



Beredningsgruppens yttrande

2021-00165 Max Petzold

Beredningsgrupp: FI-IP

Utlysningsnamn: Bidrag till forskningsinfrastruktur av nationellt intresse 2021 (Vetenskapsrådet) **Bidragsform:** Forskningsinfrastruktur
Sökt inriktning: Infrastruktur av nationellt intresse
Projekttitel (svenska): Svensk nationell datatjänst (SND)

Yttrande

National interest

[Tom]

1 - Weak/Insufficient, 2 - Good with weaknesses, 3 - Excellent

Ethical considerations

Ethical questions, as far as they concern the SND, are comprehensively explained. The consortium (partly) deals with confidential personal data and has developed procedures allowing users to safely access them. Well segmented between SND and DAUs.

Scientific impact

6

1 - Poor, 2 - Weak, 3 - Good, 4 - Very good, 5 - Very good to excellent, 6 - Excellent, 7 - Outstanding

The importance of a national knowledge centre for open data, which promotes and supports the re-use and sharing of data, cannot be overestimated. In an increasingly complex world, where digital transformation is breaking down disciplinary boundaries, a central organisation that communicates "best practices", standards, etc. is essential. Especially for the local DAU's, such a central contact point is essential so that they are always up to date with the latest methodology. Next to providing training and guidance to DAUs the infrastructure archives research data and makes them available long-term. A service that is taken up by broad user base by contributing data to and re-using data from SND.

The consortium is in close contact with similar though mostly less broad initiatives in Europe and around the world. It follows and takes part in shaping methods and standards for data documentation, archiving and sharing, e.g. in DDI and RDA.

A weakness of the proposal is that the existence of other specialized repositories is acknowledged but the challenge of integrating them is only weakly addressed. SND still is mainly looking through the social science glasses. SND should work on sharpening its profile as a hub for research data. It can either rely on its expertise in dealing with personal data, including capabilities to link data across domains and with official registers through Statistics Sweden. Or it can strive for becoming the national node for all research data. Then SND would have to add to their current data expertise to cater to the needs of more disciplines. It should then attempt to incorporate existing data archives in Sweden.

Socio-economic impact

3

1 - Weak/Insufficient, 2 - Good with weaknesses, 3 - Excellent

A coordinated availability of research data based on common and accepted standards will open up new research opportunities, increase efficiency and make Sweden's research internationally competitive. The long-term benefits of FAIR data access are manifold, not only for researchers but also for the entire society. The transfer of SND technologies to data management in industrial development is likely. The return on invest might actually be significant savings.

The contribution to SDG could have been stated clearer. The consortium caters to the data needs of many disciplines who are central for addressing the SDGs. By supporting them the initiative supports reaching SDGs indirectly but with central contributions. The societal impact should be equally strong.

Implementation, leadership and organisation **6**

1 - Poor, 2 - Weak, 3 - Good, 4 - Very good, 5 - Very good to excellent, 6 - Excellent, 7 - Outstanding

The organisational form is lean and efficient and very well suited to the problem. The SND will thus be well prepared for future challenges.

Given the successful activities from the current funding period, the proposed implementation plan seems feasible. The modules and submodules are clearly described with their contribution to the goals together with the time plan and their interdependencies. The organizational structure seems to be working. Management builds on a highly esteemed PI. Risks are analyzed but the cooperation with other infrastructures seem vague.

Consortium

E-infrastructure

2

1 - Weak/Insufficient, 2 - Good with weaknesses, 3 - Excellent

For the parts where e-infrastructure is relevant, SND seems well positioned. An important part of SND is the networking with the local DAUs of the universities, where the infrastructure is provided by the universities. The infrastructure used for the tasks that cannot be taken over by a local DAU is well positioned. However, SND might underestimate the future need for data storage and computing power for data analysis given its general openness to all disciplines and the increasing use of big data in its core disciplines.

Data management is at the core of the proposal. Its goals is to provide sufficient support for users in terms of software and user-specific tool development. The consortium is a member of many international networks setting standards for data documentation, preservation and dissemination. These are core strengths of the consortium.

Prioritisation between modules/functionalities

Modules are interlinked, no obvious prioritization

Overall grade and final comment

6

1 - Poor, 2 - Weak, 3 - Good, 4 - Very good, 5 - Very good to excellent, 6 - Excellent, 7 - Outstanding

This is a well-written proposal and should be funded. SND delivers important services to the research data infrastructure in Sweden and for the international community via e.g. CESSDA and RDA. Its strengths are the strong commitment of partner institutions and users.

The need for a national data service is obvious and timely, the proposed extension of the infrastructure builds on impressive activities in the current funding scheme. A minor weakness is the vague positioning of SND in relation to huge data repositories in astronomy, simulation, earth sciences, medical imaging, etc. If these cannot be integrated, at least interoperation should be pursued.