



NORENSE
Nordic Research Network for Steiner Education

Annual Report 2010
Nordic Research Council

Rudolf Steiner University College, Oslo
Waldorflärrarhögskolan, Stockholm
Snellman College, Helsinki

Foreword

On the 7th of March 2008 an agreement of intent was made between Rudolf Steiner University College (Oslo), Waldorflärahögskolan (Stockholm) and Snellman College (Helsinki) with a vision of developing a common research network. Through yearly meetings in Stockholm this intention was communicated to the School and Preschool Federations in the three countries - and the spiritual, organisational and financial structure of the research network was piece by piece being formed. In November 2009 during a meeting in Helsinki a name was proposed for the research network; NORENSE; Nordic Research Network in Steiner Education and a first website was established. In 2010 the planning work was taken to the institutional level and it resulted in the formation of a legal body, the Nordic Research Council whose role it is to help develop and govern all activity connected to research and development work in NORENSE.

This is the first annual report from the Nordic Research Council. It gives an account of the whole formation process of NRC with its statutes and guidelines. The federations in all three countries have been pivotal in establishing the rooting of the research programme in the school movement. In this collaboration Dag Øystein Nome (Norway), Göran Fant (Sweden) and Eva Raunela and Pia Pale (Finland) managed to create an atmosphere of trust and mutuality in a truly Nordic spirit. We are very grateful for this contribution. Also the Pedagogical Section – particularly in Sweden – has been an important contributor in the process of establishing the right interest and enthusiasm in the school movement for developing a common research culture.

We would like to thank all financial contributors for the grants that were given to NRC in its initial year 2010 in order to make this happen. The report gives you an overview of what has happened in 2010 and which research and development projects that were given grants. Most projects will only get started though 2011, which means the first project reports will come in to NRC by the autumn 2011. We will in our next report include these in more detail. A warm thank you to all the Nordic collaborators, to the school and preschool federations, the parents organisations, the Pedagogical Section and not the least to donors that made this start of Nordic Research Network in Steiner Education possible.

23.03.2011

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Introduction

How do we envisage the development of schools, teacher education and research in the next 10 years in the Nordic Countries? Could we build a common strategy for this in our dialogue with the political authorities? The need for a long-term national and Nordic political strategy was agreed upon at a first meeting on March 6th 2008 in Stockholm. An agreement of intent was signed between the three teacher training institutions (RSUC, WLH, SC). In 2009 a new meeting was held in Stockholm, and the teacher conference in Järna had “Research Culture in the Waldorf Schools” as their main focus. Bo Dahlin, Aksel Hugo and Jan Mansikka were the main speakers. The Pedagogical Section in Sweden arranged the meeting and did in 2010 a new follow up with more focus to research practice. There were meeting held in Helsinki in November 2009 to follow up and anchor the initiative with the Finish School Federation. In this meeting NORENSE was proposed as a name for a net-based Nordic Research Network in Steiner Education.

Based on the foundation of previous years work, 2010 was a year where the Nordic Research Council was established as a governing body of NORENSE. This report gives an overview of the formation process of NRC, its organisational structure, statutes and members. NRC was in November able to hold its first constitutional and formal meeting. 2010 was hence also a year where actual research project applications were scrutinized and projects funded. The report is giving a first overview of the research projects that were funded – and a status of the financial situation in NRC.

Shaping a Nordic Research Model: the NORENSE-meeting in Stockholm

It was an important foundation laid in the meeting in Stockholm January 30-31, where for the first time all federations (School and Preschool) from the three countries were present, along with the three teacher education institutions (RSUC, WLH, SC) and the Pedagogical Section. In this meeting a representative from Germany (Wilfried Sommer) was invited to present to us a model for how a school-funded research institute (Pedagogische Forschungsstelle) is organized in Germany – and what kind of experiences they had and advice he would give us to develop a similar Nordic Model.

