



SapienCE Board Meeting 2/2022 Meeting Minutes

27 October 2022, hybrid session (participants present in person and via Zoom)

Meeting participants:

Members with voting rights:

- **Chair**, Camilla Brautaset, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen, Norway;
- Teemu Ryymin, Head of the Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies, and Religion, University of Bergen, Norway;
- Torbjørn Torsheim, Head of Department of Psychosocial Sciences, Faculty of Psychology, University of Bergen, Norway;
- Atle Rotevatn, Head of the Department of Earth Sciences, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, University of Bergen, Norway;
- Trond Martin Dokken, Executive Vice President, NORCE Norwegian Research Centre AS, Bergen, Norway;
- Marion Bamford (proxy for Bruce Rubidge, Interim Director of the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Palaeosciences, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa);
- Klaus Dodds, Professor, Department of Geography, Royal Holloway University of London, United Kingdom (**absent**).

Members with observer status:

- Solange Rigaud (proxy for Bruno Mareille, Senior Scientist, PACEA, University of Bordeaux, France);
- Sireen El Zaatari, Researcher, Department of Palaeoanthropology, University of Tübingen, Germany (**absent**).

Secretary of the Board:

- Christopher Henshilwood, Director of CoE SapienCE, Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies, and Religion, University of Bergen, Norway.

Observers:

- Eli Kristine Økland Hausken, Head of Research and Science Communications Department at the University Museum of Bergen, Norway;
- Mari Knudsen, Financial Advisor, Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen, Norway;

Minute taker:

- Zarko Tankosic, Project Manager/Administrative Leader of CoE SapienCE, Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies, and Religion, University of Bergen, Norway.

Agenda:

08/22	Call to order
09/22	Minutes from the last Board meeting
10/22	Director's PowerPoint Presentation and Report, April 2022 – October 2022; Update on the progress of preparations for the midterm evaluation
11/22	Reappointment of SapienCE Professor 2 positions at UiB
12/22	Meeting with Heads of Departments of AHKR, Geology, and Psychology at UiB, update
13/22	Financial progress report 2022
14/22D	SapienCE budget 2023 and long-term
15/22D	Appointment of SapienCE Deputy Directors, General
16/22D	Appointment of SapienCE Deputy Director, Field research, and Deputy Director, ECR
17/22D	Appointment of a new member of the SapienCE Scientific Advisory Committee
18/22	Spring 2023 SapienCE exhibition at Bergen University Museum, progress report
19/22	Any other business

08/22 Call to order

- Camilla Brautaset welcomed everyone.
- No issues to be raised in 'Any other business' agenda item

09/22 Minutes from the last meeting

No comments or issues with the last meeting minutes.

Resolution:

The Board meeting 1/2022 (spring) minutes were accepted.

10/22 Director's PowerPoint presentation and Report April 2022 – October 2022

Director's report presented the background and highlights of SapienCE-related research.

Christopher Henshilwood welcomed Marion Bamford from Wits University, who joined the SapienCE Board for the first time.

A written report from the Centre's Director was distributed before the meeting. The Director gave a PowerPoint presentation on the activities of SapienCE since the last board meeting. Particularly emphasized is the current integration of the research from different research groups, which is now slowly coming into fruition following the initial years dedicated to data collection. In addition, the report presents the progress of midterm evaluation preparations, including the process of concretisation of future research plans as well as the plans for leadership changes and turnover.

The importance of fieldwork was emphasized.

SapienCE international collaborations, of which there are many, were emphasized, especially the north-south collaborations. Also, SapienCE researchers come from 15 different nationalities, which is the wealth and diversity of experiences crucial for the project's success. He presented the currently active early career researcher (ECR) positions and those forthcoming. SEAS collaboration is particularly beneficial to SapienCE.

The director emphasized particularly the constant increase in outside research funding that SapienCE has attracted, which shows the confidence in the Centre of Excellence. Some of the sources of funding have been mentioned. Thanks were given to Wits University which will continue to organizationally support SapienCE despite the change of C. Henshilwood's status vis-à-vis that institution.

Publications are SapienCE's strong point, with many articles in preparation and soon to be submitted for publication in tier one journals.

The return to the field in 2022 after the Covid-related pause has been reported on. The field season has been remarkable in both organization and results, with AHKR and Wits University MA-students participating for the first time. PI K. van Niekerk has taken over the directorship of fieldwork at Blombos Cave and Klipdrift Shelter. The season also included a geological survey of the Blombos coastline by Simon Armitage and Christopher Miller as well as survey and community outreach along the coast and in the Langeberg Mountains and the Karoo, South Africa by C. Henshilwood, S. Armitage, and Z. Tankosic. PI S. Wurz from Wits University also continued her excavations at the Klasies River site. The work on the analysis of the collected data began in the Buitenkant Wits/SapienCE satellite lab in Cape Town with the assistance of Francesco d'Errico as well as AHKR and Wits University students. The joint fieldwork experience was important for team-building. Fieldwork will continue and expand in the future.

