In memory of Professor Lennart Hjalmarsson