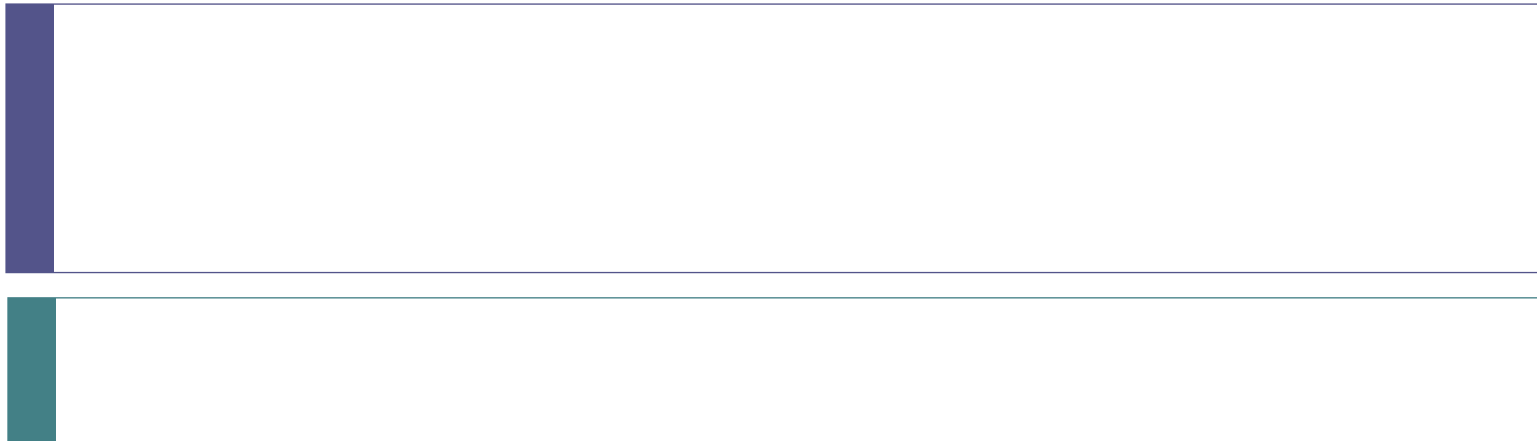


Striving for excellence in decision making

Foundations, a growing asset for research



How can evaluation help foundations make choices and inform their decision making?

1) General points on research evaluation

2) How is evaluation used at The Lundbeck Foundation – and why?

3) Lessons learned from the four workshops and meetings in the efc working group on evaluation – and where do we plan to go from here?

Why evaluate at all?

Get the best of men,

Give them the equipment you can afford,

And leave them alone

British physiologist Ernest Starling's advice to the British Research Council in the 1920's

....but then you still have to do something

- ▶ To find the best of (wo)men
- ▶ To find out what equipment they need
- ▶ And to find how it matters where they perform their research and with whom
- ▶ Ex ante evaluation

Why do foundations evaluate?

WHEN ?

WHY?

HOW?

Ex-ante

- To identify the best and most promising research and researchers

Peer reviewing, review panels and bibliometrics provide elements of decision for foundations to award grants

In-itinere

- To monitor the progress of projects, review their objectives, review appropriateness of the support provided by funder and host

Feedback and reporting from grantees enable funders to review progress and needs of projects and appropriateness of the support provided

Ex-post

- To measure the quality of research output
- To understand how research funded has an impact on science, on researchers supported ...

End-of-grant reports and accounts, use of bibliometrics and other data collection tools to collect information for estimating impact

Ex-post evaluation

- ▶ When is the right time to measure output or outcome of research grants?
- ▶ What are the right things to measure?
- ▶ Different kinds of output from different types of research

- ▶ Different areas of interest in output measurement – publications, education, knowledge transfer, influencing procedures, influencing decision making, impact on society

- ▶ What will the answers to the questions asked in an evaluation exercise be used for – and by whom?

