

Nordic Gerontological Federation

GeroNord

News on research, developmental work and education within the
ageing area in the Nordic Countries

Volume 28, no 2, 2019

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The 25th NKG 3.-6.6.2020



Once again we are looking forward the main activity of NGF, the Nordic Congress of Gerontology (25NKG), which will be organized in Reykjavik 2020. The congress is a meeting place for delegates from the Nordic countries and a possibility to make new contacts across the borders. But what is happening in the national member societies of NGF between the congresses? Based on the work at 24NKG in Oslo, I got a feeling that the activities vary a lot. During this autumn, we will ask the societies few questions about their activities and communication channels. The findings will be discussed with the board of NGF with the aim to find out if there are good practices that we can learn from each other. Results will be summarized in GeroNord newsletter.

This newsletter provides lot of information on the forthcoming congress in Reykjavik such as important dates and information on keynote speakers and prizes, and a glimpse to the successful IAGG-ER congress, which was held last spring in Gothenburg. The call for abstracts and registration for 25NKG opens already **the first of October**. I would also like to remind you of the **prizes**, The Sohlberg prize, and a prize for a promising researcher in the field of gerontology and geriatrics, which will be awarded at the congress. There is also a call for **grants** for junior researcher to cover the costs of the congress. We wish to have applications from all five Nordic countries and additionally, it is possible to apply from the three Baltic countries. Please spread the word and be active in nominating candidates for prize winners!

Lending my support to organizing committee of the25NKG, I wish to see you all in Reykjavik next June.

Nils Holand

President of NGF

Welcome to the 25th Nordic Congress of Gerontology in Reykjavik, Iceland 3-6th June 2020!

So far, the organizing committee has worked hard behind the scenes to be in time in all the congress preparation but now call for abstracts and registration opens **1st October**, and it is your turn to participate and guarantee successful congress with high quality research.



The Icelandic representatives for 25NKG were at IAGG-ER in Gothenburg in May 2019 to introduce a preliminary program and the conference venue in Reykjavík congress. Book the date June 3rd to 6th to enjoy Icelandic summer and an exciting congress in Europe's northernmost capital, which offers opportunities for professional development and networking.

Steinunn Þórðardóttir and Sigurbjörg Hannesdóttir

Important dates for the 25NKG

1 October 2019 - Registration and call for abstracts opens

15 December 2019 - Deadline abstracts symposia

15 January 2020 - Notification symposia

1 February 2020 - Deadline abstracts oral presentations and posters

25 February 2020 - Notification acceptance of abstracts

1 March 2020 - End of early bird registration

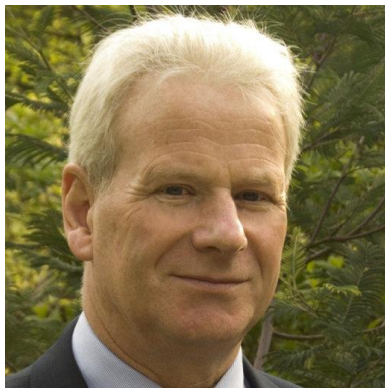
More information is available <https://www.25nkg.is/>

There are seven confirmed keynote speakers for the congress from the Nordic countries, UK and the US representing a broad range of research in the fields of gerontology and geriatrics.



Kristina Johnell is a professor in geriatric pharmacoepidemiology at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden. She is the Head of Department of Medical Epidemiology and Biostatistics (MEB) at Karolinska Institutet. She is devoted to improving drug treatment for older persons. Her areas of research include personalized drug treatment, inappropriate drug use and adverse drug events in older persons,

optimizing drug therapy in people with dementia and at end-of-life and methodological development in big data pharmacoepidemiology. Kristina has a translational profile ranging from experimental basic science to implementation of decision support in health care.



