**COOPERATION AGREEMENT**

BETWEEN

**UNIVERSITY OF VERONA**

**Graduate School**

**PhD programme in …………………………**

AND

**UNIVERSITY OF ………………………**

**PhD programme in ………………………………..**

**FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL TRACK IN " ............................... "**

the Graduate School of Verona University (hereinafter referred to as “UNIVR”), located in Verona (Italy), represented by its Director Prof. ……….,

**AND**

....................................... (hereinafter “.............”), located in .......................... , represented by ......................., Rector/President/Director of ....................................... *(university)*,

**CONSIDERING THAT**

* UNIVR and …..................., in accordance with their respective local regulations on third-level university education, have activated their own PhD programmes in ...................................... .
* UNIVR and ........................ have a mutual interest in jointly activating an International Doctoral Track in ................... (hereinafter also "IDT") pursuant to Art. 10 of Italian Ministerial Decree no. 45/2013;
* UNIVR and ....................... agree that the main objective of the IDT is to foster high level skills suitable for high quality research in public and private entities, as well as in the free profession, contributing to the aims of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA);
* UNIVR and .............................. agree on the following definitions:
* The term “Institutions in Partnership” refers to the signatory institutions of this Agreement;
* The term “Home Institution” refers to the institution where doctoral students will undertake their main education and research activities and where they have first been accepted and enrolled;
* The term “Host Institution” refers to the institution where doctoral students will participate in additional education and research activities.

**For the Italian institution, acknowledging:**

* Art. 4 of Law no. 210 of 3rd July 1998;
* Ministry of Education, University and Research Decree no. 45 of 8th February 2013 “Regulations establishing the procedures for the accreditation of offices and doctoral courses and criteria for the establishment of doctoral programmes by accredited bodies”; and
* University of Verona’s Regulations for PhD Studies and University of Verona’s Regulations for PhD Schools and PhD Programmes issued respectively by Rector’s Decrees no. 2627 and no. 2629 of 26th March 2021;

**And for the ..................... institution, acknowledging:**

*(Mention here the partner institution's legal framework for research doctorates)*

the Institutions in Partnership agree to accept the following terms and conditions, including those reported in the Annexes which constitute an integral part of this document.

**IT IS AGREED AS FOLLOWS**

**Article 1 – Objectives of the Agreement**

UNIVR and ....................... intend to establish an International Doctoral Track (IDT), entitled “............................”, in accordance with Art. 10 of Italian Ministerial Decree no. 45 of 8th February 2013.

On the Italian side, establishing and activating the IDP is conditional upon approval of the programme by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) and the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University System and Research (ANVUR), in accordance with the constraints imposed by Ministerial Decree no. 45/2013 for the accreditation of doctoral programmes and offices.

The educational and research objectives of the IDT are described in Annex A, which forms an integral and essential part of this Agreement.

The Institutions signing this Agreement will implement it in the spirit of cooperation towards the common objectives of supporting high quality research and developing cultural and scientific cooperation between the two countries in question.

The Agreement encourages the exchange of PhD students and professors, allowing doctoral students to develop further competence in carrying out highly qualified professional and research activities.

**Article 2 – Objectives and general characteristics of the IDT**

……………………………………….. is an international doctoral track jointly sponsored and chaired by the signatory Institutions, UNIVR and .................... ..

The IDT focuses specifically on the theme: " ............................................ ".

At UNIVR, the IDT shall be implemented by internationalising the already existing PhD programme in ........................... , which is organised as follows:

- curriculum in ……………………

- curriculum in ……………………

The IDT does not constitute an additional curriculum, but completes the degree in terms of content and co-tutoring for the students.

At ......................., the IDT shall be implemented by internationalising the already existing PhD programme in .......................... .

The IDT is intended for highly qualified candidates from all European and non-European nations, and aims to train young researchers at a high academic level.

The research expertise developed by the Institutions in Partnership and the international aspect of the programme are assured through the mobility of their PhD students and academic staff, either between the two Institutions or within the research network related to the Institutions.

The Institutions in Partnership agree that PhD students participating in the IDT must participate in training and research at a Host Institution for at least …………. months, consecutive or not, out of the 36 months of the programme. The Host Institution may be any university or international research institution that is highly qualified in the fields of research covered by the programme, as long as the mobility is authorised by the relevant authority of the student's Home University.