Based on the discussions held after Sommer's contribution, a work-plan for 2010 was agreed on for the process of

1. Establishing a legal structure for NRC
2. Establishing a collaboration network between the Nordic federations
3. Starting the process of a joint financing strategy
4. Clarifying guidelines for research applications

A working group consisting of Aksel Hugo and Caroline Bratt prepared the process of 1 and 4 in close collaboration with Dagny Ringheim and Gerd Eva Valøen (RSUC). Dag Øystein Nome from the Norwegian School Federation agreed to be coordinator of process 2 and 3.

Establishing a legal structure for NRC

A first sketch of a regulative framework of Nordic Research Council was prepared in a short meeting in March in Oslo. A suggestion was sent out to the three colleges and to the federation representatives. This document was basis for the meeting held in Oslo May 26th with participants from WHL, SC and RSUC in addition to Dag Øystein Nome representing all the different federations.

After the discussion the meeting concluded that the proposed structure of placing NRC within RSUC as a legal body would be the right formal regulative framework. It is understood as an offer from RSUC for the proposed working period (2010-2014) that can be revised. The RSUC will make no economical profit from hosting the NRC. It is important that this understanding is communicated to the participating individuals and organizations. The role of the NRC is to develop and govern NORENSE. The vision and intention of NORENSE is twofold:

1. To develop a research culture in Steiner Education in the Nordic countries.
2. To support and develop research and research publications.

The principles and criteria for funding within NRC should serve these two aims. The research

culture (see point 1 above) is embodied in the pre-schools, schools, teacher training institutions and individual researchers. Research (see point 2 above) is defined as projects supervised by a person with PhD. The statutes and guidelines for NRC that were a result of this meeting are attached to the report. These include also guidelines for research applicants.

Review of the NRC work 2010

In 2010 the planning work was taken to the institutional level and it resulted in the formation of a legal body, the Nordic Research Council whose role it is to help develop and govern all activity connected to research and development work in NORENSE.

- NORENSE-meeting January 30-31 in Stockholm. Working group established
- After preparatory meetings and work the NRC was constituted and statutes were decided upon on May 26 2010 in Oslo. (Statutes, NRC attachment 1)
- The possibility to apply for money and the guidelines of NRC were announced in September. (Guidelines, NRC attachment 2)
- At the NRC meeting in November 26 in Helsinki the criteria were decided and four projects received funding. (Criteria, NRC attachment 3)
- The Pestalozzi foundation has continued to support the professorship at RSUC as well as Swedish master students.
- Bo Dahlin published two articles in *Nordisk Pedagogik* and *Journal of Beliefs and Values*.
- Aksel Hugo, Dag Nome and Caroline Bratt visited the teacher's conference in Lappeenranta, Finland to speak about research and Nordic cooperation.
- There has been further work to invite representatives from Denmark to take part of NORENSE.
- In January 2011 the first former master student, Axel Föller Mancini, presented his dissertation at the University of Life Science in Ås, Norway.
- Cooperation in form of dialogue and exchange of experience between RSUC and WLH has begun regarding the class teacher programme.

The first half-year was focused on establishing NRC with its statutes, the second half year in the autumn to actually start the work. Also important work was done within the federations to anchor the project in the school movement. In March the Norwegian School Federation had its yearly assembly and decided to give one per mil of its turnover to research – the decision was almost unanimous, made with the support of 35 out of the 37 schools. Having NRC and a first funding in place, it was possible to shape the announcements of research projects in the early autumn. The result was eight research applications that were handed in. These applications were scrutinized at the first operational NRC meeting held in Helsinki on November 26th.

Overview of research grants given in 2010

NRC received nine applications and has in its first operational year given support the following research projects:

- Bente Edlund has received 40.000 NOK for a project within the field of early childhood education. Decided in May 2010.
- Anne Mette Stabel received 224.000 NOK for her PhD work regarding the history of primarily the Norwegian Waldorf curriculum. Decided in November.
- Trond Skaftnesmo received 156.000 NOK for a research project about Evidence-based research. Decided in November.
- Renate Krämer Østergaard received 40.000 NOK for a project about play in the pre-school. Decided in November.
- Astrid Sund received 36.000 NOK for a project about the question of time in a pre-school context. Decided in November.

