

# **Individual Doctoral Candidate Agreement**

for candidate admitted to the

ERASMUS MUNDUS JOINT DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

EUROSPIN

## ARTICLE I - INTRODUCTION

The Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (hereafter ALUF), Kungliga Tekniska högskolan (hereafter KTH), University of Edinburgh (hereafter called UoE) and National Centre for Biological Science (hereafter called NCBS) have recognized their mutual interests in research and in the development of doctoral training and wish to specify the terms under which students from any two of these universities may be admitted to a joint PhD programme and granted, upon successful fulfilment of all requirements applicable for graduation at each of the two universities where the doctoral candidate is admitted and will be supervised (hereafter “the two universities”), a joint doctorate, i.e. the official PhD degree certificates of comparable academic levels from both universities.

This Doctoral Candidate Agreement identifies and defines the terms of implementing the joint doctoral programme, the rights and responsibilities of the doctoral candidate and of the two universities and the requirements of ALUF, UoE, NCBS and KTH regarding the awarding of the joint doctorate.

For the local rules and detailed regulations of the Doctoral Degrees and PhD Programs we refer to:

KTH: [http://www.kth.se/csc/utbildning/forskarniva?l=en\\_UK](http://www.kth.se/csc/utbildning/forskarniva?l=en_UK)

ALUF: [http://www.biologie.uni-freiburg.de/studium/promotion\\_1\\_en.php](http://www.biologie.uni-freiburg.de/studium/promotion_1_en.php) and  
[http://www.bccn.uni-freiburg.de/teaching\\_and\\_training/rules\\_regulations](http://www.bccn.uni-freiburg.de/teaching_and_training/rules_regulations)

UoE: <http://www.acaffairs.ed.ac.uk/Regulations/Assessment/Home.htm>

NCBS: [http://ncbs.res.in/EUROSPIN\\_programme.htm](http://ncbs.res.in/EUROSPIN_programme.htm)

## ARTICLE II – PARTIES INVOLVED

**Home/Contracting University:**

**Host University (main one):**

**Doctoral Candidate:**

## ARTICLE III - ADMISSION AND REQUIREMENTS

Students will be admitted to both of the two universities, according to each university’s prevailing admission criteria.

Students must be highly qualified and have a good proficiency in the English language in order to be considered for admission to the joint doctoral programme.

Students will be admitted on a full-time basis to the joint programme.

A set of documents detailing course requirements at the two universities and requirements related to the research to be conducted (i.e. the “study plan”), the final written thesis/dissertation and its oral defence, the assessment/grading of the thesis, and the financial plan for the study period will be negotiated and concluded on supervisor level for each individual student taking part in the joint doctoral programme. Also it will be decided which university functions as the home

university. These documents (hereafter Doctoral Candidate Agreement Annexes<sup>1</sup>) will be ratified by the student's main supervisors at both universities, within two months from the final acceptance of the student, and these documents will form annexes to this Doctoral Candidate Agreement.

#### **ARTICLE IV – SUPERVISION OF RESEARCH**

For each student, there must be at least one supervisor at each university with allocated responsibilities. The responsibilities and roles of the supervisors are to be specified in the individual Doctoral Candidate Agreement Annexes.

The supervisors should have a PhD degree or equivalent with at least two years of post-doctoral research experience and hold a position where one is qualified to supervise doctoral studies according to the local university's regulations. At KTH a PhD student must have at least one supervisor who holds the position of an associate professor ("Docent"), at ALUF, the supervisor must be a Faculty member (in exceptional cases, a member of another Faculty or Research Institution (e.g. Max-Planck-Institute)) with the qualification to supervise PhD projects, awarded by the Faculty Council. All members of the NCBS Faculty are eligible to supervise PhD students at NCBS.

#### **ARTICLE V - PERIOD OF CANDIDATURE**

A full time student is expected to complete the requirements of the PhD programme in maximally 4 years. If the student requires more time he/she must seek approval from both universities.

The student should spend at least 6 months, at the partner's university, and at least two years at the European partners as specified in the Programme Guide 2009-2013 for EMJD programmes. As per the requirement of NCBS, the students are expected to spend at least one year at NCBS. Details regulating this will be specified in the Doctorate Candidate Agreement Annex.

#### **ARTICLE VI – INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLAN**

The doctoral candidate shall make an Individual Study Plan<sup>2</sup>, specified in a Doctoral Candidate Agreement Annex, for the study programme covering generally research subject, total planned study period, listing of courses and achievements up to the date of each revision. The supervisor from each partner institution will approve the joint Study Plan.

The Individual Study Plan shall be revised at a minimum of once per year.

Courses from the Study Plan are recognized by both partner institutions towards the degree of the doctoral candidate. The partner institutions will communicate Academic Records to help in the validation of studies.

The Individual Study Plan shall also specify the planned mobility in order to fulfill the EMJD programme requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> Documents fulfilling such purposes are employment contracts, local study plans formally ratified by the home or partner universities, the yearly requested EU progress report, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Documents which can be used here are already existing local study plans at one of the partner universities, successive progress reports how the project develops, etc. The info in these documents should be communicated and agreed upon with the supervisors at both universities yearly.

