

# Annual Report of the PhD Council, 2025

Date: November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## 1. Council Members 2025

In 2025, the PhD Council consisted of the following people who represented the PhDs and Post Docs in the mentioned committees:

- Nora Milch (IKRS): Chair and representative to the Faculty Board
- Katrine Antonsen (IKRS): Representative to PFF
- Johanne Løvli Harstad (IOR): Representative to LiMU and the Election Board
- Øystein Flø Baste (IOR): Treasurer and social activities coordinator
- Lars Arnesen (IfP): Secretary and representative to PFF and IVA

## 2. PhD Council Activities 2025

### 2.1. Boards and Committees

#### 2.1.1. *The Faculty Board*

A member of the PhD Council has served as representative for the temporary academic staff on the Faculty Board in 2025. There are four meetings per year: see minutes [here](#). The Faculty is in the process of decreasing our “capital” (underforbruk) steadily over the current period. The PhD Council has supported the Board’s ambition for the Faculty to obtain more external funding and increase the production of student credit points in order to maintain the number of academic staff, as well as the quality of teaching and research. In the budget, the Board wishes academic positions to be prioritized ahead of infrastructure and AV equipment. The PhD Council has also raised issues related to the ventilation and temperature in the building, which is primarily affecting students and staff working odd hours.

#### 2.1.2. *Programråd for Forskerutdanning (PFF)*

The PhD Council is represented in the Programme Committee for Research Training (Programråd for forskerutdanning (PFF)). PFF has the overall responsibility for the PhD program at the Faculty of Law, including organising the PhD courses. In 2025, the PhD Council collaborated with PFF on reviewing the PhD program, a work that started with internal and external evaluation of the program in 2024. Although the process was temporarily paused pending the appointment of a new faculty leadership before the summer, it has since resumed and is progressing effectively.

As part of the review, PhD candidates have been allocated two permanent seats in PFF—one representative with a social-science background and one with a legal background—to ensure that the new programme addresses the needs of both groups. To date, two extraordinary meetings have been held focusing on the structure of the educational component of the programme. The PhD Council has advocated greater freedom for

candidates to select relevant courses and clearer course profiles with stronger academic anchoring. We have further emphasised that the courses should be relevant to a broader audience and meet the needs of candidates from both social-science and legal backgrounds, also considering that legal scholars have diverse topics and academic backgrounds.

While the process has not yet reached overall conclusions or formal decisions, it has been decided to remove the article-publication requirement. It has been proposed that the obligatory structure of the programme comprise four mandatory courses: a course in academic writing and dissemination; a course in philosophy of science and research ethics; a methods course with two main tracks—social-science methods and legal methods; and a dedicated perspectives course focusing on legal perspectives, where the PhD Council has suggested the incorporation of international perspectives and the replacement of the existing JUR9021 in order to free up credits for elective courses.

Although the compulsory structure has not changed significantly, the objective is a substantive renewal of course content, as it was concluded that methods, theory, writing and perspectives are essential components of academic education and that these courses serve as important cross-department meeting forums. With respect to course content, responsibility rests with the course coordinator. The PhD Council has proposed a renewal of the reading lists and measures to ensure broader relevance and improved coherence. It has also been suggested that the course coordinator develop a programme for each course and present it to PFF for feedback, and that each course has two coordinators—one with a social-science background and one with a legal background.

The next step is for PFF to prepare a consultation memorandum (høringsnotat) setting out proposed changes for discussion at a general meeting (allmøte).

## ***2.2. Likestillings- og mangfoldsutvalget (LiMU) / “The Equality and Diversity Board”***

A member of the PhD Council served as representative for the temporary staff on the Equality and Diversity board, LiMU, which works to ensure that the composition of the law faculty's students and staff is to a greater extent a reflection of the general population, and that both students and staff are guaranteed equal opportunities for achievement regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, minority background, sexuality or other reasons. There has been limited activity in LiMu in 2025.

### ***2.2.1. Innstillings- og tilsettingsutvalet (IVA)***

The nomination and appointment committee (Innstillings- og tilsettingsutvalet) has conducted all its tasks over e-mail the last year, and there have been no noteworthy cases or topics. The committee has come to an agreement with the assessment committees

(bedømmelseskomiteer) in all cases.

### **2.1. 5 Valgstyret /Election Board**

A member of the PhD Council has represented the temporary employees in the Election Board. In 2025, the Election Board ensured that the elections were conducted in accordance with the regulations.

