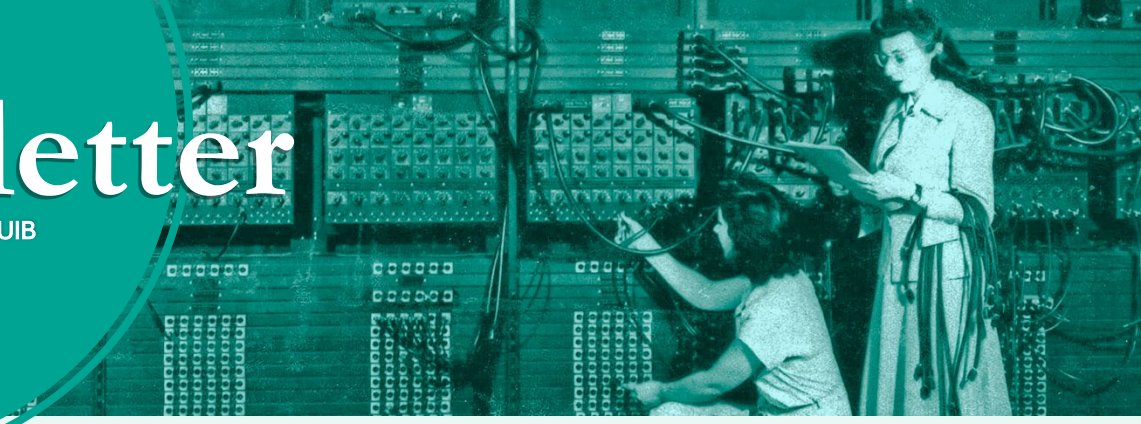
Newsletter

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATICS, UIB
No.06/2022, 25.03.2022



Editor-in-chief: Inge Jonassen. Editor: Randi Heggernes Eilertsen.
Contributions or comments to the newsletter are very welcome.

Dear Colleagues,

In academia we are used to being evaluated. When we are students, this happens through assignments and exams. Then we compete for jobs, and many go through a number of time-limited contracts before maybe getting a permanent post. And even then, our manuscripts and proposals are subjected to review – and students and peers assess our study programs and teaching. We compete to publish in the most prestigious journals, present at the best conferences etc. The competition is tough!

Within our department and within and across the research groups we support each other, and applaud when our colleagues publish papers, obtain funding, graduating students etc. I just talked with a colleague asking him for some help and his response was that "[in this group] we always try to help each other when there is a need" – and I think this is the general attitude across the department. Let's keep it like that!

This also helps us do well in the periodic (every ten years) assessments performed by the Research Council of Norway. In the three previous rounds (1992, 2002, 2012) we did best among all informatics departments across Norway. It is very important that we do our best preparing for the next assessment round – in 2023 – and use this occasion to think about priorities and strategies moving forward.

It is worth looking back at the previous assessment reports and reflect on how we have done in light of their assessment and recommendations. As head of department, I look forward to discussing this with all of you and it will be one of several important topics for our department gathering in April.

At the department gathering we will also celebrate previous head of department Petter Bjørstad and his new status as professor emeritus! Petter has played an important role at the department – almost since its birth in the eighties! I hope to see you there, both for the celebration and for a nice time together at Solstrand.

I wish you all a good weekend!

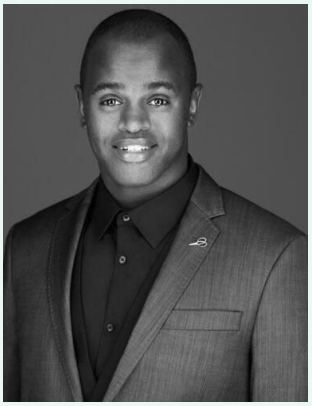
Inge

The Dean's Blog – Gunn Mangerud

The Dean's blog aims to inform us of ongoing work and processes at The Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

Her latest posting:
«En verden i krig»

Welcome, new colleagues!



Gutama Ibrahim Mohammad

Gutama is starting as a PhD candidate working with Computational Biology and Machine Learning.

Gutama did an integrated master's degree in applied physics and mathematics at the University of Tromsø, where he chose to specialize in machine learning.

Welcome to the team, Gutama!

Matúš Kalaš

Matúš has already been working with us both as a postdoc from 2015 to 2020, and as a senior researcher from 2020.

He will now be starting in the position of senior engineer as a part of the ELIXIR Norway team.

Congratulations on your new position, Matúš!

PhD updates

There's a new PhD in town: Congratulations, Isaac Andrés Canales Martínez!

