



VITENSKAPELIG
HØYSKOLE

Norwegian School of
Theology, Religion and Society

Strategic Plan

2022-2025



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Adopted by the Board, 14/12/2021

MF was founded in 1907 as an independent theological institution at university level and is Norway's largest provider of theological education and research. Since 1967, MF has offered Christian/religious education to the school system and, since the 2000s, MF has also offered modules and programmes in the social sciences. In line with current needs, MF has developed a broad portfolio of professional qualifications for the church, schools and society.

The religious and faith-related demographics in Norway are continuously changing. There is a growing need and demand for knowledge and quality in research, education and dissemination relating to religion and society. MF meets this challenge through interdisciplinary research into religion and society, as well as relevant bachelor's, master's and PhD programmes in theology, religion and society.

1. VISION

MF will be recognised as a value-based specialized university that emphasises academic freedom, critical thinking and democratic participation.

Through teaching and research of high international quality, MF will participate in the national and global development of knowledge and society.

The study programmes at MF will emphasise holistic formation and meet the current and future needs of church, schools and society.

2. CORE ACTIVITIES

2.1 Education

MF will be the preferred educational institution in Norway and the Nordic region for research-based study programmes in theology and religion and will offer study programmes of high quality in the social sciences, as well as secondary school teacher qualifications based on MF's research expertise in religion, democracy and citizenship.

MF is a key provider of theology qualifications and other forms of higher education for ecclesiastical professions, offering both full-time and part-time programmes. The secondary school teacher qualifications are in high demand and have a clear value profile linked to democracy and citizenship. MF offers both discipline-based and interdisciplinary bachelor's and master's programmes based on theological, humanistic and social science perspectives.

Great emphasis is placed on ensuring that the study programmes are relevant to the church, schools and society, as well as on the importance of the learning environment when it comes to students' professional development and personal growth and formation, as professionals, practitioners and members of society. Our learning environment promotes critical reflection, social engagement and active student participation.

2.2 Research

MF will be a leading international environment for research and development in our fields.

MF will continue to be a driving force in research and the development of the theological and religious disciplines, as well as within the fields of the humanities and social sciences linked to our study programmes.

The organised research training at MF will provide the conditions for independent, critical and original research and will enable PhD candidates to participate in cutting-edge international research.

MF is an attractive partner for leading research communities and research networks both nationally and internationally, including through MF CASR.

Strategic goals education

MF will

- 2.1 facilitate good working conditions for the development and implementation of teaching and ensure that lecturers are qualified in the relevant field.
- 2.2 increase employees' professional digital expertise and facilitate appropriate, critical and ethical use of digital resources.
- 2.3 offer socially relevant, flexible programmes for lifelong learning.
- 2.4 provide selected study programmes digitally and other study programmes on campus.
- 2.5 strengthen and highlight the relevance to working life of the qualifications, especially for study programmes that are not specific to a single profession.
- 2.6 facilitate innovative and exploratory learning processes founded on research-based knowledge about learning.
- 2.7 contribute to increased completion rate by strengthening academic supervision and continue to develop the writing centre.
- 2.8 offer university educational skills development and stimulate excellent teaching quality, including through the merited lecturer scheme.
- 2.9 strengthen the interaction between research and teaching through student involvement and active use of research in teaching.
- 2.10 strengthen international student and employee exchanges

Strategic goals research

MF will

- 2.11 facilitate good working conditions for research, development and implementation of outstanding research projects.
- 2.12 continue to play a prominent part in academic and research publishing activities in our fields and work to promote increased co-publishing and the use of open access.
- 2.13 work to continue the RVS research school in collaboration with relevant partners when the current funding from the Norwegian Research Council ceases.
- 2.14 stimulate applications for external research funds through the Norwegian Research Council, the European Research Council (ERC)/the EU Commission (Horizon Europe) and other relevant funding schemes.
- 2.15 prepare for and consider applying to become a Centre for Excellent Research during the next call in 2025.

2.3 Social Responsibility

MF's academic expertise shall be relevant, visible and in demand by the church, schools and society.

MF's researchers shall develop and participate in interdisciplinary research projects that help solve the complex challenges of the present. Our activities will contribute to strengthening social equality, democratic participation and sustainable development.

Strategic goals social responsibility

MF will

2.16 strengthen MF KOM as an academic pivot for research, contracted activities, skills development and dissemination in the church.

2.17 further develop communication work for the purpose of reputation-building, recruitment, research dissemination and external funding.

2.18 increase visibility and participation in the public space through digital channels and traditional media.

3. ORGANISATION

MF will be an entrepreneurial organisation characterised by motivated students and employees.

The MF working environment and employee community are characterised by equality, respect, compassion, knowledge, democratic participation and teamwork.

MF has ambitions to offer high levels of academic and administrative expertise and to perform high-quality work.

MF displays responsible financial management, ensuring predictability and long-term planning, as well as the room to make necessary changes.

MF has excellent contingency measures in place in relation to risk areas, information security and crisis and conflict management.

MF has an infrastructure that supports and stimulates academic activities, the working environment and job and study satisfaction.

Strategic goals organisation

MF will

3.1 make sustainable and proactive choices in the face of climate and environmental challenges.

3.2 secure revenue by increasing student's completion rate and maintaining a high number of externally funded research projects.

3.3 facilitate skills development for administrative employees and management to ensure continued quality in line with sectorial requirements.

3.4 review procedures and allocation of responsibilities between administrative and academic management.

3.5 work actively to combat discrimination and strive for diversity and gender balance when recruiting new employees.

3.6 ensure student participation at all levels of quality work.

3.7 develop library services in line with the academic development of the library and offer high-quality infrastructure that supports teaching, research and dissemination.

3.8 improve procedures and channels for internal communication to ensure that information, processes and decisions are transparent and clearly communicated to students and employees.

3.9 strengthen employees' digital expertise and exploit the opportunities provided by digitalisation through useful and user-friendly tools for digital interaction.