Each cycle of the IDT has a duration of three (3) academic years, from 1st October to 30th September of the following year. The accreditation of the IDT will be valid for three consecutive cycles:

37th cycle - academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024

38th cycle - academic years 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

39th cycle - academic years 2023-2024, 2024-2025 and 2025-2026

he language(s) of communication of the IDT will be ............................ . The teaching language in the programme will be........................ .

**Article 3 – Admission to the IDT**

Participation in the IDT is restricted to students already admitted to one of the PhD programmes reported in Art. 2, which are:

PhD programme in ........................................ at UNIVR

PhD programme in ........................................ at .......................

To access the International Doctoral Track, each Institution will admit students whose research project is evaluated by the Joint Coordination Committee as suitable for the aims of the IDT. The Joint Coordination Committee will then inform the relevant offices of the Partner Institution of the number and names of the students selected for the IDP.

Each Institution will enrol all the IDT-selected candidates as incoming co-tutelle students.

Specifically, PhD students with UNIVR as their Home University will be registered by the University of .................... as degree students of the PhD programme in .............……………

PhD students with .................. as their Home University will be registered by UNIVR as degree students of the PhD programme in ............................. .

The Institutions in Partnership agree not to require tuition fees from IDT students in addition to those already required to enrol in their respective national doctoral programmes.

Besides the procedure reported above, the Parties may decide to reserve a certain number of places specifically for the IDT out of the total number of places in the programme as announced annually through the Call for Applications.

At UNIVR, the selection procedure consists of an evaluation of applicants' qualifications plus an individual oral examination. In the oral examination, candidates who have applied for the IDT must show they have sufficient knowledge of the .......................... language.

In this case, the Joint Entrance Examination Panel will include the members of the Joint Coordination Committee who belong to the Partner University. The intended members of the Joint Coordination Committee are detailed in Art. 8 Governance.

Subsequently, the Examination Committee will rank the successful IDT candidates according to their results and their knowledge of the ………………….. language. If a candidate has applied for both the IDT and the national programme and is accepted to both, the student shall choose whether to enrol for the IDT or the national programme.

When a candidate has successfully passed the admission procedure at one of the Institutions in Partnership, that Institution shall contact the other, via its PhD office or other appropriate office, providing copies of all the documents necessary for the student to also be enrolled at the Partner university.

For information on any aspect of the procedure, the signatory Institutions can be contacted here:

University of Verona:

Ufficio Dottorati di Ricerca

Università degli Studi di Verona

Via San Francesco 22, 37129 Verona

E-mail: dottorati.ricerca@ateneo.univr.it

University of ................................

Applicants must satisfy the general entrance requirements for admission to doctoral programmes; specifically, they must hold a second-level university degree (e.g. Master of Science, Master of Arts or equivalent) that gives access to PhD programmes in the country of the Institution that awarded it.

**Article 4 – Educational activities planned for the IDT**

UNIVR and .................... will provide a set of joint educational modules, specialised seminars, summer schools, advanced workshops on specific topics, as well as experience in suitable laboratories.

The Institutions in Partnership will encourage the development of joint modules and joint tutorship for research theses on the various scientific topics.

Each PhD student participating in the IDT will be supervised by two professors, one belonging to UNIVR and one belonging to …………………… .

**Article 5 – Preparation of the thesis and the final examination**

The academic qualification of PhD will be awarded by all Partner Institutions at the conclusion of the IDT after a successful evaluation of the student’s research thesis that should contribute to the advancement of knowledge or methodologies in their chosen field of study.

IDT students must defend their doctoral thesis at their Home University.

Thesis defence at UNIVR

At UNIVR, candidates must discuss their thesis within a maximum of 12 months after the end of the three-year programme.

The PhD thesis should be written in English, although it may be written in another language with the approval of theJoint Teaching Committee. In the latter case, the thesis must contain an extended abstract written in English. A summary of the activities developed by the student during the three years of the programme, including any related publications, must be attached to the thesis.

The final examination for obtaining the title of PhD *(Dottore di Ricerca)* consists of the candidate orally defending their thesis in front of a Joint Thesis Examination Panel. The examination may be attended by the public.

The thesis is subject to prior evaluation by at least two highly qualified referees who are external to the Parties involved in this Agreement.

