

**MULTILATERAL INTER-UNIVERSITY AGREEMENT
FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF AN
INTERNATIONAL PhD PROGRAMME
IN NEUROSCIENCE**

Between

The SAPIENZA University of Rome, represented for the purposes hereof by its Rector, Luigi Frati

The University Autónoma de Madrid, represented by its Rector, José María Sanz Martínez,

The University of Crete, represented by its Rector, Euripides Stephanou, and the University of Porto, represented by its Rector, José Carlos Diogo Marques dos Santos,

For SAPIENZA University:

- taking into consideration Article 4 of Italian Law no. 210 of 3 July 1998 on research doctorates;
- taking into consideration Ministerial Decree no. 224/99 on rules governing research doctorates;
- taking into consideration Ministerial Decree no. 509/99 and the law 270/04 on rules governing the curricular autonomy of universities;
- taking into consideration SAPIENZA University Regulations on Research doctorates;

For University Autónoma de Madrid:

- taking into consideration the Real Decreto 99/2011 regulating the official doctoral education.
- taking into consideration the regulation on doctoral education of the UAM as approved by its Governing Council; in particular the procedures regarding co-tutorship ("Procedimiento para la tramitación de un convenio de tesis de cotutela"), which should be fulfilled in time:
<http://www.uam.es/ss/Satellite/es/1242652450791/contenidoFinal/Procedimientos.htm>
- Taking into consideration UAM regulation on mobility of international students for both incoming and outgoing students, as approved by its Governing Council on 08/10/2010.
- Taking into consideration UAM regulations on international agreements and conventions of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid with foreign universities or institutions, regarding International Exchange Programs, approved by its Governing Council of 25/06/2004.

For University of Crete:

- taking into consideration the provisions of Article 10 of Greek Law 3685/2008 (OFFICIAL GAZETTE 148, Vol. A, 16.7.2008), «INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK CONCERNING POSTGRADUATE STUDIES», as amended by Article 24 of Law 3696/2008 (Govt. G. 177, Vol. A, 28.5.2008)
- taking into consideration the provisions of Greek Law 3374/2005 (OFFICIAL GAZETTE 189, Vol. A, 2.8.2005) «MEANS TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION – A SYSTEM OF TRANSFER AND ACCUMULATION OF CREDIT UNITS – DIPLOMA ANNEX »;
- taking into consideration the provisions of Article 90 of the «LEGISLATIVE CODE CONCERNING THE GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT BODIES» as ratified in Article 1 of Presidential Decree 63/2005 (OFFICIAL GAZETTE 98 A');
- taking into consideration the no. VI5/5557 (OFFICIAL GAZETTE 68/V. B' 21.1.2009) Decree of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education "Determination of the responsibilities of the vice ministers of the Ministry of Education";
- taking into consideration the Regulations of the University of Crete concerning doctorate degrees;

For University of Porto:

- taking into consideration Decree Law nº 74/2006 of March 24, as amended by Decrees Law nº 107/2008, of June 25 and nº 230/2009 of September 14.
- taking into consideration the Regulation to create joint and double/multiple titles between the University of Porto and foreign Universities as approved by the Rectoral Decree GR.04/01/2011 of 19.01.2011.
- taking into consideration the General Regulation of the Third Cycle of Studies of the University of Porto, as approved by Rectoral Decree GR.05/11/2009 of 24.11.2009, as amended by Rectoral Decree GR 06/01/2011 of 27.01.2011
- taking into consideration the Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Porto, as approved by the Scientific Council of 21/10/2009.

UNDERTAKE TO AWARD A DOUBLE DOCTORAL DEGREE ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS OF AGREEMENT

Article 1 – Goals

The brain is a highly complex piece of biological machinery, made up of hundreds of billions of cells organized into several subsystems. These underlie sensory processes, learning, emotion, action, and cognition; these have been the object of intense enquiry for hundreds of years. Neuroscientists strive to provide a description of the neural mechanisms responsible for these processes in terms of the discharge pattern and connections of brain cells as well as their specific molecules.

The Universities signing the present agreement seek to join efforts to advance current understanding of the organization and operation of the brain. This overall goal will be achieved by sharing expertise and resources to train doctoral students in forefront Neuroscience.

