



## Minutes – UID Strategic Board meeting

**Time:** Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2015

**Venue:** Administration conference room, UID

**Present:**

Board members: Anne Asensio (external member)  
Björn O. Nilsson (external member)  
Daniela Rothkegel (PhD student representative)  
Lars Isaksson (staff representative)  
Jonas Lindberg (student representative)  
Maria Göransdotter (Head of Department, Chair)  
Mikal Hallstrup (external member)  
Thomas Degn (faculty representative)  
Demian Horst (faculty representative)

Other participants: Ingela Westerlund, minutes taker

Absent: Niklas Andersson (faculty representative)  
Lene Rydningen (student representative)

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1. Opening of the meeting/	Chair Maria Göransdotter opened the meeting.
2. Organization	
2.1 Approval of the agenda	The meeting agenda was approved.
2.2 Quorum	Björn O. Nilsson will step in as chair from item 6.
2.3 Scrutinizers of the meeting	Lars Isaksson and Anne Asensio were elected to check the minutes together with chairs Maria Göransdotter and Björn O. Nilsson.
2.4. Last meetings' minutes	The minutes from last meeting were approved.
3. Review of current issues	Maria Göransdotter reviewed current issues at UID. Recruitment process for a <i>new rector</i> is continuing. Internal recruitment may be an alternative. The leadership group has covered parts of the rector's assignments in the absence of a rector. The application process for <i>educations</i> on master level and 1-year course is ongoing. There are somewhat fewer applications than last year, but still quite good numbers. A <i>collaboration</i> project with Audi has been carried out during

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autumn, resulting in a full scale model in clay presented to the company in Germany. Many other successful projects with external partners have also taken place during the autumn semester.

Within *research*, we have recruited an assistant professor, starting her 4-year research position on January 1. During the spring, a national evaluation of PhD education will be carried out, and there will also be an evaluation local to Umeå University of the ongoing and planned research goals for the four faculties. UID is strong in practice based research, which stood clear at the DRS 2014 conference, but has a very vulnerable research infrastructure, which will probably be reflected in both evaluations.

**The board expressed strong concerns** about UID still not having recruited a rector. Even though the leadership group works well and has maintained the school, the work load is high for them and the strategic disadvantages of not having a rector are now highly noticeable in the internal work at the University. UID urgently needs a rector to represent the school, both internally and externally. The board points out that UID may miss opportunities if the process takes too long time, but that it is also important to not make rushed decisions in such an important question.

**The board asks UID to benchmark the research funding situation** and research results against other relevant design research environments nationally and internationally. In particular, the board asked how UID compares with international design research peer universities and institutes.

## 4. Developing UID – past events and future strategy

Maria Göransdotter presented a summary of the autumn's work with economy and strategy at UID. There have been intense discussions with the Faculty of Science and Technology regarding UID's financial situation. UID has also had a frequent dialogue with the university management regarding this. The UID leadership group has highlighted issues of future strategy, risks and ambition level that have not been explicitly handled or jointly agreed on yet, and are awaiting a continued process in which the dialogue continues with both Faculty and University leadership before any concrete decisions on future ambition level and strategy can be made. The situation is crucial to UID, since our education needs to develop and change from a disciplinary perspective but also from an economical point of view, and it is difficult to make the right strategic choices before we know what University framework we have to relate to in the near and far future.

**The board stresses that communication between UID, the Faculty and the central University leadership must be improved** as soon as possible, in order to find good resolutions of the situation. The board suggests that this process should be driven by the Vice-Chancellor, since the strategic value of UID in relation to the University as a whole needs to be articulated and defined on central level. In order for UID to carry out the necessary changes in education and research to continue upholding a globally leading position in its' field, the structural support provided by the University and Faculty must be clarified

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in order for this process to be successful. Since the Faculty must be fair in its' treatment of all its' departments, any additional support or measures to aid UID's development process should be brought up on a strategic main University level. As the Board sees it, there is a mutual benefit in strategic issues and brand development shared by Umeå University and UID.

### 5. UID economy and budget

Maria Göransdotter presents UID's financial situation, and gives a short background on how the deficit of 6 MSEK has built up over the years 2010-12. The Faculty of Science and Technology has given UID the opportunity to work with making changes in the economy, without having to pay back on the deficit in the next few years, but showing a yearly positive result between 2015-18. This is very positive. In 2019 a new assessment of the UID economy will be made by the Faculty board.

The follow-up of the economic outcome for 2014 showed an increase of our deficit, since UID overran budget with 1,2 MSEK on basic education. 700 TSEK related to costs that should have been covered by external funding, 200 TSEK were invoices belonging to 2015. These adjustments will be made in January 2015. However, the rest of it is due to overspending, and actions will be taken on a structural level within education to establish better financial principles, steering and reporting. Over the coming years, the financial situation for UID will be even more stressed, since the 10-year Baltic donation to UID ends in the summer of 2016, and also the funding for the research project Prototyping Practices (Dec. 2016). This will affect both the possibilities to conduct research and PhD education, and also many of the externally aimed activities at UID. The board notes that no attempts have yet been made by UID to extend the sponsorship from the Baltic Group.