Renate Krämer Østergaard and Astrid Sund were asked to develop their respective projects to PhD projects.

Cooperation between the federations

Important work has been done through 2010 in bringing collaboration structures between the School federations in the three participating Nordic countries. One important step was the meeting held in Lappeenranta in November in connection with the Finnish teacher conference where Dag Øystein Nome (Norwegian school federation), Aksel Hugo and Caroline Bratt participated. Pia Pale and Eeva Raunela from the Finnish federation have played important roles. The Finnish federation is investigating if and how it will be able to support NRC financially. Göran Fant from the Swedish federation said that the Swedish federation from 2011 would also give 1 % to NRC. He pointed out that the Swedish federation's intention is that the Swedish money goes to research projects on a higher level than MA. The importance of cooperation between the pre-school federations and the school federations was pointed out. This also regards the representation in NRC.

The kindergarten federations from all three countries participated in the NORENSE meeting in Stockholm. The Norwegian federation has also in 2010 started its financial contribution to the Nordic Research Network. The parents' federations also participated in the meeting with a representative from Norway and Sweden. In Finland the new federation is a collaboration of parents, teachers and preschool teachers federation.

The situation of teacher education in Denmark

It has been the intention of NORENSE to also include the federations and teacher training institutions in Denmark. Jeppe Flummer participated in the meeting NORENSE meeting held in January 2010 in Stockholm and described the complex situation in Denmark. At a meeting in January 2011 Jørgen Bækkeskov and Annette Klevi Nielsen told us about the situation for the teacher education in Denmark, representing also Michael Brinch.

There are at the moment only part time programmes in Copenhagen (Sophia seminar) and Skandeborg (Novalis seminar) with a total of around 60 students. These programmes do not receive any state subsidies. There are efforts to develop a full time programme for pre-school teachers. In 2011 we hope a continuous working relation will be established with Denmark. The Danish federation has decided to donate 20.000 DK to NORENSE in 2011.

Financial support from Ahtola and Pestalozzi foundation

Donations from two Nordic foundations, the Ahtola Foundation in Finland and the Pestalozzi Foundation in Sweden, have supported the development of NORENSE in 2010. A donation from Ahtola made it possible to establish a website and pay a web-editor (www.norensenet.net). A donation from Pestalozzi made it possible to increase the employment of the research director (Professor Bo Dahlin) and has also given scholarships to master degree students from Sweden. The Swedish School Federation has administrated the call for and distribution of the scholarships. For the other Nordic countries, this is an important example to follow, since the development of a research culture depends on recruiting and educating new researchers amongst the Waldorf School practitioners and creating and understanding among the schools for the importance of educational development of the staff. It is *not* just a private matter.

RoSE: Research journal on Steiner Education

A very important element in the Nordic research development is the establishment of RoSE, a peer reviewed research journal. Professor Bo Dahlin has been pivotal in establishing this and is also head of the editorial board (see: www.rosejournal.com). During 2010 the first two issues have been published on <http://rosejournal.com/index.php/rose> . The journal is produced in cooperation between RSUC and Alanus Hochschule. An operational framework for the journal has been designed and was agreed on during 2010, including statutes and guidelines for editorial board and for reviewers. In June 2010 an announcement was sent out to all Waldorf schools and all Waldorf Training Centres in the world – and to all university libraries. The journal is not yet registered as a peer review journal, but this will be applied for.

Research Collaboration and Conferences

Through the NORENSE website, it is possible to connect and have an overview of research conferences inside and outside the Nordic Countries. These include conferences for teachers and teacher educators; for example the conference on “The role of arts in higher education” held in Sheffield in June 2010 where many Nordic educators participated.