### **2.3. Meetings with the Deanery**

Representatives of the PhD Council met with the new Deanery in October this year. During this meeting we discussed the review of the PhD programme courses, the Faculty's recruitment plans for both regarding postdocs and permanent positions; Leave and sick absence among PhD candidates; Accounting of administrative duties (positions, extracurricular roles, etc.); use of project funds or other funds for the dissertation dinner. We are following up with the Deanery in several matters. The main goal of these meetings is to discuss matters of importance to PhD Fellows and Postdocs and to discuss implementation of different policies. In addition, we have regular contact with the Deans and the PhD Coordinator via email.

## **3. Implementation of PhD Council Goals**

### **3.1. Evaluating the PhD Programme**

The evaluation of the PhD programme has been a key working theme for us this year. This year we have mainly followed up on the evaluation and resulting review in PFF, and proposed several concrete improvements of the programme. See more in section 2.1.2.

### **3.2. Improving Social Arena**

#### **3.2.1. Overview**

The PhD life can be challenging, and at times, a lonely endeavor. To meet this need, the PhD Council has organized regular social events throughout the year:

#### **3.2.2. Shut up and write events**

The PhD Council organised informal shut-up-and-write events for PhDs in February, March, June, September and October of 2025. One more writing event is planned for December. These events not only provide a conducive space for progressing on writing, which is central to the success of any PhD project, but also provide a much needed opportunity for PhD candidates to socialise and to get to know one another and each other's work. Lunch was served by the PhD Council and covered by the faculty funds. With limited space in meeting rooms at the faculty, the numbers had to be limited to usually around 20 participants. There has been high participation and enthusiastic feedback for these events every time. This year, we have aimed at scheduling Shut up and write at the same dates as Forskertimen

to continue the socializing after work.

### **3.2.3. *Back to school lunch***

The PhD Council received feedback that more social events during working hours were wanted. Therefore, the PhD Council arranged a Back 2school Lunch at the rooftop at Domus Juridica on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2025. This lunch kickstarted the academic year and was well received by the PhDs.

### **3.2.4. *Summer party (May 2025)***

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May, the PhD Council hosted its annual Spring Party at Øystein's apartment. A common pizza-making activity was arranged. 30-40 PhD fellows participated – some into the long hours. The party remains a great tradition for meeting colleagues in a less formal context.

### **3.2.5. *Shut up and write getaway (2025)***

The PhD Council applied for funding from Lovsamlingsfondet to arrange an overnight writing retreat at Voksenåsen hotel, following a three-year tradition of doing so. The initiative begun in the late stages of the pandemic to facilitate social writing opportunities for PhD fellows at the Faculty. Lovsamlingsfondet granted us 93 875kr, which sponsors a two-day writing retreat for 25 registered participants – all PhD fellows from the Faculty. The event was held 13.-14. November 2025.

### **3.2.6. *The PhD Sauna and Swimming Club***

This year, the PhD Council took on the administration of the PhD Sauna and Swimming Club, an initiative started by former PhDs at the Faculty, to ensure its continuation. The PhD Council applied for, and received, funding from Lovsamlingsfondet to cover sauna rental once a month during the winter season. The sauna sessions have allowed for both social and academic exchange in a relaxed setting, with an aim to foster our physical and mental wellbeing during the dark winter months.

## **3.4. Proposed projects for further development**

The 2025 Council suggests the following points for follow-up by the 2026 Council:

- Continue the work on the PhD programme review in collaboration with PFF and the Deanery.
- Keep improving the social arenas as well as psychosocial work environment for PhD fellows.
- Strengthen relationships with trade unions, who also work to improve the situation for temporary staff at the university.
- Strengthen the implementation of the career plan requirement for PhDs.

## 4. Finances

All expenditures in 2025 have been related to events where all current PhD fellows have been invited to participate. The funds from the faculty were used for local Shut up and write seminars and food for the spring party, while the overnight Shut up and write event is covered in by funds from Lovsamlingsfondet (93 875) and the beverages for the dinner was covered by the faculty funds (7514). Expenditure of the faculty funds must be in line with the UiO rules and routines. All funds are funneled through the institute of the chair of the Council, which in 2025 has been the Department of Public and International Law.

So-called “carryover funds”, also known as the PhD Council’s “own funds”, have historically been held in a private bank account by the Council member responsible for finance. These funds were expended with the traditional handover dinner held with old council (2024) in January 2025, and is included in the table below nor in the Outgoing Expenses (Appendix 2).

| INCOMING FUNDS                  | INCOMING FUNDS | Used         | Remaining funds per 18.11. 2025 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Source                          | Amount (NOK)   | Amount (NOK) | Amount (NOK)                    |
| Funding from the Faculty of Law | 50 000         | 33 553,84*   | 16 446,16                       |
| Lovsamlingsfondet               | 93 875         | 93 875       | 0                               |
|                                 |                |              |                                 |
| Total                           | 143 875        | 127 428,84   |                                 |

\*Per 18.11.2025, prior to one remaining Shup up and write seminars and the Annual meeting.