The aim of the *International PhD Programme in Neuroscience* (heretofore, the *Programme*) is to offer high quality graduate studies and to promote cutting edge research in Brain Sciences, with special emphasis on Neurophysiology and Neuroanatomy, both at cellular and systems levels, in Psychobiology and Psychopharmacology, in Neuropsychology, and in Cognitive and Computational Neuroscience. It intends to prepare a new generation of scientists who will excel in Academia or Research Institutions, the public or private sector in Europe and abroad. The Programme shares the Doctoral Programme in Behavioural Neuroscience of the University of Rome SAPIENZA, the Doctoral Programme in Neuroscience of the University Autónoma de Madrid, the Graduate studies and the Doctoral studies offered by the Brain and Mind Programme and the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Crete, respectively, and the Neuroscience Doctoral Programme of the University of Porto.

Article 2 – Management Structure

The *Programme* will be managed by a Scientific Steering Committee, which is to be considered its executive body. The Scientific Steering Committee will include 2 Faculty members from each participating University elected according to the rules of each University. The Scientific Steering Committee will appoint a *Programme* coordinator.

For each partner, contact persons responsible for the implementation of the *Programme* are specified in an Annex, which is to be considered part of the present agreement. These persons are members of the Scientific Steering Committee.

Article 3 – Thematic Areas and Research Environment

The laboratories of the Faculty members of the *Programme* are well equipped to address questions pertaining to Brain Sciences, with special emphasis on Neurophysiology and Neuroanatomy, both at cellular and systems levels, on Psychobiology and Psychopharmacology, on Neuropsychology, and on Behavioural, Cognitive and Computational Neuroscience. Each PhD candidate enrolled in the *Programme* will focus on one or more of these fields depending on his/her preferences and the priorities of the laboratory(ies) where she/he will do experimental work.

Article 4 – Supervision and Training

Supervision of doctoral research trainees enrolled in the *Programme* will be ensured by tutors belonging to partner Universities. The tutoring and co-tutoring at home and at the host institutions are aimed at jointly monitoring the research progress over the entire period up to the final dissertation.

The members of the Scientific Steering Committee at the host institution, in agreement with those of the home institution, are responsible for solving any problems that may arise concerning the trainee's stay at the host institution.

Article 5 – Mandatory International Mobility

In order to obtain the double Doctoral Diploma, each research trainee must be registered in the two institutions offering the two doctoral programs of his choice and spend in each one a minimum period of 6 to 9 months, according to the local regulations.

Article 6 – Research Trainee's Obligations and Rights

Each student will observe the rules of both home and host institution.

The students will be granted full access to the facilities of home and host institutions (such as library, laboratories, etc.) during their studies, provided that they are registered in the respective Doctoral Programme. Health insurance is regulated by the rules of each University.

The presentation, deposit and reproduction of the thesis shall be done in each country in accordance with the applicable regulations in force.

Article 7 – Supervisor's Obligations

There will be a minimum of two supervisors (tutors) for each student, at least one from each University involved. Supervisors will be jointly responsible for planning and monitoring each student's work, including the periods of study to be spent at each location.

Article 8 – Admission and Selection of Candidates

Student admission takes place separately in each institution per its rules and regulations.

Selection of students to be enrolled in the *Programme* is highly competitive: students have to be among the best of their class. Applicants should have an excellent University record. Proof of proficiency in the use of the English language is required; if necessary, the candidate's knowledge of English will be evaluated during the selection procedure.

The following criteria are also taken into consideration: scientific articles/abstracts, if any, authored by the student, previous research experience, recommendation letters, prior degrees awarded to the candidate, detailed record of courses and grades, in particular the grades in courses related to the *Programme*, and a written description of research interests.

Article 9 – Enrolment

Each PhD candidate is enrolled in one of the Universities participating in the *Programme* (home institution) and is registered in the host institution, being entitled to all the rights and privileges of the PhD candidates of the host Institution.

Article 10 – Registration Fees

Registration and tuition fees will be paid to the home Institution and be exempted by the host institution, which will guarantee a fee waiver upon condition of reciprocity.

Article 11 – Research Training Facilities and Infrastructures

The hosting institution will ensure financial and material support, whether for operating costs, access to infrastructures (also including use of laboratories and other facilities) and hospitality extended to international students and researchers.

Article 12 – Support for International Mobility

Each home institution will support the mobility of its own doctoral research trainees according to its rules, provided that they have access to specific funding such as LLP-Erasmus scholarships and/or an increase of the stipend awarded the student for the period of training abroad. Given the multi-lateral nature of the mobility of the staff and research trainees the participating institution shall cooperate to establish mobility opportunities funded from international sources.

