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Dear Professor Benn:

At a meeting on December 13, 2016, the board of the Danish National Research Foundation considered the midterm evaluation of your Research Center for Vitamins and Vaccines (CVIVA) and the suggested research plan for a second grant period.

Date December 22, 2016
Jnr. 24-424-1

I regret to inform you that the board has decided not to approve your application for a further four-year period for CVIVA.

The board made its final assessment based on the center's self-evaluation, the ten publications, the research plan for the present funding period, the proposed research plan for the second funding period, the report from the evaluation panel, and the comments you made on this report.

While the board recognizes that CVIVA has acquired recognition for some of their observations, the board also has a number of serious concerns about the conducted studies and planned research.

After a thorough review of the center's research and the comments from the evaluation panel, the board concluded that the quality of the research does not justify the funding of CVIVA for another four years for the following reasons:

- The research strategy has primarily been aimed at reconfirming the hypothesis rather than challenging this.
- The research is widely based on observational studies. Experimental studies aimed at understanding the basic biological mechanisms behind the observed responses have not progressed as planned.
- The research plan for the second period includes an extensive number of activities. The board finds that completing all studies is not a realistic goal within the four years.

- The Ph.D. students and post-docs are not sufficiently international for a Center of Excellence.

It is the overall picture rather than the items individually, which lead the board to decide to terminate the center after the first grant period.

Please note that the board's decisions are final. However, you are welcome to contact me by phone at +45 3318 1950 with a view to a possible clarification of the board's decision.

The Danish National Research Foundation's activity is regulated by law; cf. Consolidated Act on the Danish National Research Foundation No. 367 of 10 April 2014, and the decision has been made according to section 4 of this act.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Søren-Peter Olesen'.

Søren-Peter Olesen
Director, Professor