Finbarr Martin is emeritus professor of Medical Gerontology at King's College London. For 30 years he was also a consultant geriatrician at Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust in London. It is a part of King's Health Partners, a large academic health sciences centre, where he has a personal chair. He worked in and developed a broad range of acute and community clinical services for older people. Since stopping clinical work, he has led ageing related service improvement work in the English NHS. His research publications (>140 peer-reviewed with

current H Index of 39) concerns the geriatric syndromes of falls, frailty and delirium, health services evaluations of intervention related to these syndromes, and care homes medicine. He continues to supervise PhD students on frailty related topics. He was a non-executive director of NICE 2013-2016, president of the British Geriatrics Society 2010-12 and president of the European Geriatric Medicine Society 2018-19



Kári Stefánsson, M.D., Dr. Med. founded deCODE in 1996. Dr. Stefánsson was a professor of Neurology, Neuropathology and Neuroscience at Harvard University and Director of Neuropathology at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts from 1993-1997. From 1983 to 1993, he held faculty positions in Neurology, Neuropathology and Neurosciences at the University of Chicago. Dr. Stefánsson received his M.D. and Dr. Med. from the University of Iceland and is board-certified in neurology and neuropathology in the United States. Dr. Stefansson is recognized as a leading figure in human genetics and the man who began an approach to population genetics that is being adopted all over the world. He has shaped deCODE's scientific approach and been actively engaged in leading its work on human genetics. Dr. Stefánsson has received numerous awards for his work, including the Sackler Lecture at MIT (2009), the European Society of Human Genetics Award (2009), the Anders Jahre Award (2009), the American Alzheimer's Association's Inge Grundke-Iqbal Award (2014), and the Federation of European Biomedical Societies' Sir Hans Krebs Medal (2016) and The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) has named Dr. Stefánsson the 2017 recipient of the annual William Allan Award. He has published more than 500 scientific papers.



Susan Whitney, DPT, PhD, NCS, ATC, FAPTA received her PhD in motor development / motor learning from the University of Pittsburgh and her professional physical therapy education from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. Currently, she is a professor in physical therapy in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, in the Department of Otolaryngology and the Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. She is the Program Director of the Centers for Rehab Services (CRS) Balance and Vestibular Rehabilitation Center at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Dr. Whitney is supported by the Department of Defense and by 3 grants related to the use of a tablet to perform home exercise in persons with vestibular disorders. Dr. Whitney has authored or coauthored over 135 articles on Medline and is currently engaged in research related to dizziness and falls plus concussion.



Hanne Tuntland works as a Professor at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL) (100% position) and as an Associate Professor at Oslo Metropolitan University (20% position). She has a doctoral degree from the University of Bergen, a master's degree from the University of Oslo and a bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy (OT) from Oslo Metropolitan University. She has an OT specialisation dealing with health of older adults. Tuntland has long experience as a faculty member involved in master level interprofessional educations dealing with gerontology and rehabilitation and has also been in charge of developing an English-speaking online master's programme in healthy ageing and rehabilitation at HVL. Her academic and teaching experience has resulted in several textbooks. She is a pioneer in Norwegian reablement research and has been involved in two empirical studies investigating reablement. This has resulted in several scientific articles and reports, a doctoral thesis, an edited textbook and several book chapters exploring various aspects of reablement. Tuntland has also participated in the Global Think Tank on reablement arranged by the International Federation of Ageing and she is currently a member of the ReAble international research network on reablement.



Miia Kivipelto, MD, PhD, is Professor in Clinical Geriatrics at Karolinska Institutet, Center for Alzheimer Research and Director of Research and Development of Theme Aging at Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden. Prof. Kivipelto's translational research focuses on the prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of cognitive impairment, dementia and Alzheimer's disease. She is PI of the landmark *FINGER* trial (Lancet 2015) which is the first large-scale trial showing that a multi-domain lifestyle based intervention can reduce the risk of cognitive impairment among at risk persons from general population. Professor Kivipelto has recently launched the *World Wide FINGERS Initiative* (alz.org/wwfingers) a unique interdisciplinary network to harmonise and share data and plan joint international initiatives (15 countries have already joint). She is also founder of the *FINGERS Brain Health Institute* (www.fbhi.se) aiming to find novel solutions to promote brain health and prevent cognitive impairment and Alzheimer.