## 5. Annual Meeting

The Council annually hosts a statutory meeting in line with the Statutes of the PhD Council, which may be found here: <https://foreninger.uio.no/stipendiatradet/om/statutes-2020-phd-council.pdf>. The PhD Council will host its Annual Meeting after the last Shut up and write by 8th December 2025.

## Appendices

1. Statutes of the PhD Council (Statutter for stipendiatrådet).
2. Detailed overview of expenses.

## **Appendix 1: Statutter for Stipendiatrådet ved Det juridiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo**

### **1. Formål**

Stipendiatrådet skal fungere som et talerør for stipendiatene ved Det juridiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo.

Rådet skal fremme synspunkter og problemstillinger som er aktuelle for stipendiatene, gjennom ulike representantposisjoner i fakultetets og instituttenes organer. Rådet skal også formidle informasjon fra disse organene til stipendiatene.

Rådet skal slik fylle en tillitsvalgtfunksjon for stipendiatene på tvers av fagområder og institutter, og samtidig bidra til å forbedre kommunikasjonen mellom stipendiatene og fakultetsorganene.

### **2. Rådets sammensetning**

Om mulig skal rådet bestå av fem medlemmer som representerer fakultetets institutter og senter, slik at hvert institutt og senter er representert med ett medlem.

Medlemmene velges ved allmøtet i oktober eller november hvert år, slik at det er tilpasset nominasjonsperioden til Fakultetstyret. Som valgt anses den som får flest stemmer. De valgte medlemmenes funksjonstid er ett år.

Rådet konstituerer seg selv på første rådsmøte etter valget men de sentrale funksjonene av én lederen og sekretæren skal velges under allmøtet. Det er et mål at Rådet har nært samarbeid med representanter som bekler verv for midlertidig ansatte i alle fakultetets råd og utvalg. Der representanten er stipendiat, er det et mål at representanten også er medlem av Rådet.

### **3. Rådets møter**

Stipendiatrådet avholder møter etter behov. Som hovedregel avholdes møte én gang i måneden i vår- og høstsemesteret.

#### 4. Allmøtet

Hvert år avholdes allmøte for fakultetets stipendiater, hvor Rådets arbeid presenteres. Allmøtet etterfølges av et sosialt arrangement.

For øvrig avholdes allmøte når dette kreves av minst tre av stipendiatrådets medlemmer eller minst 20 av stipendiatene. I begge tilfeller skal stipendiatrådet kalle inn til allmøte som avholdes i løpet av fire uker etter at krav om allmøte er fremsatt.

Senest tre uker før allmøtet skal stipendiatrådet sende innkalling til møtet. Innkallingen sendes stipendiatene per e-post med varsel om at saker som ønskes forelagt allmøtet til vedtagelse etter pkt. 4.2, må sendes inn til stipendiatrådet senest to uker før allmøtet. Dersom stipendiatrådet mottar saker som nevnt, skal Rådet sende ut en endret saksliste senest én uke før allmøtet.

#### 5. Referat mv.

Rådets sekretær fører referat og sender referat fra rådets møter og allmøter til stipendiatene.

Representanter som også sitter i fakultetets øvrige organer, skal i rådsmøtene informere om aktuelle saker.

## Appendix 2: Outgoing expenses 2025

| Date                     | Description                                | Amount               | Funding source                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 07.02.2025               | Shut up and write                          | kr 3 010,36          | Faculty                           |
| 28.03.2025               | Shut up and write                          | kr 3 188,03          | Faculty                           |
| 22.05.2025               | PhD Spring Party                           | kr 8 509,00          | Faculty                           |
| 12.06.2025               | Shut up and write                          | kr 1 163,00          | Faculty                           |
| 15.08.2025               | Back 2School Lunch                         | kr 3 942,40          | Faculty                           |
| 05.09.2025               | Shut up and write                          | kr 2 862,90          | Faculty                           |
| 17.10.2025               | Shut up and write                          | kr 3 364,15          | Faculty                           |
| 21.11.2025               | Shut up and write<br>Getaway<br>Voksenåsen | kr 101 389,00        | Lovsamlingsfondet<br>and Faculty* |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>           |                                            | <b>kr 127 428,84</b> |                                   |
| <b>Faculty expenses:</b> |                                            | 33 553,84            |                                   |
|                          |                                            |                      |                                   |
| <b>Planned:</b>          |                                            |                      |                                   |
| 08.12.2025               | Shut up and write                          | TBC                  | Faculty                           |
| 08.12.2025               | Annual meeting,<br>food, and drinks        | TBC                  | Faculty                           |

\*Lovsamlingsfondet covers the food and stay (93 875), the faculty is covers the beverages (7514).