

Computing Across the Disciplines (CAD); a new Center/Department at the University of Oslo

A proposal to the board of the Mat-Nat Fakultetet of the University of Oslo

Establish a center by fall 2018 and as a new department by fall 2021

Why should we focus on Computational Science and Data Science?

- By 2020, it is expected that one of every two jobs in the STEM fields will be in computing (Association for Computing Machinery, 2013)
- Computation is an essential and cross-cutting element of all STEM disciplines
- Computational science has developed into a discipline of its own right
- Computations and the understanding of large data sets will play an even larger role in basically all disciplines of STEM fields, Medicine, the Social Sciences, the Humanities and education
- Students at both undergraduate and graduate level are unprepared to use computational modeling, data science, and high performance computing – skills valued by a very broad range of employers.

Goals

- Position UiO as a leader in computational science by recruiting faculty whose expertise pertains to large-scale computing and mathematical foundations of data science - both generalists (algorithm/tool developers) and specialists (focused on specific disciplines).
- Develop a comprehensive set of courses and degree programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including minors and graduate certificates, that will give students across the university exposure to practical computational methods, and more generally to the idea of computers as problem-solving tools.
- Facilitate the adoption of computational tools and techniques for both research and education across campus, through education and faculty collaboration. A center and then a department will facilitate the pursuit of these goals!
- Educate the next generation of school teachers and university teachers, with a strong focus on digital competences.

Strengths, Possibilities and Synergies

- Several Centers of excellence in research where Computational Science plays a major role
- Newly established center of excellence in education research
- Newly established Master of Science programs in Computational Science and Data Science
- Several excellent groups in STEM fields who do Computational Science
- Computational topics are included in all undergraduate STEM programs, possibility to develop a bachelor program in Computational Science
- Several educational prizes and awards related to computational science
- With a center and later a department we have the possibility to really position UiO as the leading Norwegian and perhaps European institution within Computational Science and Data Science
- Lead in the development of computations in Life Science
- Strong links with SIMULA research lab

The Center/Department

- Administratively located under the Mat-Nat college
- Composed of 25-30 FTEs, including some current MSU faculty and a larger number of new hires (most from ACI).
- Most of these faculty will have joint appointments with other units and/or departments at the University of Oslo and SIMULA research laboratory
- Faculty will focus on data science and large-scale and high-performance computation
- Faculty will be incentivized to engage in cross-discipline and cross-college research collaborations
- Nurturing environment to attract these faculty and pursue large and interdisciplinary grants
- Close ties to SIMULA research laboratory and the HPC center at USIT

Benefits

- Recruitment of new faculty who are incentivized to collaborate across the university both in terms of research and education.
- Opportunities for existing UiO faculty to expand their computation-related capabilities, and to train students to use computational techniques.
- Broad and deep educational opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students across the university.

