

DIIS 2019



DIIS STRATEGY

2020-2024

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DIIS is a leading public research institute. Our aspiration is to strengthen independent research on international affairs, and on the basis of this to provide analyses and recommendations on Denmark's opportunities within the wider area of foreign, security and development policy.

AMBITION

DIIS aims to be at the cutting edge of multidisciplinary research, policy analysis and communication on global affairs. We seek to be agile and responsive to current developments as well as to long-term challenges in a complex world.

We want to offer insights and raise critical questions that are of relevance to research, policymakers and public debate. We strive to achieve impact through close dialogue with society and stakeholders. We consider national and international collaboration to be fundamental in this endeavour.

Researchers, support functions and management all work closely together to ensure that DIIS offers an engaging and inclusive working environment.

STRATEGIC GUIDEPOSTS

In the strategic guideposts below, we describe our core values within key areas of DIIS' work and outline a number of initiatives that we intend to launch within the coming years. In addition, we reflect on how we wish to address some of the main challenges and strategic dilemmas which we face in our daily work. By strategic dilemmas we mean concerns that are important and legitimate, but which may at times also stand in opposition to one another. We cannot erase these dilemmas, but we can reflect on how we will balance them.

Producing excellent and independent research

In our understanding, research excellence has three crucial components:

- Quality
- Independence
- Impact

DIIS produces high-quality academic research, recognised both nationally and internationally. Combining theoretical development, policy analysis and fieldwork characterises the work of the institute as a whole. We publish in highly ranked peer-reviewed journals and with top academic presses. DIIS' Research Units and Research Committee work closely together with the researchers to ensure the high standard of DIIS' research applications, and DIIS has a proven record of obtaining major grants from national and international research councils. It is a main priority for us to continue to develop original and exciting research that sparks new insights. Our large network of national and international partners is a key asset in this endeavour, as well as a central element in securing international funding through research collaborations.

DIIS' engagement with the ministries, the political level and broader societal activities relies on the institute being recognised as a reliable and independent partner. It is fundamental for the institute to sustain a healthy financial situation, and DIIS receives core funding and external funding from different sources, which may be said to represent various interests. To balance this dilemma, we must continuously focus on ensuring that our research remains independent. DIIS' research and policy work must be based on free choice of methodology and theory and must produce independent conclusions. DIIS' researchers must adhere to the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and to internationally recognised codes of conduct relevant to the research field in question. In our commissioned work, the research topic may be commissioned, but never the findings.

We strive to make sure that DIIS' research has impact, both in the form of a wide scholarly readership and a high number of academic citations, and in the form of societal impact, where our research affects how policymakers and the public think about the challenging issues of our time. Our ability to contribute to the continued development of academic research and to provide research-based input to policymakers and public debate is one of DIIS' absolute hallmarks.

In the coming years, we will

- continue to explore new ways of developing innovative and relevant academic research,
- continue to support knowledge-sharing and cross-cutting initiatives, for example by allocating separate funds for such initiatives,
- explore new kinds of national and international partnerships,
- keep developing our quality assurance processes to ensure that DIIS' research continues to live up to new demands from funders,
- sharpen our focus on being transparent with regard to funding sources and possible conflicts of interest, in order to uphold DIIS' reputation for producing independent research and policy work.

Engaging policymakers and broader society

Sound policy development rests on a strong foundation of knowledge. The strength of DIIS' policy work and broader societal outreach lies in the fact that it is rooted in excellent academic research.

DIIS has a long-standing tradition of producing research-based policy work which translates the findings and insights from our academic work into knowledge that holds the potential to have an impact on society. This tradition is one of the key elements distinguishing DIIS from universities and think tanks. The solidity of our research enables us to provide analysis and commentary on current events, as well as to provide insights which reach beyond the immediate present and may help produce new perspectives and original outlooks.

Societal outreach is anchored in a wide range of DIIS' activities, from our independent research projects and commissioned work for national and international

actors to our public seminars, conferences and other events. This outreach is not limited to a national context but extends to localities where we undertake research and to the international arena as such.

