

DDLS Steering group meeting no. 48, 2026

Date: May 6, 2026

Time: 13.00 - 16.00 at zoom: <https://uu-se.zoom.us/j/68393469612?from=addon>

Attending members:

Oliver Billker (Umeå University, MIMS director)

Tuuli Lappalainen (KTH, Royal Institute of technology)

Janne Lehtiö (Karolinska Institutet)

Sara Hallin (SLU, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)

Gunilla Westergren-Thorsson (Lund University/WCMM. National SciLifeLab Committee chair)

Carolina Wählby (Uppsala University)

Members not attending:

Matts Karlsson (Linköping University)

Erik Kristiansson (Chalmers/ Göteborg University)

Erik Lindahl (Stockholm University)

Other participants:

Jan Ellenberg (Director of the DDLS research program), Chair of the meeting

Siv Andersson (KAW representative, §6 - §9)

Margit Mahlapuu (chair, DDLS research area expert group in Cell and molecular biology, §1 - §4)

Olof Emanuelsson (DDLS Research school director, §5 - §6)

Lukas Käll (DDLS Research School director)

Sandra Falk (Head of Operations Office SciLifeLab)

Maria Thuveson (Vice Head of Operations Office SciLifeLab)

Heidi C. Howard (Bioethicist and ELSI Lead at SciLifeLab and DDLS, §1 - §4, §8 - §9)

Johan Rung (Head of SciLifeLab Data Centre)

Wojtek Potrzebowski (Data Science Coordinator, SciLifeLab Data Centre)

Björn Nystedt (Manager Bioinformatics Support Peer Review track (WABI))

Heidi Törmänen Persson (DDLS collaboration manager, Operations Office SciLifeLab)

Titti Ekegren (DDLS coordinator, Operations Office SciLifeLab)

Ulrika Wallenquist (DDLS coordinator, Operations Office SciLifeLab)

Mojgan Seraji (Collaboration manager, Operations Office SciLifeLab, §2 - §9)

Elvan Helander (DDLS Controller, Operations Office SciLifeLab)

Johan Inganni (Communications officer, Operations Office SciLifeLab)

Jacob Vogel (DDLS Fellow, Lund University)

Caroline Gallant (Scientific manager Alpha Cell, Operations Office SciLifeLab, §7 - §8)

Isolde Palombo (Coordinator Alpha Cell, Operations Office SciLifeLab, §7 - §8)

Next meeting: August 26, September 30, November 10, 2026

Agenda 2026-05-06

All documents including presentations from the meeting can be found on NextCloud:
<https://nextcloud.dc.scilifelab.se/s/LqZYtbCd2T2CMGn>

1	Meeting formalities Oliver Billker was chosen to attend the minutes. The DDLs Steering group approved of the previous minutes.	<i>Presenter:</i> <i>Jan Ellenberg</i> Appendix: 1. Previous minutes, 26-03-25
2	Update from Director A presentation was given about the focus areas of the DDLs strategy day and the key takeaway messages from the discussions. The continued strategy discussion needs to clarify and prioritize areas and topics, such as: • Need to define the main priorities for long-term impact, building on discussions around scalability, tools, partnerships, and societal outcomes • Topics of partnerships, societal impact, and policy engagement require further synthesis and structuring before implementation • Need to formulate longer-term strategic goals based on the discussions across all strategic objectives Representation of DDLs Fellows was highlighted at the Strategy Day discussions and the following DDLs Fellows have shown interest in being representatives: ➤ <i>DDLs steering group:</i> Jacob Vogel & Nicholas Pearce ➤ <i>Contact points for the data centre:</i> Kaisa Thorell & Nicholas Pearce ➤ <i>RA experts group EBI:</i> Luisa Hugerth & Astrid von Mentzer ➤ <i>RA experts group EB:</i> Mariana Pires Braga & Tobias Andermann ➤ <i>RA experts' group CMB:</i> Nicholas Pearce & Golnaz Taheri ➤ <i>RA experts' group PMD:</i> Clemens Wittenbecher, Muhammad Arif & Arian Lundberg The two excellence cluster applications that are under preparation at SciLifeLab will be merged into one joint application.	<i>Presenter:</i> <i>Jan Ellenberg</i>