## **ARTICLE VII - COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS**

The student must satisfy the course work requirements of both universities involved, which may be complementary or additional to those of each individual university. For example, at UoE the course work will be marked, but not credited, while at KTH 60 credits from course work is required. Details regulating this, included in the individual study plan, will be specified in the Doctorate Candidate Agreement Annexes.

## **ARTICLE VIII - FINANCIAL MATTERS**

All funding for students and partner organizations is specified in the Programme Guide 2009-2013 detailing the regulations as determined by the European Commission and executed by the Executive Agency EACEA. Furthermore, details regarding funding will be given yearly in the Specific Grant Agreement signed by the coordinating institute KTH and the EACEA. This Specific Grant Agreement is based on the budget specified in the proposal submitted April 30<sup>th</sup> 2009.

Costs incurred at the universities related to the conducting of research will be covered by project grants as agreed by the supervisors.

Scholarships to students are paid on a monthly basis. The gross contribution from EACEA is 2800 Euro per month (for 36 months) if employment contracts are used. Salary resulting from the above becomes reduced as a result of national legislations; e.g. charges for social security, pension, taxes and health insurances. The net salary resulting from deducting all compulsory charges in accordance with national legislation thus varies among the partners, and information regarding the specific gross or net salary at the individual partner is detailed out in the admission letter.

## **ARTICLE IX - CONTINUATION, WITHDRAWAL, TERMINATION OF CANDIDATURE**

Students of the joint doctoral programme are required to follow the rules and regulations of both universities for doctoral candidates, including the conditions for continuation, withdrawal and termination of doctoral studies.

Furthermore the doctoral candidate shall meet the performance results to be allowed to continue participating in the joint programme. If the Doctoral Candidate's obligations as a participant are not met then he/she may after adequate warning have its fellowship cancelled.

A termination of the fellowship results in an exclusion from the EuroSPIN programme. The doctoral candidate may be allowed to continue the studies towards a PhD degree at either the home or host university with reference to national laws and internal regulations. A new admission procedure might be necessary.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **EXAMINATION: THESIS/DISSERTATION**

In a joint PhD degree arrangement between two of the EuroSPIN institutions, the partner university accepts the local examination rules at the university where the PhD examination takes place, in most cases at the home university. It is encouraged to agree on one joint oral

examination if the regulations at the two institutions can be accommodated at the time but in case of conflicting regulations two examinations may become necessary. Procedures are briefly summarized outlined below.

### **Examination committee**

At KTH and ALUF the regular appointing bodies of the universities will constitute a joint examination committee. The committee should consist of 3 or 5 members, with at least two faculty members from the partner university where the oral defense of the dissertation will not take place. One committee member will be external, representing a university other than KTH/ALUF. The process is initiated by the supervisor(s).

At UoE, and upon receipt of the Notice of Intention to Submit form (i.e. the request from the student to submit the thesis), the College Office will contact the Head of the candidate's School to request that examiners are nominated for the examination of the thesis. Every candidate shall be examined by at least two examiners, one of whom must be an external examiner. This is independent of the supervisors involved.

At NCBS, a PhD student is allowed to submit his/her PhD thesis after he/she has at least one paper accepted for publication (as first author) in a journal of international repute. The thesis supervisor is to suggest the names of 6 examiners from within India and 6 from abroad. The submitted thesis will then be examined by two examiners picked from this list, at least one of them being an external examiner. The PhD supervisor is also an examiner and submits a report on the thesis.

### **Written thesis/dissertation**

The student's doctoral thesis will be written in English and will consist of publications, manuscripts and a written summary, according to the standard thesis format at the two universities.

At ALUF and KTH the supervisors will certify - in writing or otherwise, as prescribed by the regulations at the two universities – that the thesis/dissertation is ready for examination. Following this, a preliminary evaluation of the thesis/dissertation is to be made by representatives from both universities representing the subject area/department of the thesis/dissertation. If the level is found to be acceptable, the student will be given permission to complete his/her thesis and undergo the oral defence.

At UoE the outline of the regulation regarding the thesis is described at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment>

Also at UoE the thesis can consist of publications, manuscripts and a summary.

At NCBS, the student's doctoral thesis will be written in English and will consist of a standard thesis format including abstract, introduction, methods, separate chapters reporting various results, and a concluding section. The submission of the final thesis is to be preceded by a Synopsis, submitted separately, outlining contents of the thesis.

### **Oral defence of the thesis/dissertation**

The graduation requirements for a PhD degree are quite similar at ALUF and KTH. The student undergoes an oral defence, with participation of the examination committee members. Apart from the three or five examination committee members, the appointing bodies of the two universities will jointly identify another external examiner (opponent). This external examiner (opponent), who must not be recruited from ALUF / KTH, will conduct the oral examination.