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation

- ▶ Commercial foundation
- ▶ Approximately 45 mio € a year for biomedical research and natural sciences
- ▶ Small administrative staff (2+) handling the administration of grantmaking and evaluation issues
- ▶ Grantmaking through a number of different instruments

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation

▶ Used for

- Finding the best applicants in the best environments
- Encouraging the best researchers to apply for grants at the foundation
- Informing research communities of the foundation's procedures
- Following the results of the foundations grant making policy
- Fertilising the board's discussions about changes in grant making policy – e.g. in response to changes in how public funders work nationally or at the EU level
- Making a basis for the foundation's interaction with public and private funders in Denmark and internationally in discussions about grant making and evaluation of its outcome

Overall plan for the organisation of evaluation at The Lundbeck Foundation

- ▶ (One size fits all)
- ▶ One flow-model (inspired by the payback model, RAND questionnaire and matrix from Canadian Academy of Health Sciences)
- ▶ Depending on the type of grant, more elements of the flow model can be included in the evaluation scheme
- ▶ As much as possible included into the electronic application and reporting system
- ▶ Increased use of story-telling on individual projects or centre grants, inspired by WT timeline portraits
- ▶ Open to applicants how the application and evaluation procedure works
- ▶ Standardised models for feed-back to applicants based on ex-ante evaluation by peers

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation

▶ Instruments:

- Project grants
- Junior Group Leader Fellowships
- Centres of excellence
- Prices and awards

▶ New instruments (starting 2010) – new challenges

- Advanced grants (neuroscience, 5 years, 3 mio €)
- ‘Fast track’ visiting professorships (6 months, all costs covered, applied from Danish PIs, short ex ante evaluation procedure)

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation – project grants

▶ Ex ante:

- Electronic application system – same application form used by all applicants
- Committees (biomedicine and natural sciences) for evaluation of applications (expected approx. 1000 a year)
- Blinded electronic scoring of applications
- 'Sneak preview' of the other members' comments prior to meeting
- Meeting three times a year (biomedicine) where applications are discussed and the committee's recommendations to the board on which applications should received support are found
- Funding level approximately 20%

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation - project grants

- ▶ In-itinere:
 - Yearly progress reports.
 - We plan to integrate the report-writing into the application system.
- Ex-post:
 - ▶ End-of-grant report + accounts
- ▶ Even more ex-post:
 - ▶ 5-year follow-up. Publications, education, collaborations, citation analysis.
 - ▶ Plans for expansion

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation Junior Group Leader Fellowships

Biomedical and natural sciences

- ▶ 1.3 mio € over 5 years
 - ▶ 'Post post.doc' segment 5-7 years after Ph.D
 - ▶ Ready to establish their own research group at a Danish university
-
- ▶ Ex ante:
 - Electronic application + bibliometrical analysis of applicants (publications, citations, h-index)
 - Peer review – ad hoc committee (internal and external peers)
 - Selection of interview candidates
 - Interview with peers from the ad hoc committee
 - Contract negotiations with host institution

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation

Junior Group Leader Fellowships

- ▶ In-itinere:
 - ▶ Yearly progress reports

- ▶ Ex-post:
 - ▶ First fellowships granted in 2007 – no ex posts yet
 - ▶ WHAT WE PLAN TO DO
 - ▶ End-of-grant report – extended version of project reports. Questions that will be repeated at the 5-year follow-up.

 - ▶ 5-year follow-up will focus on
 - production of knowledge in the form of publications,
 - masters' and Ph.D thesis,
 - how the fellow has evolved as a research leader,
 - on their use of networking with previous collaborators the networks they have built during their fellowship.
 - their experience in a university setting of the more 'autonomous' position they have had because they brought into the system such a large personal grant,
 - following their careers in the years after the fellowship

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation Centres of excellence (5 years)

- ▶ Ex ante
 - ▶ Call for declarations of interest on topic chosen by the board of trustees (this year: Nanomedicine)
 - ▶ International expert ad hoc committee reads and scores declarations of interest
 - ▶ Candidates for full application selected
 - ▶ Fee paid for writing a full proposal
 - ▶ Proposals read and scored by international ad hoc committee (some members may have been replaced)
 - ▶ Candidates invited to present their application and to be cross-examined by the committee
 - ▶ Committee recommends to the board of trustees which applications they think should be funded
 - ▶ Contract negotiations with centre leaders and their host institutions
 - ▶ At present: 15 COE running