**The Board states that UID must dedicate more efforts to find new resources and external funding** from funding bodies for both infrastructure and research, for example Wallenberg, Erling Person etc. The research side should be helped to get funding since we do have PhD's graduating in 2015, but a realistic goal should be set. However, since external funding applications must be made by scientifically merited researchers, one problem that UID is facing is lack of resources/persons with this competence. Base stability is missing for making time to work on applications for external funding. Therefore, **the Board underlines that the principles for distribution of state granted research funding at the Faculty should be revised** so as to include the field of design research, and that UID should take an active part in the work with the revision of these criteria.

### 6. Strategic analysis

Björn O. Nilsson initiated the strategic analysis by asking the board members to apply the design process on UID in order to define the most relevant problems to solve. All organization must be reinvented; how could UID be reinvented and build on a positive but realistic spirit to get the organization back on track, adapting to the circumstances around. There are many opportunities and the basis for an excellent institute is definitely

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in place to be built on. UID is a figure head of Umeå University.

**The board stresses that UID should not change the aim or ambition of being the world's strongest design school.**

However, UID must adapt to the changing circumstances when it comes to funding and higher education policy, as well as to the changes in the design profession. Some matters are urgent and some are long-term, and at the moment the urgent matters are blocking the road for the long term strategy.

**UID needs to make a serious shift in practice, and cannot continue running the way it is at the moment.** The vision for how to do this should be shared with the University. Here, UID should find more synergies with other departments at Umeå University. Also, the resources that alumni can bring in this process must be handled systematically and seriously.

UID is a strong school with a strong brand, but **the school needs to show the uniqueness of its practice in new ways**, and on new strategic arenas. External funding will impact the matter of getting internal funding. Societal impact may be a measure of getting funding, not only funding for publishing papers.

**UID needs to explicitly define a new vision for the school.** It is then also needed to improve story-telling, increase the University perspective, and focus even more on both internal and external collaboration.

**UID must evaluate how education can be more efficient**, with smarter work flows and financial routines, as well as out of a design development perspective. The Board suggests UID to define 3 things we will stop doing tomorrow, and 3 things we will start doing tomorrow.

**Collaboration is the key to innovation, and to defining a best practice for now and for the future.** With more internal collaboration, external funding might increase, and then also internal funding. UID should even more actively position itself as a part of Umeå University. Doing this should somehow impact culture at the University, by doing something totally unexpected to surprise and show what design can bring to the table. The project Prototyping the Future may be a good demonstrator how to apply the design process in a broader perspective.

## 7. Statement from the Strategic board

The Board decides to make a statement, addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, clarifying arguments for the value of UID and highlighting collaborations and key issues to solve internally and short term as well as externally and long term. The Board in this statement also point out that the rector ship at UID should be handled with the highest priority.

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8. Operational plan 2015

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The Board reviewed the follow up of the 2014 Action plan and the 2015 Operational plan. For the coming year's action plan, **the Board underlines that all activities must be assigned to a specific person** to avoid that issues are not addressed.

In the revision of the 2015 Operational plan, the Board stresses the following items for priority during the year:

*-Industry exchange for staff.* Mobility between academia and industry is traditionally very low in Sweden, but should be a key strategic issue for developing UID.

*-Seminars and visits to other UmU departments.* This must be assigned a specific person in the UID leadership group, since this is of crucial importance to the internal collaboration issues at UID.

*-Input from students on internships.* This information must be gathered continuously, systematically and with a strategic development and benchmarking aim.

*-Input from alumni.* This information must be gathered regularly, systematically and with a strategic development and benchmarking aim.

*-Benchmarking.* All areas of education should benchmark in the same way, ideally in a European context. This is of high priority.

*-Faculty funded research time.* In order to establish criteria for design research, UID could help by working together with other actors in design research to define suggestions for criteria.

*-External communication.* UID's web presence should be given the highest priority and must be taken very seriously. This should be assigned to the Communications officer.

Other priorities for 2015 should also include developing the course *Design research intensive*, creating *work descriptions for teaching staff*, and *establishing strategies and routines for internal and external communication*.

9. Dates for upcoming meetings

Next meeting date: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2015

Proposal for upcoming meeting: Wednesday, June 1 2016

10. Any other issues

No other issues.



Maria Göransdotter  
Chair/Ordförande

Björn O. Nilsson  
Chair/Ordförande

Minutes taker / Vid protokollet

Minutes checkers / Justerat

Ingela Westerlund

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