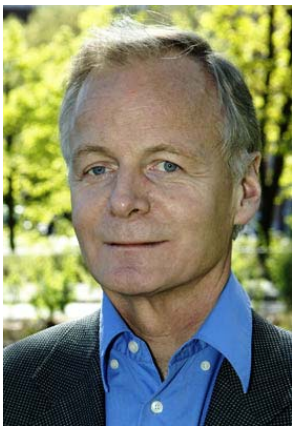
CV Nils Christophersen

October 2007

Nils Christophersen was born in Levanger, Norway, in 1946 and has a Norwegian citizenship. He received a MSc. in physics (cybernetics) in 1972 and a PhD in informatics in 1983, both from the University of Oslo. He worked at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment from 1972 to 1975 and was associate professor at the Department of Physics, University of Oslo from 1975 to 1977. He then worked at Centre for Industrial research (later SINTEF) for fourteen years, leading the Environmental data analysis group for 6 years and becoming an adjunct professor in 1986. He was a visiting scientist at the Institute of Hydrology, UK, in 1988-1989.



His main work in this period was hydro-chemical modelling of effects of acid rain on soils and freshwaters. This work has put him on the list of the world's most cited scientists as defined by the Institute for Scientific Information (http://hcr3.isiknowledge.com/home.cgi_), making him one of thirteen such scientists in Norway.

Since 1991, he has been professor at the Department of informatics, University of Oslo working within applied statistics and signal processing. He spent a sabbatical leave at the Department of Statistics, Stanford University in 1997 - 1998. Back in Oslo, he served as Head of Department of Informatics for the period 1998 – 1999 and was Dean of studies at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences from 2003 to 2004.

During his stay at Stanford University, Christophersen became interested in commercialization of academic research and in 1999 he founded the Norwegian School of Entrepreneurship at the University of Oslo. The idea is to teach students at the master level from different fields (e.g. engineering, natural and social sciences, and business administration) entrepreneurship in a hands-on manner. After a standard initial course in entrepreneurship, the main component is a three-month working period in start-up companies abroad. In 2006, there were 150 Norwegian students from 19 universities and colleges in Norway working in Boston, San Francisco, Singapore, Shanghai, Johannesburg and London. In total, over 600 students have taken part in the program.

As Dean of Studies at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Science, Christophersen was instrumental in establishing the Centre for Entrepreneurship at the University of Oslo which now includes the Norwegian School of Entrepreneurship. This centre also gives a master degree in entrepreneurship for students with a background in informatics or biotechnology and collaborates closely with Birkeland Innovation, the University Technology Transfer Office.

Christophersen served on the board of the "Venture Cup" business competition from 2000 to 2003. He is currently heading the board of the Centre for Entrepreneurship at the university, and is a board member of the University of Oslo, SINTEF's institute for information technology and the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU).

His main current interest is application of modern information and communication technology (ICT) to foster good governance and sustainable economic growth in developing countries.

The Department of informatics has had a long term effort in this area with international partners focussed on the development and deployment of the open source health information system HISP (Health Information System Programme). Christophersen is now heading an initiative at the Department expanding this effort into other areas of ICT including entrepreneurship and innovation.

Nils Christophersen is married to a Swedish archaeologist and has three children with his first wife. He is heading the group promoting the UN Millennium Goals in the Norwegian Polytechnic Society. A main interest in his leisure time is the relationship between “the two cultures” – the humanities and the natural sciences.

In total, Christophersen has authored or co-authored about 100 journal papers, proceedings and reports. A full list is available at his home page: http://heim.ifi.uio.no/~nilsch/