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation

Centres of excellence

- ▶ In itinere:
 - ▶ 4 reports over the five years
 - ▶ Scientific progress, changes in research plan, collaborations, number of students etc
 - ▶ Mid-term evaluation (after 2½years)
 - ▶ More extensive report
 - ▶ Ad hoc committee of experts read report
 - ▶ And pay 1-day site visit to the centre to hear about the research at the centre and to discuss the contents of the report with the center leader
 - ▶ Experts write a report to the foundation. Centre leaders are allowed to comment on the report before it is presented to the foundation's board of trustees by the administration.
 - ▶ If the report is not satisfactory the foundation has the possibility to end the grant.

Evaluation at the Lundbeck Foundation

Centres of excellence

- ▶ Ex-post (first centres established in 2005)
 - ▶ Currently discussion of 'life after death for the centres'
 - ▶ Extensive end-of-grant report
 - ▶ 5-year follow-up focusing on
 - ▶ Output from centre (publications, people/education) and outcome of new initiatives started as part of the centre, e.g. new collaborations
 - ▶ 'added value' of centre grants compared to individual grants for PIs of the centre
 - ▶ 'Life after death' of centres - was it possible to continue the core activities of the centre
 - If yes – how did they get funded

Striving for excellence in decision making



Striving for excellence in decision making

Lessons learned from the four workshops and meetings in the efc working group on evaluation

Foundations in Europe

- There are over 119.000 public benefit foundations in Europe including foundations which fund research directly, or indirectly as a means of supporting their mission.
- Foundations that support research are very diverse in size (both in terms of financial and human resources). They support research in many different **ways** (i.e. mechanisms to fund research) and the focus of their spending (i.e. scientific fields or research related issues which they support) is also very varied.

In these respects, foundations are a great asset for research, however this brings about many inherent challenges when evaluating their activities.

2008/2009:

Workshops organised with foundations, public funders and external experts

- ▶ Four meetings focusing on
 - ▶ Sharing experiences
 - ▶ What tools are available for ex-ante evaluation
 - ▶ The use and caveats of using bibliometrics
 - ▶ What type of information can bibliometrics provide in ex-post evaluation?
 - ▶ 60-30-10% for impact



With evaluation, foundations can:

- Take the right decisions to improve their funding, their operation and thus their impact
- inform the public of their activities and provide evidence of how their money is spent and what the foundations hope to achieve by funding particular researchers or areas of research
- explore the possibilities private foundations have with their grantmaking, such as supporting innovative research, being able to release funds quickly, interacting with public funders on areas of particular interest to the foundation

Evaluation, for decision making: It's about questions...

A useful evaluation is one that is undertaken not for its own sake but to provide answers to questions

- **Are we focusing our efforts on the right research?**
- **Are we providing the right form of support to our researchers?**
- **Are we providing sufficient levels of funding to our researchers?**
- **Are new needs and approaches to research emerging?**
- **Is our support having an impact and how must we evolve?**

...more questions

What to evaluate? How to evaluate it? What indicators to use?

How much resources to dedicate to evaluation?

What expertise is required? Who can help?

How to communicate the outcomes of evaluation?

Whom to involve? How to evaluate multi-partner projects?

...

Where do we go from here?

- ▶ A set of 'starting tools' is being developed with input from foundations having participated in the workshops
- ▶ Should cover questions raised by foundations funding all kinds of research, not only biomedicine
- ▶ Should be of help to administrative staff within foundations starting or considering the systematic evaluation of the output and outcomes of their grant making activities
- ▶ Should be of use also to foundations with limited resources for evaluation
- ▶ 4-5 pamphlets with topics covering
 - ▶ Why evaluate
 - ▶ How to evaluate
 - ▶ What to evaluate
 - ▶ In addition to providing case studies and information on resources available
- ▶ Pamphlets will be 'pilot-tested' during the first half of 2010 by private foundations and interested public funders
- ▶ Pamphlets are expected to be released in the fall of 2010