At KTH, the oral defence is to be conducted in English and it will be a public (i.e. open to a general audience), 2-3 hour session which is chaired by a faculty member who represents the

arranging university but is not a member of the examination committee. In Freiburg, the examination procedure consists of a public lecture by the candidate, followed first by a short public defence and a subsequent closed examination session (“Rigorosum”), all events being chaired by the Chairman of the Faculty Committee for Doctoral Studies (“Promotionsausschuss”).

At UoE the examiners will also hold an oral examination unless this is, for exceptional and special reasons, waived by the Committee. The oral examination may be done via video conferencing. The oral defence examination is conducted jointly by an external and an internal examiner.

At NCBS, the first step of the PhD thesis defence involves a public presentation, followed later by a closed-door oral examination conducted jointly by external and internal examiners.

### **Examination committee meeting**

The student's performance during the oral defence, together with the written thesis, will form the basis for the examination committee's decision, which at KTH shall be taken immediately after the oral defence by vote in a closed meeting by way of simple majority. It is recommended that the committee members elect amongst themselves a chairperson for this closed meeting. At Freiburg University, this role is taken by the Chairman of the Faculty Committee for Doctoral Studies (“Promotionsausschuss”). The external examiner and the supervisor/supervisors may be present during the first part of the closed meeting to answer questions. At KTH, the supervisors should leave the room before the voting, at Freiburg University, this is not the case.

Following a public defence of the thesis, a closed-door oral examination conducted jointly by external and internal examiners will make the final decision.

At UoE the examiners report to the Committee, which in the light of their report makes a recommendation to the Senatus on the award of the degree. The examiners must report to the Committee either a joint recommendation or, if they are unable to reach agreement, separate recommendations, in one of the ways described at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment>

In summary, the thesis and oral defence is either approved of and the student can submit the final thesis and receive the degree. Or else, the thesis or oral defence have to be improved or revised through further examination within a limited time period.

At all EuroSPIN universities students can fail to receive the PhD degree.

## **ARTICLE XI – INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

Any intellectual property rights created by the Candidate in the direct performance of the Project in accordance with the Individual Study Plan - defined in article VI in the Doctoral Candidate Agreement specifying the Candidate's research, course work and other activities, shall be owned by the institutes of the Candidate's association, while the candidate will be the inventor, in accordance with applicable laws of the country or countries where the invention is worked out. Any intellectual property rights created jointly by the Candidate in collaboration with one or several of the Parties and/or employees of the Parties, in the direct performance of the Project in accordance with the Individual Study Plan, will entitle those involved for co-inventorship, while the ownership will rest with the institutes where the work was carried, on conditions to be agreed upon in writing between the joint owners.

The Parties shall have a right to use such intellectual property rights for internal and non-commercial research and education purposes, without having to pay compensation to or to report to the other Parties. The parties may agree on mutually to license the inventions on a nonexclusive basis.

## **ARTICLE XII - GRADUATION AND AWARD OF DEGREE**

### **Joint Doctorate**

If the doctoral candidate has passed the doctoral examination successfully, each of the partner institutions will confer, separately but simultaneously, a doctoral degree and diploma:

- KTH - Teknologie doktor i datalogi / PhD degree in Computer Science
- ALUF - Dr. rer. nat.
- NCBS - Doctor of Philosophy in the Life Sciences, with the title of the thesis indicated on the degree certificate.
- UoE - Doctor of Philosophy by Thesis

Each diploma shall be signed by the head of the institution awarding it. Each diploma shall stipulate that the doctoral programme has been performed jointly by the awarding institutions.

A list should also be included of the postgraduate courses transferred from the partner's universities

## **ARTICLE XIII - SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

The Boards of Graduate Studies of the two universities shall resolve any disputes arising from interpretation of this Doctoral Candidate Agreement jointly. In case of non-resolution, the first step is at ALUF mediation by the Dean of the Faculty of Biology, and at KTH the President of KTH, at UoE the College Postgraduate Studies Committee at UoE. At NCBS, a committee appointed by the Director NCBS and chaired by the Head Academics will resolve such special cases. The second step is to refer the dispute to arbitration by an arbitrator jointly appointed by the Parties. If failing resolution, the dispute shall be finally resolved by arbitration in the English language in accordance with the arbitration rules of arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce.

## **ARTICLE XIV - EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERMINATION**

This Doctoral Candidate Agreement will become effective upon signing and shall remain in effect for a period of five years from the date of the last signature. Any of the partner universities may at any time review this Doctoral Candidate Agreement and the actions taken under it. Modifications to this Doctorate Candidate Agreement may be made by mutual agreement and confirmed by the parties in writing. The Doctoral Candidate Agreement may be extended by mutual consent by the parties in writing.

All parties agree that in the event of any party wishing to terminate the Doctoral Candidate Agreement, the student enrolled under the joint programme will be allowed to proceed and graduate under the programme.

The termination notice period is one year.

For University 1

For University 2

Position of supervisor

Position of supervisor

Name .....

Name .....

Signature .....

Signature .....

Date .....

Date .....

Doctoral Candidate

EuroSPIN coordinator

Name .....

Jeanette Hellgren Kotaleski

Signature .....

Signature .....

Date .....

Date .....