The referees, who will be nominated by the Joint Coordination Committee and appointed by the Teaching Committee of UNIVR, will express their analysis and opinion of the thesis in writing and will either recommend that the candidate be admitted to the examination to defend the thesis, or that the candidate postpone the examination for up to six (6) months if it is deemed that significant additions or corrections are necessary. Once such period has passed, the thesis will in any case be admitted to the final examination, accompanied by a new written opinion by the same referees in the light of the corrections or additions made by the student.

The Joint Thesis Examination Panel shall be assembled pursuant to Italian and .............. law and shall be comprised of university professors and researchers. The composition of the Joint Thesis Examination Panel will be proposed by the Teaching Committee of UNIVR upon the recommendation of the Joint Coordination Committee, and will be nominated by the Rector of UNIVR.

After the thesis defence at UNIVR, a copy of the report written by the Joint Thesis Examination Panel will be sent to the relevant office of the Partner University. On the basis of this report the Partner University will award its PhD Degree.

Thesis defence at ......................

At ......................

The publication, development and copyright protection of the thesis content and research results in the form of intellectual property will be guaranteed by the Parties in accordance with each Institution’s regulations. Later, specific agreements between the participating institutions will establish the protection conditions as well as the rights and interest that each institution has in the intellectual property and any use of the research results.

Pursuant to the local regulations on doctoral programmes at UNIVR, and in order to obtain the PhD qualification, all PhD students admitted to the IDT, regardless of whether their Home Institution is UNIVR or ……………… , must upload their thesis on the UNIVR University Catalogue (IRIS) at least 2 weeks prior to the thesis defence date. The thesis will be made public within 30 days after the defence, except in cases of embargo for theses containing information protected as trade secrets and/or by publication rights.

**Article 6 – Granting of the PhD degree**

The Parties agree to grant a joint/double PhD degree to all UNVR and ................ students who successfully complete the IDT.

Specifically, the following degrees will be awarded:

UNIVR: PhD degree in .................................. , international doctoral path in .......................... .

.......... : PhD degree in .................................. , international doctoral path in ........................ .

Diplomas will be signed by the legal representatives of each Institution in accordance with the regulations of their respective countries.

**Article 7 – Governance**

The Parties have established the following governing structure of the IDT:

Joint Coordination Committee

The Joint Coordination Committee is comprised of ............. members from each Partner University. For UNIVR, these members will be appointed by the Teaching Committee of the PhD programme in .............. ............ and will be chosen from among its members.

For .................... , they will be appointed by the ........... ............... of the PhD programme in .......................... and will be chosen from among its members.

The Joint Coordination Committee, together with the relevant local committees (Teaching Committee for UNIVR and ................... for ................. ) shall ensure the IDP is managed correctly. In particular, it shall be responsible for organising and coordinating the day-to-day running of the programme and its specific academic activities (joint seminars, conferences, etc.). The Joint Coordination Committee will meet periodically; this may be conducted through videoconferencing.

At the beginning, the Joint Coordination Committee of the IDT shall be constituted as specified in Annex C.

Each Institution will designate an IDT coordinator to oversee and facilitate the implementation of this Agreement. For UNIVR, the person responsible for the implementation of the Agreement will be the Coordinator of the PhD programme in ………………………… (or his/her delegate).

For the University of ………………………….. the person responsible for the implementation of this cooperation agreement will be the Coordinator of the PhD programme in ................................... (or his/her delegate). Members of the Joint Coordination Committee belonging to the Partner Institution will be included in the composition of the Teaching Committee at Verona.

**Article 8 – Mobility of IDT students**

In the spirit of exchange, the Institutions in Partnership will facilitate as much as possible the admission procedures, academic progress, physical relocation and cultural orientation of the students admitted under this Agreement, providing:

* Access to university facilities (such as libraries, language courses and canteens);
* Information on health insurance requirements and the extent of medical cover;
* Assistance in finding housing;
* Documents necessary for obtaining a visa.

The Host Institution does not guarantee accommodation on campus for incoming doctoral students. However, every effort will be made to assist students in finding accommodation within a reasonable distance from campus.

Doctoral students from the Home University will be responsible for:

* Paying their Home University tuition fees prior to participating in the IDT;
* Paying for their own room and board in the host country, including utility bills;
* Organising and paying for transport to, from and within the Host University;
* Arranging and paying for the appropriate medical insurance;
* Any expenses in excess of their medical insurance cover;
* Purchasing any required textbooks, clothing and personal items;
* Obtaining and paying for the appropriate visa;
* Settling all other debts incurred by them or on their behalf during their student exchange or regarding their participation in the International Doctoral Programme, as applicable.