Isaac successfully defended his thesis "New cryptanalysis of LFSR-based stream ciphers and decoders for p-ary QC-MDPC codes" on the 18th of March.

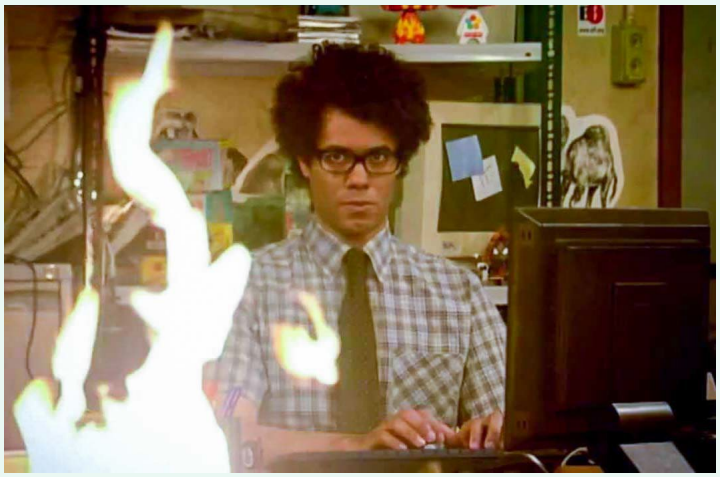
Congratulations, Isaac!

Current Issues

Short overview of upcoming department events:

4-5 April	Department gathering 2022, at Solstrand
20-23 April	6th Creative Mathematical Sciences Communication conference (CMSC'22) in Bergen
5 May	Fire safety course
13 May & 13 June	Faculty and Staff lunch, in Skogen (4th floor)

Fire prevention course



Do you know what to do if there's a fire?

Do you know what to do if the fire extinguisher is on fire?

All UiB employees are required to complete a fire prevention course. On the 5th of May, the department is holding a (physical) fire safety course from 14:00 to 16:00 in the VilVite auditorium. This involves both a theoretical part and a practical part (which will be held outside of VilVite).

All new employees, and all who haven't yet taken the course due to the pandemic, are required to take this course. **Please sign up by sending an email to marta.lopez@uib.no.** Any questions about the course can be sent to Marta.

New dongle policy for Mac users

UiB's IT-department has officially decided that ~~Windows is better than Mac~~ if you want to use a Mac with the AV equipment in lecturing rooms and auditoriums, you must bring your own dongle.

According to an internal note, the IT-department have decided to give up on trying to keep up with the frequently changing requirements of hardware needed to communicate with UiB's established AV equipment.

In practice, this means that you can still use your Mac with whatever equipment is in the room, but there is no guarantee that you will find the correct dongle for your laptop.

You can also transfer your presentations to the designated computers that are already hooked up to the equipment.

Kunnskapseplet

The Mathematics and Natural Sciences Library have monthly popular science talks. The aim of these talks is to provide an informal arena for students, PhD students, researchers, and other staff to share their work or talk about a topic they are passionate about. The events will last 30-45 minutes, depending on the length of the presentation. Read about Kunnskapseplet here.

Next talks:

Torsdag 21. april: Nanoteknologi for fremtiden og klima (in Norwegian)
Torsdag 19. mai: Bergens ferskeste og strålende legemidler (in Norwegian)

Sikkerhetskonferansen 2022

The Norwegian National Security Authority is inviting fans of cyber security to participate in the 2022 Security Conference!

The conference will be featuring speakers such as Rob Royce (Director of the NSA) and Professor Sir David Omand of Cambridge University, among others.

The conference will be held digitally on the 30th of March. Find more info and sign up here (only in Norwegian).

NASJONAL SIKKERHETSMYNDIGHET

Course invitation: "Introduction to GPU Programming with OpenACC" (29 March)

The Scientific Computing group at the IT department (UiB) in collaboration with NRIS (Norwegian Research Infrastructure Services) is offering a one day hands-on physical course for Introductory GPU Programming with OpenACC. Read more here.

Welcome to Yoga on Wednesdays!

Illustration: Your body after a single yoga session

Yoga is a great way to reduce stress and tensions from work. Yoga classes are held at our department on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 pm at the CBU seminar room in 5th floor.

Our professional yoga instructor, Kjersti Næss, is teaching in English. No signing up, and no participation fee. Please bring your own yoga mat. We also have some mats for loan. All employees are welcome – also those of you who never tried yoga before.

And remember: When you are too busy to go to the yoga class – then is when you need it the most!

Invitation: UiB AI seminar

The UiB AI Steering Group welcomes you to a seminar on April 8th at 10am in the University Aula. The seminar lasts until 11:30 and there will be lunch and discussions 11:30-12:00.