Jon Snædal received his medical degree from the Medical Faculty, University of Iceland (UoI) in 1976. He specialized in internal medicine and geriatrics in Sweden during 1979-1984. He has worked as a specialist in Geriatric Medicine at Landspítali University Hospital (LUH) in Reykjavík 1984-1997 and became a head of the Psychogeriatric Clinic, including the Memory Clinic. Since 2014, he has held a Professorship in Geriatric Medicine at LUH and UoI. His research has primarily focused on dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease, and he has a wide record of publishing in Iceland and internationally in the medical field. He has worked with the diagnostic methods (Mentis Cura) and genetics (DeCode Genetics). He was the vice president of the Icelandic Medical Association (IcMA) 1996-2004 and chair of its Ethics committee 2004-2014. He was a member of the Council of the World Medical Association (WMA) 2001-2005 and 2011-2015. In 2006, he was elected President of the WMA for the period 2007-2008. In 2012-2017, he was the chair of the Research Ethics Committee in Landspítali University Hospital. He is an honorary member of IcMA.

The Nordic Gerontological Federation (NGF) invites nominations of candidates for the most prestigious Nordic Prize in Gerontology, the Sohlberg prize, and for the promising researcher in gerontology or geriatrics in Denmark. In addition, junior researchers are encouraged to apply grants for congress participation.

The Sohlberg prize

The Sohlberg prize of 10.000 euros is sponsored by the Päivikki and Sakari Sohlberg Foundation and will be awarded at the Opening Ceremony of the 25th Nordic Congress of Gerontology in Reykjavik. The prize is relevant for all aging sciences and is awarded to a scientist active in a Nordic country who is a leader in gerontology with a major influence on the development of her/his field in aging research. To be considered, the candidate should have built a strong research group or initiated research of major importance for developments in gerontology.

The nomination must include reasons for the nomination (described on a half to a full A4 page), in addition to a curriculum vitae and a publication list of the candidate. Self-applications are not accepted. The prize will be awarded by a jury including the president and two vice presidents of NGF and the two most recent prize-winners.

The nomination should be sent to the NGF's president Nils Holand by e-mail: [nholand\(at\)online.no](mailto:nholand@online.no), no later than **15th December 2019**.

Promising researcher in gerontology or geriatrics

At the 25th Congress of Gerontology in Reykjavik the NGF prize for promising researcher in gerontology will be handed out for the 4th time. The prize is intended for a researcher from one Nordic country. At the Congress in Reykjavik the prize will be offered to a candidate from the country that will host the next Nordic Congress of Gerontology, namely Denmark. Thus, only candidates from Denmark are applicable this time.

The proposed candidate shall not hold a senior position but should preferably have concluded a PhD. **A member association of NGF can nominate** the candidate to the prize. Argumentation and a CV must follow. No direct applications will be accepted. The jury consists of the president and two vice presidents of the NGF, and the chairs of the scientific committees in the current and for the next congress. The prize-winner will receive 20.000 SEK and give a lecture at the congress. The prize-winner will not pay any registration fee at 25NKG. Expenses for travel (in economy if by flight) and accommodation during the congress will be paid by NGF.

The nomination with all relevant information shall be sent to the president of NGF, Nils Holand by email: [nholand\(at\)online.no](mailto:nholand@online.no), no later than **December 15, 2019**

Grants for 25NKG participation

The Nordic Gerontological Federation (NGF) offers 13 grants for congress participation, two grants for each Nordic country and one for each of the three Baltic countries.

The grants are aimed for those who have difficulties raising funds to cover their cost of attending to the congress. The grants can only be applied by PhD Candidates and non-senior researchers from the fields of gerontology and geriatrics. The application must include the following information: name, age, education, employment, and reason for applying. The application will be evaluated by the local scientific committee, the president of the congress and the president of the NGF.

Applicants also need to submit an abstract since grants are not awarded without an approved abstract. Each grant is 5.000 SEK. In addition, those who are selected do not need to pay the congress registration fee.