Article 13 – Dissertation and Final Evaluation Committee

The thesis should be written in English and should include one or more articles authored or co-authored by the student and published or accepted for publication in international peer-review journals, in conformity with the rules in use in each one of the institutions awarding the degree. The thesis will include a summary in the language of the home institution.

The defence of the thesis shall take place at the home/coordinating University. The composition of the International Evaluating Committee shall respect the requirements of the doctoral regulations of the awarding institution/s. After its successful completion, the host institutions will receive from the home institution the necessary copies of the thesis, and will be officially informed of the result of the public defence.

Article 14 – Degree Award

Upon completion of the PhD *Programme*, the new Doctor is awarded separate diplomas by each one of the two institutions that hosted his/her research, which will refer the scientific domain in which the degree is awarded, in national language, according to the rules and regulations of the institution awarding the degree, namely:

- By the SAPIENZA University of Rome: Doctor of Behavioural Neuroscience
- By the University Autónoma de Madrid: Doctor en Neurociencia
- By the University of Crete: Διδάκτωρ των Νευροεπιστημών
- By the University of Porto: "*Doutor em Neurociências, Especialidade em Neurociências Experimentais*" or "*Doutor em Neurociências, Especialidade em Neurociências Clínicas, Neuropsiquiatria e Saúde Mental*"

No student will receive more than two doctoral diplomas under the auspices of this Programme.

Article 15 – Financial Resources and Costs Management

Each participating Institution will be responsible for its own costs associated with this Inter-Institutional Agreement. Neither University will have the authority to permit or incur financial liability on behalf of another. Each institution must guarantee the appropriate administrative control for separate funds from its own sources that are dedicated to the achievement of the goals of this *Programme*. Besides tuition fees, financial resources provided to the *Programme* must be allocated in accordance with the specific contractual regulations of the sources of those funds (e.g. EU, ministries, universities, foundations, private and public sources etc.).

Article 16 – Quality Assurance

Quality assurance will rely on both internal and external assessment. Internal assessment will take place once every two years in the form of a conference of all members of the Scientific Steering Committee to evaluate its impact on the career of its graduates and prepare a list of accomplishments. The external evaluation of the *Programme* will take place every three years by a committee of internationally renowned scientists.

Article 17 – Application of Law and Dispute Resolution

If any dispute arises between the member institutions, they will in good faith attempt to negotiate a settlement. If unsuccessful, they will in good faith attempt a resolution through an alternative dispute resolution procedure commissioned by the scientific steering committee. The consortium will, if needed, appoint a common committee for appeals and grievances.

Article 18 – Intellectual Property Rights

The protection of the subject matter of the thesis and likewise the publication, exploitation and protection of the results obtained by the candidate's research in the contracting institutions shall be subject to the applicable law in force and guaranteed in compliance with the specific procedures of each of the institutions/countries involved in the joint supervision of the thesis. If requested, the provisions in connection with intellectual property rights may be agreed in specific protocols or documents.

Article 19 – Insurance, Prevention and Security

Each student will be granted insurance coverage according to the rules of each institution. Relevant information on the risks of the working environment or specific experimental procedures will be given to each student.

Article 20 – Duration and Renewal

This Inter-institutional multilateral agreement will be valid for a period of three (3) years from the signature by the legal representative (Rector) in each institution. It will be automatically renewed, unless the partner Universities will explicitly request to renegotiate the agreement or give notice of termination in written form at least six (6) months prior its expiry. No provision of this Inter-Institutional Agreement may be varied apart from in writing. Each partner institution may withdraw from the Agreement by written notification at least six (6) months in advance. In the case of any disagreements, which may arise in the application of the agreement, the parties will seek to find an amicable solution. In case of withdrawal the partner institutions will honour all obligations formally agreed upon in advance.

SIGNATURES

For the **SAPIENZA University of Rome**,

For the **University Autónoma de Madrid**,

Signed and stamped in Rome

Signed and stamped in Madrid

on ____ / ____ / 2012

on ____ / ____ / 2012

Luigi Frati

José María Sanz Martínez

Rector

Rector

For the **University of Crete**,

Signed and stamped in Heraklion

on ____ / ____ / 2012

For the **University of Porto**,

Signed and stamped in Porto

on ____ / ____ / 2012

Euripides Stephanou

Rector

José Carlos Diogo Marques dos Santos

Rector

José Agostinho Marques Lopes

Dean of the Faculty of Medicine

ANNEX

Contact Persons

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