

CBS 2021: External research funding strategy

(February 2013)

Preamble:

Ambitious goals and challenges

CBS is facing a number of challenges which together lead us to an increased prioritization of external funding. Success in attracting external funding is a crucial indicator of our research strength – and thus serves as an important quality measure (both nationally and internationally). Given the pressure on the CBS budget over the coming years, external funding will be an essential ingredient in creating new academic positions (including at the post doc and PhD levels). Demonstrated success in attracting external funds will also serve as a foundation for national discussions over the currently-low level of basic research funding ('basisforskningsmidler') allocated to CBS. Finally, it must be acknowledged that, even taking account of CBS' academic location within the social and business sciences, external funding across the institution is currently modest (especially given CBS' research strength and standing).

However, 'external research funding' is a very broad term which covers a variety of activities. It includes funding from national public and private sources as well as EU and other international bodies that support a range of research and dissemination activities. It also encompasses the various types of funding opportunities that support research initiatives across sectors. Since the international trend now is turning towards a real interest in multidisciplinary research, including contributions from the social sciences and humanities, to address the world's large challenges, external research funding has become an even broader term. Thus, this document is not intended as a final strategic statement, but rather as a 'living document' which can both inform and inspire future development.

In order to achieve its goals in increasing external research funding, CBS must reach out to many different stakeholders. CBS is already dealing with a broad portfolio of external funding sources with different expectations for cooperation and outcome. In terms of research funding, a wide spectrum of external sources must be targeted: from those with a primary focus on research quality, such as the European Research Council (ERC) and the Danish National Research Foundation (Danmarks Grundforskningsfond), to those with a much stronger emphasis on societal relevance such as large Danish foundations, regionally-targeted and strategic funds.

At the same time, CBS will work on a culture change (and leadership challenge) in the direction of a higher collective prioritization of external funding. External research funding should not only be seen as a goal in the development contract but as an academic career opportunity and a possibility for creating innovative research activities and collaborations (which will in turn strengthen our education and outreach activities). CBS will not only focus on nurturing talent in this area, but also on sharing the effort of applications, and supporting research leadership.

CBS has set a goal of increasing external research financing by 10% every year for the next 10 years.

Development contract goal on external financing 2012-2014:

	2011	2012	2013	2014
External research funding (in 1000 DKK) (income ¹)	82.940	91.230	100.360	110.390
Increase		10%	10%	10%

This is an ambitious goal. Accordingly, CBS has established a unit within the Dean's Office, Research, which supports individual researchers, research groups and academic departments in preparing external research funding applications. Furthermore, the Dean's Office, Research establishes and maintains CBS' contacts to public and private funding sources, and provides management information and internal courses on external funding.

CBS is currently over-performing with regard to success rates within EU research funds and will continue its effort in this field. Within national public research funding, CBS is underperforming and has therefore initiated a quality review process to improve application success rates. Since both EU and national public sources for research funding within Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) are limited, new possibilities for external research funding must be explored. Therefore this strategy concerning external funding for CBS has two specific ambitions: A focused effort to increase the amount of research funds from private sources, which has been initiated from 2012, and a special goal of attracting larger strategic grants over the next years from public, EU and private sources.

Of course, any strategy for external research funding depends upon a solid research foundation, including high-quality publications, international standards of excellence, strong research networks, critical mass in key areas, PhD training, a high international and national reputation, strong departmental research cultures, and (perhaps most of all) hiring and developing the best academic staff. To some degree, this document takes these elements for granted as the sine qua non of a successful funding strategy. However, this in no way ignores their importance.

Focus points

- a) Focusing on strategic research with business partners**
- b) Targeting private foundations**
- c) Targeting blockbusters**
- d) Encouraging initiatives across borders, disciplines, institutions, and sectors**
- e) Attracting top level research and researchers**
- f) Supporting Business in Society platforms and World Class Research Environments**
- g) Supporting departmental initiatives**
- h) Monitoring and benchmarking**
- i) Increasing incentives**

¹ 'Income' is equivalent to 'expenditure' in the accounting system with regard to external funding.

a) Increased focus on CBS' current and potential business partners, and the role they can play in attracting more strategic research funding.

CBS has a long tradition of close co-operation with the private sector. Such partnerships have become more and more important, especially as a means of forming strong cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral initiatives in order to attract e.g. strategic governmental grants to CBS.