This is the second in a series of seminars on artificial intelligence at UiB. The seminars will be a meeting point across departments and fields of research, where different examples on the use of AI in research will be presented.

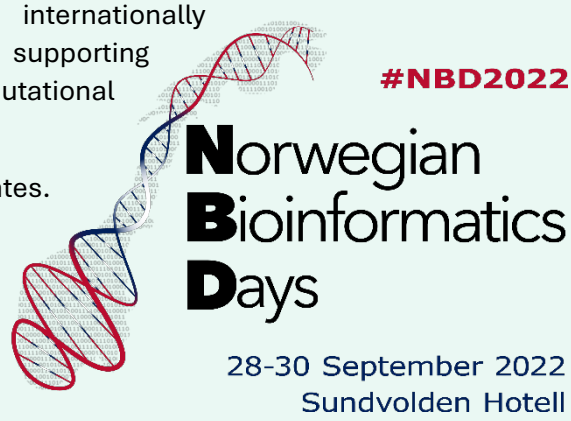
On April 8th Samia Touileb and Ghazaal Sheikhi from MediaFutures (Department of Information Science and Media Studies) will talk about how AI sees the world and makes the decisions that shapes it.

Since participation is physical and we will order food, we ask all participants to register via the link on the seminar web page. You will find more information about the seminar and registration link here: **UiB AI #2 But, why? - make AI answer! | UiB AI | UiB**

Invitation: Norwegian Bioinformatics Days 2022

(The NBD organizing team): Welcome to the national bioinformatics conference Norwegian Bioinformatics Days 2022 taking place September 28-30, 2022, at Sundvolden Hotel (~one hour drive from Oslo).

This meeting aims to gather people who work with bioinformatics in Norway for three days of research sharing and networking. Hear from several internationally interesting keynote speakers and get an insight into the supporting infrastructure and activities within bioinformatics and computational biology in Norway.



Visit the website https://norbioinfo.no/ and sign up for updates. Conference program, registration and invitation to submit abstracts will follow soon.

Please help us spread the word in your networks. In the attachments, we also include an invitation to display on screens.

We are looking forward to seeing you all in Sundvolden in person!

This meeting is a collaboration with Centre for Digital Life Norway, Elixir Norway, NORBIS, RSG-Norway, Computational Biology Unit (UiB), and many more.

Updating your page on UiB

Are you sick of the first google result when someone searches for you being that one photo where you're passing the finishing line of Stoltzekleiven Opp, looking sweaty and gasping for air? Luckily, you can present yourself in a whole new way by updating your UiB profile page.

Påhoyden.no has made a new guide to help you make the perfect UiB profile page here. There is also an existing guide in English here.

If you need a new profile picture, you can ask Randi for a free photoshoot.

NORA Research School

If you are a PhD student within the field of AI from a NORA-partner institution (that includes us), we encourage you to become a member of the NORA Research School.

NORA is in the process of establishing research school for PhD students at our partner institutions. However, membership in NORA's Research School is already open to any PhD student from a NORA partner institution with a project related to artificial intelligence, machine learning and/or robotics.

You can be a member of several research schools simultaneously, and there are no obligations, costs or commitments to being a member. Through membership in NORA Research School you will be the first to receive relevant information about and the opportunity to participate in courses, lectures and events.

NORBIS activities

NORBIS conference - SAVE THE DATE!

The 8th and last NORBIS conference will be arranged in 2022 at Rosendal Fjordhotell week 43, 24-28 October. More information to come! But for now, save the date!

Machine Learning in Medical Bioinformatics

Dates: May 2-6, 2022. **Location:** Linköping University, Sweden. **Course responsible:** Björn Wallner. **Lecturers:** Björn Wallner, Claudio Mirabello, Manuela Zucknick. **Credits:** 5 ECTS.

Short course description: This workshop will consist of a mix between research talks, the theory behind the research, and actually applying the theory yourself in practical exercises. Topics discussed during the workshop: unsupervised and supervised learning and various machine learning techniques, ranging from linear models, support vector machines, random forests, neural networks, and deep neural networks. Pre-course assignment must be completed before the course start. More information and link to registration here.

Sequence comparison and database search

Dates: May 9-13, 2022. **Location**: University of Bergen. **Course code**: NORBIS901. **Organizers**: Inge Jonassen, Cedric Notredame. **Lecturer**: Cedric Notredame, Center for Genomic Regulation. **Credits**: 5 ECTS. **Evaluation**: The students will sit through a two-hours written exam. In addition, the written report will need to be approved.