The Director provided a detailed summary of 2022 activities across the three research groups in SapienCE (Archaeology, Climate, Cognition). Following that, an overview of the current progress of planning for 2023 and for phase II of SapienCE was presented, including the current activities related to it. Particularly important was the meeting in Bergen on 11.10.2022, where preliminary plans for phase II research were discussed and agreed by SapienCE scientists. These plans will be operationalized and presented to the Research Council of Norway as part of the midterm evaluations.

SapienCE outreach activities have increased in the sense of the project's more visible online presence as well as the current exhibition in South Africa, which will be transferred to the Cape Point visitors' centre in January 2023, which will make it visible to a very large number of people. In addition, the preparation of the SapienCE exhibition at the University Museum of Bergen are progressing well; this exhibition is scheduled to open in April 2023.

Camilla Brautaset thanked C. Henshilwood on the presentation and congratulated SapienCE on their impressive work-record. She believes that agent-based modelling might be crucial in the future. She also thanked all SapienCE researchers on behalf of the Board. C. Henshilwood thanked the Board in return for their support and particularly emphasised the support from UiB-HF and AHKR dean and department head, respectively.

Atle Rotevatn joined the congratulations and specified the excellence in interdisciplinarity.

Torbjørn Torsheim seconds A. Rotevatn and commented that it is a major success to integrate all the different strands of research.

Trond Dokken supports the previous two comments and gave thanks for the detailed updated by SapienCE Director, especially emphasising methodological developments including agent-based modelling and suggested inland coring in the future.

Teemu Ryymin was impressed with the accelerated research and is happy to see that the synthesis part of the project is planned for the future.

Solange Rigaud asks if SapienCE research related to marine adaptation of people inhabiting coastal areas during the Middle Stone Age will have bearing on the fact that such developments have until recently been rejected by most scholars. C. Henshilwood replied that according to SapienCE results, early humans were much more adaptable than we thought, and he believes that a -marine only adaptation model is no longer feasible as this is not supported by the evidence from archaeological sites.

Resolution:

The Director's report is taken into advisement.

11/22 Reappointment of SapienCE Professor 2 positions at UiB

The Dean informs everyone that the three Professor II positions associated with SapienCE (Sarah Wurz, Francesco d'Errico, and Christopher Miller) have been extended for another five years from 1 October 2022 by the Faculty of Humanities. This also shows the confidence and support that the faculty has in SapienCE

C. Henshilwood expressed his pleasure that this has happened and emphasised how this type of continuity is important for SapienCE.

Resolution:

The Board takes note of the reappointment of SapienCE Professor 2 positions at UiB.

12/22 Meeting with Heads of Departments of AHKR, Geology, and Psychology at UiB, update

The Dean invites T. Ryymin to update the Board about this meeting. Written reports were sent to the Board previously.

T. Ryymin, gave thanks to Heads of Departments and SapienCE Project Manager for this meeting, which also satisfies the requirements stated in the UiB SFF-IV guidelines. These regular meetings will precede Board meetings.

A. Rotevatn agrees that these meetings are important for SapienCE and departments and looks forward to the future ones. The commitment of UiB's departments needs to be maintained.

Resolution:

The Board takes note of the meeting of the HoDs of AHKR, Geology, and Psychology.

13/22 Financial Progress report 2022

The Dean thanks Mari Knudsen on her excellent work in preparing the budget and generally on her work as the financial advisor for SapienCE.

Zarko Tankosic briefly presented the state of SapienCE finances since the last board meeting, the report of which was distributed to the Board members before the meeting. The reports concluded with 30 September 2022, by which time the budget showed 51% of expenditure; however, with not all costs from consortium partners still to be invoiced. The budget for the Special Operating Expenses has the highest deviation between the budget and the accounts, which is, among other reasons, a consequence of absence of fieldwork during the Covid pandemic.

Camilla Brautaset agreed and indicated that most SapienCE expenses are activity-related and that we would like to see a very large increase in costs in the future that moves the project forward in a positive way.

Resolution:

The Board accepts the financial progress report for 2022.

14/22D SapienCE budget 2023 and long-term

Z. Tankosic presented the budget proposal for 2023 and long-term. The budget documents had been submitted for the Board's consideration before the meeting. We refer to that document for budgetary details containing additional details for plans for activities funded by SapienCE per each research group. This document was augmented by two attachments showing original and amended long-term SapienCE budgets.

The proposed budget for 2023 is 25 m NOK, thereof 18,9 in RCN funding, 5,5 in UiB own funding and 509 000 in other public funding. The total RCN funding is 18,9 m NOK thereof 14 m NOK is funding allocated to UiB activity and 4,9 is allocated to consortium partners. For 2023 the budget “unallocated” is 5,5 m NOK and is for the recruitment positions that are planned to start during year 2023.