WLH has started a collaboration process with Crossfields Institute. The first programme to become accredited is hopefully a Complementary Course in Waldorf Pedagogy for Subject Teachers (60 ECTS). The accrediting process forces WLH to become clear in its organisation

and structure. It also requires that we formulate criteria for teacher competences and how we assess those competences. It is therefore of importance to us to develop these criteria so that they match what we need and wish to accomplish. WLH would like to have a working dialogue about teacher competences.

Research on competences in the context of the European Qualification Framework

In the NORENSE-meeting January 2010 Aksel Hugo and Caroline Bratt proposed to initiate a project as part of our research strategy to go into the field of teacher competences. This research and development work could, in the light of the European and National Qualification Frameworks, investigate conditions for shaping pre-school teacher and teacher programmes with double qualifications. The question shaping a common Nordic competence project was prepared as a separate theme on the conference in Stockholm in January 2011.

Summary of the economy in 2010

Incomes:

Norwegian school and preschool federations	410.000 NOK
Ahtola foundation	5.000 €
Pestalozzi foundation	150.000 NOK

Expenses:

Scholarships	496.000 NOK	106.000 NOK were taken from the budget 2011
Employment of research director:	150.000 NOK	
RoSE academic journal online	5000 €	
NORENSE website/editor	10.000 NOK	
Administration	20.000 NOK	

Rudolf Steiner University College, WLH and Snellman College have carried the costs for all allocated staff time in planning, developing and documenting work with NORENSE/NRC. Costs connected to staff time involved from the institutions and for travels, accommodation

and meetings are not included in the summary above. From RSUC a 20% position and from WLH a 20% position were allocated to this work in 2010. Several co-workers in all three institutions have participated in the development work.

Members of NRC, 2010

Bo Dahlin, Research director, RSUC

Marja-Leena Ilmonen, SC

Eeva Raunela, SC

Bente Edlund, RSUC

Aksel Hugo, RSUC

Dagny Ringheim, RSUC

Gerd-Eva Valøen, RSUC

Caroline Bratt, WLH

Leif Tjærnstig, WLH

Dag Øystein Nome, Norwegian federation

Göran Fant, Swedish federation

Aksel Hugo and Caroline Bratt wrote the Annual Report 2010.

Appendixes

Appendix 1

NORDIC RESEARCH COUNCIL (NRC) in Steiner Waldorf Education Statutes decided May 26, 2010 (Oslo meeting)

1. Vision and purpose

NRC serves the development of a research culture¹ in Steiner Waldorf Education within the Nordic countries. The purpose is to develop and stimulate research², and to raise and distribute research funds.

2. Tasks

The general task of the Council is to serve this vision and purpose, by developing NORENSE³ as a programme and network. This task includes to

- raise funds for research and development work in Steiner Education
- stimulate, support and produce applications for research resources
- allocate research funds and give financial support to R&D projects
- support development of a research culture in schools and teaching institutions
- report on research and development projects to carrying institutions and individuals
- administer the NORENSE webpage.

3. Legal framework and constitution

The NRC is constituted by 2 representatives from each of the participating teacher education institutions. The Nordic preschool-federations, school federations and parents' federations choose 3 representatives among themselves. NRC is chaired by a research director, who is employed by one of the participating teacher education institutions.

Decisions in NRC are taken by votes, in cases where general agreement is not achieved.

NRC is legally housed as a body within Rudolf Steiner University College (RSUC), Oslo. Principal and head of administration at RSUC both participate in NRC.

Principal and head of administration participate in the roles of hosting NRC, and do not vote.

4. Meetings and reporting

The whole NRC meets at least twice a year.

¹ The term 'research culture' as described in Hugo, A. (2010): Cultivating Human Growth: a Research Strategy for Waldorf Education. *RoSE - Research on Steiner Education*, 1(1); pp 96-100.

² 'Research' includes the following activities: research conducted by persons with a PhD, doctoral thesis work, master thesis work, research and development projects conducted or led by someone with at least a PhD-degree or equivalent research competency, and contributions to academic research conferences.

³ See: Nordic Research Network for Steiner Education, www.norense.net

At the beginning of each year NRC meets with representatives from the participating and funding organisations to report on achievements the previous year and plan/discuss focus for the coming year. The aim of this meeting is to tune planned activities to future needs.