“Strategic research contributes to solving grand societal challenges for Denmark, both short and long term. Most societal challenges are complex, and a solid solution demands close collaboration between Danish and international researchers from different disciplines as well as cooperation with relevant stakeholders in society.” (Source: fi.dk: ”700 mio. kr. til forskning i samfundsudfordringer i 2013”)

CBS is already taking part in a pre-consortium preparing a large strategic cross-sectoral research and development project to be financed by The Strategic Research Council, The Danish Council for Technology and Innovation, industry partners across Denmark, and the universities in Denmark.

Initiatives:

- 1) Participating in innovation consortia and other large scale strategic initiatives.
- 2) Developing strategic research areas in close dialogue with corporate partners.
- 3) Strengthening co-operation with corporations in regard to research positions, especially industrial PhDs and post docs.

b) Targeted effort towards the increasing possibilities private foundations offer to research funding in Denmark.

Private foundations' contribution to Danish research is increasing. Danish private independent foundations play a major role in Denmark within the field of research, culture and applied projects. In 1981 private foundations' contribution to Danish research was 1,6 % of research funding in Denmark, in 2009 it had increased to 8,4 % (DEA's Report on Private Foundations in Danish Research 2012).

The largest ten foundations award approximately 1 billion EUR every year to projects within these different fields. A major part of this contribution goes to research or research based projects at the universities in Denmark. CBS is in close dialogue with a number of large foundations in Denmark and, for example, attracted several major grants in 2012.

Initiatives:

- 1) Establishing and strengthening the strategic contact to and dialogue with the foundations.
- 2) Mapping strengths and targeting potential partners and foundations.
- 3) Enhancing support to key staff during larger applications.

c) Targeting 'blockbusters': Prestigious grants above 10 mill. DKK.

The so-called 'Blockbusters' are typically large centre grants or large individual prestigious grants. Two important examples are the Centres of Excellence grants from The Danish National Research Foundation (DNRF) and the European Research Council's grants awarded to both senior and junior researchers. CBS has over the past few years been successful in

attracting these types of grants after a long and focused effort. This effort will continue by focusing attention and resources.

Initiatives:

- 1) Supporting researchers/departments in preparing ambitious applications (e.g. Centres of Excellence).
- 2) Identifying potential areas of strength and potential academic partners and matching them to prioritized societal challenges.
- 3) Mapping and targeting leading research groups and research managers at CBS in close dialogue with heads of department.
- 4) Restructuring co-financing policy in regard to the Dean's support for larger projects.

d) Prioritizing participation in projects and initiatives across borders, disciplines, institutions and sectors.

The international trend is turning towards a real interest in the strengths of multidisciplinary research to address societal challenges. CBS aims to be at the forefront of this by promoting ourselves nationally and internationally in a variety of fora where potential new partners can be found. Working across disciplines and institutions will enable CBS to join more projects and thus bring more funding to CBS. There are already a number of large scale strategic initiatives across CBS, disciplines, borders, universities, industries and sectors. This effort will include an increased number of partnerships with e.g. hospitals and other large public institutions. At the same time CBS' engagement in regional cooperation within applied projects will be brought into focus. Furthermore we aim to encourage an increased understanding of the great value of Social Sciences and Humanities in complementing other disciplines. For multidisciplinary research to actually work it is essential that researchers from different disciplines see the benefit of linking together.

Already CBS has set up several initiatives which include international researchers from several universities and participants from other sectors.

Initiatives:

- 1) Supporting our researchers in coordinating or joining projects with researchers from various other disciplines and facilitating cross-disciplinary initiatives.
- 2) Promoting CBS as an attractive partner nationally and internationally.
- 3) Forming a research funding policy group at CBS – a group with a variety of colleagues, who have the talent for and are dedicated to nurturing CBS' strengths and lobbying with potential partners.

e) Creating synergies between high-level recruitment and external funding.

An external research funding strategy should go hand in hand with strategies on recruitment. External funding is also about obtaining grants to attract high level researchers at both junior and senior levels in order to build, retain and strengthen priority research areas. A variety of national and international, both public and private, funding sources exist, which specifically support the recruitment of top level researchers.

CBS has attracted one of the two ERC grants in 2012 in close cooperation with an external researcher, who has been recruited to CBS after obtaining the grant. We should see

recruitment – and the targeting of recruitment - as integral to our funding initiatives (e.g. as new staff go on to play a significant role in applications).

