

# FIN3R Board Meeting

January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Zoom, 11.00-12.30

**Attendees:** Eero Lehtonen, Brian Mphande, Virve Sihvola, Reetta Hintala, Dario Greco, Hanna-Marja Voipio, Johanna Åhlgren, Vootele Voikar, Hajnalka Nadai, Sarka Lehtonen, Johanna Englund, Anna Valius, Marianna Noring, Mikko Airavaara, Sara Sladakovic

## Agenda:

**1. Approval of the Meeting Minutes (November):** Meeting minutes were accepted with no previous comments or objections.

## **2. Future Activities**

### **- Replacement:**

- Continuing plans from last year, the first event will be a seminar on state-of-the art organoid technologies, hosted together with a Stemcell Technologies company. It will be online, most likely before the summer holidays.
- Replacement team will attend local meeting, representing FIN3R center, such as: Organ-on-Chip Annual Symposium in December, Annual Meeting of the Finnish Society of Toxicology in April.
- Replacement Director is a part of several working groups along with the members of TOKES and Ministry of Education, such as: Replacement Education Group, 3R Follow-up group. One initiative of the Replacement Education Group for this year is to present final results of the survey exploring the current state of the education on replacement methods at universities in Finland.
- Suggestion to participate in the workshops and seminars on replacement as part of the EU projects' workshops has been made by a coordinator. The final decision on participation will be made when more information is available, but the Replacement team is interested in joining.

After participation in the meeting of LERU ANIM, Eero Lehtonen is asking for help of collecting link for the relevant events on non-animal methods. The deadline for send the links is February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. All the relevant information should be forwarded to Sara Sladakovic.

- **Reduction:** it is important to discuss the annual event as soon as possible and start with the organization. Reduction team is interested in joining the workshop organization together with the Refinement team, Experimental Design workshop, for example.

### **- Refinement:**

- Webinars are continuing as last year, one already held on January 14<sup>th</sup>, following is scheduled for February 4<sup>th</sup>. Request for the third webinar of the year still pending but it will be decided soon.

- Animal Welfare Body Network in Finland is continuing the work, next meeting is scheduled to be online, in the end of February. In person meeting is planned for October.
- Culture of Care symposium and workshop are scheduled for April 9-10, 2025. It will take place in Helsinki, and it is organized together with the Culture of Care working group. Survey on Culture of Care from 2022 will be repeated this year, too.
- Refinement director will attend the FELASA Conference in Athens in June and session of European Animal Welfare Network.
- Experimental Design workshop is planned as a two-day event in September.

Statistics about the rise of the 3R centers in Europe has been presented, including the brief introduction of the IMPROVE cost action. 3Rs are receiving more attention in Europe. Memorandum of understanding implies more 3R center networks are needed in Europe, whose aims will be funding acquisition, policy advertisement, dissemination, and education.

- **FIN3R Annual Symposium:**

General agreement is that the tradition should be continued, so the momentum is not lost. Two locations have been suggested – Turku and Kuopio – and Kuopio has been chosen as a tentative option since there are local representatives in the board. As well, there are several important companies that would be good to have as partners or sponsors.

Symposium should take place in the first half of November, preferably week 46, to avoid overlapping with the Danish Annual Meeting.

Planning should start in May, the latest, especially if there will be international speakers. Invitations should be sent before the summer holidays and advertisement can start already then. Practical arrangements can be addressed in August.

University of Eastern Finland offers funding of the educational events, the deadline for applications is soon. University will be the venue for the event. The program should include the workshops which will be good for the local PhD students and can increase the funding.

As main organization committee, Sarka Lehtonen, Hajnalka Nadai and Jenni Hakkarainen were suggested. The rest of the board will provide assistance too.

**3. Finances:**

Budget for 2025 is almost the same as for 2024. Last year, the money was well spent, and almost the whole budget was used.

In the discussion with the Ministry representatives, it is decided that the FIN3R budget is independent contract between Dario Greco as coordinator and the Ministry, hence there is no need for TOKES to approve the budget.

#### 4. TOKES update

- Seminar about funding opportunities for small projects will be organized, perhaps in May. The aim is to attract funders to provide a continuous support for the small 3R projects.
- Information group of the TOKES suggest that their official pages will be a part of the FIN3R. Topics to be included are background information of TOKES, meeting minutes, press releases, relevant information, opinions, working group updates. Some information about Tokes and 3R should be available in Finnish.
- 3R follow-up group contains some FIN3R board members. First follow-up report should be ready by the end of this year.
- Surplus animal report will be available soon as well. The main aim is to find ways to decrease the numbers.
- Culture of Care group plans the above mentioned symposium on April 9-10<sup>th</sup> 2025.

#### 5. Last Meeting's Issues (selection criteria, community expanding, website design and communication materials)

- **Website and communication materials:** a working group for the website changes should be decided. It is important to decide if a design company needs to be hired for the changes or not. More advertisement materials should be printed.
- **Selection criteria:** small group should (Coordinator + 3R Directors) make suggestions for this issue and present it to the board. Things that need deciding are: the length of the term, practical things such as requirements for each position, selection criteria of the applicants, etc. For this year, suggestions for the candidates should be made too, along with the advertisement text. As well, roles and tasks of the board members should be defined and clearly established.

#### 6. Other issues:

A question about the sustainability and continued support of the Ministry has been posed. In particular, what does it depend on, how long is it planned for, are there any expectations about the performance of the board, how does the reporting work?

So far, it is known that the financial support is decided by the Ministry every year, budget can fluctuate or change every year, as well as be discontinued.

Inviting Tiina Pullola to one of the FIN3R board meetings might be a promising idea, so she can give answers to these questions.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.28. The next meeting is scheduled for March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025.