The Parties agree that for each of the academic cycles activated for the duration of this Agreement, the mobility costs of each student admitted to the programme will be the concern of the student's Home University.

Subject to the availability of specific funds reserved for this purpose, each Institution will be responsible for providing funds to cover the travel expenses, board and lodging costs of its own staff who participate in joint activities organised within the framework of this International Doctoral Programme

Following the principles of reciprocity and fair treatment, the Institutions in Partnership agree to contribute towards the travel expenses of professors who take part in the examination procedures and the Joint Coordination Committee meetings described in this Agreement.

**Article 9 – Regulations for reference and resolution of disputes**

For any matters not specified in this Agreement, please refer to the laws in force in the respective countries, and in particular the internal regulations in the field of doctoral studies issued by the Institutions in Partnership.

The signatory Institutions commit to amicably solve any disputes that may arise regarding this Agreement.

Should it not be possible to reach an agreement in this manner, and for any disputes that may arise between the Parties concerning the interpretation, execution and/or validity of this Agreement, will be submitted to a board of arbitration of three (3) members. Each party will appoint a member; these members will appoint an independent third member, who will act as chairperson. The arbitral proceedings shall be ritual and based upon current regulations. Decisions will be binding to all parties.

**Article 10 – Language, entry into force and duration**

This agreement is written and signed in two (2) original copies in English, both having the same legal validity. Each party will receive one original document signed by both the Institutions in Partnership.

This Agreement shall enter into force upon being signed by the Institutions involved, and will remain in force for five years. The Agreement may be renewed and modified by mutual agreement between the parties. All changes and modifications must be made in writing and authorised by the representatives of each Institution in Partnership.

In the event that a party wishes to withdraw from the Agreement before the established end date, it must give written notice at least six (6) months in advance, unless the withdrawal is due to reasonsof *force majeure*.

**Article 11 – Annexes**

The following annexes are an integral part of this Agreement:

Annex A: Definition of research topics and educational objectives of the IDT

Annex B: Facilities and equipment made available at each institution

Annex C: Composition of the Joint Coordination Committee and scientific publications

UNIVERSITY OF VERONA

Graduate School

Director

………………………………….

…………………………… *(university)*

………………..

……………………………………

**Annex A**

**Definition of research topics and educational objectives of the IDT**

Joint fields of studies:

* ………………………
* ………………………
* ……………………….

**Information on UNIVR**

Name of the PhD programme run by the Partner Institution:

Accreditation of the PhD programme by national agency (if applicable):

Name of national agency:

Information about the position of the partner institution in national and international rankings:

**Information on …………………………..**

Name of the PhD programme run by the Partner Institution:

Accreditation of the PhD programme by national agency (if applicable):

Name of national agency:

Information about the position of the partner institution in national and international rankings:

COLLABORATIONS WITH THE INSTITUTIONS IN PARTNERSHIP IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS:

**……………………**

**Annex B**

**Facilities and equipment made available at each institution**

**UNIVR**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Laboratories** |  |
| **Libraries** |  |
| **Database** |  |
| **IT *facilities*** |  |
| **Other** |  |

**……… (Partner Institution)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Laboratories** |  |
| **Libraries** |  |
| **Database** |  |
| **IT *facilities*** |  |
| **Other** |  |

**Annex C**

**Composition of the Joint Coordination Committee**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Surname | Institution | Deartment | Position  (full/ associate professor) | Scientific Sector |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**(**Members of the Joint Coordination Committee who belong to ……………….. will be included in the composition of the Italian Teaching Committee of the PhD Programme in …………………………………. For this reason**,** in accordance with the constrains imposed by the Ministerial Decree 45/2013, they are required to provide the following information:

* Bibliometric sector: please provide the number of products published over the last 5-year period (from 2014 to date) on scientific journals included in the international databases “Scopus” and “Web of Science”
* Non-Bibliometric sector: please provide the number of products published over the last 10-year period (from 2009 to date) on journals belonging to Class A

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Author | Other Co-authors | Publication Year | Document Type | Title | Journal/Publisher/Congress name | ISSN/ISBN | DOI | Other data (Volume, issue, nr. Pag.) |
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