Applications should be sent to the secretary general Ólóf Guðný Geirsdóttir by email: [ogg\(at\)hi.is](mailto:ogg(at)hi.is)

Deadline for application is **15th February 2020**.

Oldest Iclander tells her unprecedented secrets of longevity

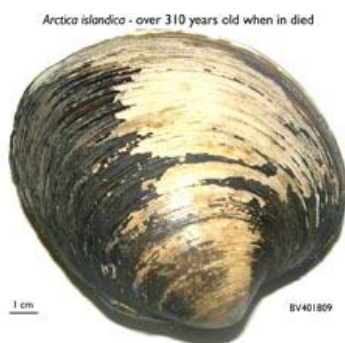
- By María B. Steinarsdóttir

I was ever so privileged to meet up with Hafrún from the arctic island of Grímsey, before she passed away in 2006. I was sure Hafrún, who was by far the oldest living individual in the world, would have some deep meaningful wisdom to share with us. I have to admit, I was really hoping she would reveal the secrets of her long and happy life. When I met her, she was in good health and the atmosphere around her was of uttermost tranquility. Would she open up?

I found out that Hafrún never smoked or drank alcohol in her life and she regrets nothing. Amazingly, she never needed any kind of medical care. She was most active at a very young age, when she traveled the most. “The easiest way was to follow the currents, to save energy” Hafrún said. “My happiest moment? When I found my future home and could really settle in and relax”. “I think the cause for my longevity is a sedentary lifestyle” Hafrún said. “You know, avoiding excitement and stress altogether and just staying calm and relaxed all the time. Little or no physical activity, you know... it saves energy!”

I was startled and felt a bit uneasy. But Hafrún continued: “Maybe it also helps that I retract myself further into darkness during winter months? Cold ocean baths?” I was speechless. “But what do I know”, Hafrún said with a twinkle in her eyes, “I am just a silly old clam!”

P.S. Hafrún is a clam of the species *Arctica islandica*. She has been found to be the longest-lived individual animal in the world known to science whose lifespan has been precisely measured. Hafrún hatched in 1499 and reached the age of unbelievable 507 years!



Reference: Jón Eiríksson et al. 2017. Langlífi kúskeljar, skeljatímatal og ástand sjávar við Norðurland í þúsund ár. Náttúrufræðingurinn, 87 (3.-4.): 95-108.

https://www.google.com/search?q=arctica+islandica&rlz=1C1GCEA_enIS778IS778&sxsrf=ACYBGNSTfH_IdtABHmOyUekC3c4lCQzfkA:1568123714478&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewajtyHtMbkAhWcQkEAHVWwCNYQ_AUIEigB&biw=1280&bih=578#imgrc=TpsxDrm0mvRd1M:

A glimpse to the successful IAGG-ER Congress in Gothenburg, May 23-25, 2019



The 9th Congress of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics-European Region (IAGG-ER) was for the first time held in a Nordic country and in Gothenburg, May 23-25. That the bid for the congress initially was approved was largely due to many positive experiences among delegates from previous successful NKG-congresses, known to be well organized and scientifically solid. The active support from NGF was also a major argument, besides that from the Swedish gero-organizations, SGS (Swedish Gerontological Society) and SGF (Swedish Geriatric Federation).

The theme for the congress was 'Towards Capability in Ageing – from cell to society' with a focus on our ability to perform actions in order to reach valued goals within the macro, meso, and micro contexts. A major reason for this theme was that AgeCap – Center for Ageing and Health at the University of Gothenburg – acted as the local host for the congress. Everyone who has been involved in arranging greater meetings know what it takes in terms of time and efforts to plan for a meeting and this respect we know that an engaged local host is needed. Given that the AgeCap center includes more than 150 researchers across all faculties/colleges across the university, we were lucky to rely also on this broad local support system.

This was the greatest gero-congress so far arranged at the Nordic scene. We had more than 1600 registered delegates for the very intense 3-day program, with up to 14 parallel sessions each day. (For those of you who are interested but were unable to attend the congress, you can still check the congress home page for details). Besides keynote lectures, symposia, oral, and poster sessions, we also arranged for oral-poster sessions in which a delegate was offered a chance to first orally present the highlights of their contribution and then to discuss details in a poster session. The experiences from this format were positive and we hope to see more of this format in future congresses.