3	Update from DDLS Program office (See presentation “May 6_DDLS SG”, page 16 - 25 for details) Information was given about the DDLS Program Office staff day that focused on translating the steering group’s strategic discussions into a shared plan for implementation. A Summary of suggested new activities identified from the DDLS Steering Group strategy day was presented together with the activities in the DDLS operational plan. The next DDLS NRG meeting is planned for May 19, and the agenda will include: Presentation from DDLS Fellows about the Fellows community, updates from DDLS research school and postdoc call and presentation from DDLS partners. All members of the DDLS research area expert groups were shown. The DDLS Steering group suggests that also the representative DDLS Fellows are shown in each RA expert group. The PMD research area expert group has been in contact with the sites to find new members to the group.	<i>Presenter:</i> Heidi T Persson
4	Surplus allocation guidelines phase 2 onwards (See presentation “May 6_DDLS SG”, page 26 - 33 for details) Presentation of the rationale, process and timeline to handle unspent funds within an Operative Area at the end of a Phase period. - Operative area activities, strategic initiatives and other emerging activities funded by surplus left from a phase are approved by the Program Director. - Once all surplus allocations are finalized, the full set of planned OA activities and strategic initiatives are presented to the Board for information. The presented Surplus allocation guideline will be presented to the SciLifeLab board. ACTION: The DDLS Steering group agrees to send the Surplus allocation guidelines phase 2 onwards to the SciLifeLab board for decision.	<i>Presenter:</i> Elvan Helander Appendices: 4a. Surplus allocation guidelines Phase 2 and onwards 4b. Surplus Allocation Process and Timeline.
5	DDLS Research school Postdoc call update (See presentation “May 6_DDLS SG”, page 34 - 45 for details) Statistics from the postdoc call applications were presented. 122 applications with good gender balance were received from 12 hosting universities and industry. The review process is on-going, and the decision is due June 15. The DDLS steering group commented that the call structure allowing one candidate per PI might lead to a pre-selection process that could be quite tedious and problematic if the candidate withdraws the interest for some	<i>Presenter:</i> Lukas Käll

	reason. This might cause some good applicants to be missed. A suggested alternative is that PIs create a short list with ranked candidates instead of choosing just one and then if someone drops out there's still candidates for the position. This model might be considered for the next call.	
6	DDLS Research School - industry collaborations (See presentation "May 6_DDLS SG", page 46 - 49 for details) Presentation and discussion about the issues on how to attract industry to apply in calls for DDLS research school. The 'teacher exemption' (lärarundantaget) and two-year employment contracts are difficult for industry to manage. Some reflections from the discussions: • Conduct targeted interviews with companies that we believe would benefit from a DDLS PhD student/postdoc. Ask them what they perceive as barriers to such employment • identify the most favorable places for advertising industrial positions • Can a model be created in which an industrial PhD student/postdoc is employed by the university? • How should we handle academics who also own SMEs? Would it be valuable to allow them to apply for postdoctoral positions as well? Based on the above discussion, the DDLS Steering Group suggested the next call text for industrial postdocs to be modified and discussed with KAW. <u>DDLS PhD Research school:</u> The work with the affiliations model is ongoing and WASP is being consulted. A call for courses is about to be launched.	<i>Presenters:</i> <i>Lukas Käll, Olof Emanuelsson</i> Appendix: 6. Industrial PD Funding_Employment and IP rules
7	Update from Data Centre and WABI (See presentation "May 6_DDLS SG", page 50 - 64 for details) A Digital Services strategy group has been formed to bring together NBIS and Data Centre for joint strategic planning around SciLifeLab-wide integration of digital services. The group will meet monthly, coordinated by Sverker Holmgren. Partnerships around e-infrastructure are being established. Plans around WABI AI were presented. Three FTEs are about to be announced for personnel to a central competence hub with focus on data science and advanced machine learning. This competence hub will be an integrated part of WABI and aligned with the SciLifeLab AI strategy. The 3 FTEs are suggested to be a 0.5 FTE Data Science lead (Working with SciLifeLab AI lead and NBIS AI coordinator) + 2.5 FTE senior AI experts.	<i>Presenters:</i> <i>Johan Rung, Björn Nystedt</i>

	The suggested projects and thoughts around training and guidance for the competence hub were also presented, including extended data analysis support to the Research Data Community Projects (RDCPs) in line with other WABI projects. The DDLS steering group is positive towards creating a central AI competence hub, including extended data analysis support to the Research Data Community Projects (RDCPs).	
8	The Alpha Cell project (See presentation "May 6_DDLS SG", page 65 - 89 for details) Presentation of the new flagship research program at SciLifeLab, the Alpha Cell project. The Alpha Cell project has been granted a funding of 590 MSEK for an 8-year period from KAW and works in parallel with the Human Protein Atlas project, also a SciLifeLab flagship project. The program is in the implementation phase and the management team, working groups and Advisory board are being established. Future recruitments include a Space Data lead, 3 Alpha Cell group leaders, postdocs and research/data engineers. A new plasma FIB SEM is being procured in 2026 and a new laser-phase plate TEM instrument is planned for purchase in late 2027.	<i>Presenter:</i> <i>Jan Ellenberg</i>
9	Other issues No further issues. The chairman thanked all participants for a nice meeting.	<i>Presenter:</i> <i>Jan Ellenberg</i>

Jan Ellenberg, chair of the meeting

Oliver Billker

May 20, 2026

Oliver Billker, Attending minutes

Signature page

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