In the coming years, we will

- strengthen the outreach of DIIS' research. Engagement and dialogue are vital in this endeavour, and we will continuously work to develop our interaction with policymakers and other stakeholders in Denmark and abroad,
- regularly assess our perception of relevance and impact,
- integrate considerations about outreach early on in our project planning,
- increase our awareness when it comes to using our research to generate policy work, and our policy work to generate new areas of research,
- evaluate our communication platforms. This will include exploring new possibilities and creative formats, including those presented by social media and other forms of interactive communication,
- develop DIIS' communication through close dialogue between DIIS' communication professionals, researchers and management,
- continue to optimise the inclusion of all units in the development of our bi-annual communication plans,
- explore how to further develop the support to our researchers in this task, as we acknowledge that communicating research requires time and resources.

Developing DIIS' research profile

Innovative and excellent research often emerges from researchers' interests and curiosity. We believe that the quality of DIIS' research is best sustained by developing new research ideas based on independent and individual initiatives as well as on collective efforts.

In order to ensure an original and multidisciplinary research profile, we prioritise stimulating interaction between researchers with different disciplinary backgrounds, theoretical approaches, and experience of policy work. We aim to develop platforms that cut across DIIS' Research Units and that link with colleagues at other research institutions.

In our daily work, we strive to interlink and create synergy between DIIS' research and policy work. We also seek to shape DIIS' research profile in a way that balances the promotion of individual ideas with collective considerations about the institute's overall research priorities. To accomplish this, DIIS' research profile is developed through a dynamic interaction between DIIS' individual researchers, the Research Units, the Research Committee and the Board. In order to ensure the continued relevance of DIIS' work, we continuously discuss the relationship between our research and policy work on the one hand and the changing policy needs and challenges of the outside world on the other. The Director, the Heads of Units and the Research Committee hold joint discussions about the Research Units' annual work plans before they are presented to the Board. The final decision about DIIS' overall research profile lies with the Board.

In the coming years, we will

- improve our strategic approach to the development of DIIS' research profile,
- strengthen the coherence between the units' annual work plans, our recruitment of new staff and our research initiatives,
- evaluate and adjust our current decision-making processes and interaction between the institute's various bodies.

Nurturing an inspiring and collaborative work environment

Our employees are DIIS' key assets. Therefore, it is essential that DIIS is an attractive workplace which can recruit and retain highly skilled and ambitious people.

We prioritise a high degree of staff participation through free and open dialogue on the institute's internal and external issues. All staff are encouraged to take part in this dialogue and are expected to contribute proactively to the collective efforts of the institute. We wish to nurture a collaborative and inclusive work environment with mutual respect across disciplines and professions. But we also value and make space for individual efforts, and we welcome constructive criticism. We consider knowledge-sharing, dialogue and feedback essential to creating a dynamic and efficient workplace. We prioritise a sensible work-life balance for our employees in order to avoid stress and burnout.

In order to ensure the continued development of DIIS' innovative and high-quality research, a regular influx of new research staff is important. For the institute, it can be a challenge to strike a healthy balance between the influx of temporary staff, who may contribute with new ideas to DIIS' research and help respond to new research demands, and maintaining a core of permanently employed researchers, which helps ensure stability. For the individual researcher, it can pose a challenge to hold a non-permanent position. We are conscious of these challenges and aim to be transparent in our recruiting processes and about the career possibilities for all professional groups at the institute. We seek to provide our temporarily employed staff with qualifications that can be beneficial to DIIS as well as help the researchers' future careers. We aim to reflect the diversity of the surrounding society, both in our recruitment and in our choice of partners for our wide range of activities.

In the coming years, we will

- focus on optimising our recruitment and retainment measures with regard to both research and support staff
- invest in and develop the academic skills, professional skills and leadership skills throughout the organisation
- prioritise investing in DIIS' future, while focusing on running a cost-effective organisation
- continue to develop DIIS' support functions in order to provide efficient and proactive support to DIIS' core activities, as we know that there is a trade-off between resources used for research activities and for support. This includes implementing modern, flexible and secure IT solutions that support and empower our employees.

In addition to this, we want to be a climate-friendly workplace and will continuously explore new ways to minimise DIIS' impact on the environment. We are committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

This strategy is supplemented by separate funding, communication, and IT strategies, which we evaluate every 1-3 years.

The strategy was approved by DIIS' Board on 25 November 2019.