The congress program also included a special multidisciplinary master class for PhD students and postdocs. The theme for the Master Class was “Portraying Old Age and Ageing to Counteract Ageism”, focusing on how our knowledge in gerontological and geriatric research can be used to challenge prevalent age stereotypes, misconceptions and ageism with devastating effects, not only for older adults themselves, but on society at large. Our experiences from a Master Class like this one, that assembled 25 emergent scholars from many countries, inform us that this should be an educational opportunity also for future NGF/NKG meetings. The day before the congress, there were also a number of pre-congress meetings.

During the congress, we also arranged many other aging related activities on a special AgeStage and Key Stage scene. The delegates could listen to discussions on various topics, presentations by Award winners, and music entertainments. Participants were also offered a good chance to remain fit during the congress,



in the format of a morning run, yoga, or lunch break Zumba. At the IAGG-world council meeting that was held during the congress in Gothenburg it was decided that the next IAGG-ER congress will be held in Spain and in Malaga, 2023. But, long before that we continue with our Nordic meetings. So, see you all in Reykjavik next Spring.

Boo Johansson

IAGG-ER Congress president

Marie Kivi

IAGG-ER Deputy Congress Secretary

The Scientific Committee of NGF is elected for the years 2019 and 2020. The Scientific Committee consists of 2-5 members from each Nordic Country representing different research fields including Biological and Medical Sciences, Health Sciences, Behavioural and Social Sciences, Humanities, Social Research, Policy, and Practice. The tasks of the Scientific Committee include reviewing submitted congress abstracts, contributing to the newsletter and providing advice to the Board.

Denmark

Paolo Caserotti, Pia Nimann Kannegaard, Aske Juul Lassen, Anu Siren and Christine Swane.

Finland

Ilkka Pietilä, Sari Stenholm, Elisa Tiilikainen, Päivi Topo and Elina Sillanpää.

Iceland

Ólöf Guðný Geirsdóttir, Adalsteinn Gudmundsson, Ólafur Samúelsson and Gudlaug Thorsdottir

Norway

Marja Aartsen, Hanne Merete Eriksen and Zada Pajalic

Sweden

Janicke Andersson, Stefan Fors, Sofi Fristedt, Andreas Motel-Klingebiel and Joy Torgé

More information of the Scientific Committee is available online <http://www.ngf-geronord.se/BoardandScientific.html>

Executive committee

Nils Holand: President

Steinunn Þórðardóttir: 1. Vice president

Marja Jylhä: 2. Vice president

Marijke Veenstra: Secretary General of the 24NKG

Representatives from the member organizations

Denmark: Danish Gerontological Society (Dansk Gerontologisk Selskab): Jette Thuesen

Danish Society for Geriatrics (Dansk Selskab for Geriatri): Pia Nimann Kannegaard

Finland: Societas Gerontologica Fennica: Mikaela von Bonsdorff

Finnish Geriatricians (Suomen Geriatriit ry - Finlands Geriatriker rf): Eija Lönnroos

Finnish Society for Growth and Ageing Research (Kasvun ja vanhenemisen tutkijat ry - Föreningen för forskning i uppväxt och åldrande): Elisa Tiilikainen

Iceland: Icelandic Gerontological Society (Öldrunarfrædafélag Islands): Sigurbjörg Hannesdóttir

Icelandic Geriatrics Society (Félag Islenskra Öldrunarlækna): Steinunn Þórðardóttir

Norway: Norwegian Society for Aging research (Norsk selskap for aldersforskning): Marijke Veenstra

Norwegian Geriatrics Association (Norsk forening for geriatri): Nils Holand

Sweden: Swedish Gerontological Society (Sveriges Gerontologiska Sällskap): Susanne Iwarsson

Swedish Geriatric Society (Svensk Geriatrisk Förening): Peter Nordström

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