5. Guidelines and reporting

NRC develops guidelines for the different task areas (see point 2), funding policies and procedures (see point 3), meeting routines (see point 4) and reporting procedures.

Appendix 2

NRC / NORENSE

NORDIC RESEARCH NETWORK FOR STEINER EDUCATION

Principles and criteria for funding / 2010-2011

Background and aim

The vision and intention of NORENSE is twofold:

1. To develop a research culture in Steiner Education in the Nordic countries.
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Funding resources

The funding resources are either

- earmarked (from private foundations or public funds) or
- open donations (from school and kindergarten federations, parents federations etc.).

Decisions of hosting research by earmarked resources can be made in NRC as long as it supports the vision and intention of NORENSE. Decisions related to NRC hosted research financed by open research donations are made based on the criteria given below.

Criteria for funding

According to the agreement between the three participating institutions (Snellman College, WLH and RSUC) the overall aim is to develop a common research programme to be shared by all participating institutions – and to avail and communicate new research for the Federations and the Waldorf preschools and schools in all participating countries.

1. RELEVANCE

Nordic relevance

Choices of funding should over time be balanced to help the development of research across and within the participating countries. *Priority* should be put to research that proves to be relevant for all participating countries.

Relevance to school life

Choices of funding should help develop the connections between research, education and school life. *Priority* should be put to research that proves to be relevant for educators, practitioners and researchers.

Public relevance

Research funded by NRC should also aim at contributing to the wider public outside the

Waldorf preschools/schools and Waldorf-education institutions. *Priority* should be put to research that is interesting for the general public as well as for Waldorf schools.

2. ACADEMIC RIGOUR

Research hosted and financed by NRC should have academic rigour at a high level.

Priority should be put to research applications that prove to be conducted within a research context that secures academic rigour.

3. ACADEMIC ORIGINALITY

Research hosted and financed by NRC should help develop new holistic approaches in educational research, building on the impulse of Steiner. *Priority* should be put to applications where the individual researcher demonstrates an ability to perform this within a particular research field.

4. RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Research hosted and financed by NRC should help develop strong links between researchers and practitioners in Steiner Education and researchers and practitioners beyond. *Priority* should be put to applications where the applicant will facilitate and situate the research activity within a larger community of researchers. This bridging also applies to the content of the research.

The Nordic Research Council should in their evaluation of research applications validate and balance applications separately according to these criteria. An overall judgement should be made to always serve the long-term aim and intention of NORENSE. It is also reasonable that a certain balance is sought between input of open donations and return of research activity between the participating countries.

Approved by the NRC meeting in Helsinki
2010-11-26

Appendix 3

Guidelines for the Nordic Research Council's (NRC) treatment of applications

Approved 14.09.2010

1

The purpose of NRC funding is to support research, development and publications that aims to deepen or in other ways develop the theoretical and/or practical sides of Steiner's educational impulse.

2

The NRC especially welcomes projects that can build bridges between the Steiner Waldorf school and kindergarten movement on the one hand, and mainstream schools/preschools and educational research on the other.

3

All projects must be documented and reported in writing in a form accessible to the intended public (teachers, researchers, or the public at large).

4

Applications should be addressed to the NRC and sent to the Research Director, preferably in digital form. Applications should be in writing, about 5-10 pages. Applications must include the following:

- I. A description of the project: its purpose, background and ways of working.
For research projects this means:
 - Purpose: what is hoped to be achieved by the research
 - Background and educational context, theoretical and practical
 - Specific research questions
 - Methods of research
 - Intended form of publication of results
- II. The academic and practical qualifications of the applicant
- III: A time frame for the project
- IV. A budget for the project and the actual amount of money applied for

5

Applications can be sent in anytime but have to await the decision meeting of the NRC, which takes place once a year (March). Only in exceptional cases can extra decision meetings be held. Applications are preferably received in digital form, see address below.

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