Short course description: This course provides insight into methods for analyzing biological sequences. Its goal is to present an overview of some advanced concepts of sequence alignments and some of their applications with a strong emphasis the algorithmic homology based multiple sequence alignment modelling, one of the most widely used method in biology. The first part is dedicated to molecular evolution, in the second part we will cover the pairwise and single sequence analysis, and the third part of the course will deal with Multiple Sequence Alignment algorithms of both RNA and Protein sequences. More information and link to registration here.

Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Enabling technologies: There is an open call for Collaborative Projects on Digital Security and Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Autonomous Systems. "The objective of this call is to develop new knowledge within one or both topics for the call: Digital security and/or AI, Robotics and Autonomous Systems. [...] The project must involve two or more Norwegian partners that are not research organisations. Partners that are not research organisations must together participate with a minimum of 10 per cent of the total project costs."

Application deadline: open-ended

The call may be closed before the end of 2022. If so, RCN will publish this information on their website in due time.

New **UiB AI**: UiB AI has issued a call for funding for digitalization-related activities.

Every MN department can submit max. one coordinator application. All applications need to be discussed with the head of department before starting the application process.

Dept. deadline to inform the head of dept. about planned coordinator applications: 1 April 2022

DKNVS Research Funds: Support of research on sustainable development of society, funds for travels, field work, seminars and conferences. Apply here.

Application deadline: 4 April 2022

UTFORSK: "The programme supports the establishment of long-term partnerships between Norway and Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, and the USA."

Application deadline: 20 April 2022

ERC Advanced Grant: For scientists who are "established, leading principal investigators who want long-term funding to pursue a ground-breaking, high-risk project." (ERC funding explained)

Application deadline: 28 April 2022

Peder Sather Grant Program: "The Peder Sather Center for Advanced Study supports projects carried out by researchers at UC Berkeley in collaboration with researchers from [UiB]. Grants can support activities such as workshops, mini-conferences, virtual intellectual exchanges, the undertaking of exploratory and pilot studies, activities such as PhD student exchanges, longer-term stays for Principal Investigators, the collection and analysis of data, and other core research activities."

Application deadline: 1 June 2022

ERC 2023: The ERC has published tentative application deadlines for the 2023 calls on their website:

- ERC-StG-2023, 25.10.2022
- ERC-SyG-2023, 08.11.2022
- ERC-CoG-2023, 02.02.2023
- ERC-AdG-2023, 23.05.2023

Abel Prize: "The Abel Prize recognises pioneering scientific achievements in mathematics". For more information, please visit this website.

Nomination deadline: 15 September 2022

AIM SQuaREs: Program "to allow a dedicated group of four to six mathematicians to spend a week at AIM in San Jose, California."

Application deadline: 1 November 2022

New **Nordic AI Meet 2022:** NORA has announced that the Nordic AI Young Researcher Symposium 2022 (Nordic AI Meet 2022 Conference) will take place in Oslo 14 - 15 November 2022. Save the date!

New **AI and Tech Summit 2022:** Including discussions "around key legislative files such as the Data Act and the Digital Services Act (DSA), data protection, as well as international cooperation in AI development and how to best harness the potential of AI in areas as diverse as cyber security, health care and gaming." **21 April 2022, Brussels & online.** Register here.

New **International Artificial Intelligence in Bergen Research School (AIB 22):** AIB 22 aims at "disseminating recent advances on AI. It is mainly intended for master and Ph.D. students, postdocs, and researchers wishing to learn more about the theme of the research school. In 2022, the broad theme of the school is: Knowledge Graphs and Machine Learning.". **7-11 June 2022, Bergen & online.** Register here.

New **NORA Annual Conference 2022:** "The conference aims to gather the Norwegian research community within the field of Artificial Intelligence". **9-10 June 2022, Stavanger.** Register here.

Please contact research coordinator Stefanie Meyer if you have questions with regard to your planned and ongoing funding applications as well as all contractual work related to external funds!

All applications and agreements/ contracts need to be approved by the department leadership. In addition, you can have a look at our websites for research support services, where you will also find a list of our services.

Open Science at UiB

The University Library offers open webinars on the principles of Open Science, and you are all welcome to participate:

Finding & reusing research data	22.14.2022
Introduction to DMP	13.05.2022
Open Access - step by step	03.06.2022

Read about Open Science policy and opportunities:

UiB's Policy for Open Science	UiB Publication Fund	Open Access Publishing Deals	Open Access – What, why and how	Data management plans

Vacant Positions

PhD Research Fellow in Informatics – Applied cryptology
Please find the announcement here. Closing date: 17.04.2022

Postdoctoral Research Fellow position within Informatics - Optimization
Please find the announcement here. Closing date: 30.04.2022

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