Initiatives:

- 1) Senior level: Targeting professorship programmes nationally and targeting the best candidates that can be eligible for larger grants, e.g. ERC grants.
- 2) Junior level: Supporting recruitment of rising stars by increased focus on embedding post docs and PhDs in projects and on the possibilities within the EU's mobility programme for younger staff.
- 3) Industrial positions: At both senior level and junior level, by targeting companies and industrial programmes, there are obvious possibilities for enhancing CBS efforts at attracting strong academic profiles to the University.

f) Strengthening Business in Society platforms and World Class Research Environments by focusing on possibilities for attracting external research funding to the platforms' activities.

The CBS "Business in Society" Strategy includes a number of Transformational Initiatives. The selection in 2008 of six CBS World Class Research Environments (WCREs) pursued the idea of consolidating and building recognized areas of excellence at CBS. Business in Society (BiS) platforms represent five-year initiatives to strengthen CBS' identity and direction in areas where society faces significant challenges. The BiS platforms will enhance interdisciplinary collaboration between different educational/research fields and departments. In 2011, CBS launched two platforms; Public-Private relations and Sustainability. A further two platforms were approved in 2012; Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship. The BiS-platforms are closely linked to partnerships with the corporate world (see a).

CBS Senior Management (direktionen) has decided that a new WCRE investment with the primary purpose of improving research performance will be launched from 2014. The next scheme will support new research ideas and research environments not previously funded by the WCRE initiative.

The targeted funding of the current WCREs will run out by the end of 2013. The research groups and their endeavors will be embedded in the activities of the hosting departments.

Initiatives:

- 1) Supporting coordinated cross-disciplinary projects.
- 2) Helping the BiS platforms and WCREs focus on the possibilities within external funding.
- 3) Focusing on potential strategic partnerships with business and connecting BiS platforms and WCREs to the needs of external partners.

g) Supporting department initiatives with regard to attracting external research funding (including the improvement of success rates).

Departments have worked intensely on creating new department strategies. Their main focus areas have been research, teaching, dissemination, financing, staff, and external relations. Considering financing, the Departments have been asked to give special attention to a strategy on external funding and to set goals, both short term and long term (2013-2017). A constant dialogue between departments and the Dean's Office (Research) is important to achieve CBS'

ambitious goals, which will be set into action together with the departments. The Dean's Office can help departments convert their strategies into tangible and ambitious actions. At the same time, it is essential that departments take responsibility for the creation of internal processes which enhance and support external research applications so that grant applications are not simply left to the individual researcher. It is furthermore important that departments support CBS' culture change regarding external funding and continuously view external research funding as a part of academic career development and an opportunity for creating new research activities and collaborations throughout an academic career.

Initiatives:

- 1) The Dean's Office will help departments target high priority research areas and target researchers with calls and funding opportunities.
- 2) Supporting departments developing innovative 'project environments' at department level and across CBS.
- 3) Raising the level of department management information in relation to external funding opportunities.
- 4) Reviewing and enhancing internal CBS quality review procedures in order to improve application success rates.

h) Monitoring and benchmarking

In order to improve CBS' research funding, a benchmarking process will be established. As CBS plays a special role in the Danish university sector, it seems appropriate to conduct benchmarking both nationally and internationally. At the same time, monitoring the relevant indicators concerning external funding inside CBS is of high priority. In this connection special attention to application success rates should be given.

Initiatives:

- 1) Setting up a working group to set up a process for benchmarking.
- 2) Establishing quarterly management information about external funding.
- 3) Continuing the development of existing monitoring tools.

i) Increasing incentives at CBS

At CBS there is a broad range of incentives for applying for external funding during a research career. These include co-financing of projects from the department and the Dean, transfer of administrative project funding (overhead) directly to departments, possibilities for buy-out, and use of Head of Department funds. In order to optimize the conditions for preparing larger applications, an evaluation of the incentive system will be conducted in 2013.

Initiatives:

- 1) Conducting an evaluation of incentive system in 2013 including an analysis of the existing system at CBS.
- 2) Optimizing information on incentives and intensifying the collaboration with Heads of Department in regard to planning larger external funding efforts.
- 3) Restructuring co-financing policy in regard to the Dean's co-financing for larger projects.