The long-term budget is amended in comparison to the one adopted previously (2018) to reflect the new realities. Namely, there are three significant changes: (1) increase of funding to the University of Bordeaux consortium partner by 92 000 NOK annually from 2023 for the duration of SapienCE, (2) the redistribution of unspent 2017-2022 funding by Wits University consortium partner onto the budget for the same institution for 2023-2027, and (3) redistribution of NORCE consortium partner budget in the amount of 583 800 NOK from the 2026 to the 2023 budget.

Finally, the RCN stipulates that no more than 60% of the total RCN budget is spent by the CoE by the midterm evaluation, scheduled for spring 2023; the forecast suggest that maximum 57% of the budget will be spent by that time.

T. Dokken asks if the newly planned collaboration with Axel Timmermann will require SapienCE funds. C. Henshilwood replied that this issue still needs to be discussed and details of this arrangement clarified.

The Dean reminded everyone that RCN has a standard procedure of compensating for inflation in the amount of 3% annually. Because of inflationary pressure, she urges caution in how the funds are spent.

Resolution:

SapienCE Board accepts the budget for 2023 and the proposed long-term budget for 2023-2027 as stated in the submitted documents and in Attachment 2.

15/22D Appointment of SapienCE Deputy Directors, General

The document explaining this issue has been circulated to the Board beforehand. The Dean informed the Board that the current SapienCE Deputy Director is stepping down in March 2023 and this position needs to be replaced. It is also an opportunity to further strengthen the organizational structure of the centre and renew the leadership. The proposal, therefore, is to appoint two new Deputy Directors in charge of field research and ECRs respectively, with specific responsibilities to reflect the complex SapienCE structure.

T. Torsheim ask for clarification on the mandates and the duration of the appointments of the new Deputy Directors. The Dean referred to the pre-circulated paper for details and on the following item on the agenda, where the specific people for these positions would be discussed. The plan is for the new appointments to be for the duration of the CoE.

T. Dokken asks if there are other plans for the change in the composition of the SapienCE Leader Group.

Resolution:

The SapienCE Board decides to accept the appointment of two new Deputy Director positions at SapienCE with the titles of ‘Deputy Director, Field Research’ and ‘Deputy Director, Early Career Researchers’ under the conditions outlined in the accompanying documents.

16/22D Appointment of SapienCE Deputy Director, Field research, and Deputy Director, ECR

Karen van Niekerk and Simon Armitage are put forward as the new SapienCE Deputy Directors for Field Research and Early Career Researchers, respectively. The Dean clarifies that these are administrative positions.

SapienCE Director presented the suggested candidates for the Dept. Director positions, their qualifications, and their specific work assignments and how they fit in the overall SapienCE plans. SapienCE is also looking into bringing new people from all research groups in the Leader Group in the future.

Resolution:

The SapienCE Board decides to appoint Dr Karen van Niekerk to the position of *SapienCE Deputy Director (nestleder)*, *Field Research* and Professor Simon Armitage to the position of *SapienCE Deputy Director (nestleder)*, *Early Career Researchers* with the starting date of 1 March 2023.

17/22D Appointment of a new member of the SapienCE Scientific Advisory Committee

The SapienCE Director and the Administrative Project Manager explained the need to replace a member of the SapienCE Scientific Advisory Committee to the Board.

Resolution:

SapienCE Board decides to relieve Professor Julia Lee-Thorp from her membership in the SapienCE SAC and appoints Dr Emma Loftus as her replacement at the same position.

18/22 Spring 2023 SapienCE exhibition at Bergen University Museum, progress report

Eli Hausken joined the meeting to present the upcoming exhibition at the Museum. The Museum is pleased to have this opportunity. She thanks the SapienCE Project Manager for this assistance with the organisation process.

The Museum is in the final days of negotiations with design teams who will work on the exhibition, which is expected to be of high quality. The exhibition is focusing particularly on knowledge production and scientists in SapienCE and how the integration of different strands of evidence occurs. The seven SapienCE research questions will be considered as well as methods used to answer them. Finally, SapienCE future directions will be addressed. The exhibition will open in May 2023. The Museum team will visit Johannesburg and Cape Town in November 2022 to see the SapienCE exhibition there and examine the research facilities.

A. Rotevatn has collaborated with the Museum team before and expresses his pleasure that the same team is working on the SapienCE exhibition.

Resolution:

The SapienCE takes the Museum exhibition progress report in advisement.

07/22 Any other business

No cases were raised under this item.

The date of the next Board meeting in the fall of 2022 has not been set.

Camilla Brautaset thanked the board members for their participation and to Christopher Henshilwood for the excellent work of SapienCE.

Meeting concluded at ca. 12:15.

Camilla Brautaset
Chair, SapienCE Board

Christopher Henshilwood
Secretary, SapienCE Board

If no comments are submitted by 20 November 2022, these minutes will be considered approved.