

## Bylaws of the Groningen Declaration network

As approved by the Executive Committee on 11 January 2015 and to be shared for adoption by participants at the Annual Network Meeting in Málaga, on 4 to 6 May 2015

Unless otherwise expressly stated in these Bylaws, the terms and definitions in these Bylaws will have the same meaning as the terms and definitions laid down in the Groningen Declaration Network's Statutes.

### Chapter I: Participation in the Network

#### Article 1: Applications for participation

- A. Participants may be invited to join the Network, through an invitation from the Executive Committee.
- B. Any organization, interested in the aim of the Network may send an application for participation, to the Secretary of the Network. As part of the application, the applicant pledges to subscribe to the Network's Statutes, Bylaws, Code of Conduct and the Network's Ethical Principles Document.
- C. The following information has to be provided in the application:
  - Organization name
  - Characterization of organization (for instance: Public; Private; National; International; other)
  - Main activities of organization
  - Reason of organization's interest in Groningen Declaration Network
  - Envisaged organization's contribution to Network
  - Address (Street; City; Zip/Postal Code; Country)
  - Name of representative from the organisation ([where applicable: dr. degree]; First name; [Prefix]; Last name)
  - Gender
  - Job title
  - E-mail address
  - Work phone and cell phone
  - Signed form of commitment to the Network's Statutes, Bylaws, Code of Conduct and Ethical Principles Document.
- D. On receipt of the complete application for participation, the Secretary shall assess the application for completeness and submit complete applications for approval to the Executive Committee, which shall decide on participation;
- E. The Secretary shall inform the applicant of the outcome in writing.

## Article 2: Rights and Duties of Participants

- A. Participants of the Network are entitled to:
- Attend the Annual Network Meeting;
  - Suggest candidates for positions in the governance bodies of the Network;
  - Participate in and contribute to the work of the Network by joining Task Forces and Committees.
- B. It is incumbent on participants to comply with the rules and regulations as stated in the Statutes, Bylaws, Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles Document and other regulations of the Network.

### Article 3: Courtesy Associates

The Executive Committee may offer the status of Courtesy Associate to organizations with which it wishes to promote good working relations. The benefits of Courtesy Associate status, and the selection of those to whom it is offered, shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

### Article 4: Termination of participation in the Network

- A. If a participant wishes to terminate his or her participation, the participant is to communicate this in writing to the Secretary;
- B. A participant who is found in breach of the Statutes, Bylaws, Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles Document and any other regulations or decisions of the Network shall be notified of suspension or removal in writing by the Secretary, after consulting with the Executive Committee;
- C. A participant whose participation has been suspended or removed has the right to appeal to the Executive Committee within a month of being informed of the decision. If the Executive Committee is in favour of the participant that has been suspended or removed, the participant shall be reinstated.

## CHAPTER II: On Sponsoring

### Article 5: Sponsorship

Pursuant to Article 7 E of the Statutes, for the financing of the Annual Network Meeting, the Executive Committee may seek sponsorships from third parties. The details for such a sponsorship shall be laid down on a case by case basis in a sponsorship agreement that will detail at least the amount of the sponsorship and the benefits that the sponsor may derive from the sponsorship.

## Chapter III: Governance

### Article 6: Executive Committee, duties and obligations

- A. The Executive Committee is charged with developing, adopting and implementing the general policy of the Network, which shall in any case include reviewing the delegation to the Secretary regarding financial responsibility;
- B. Each year, the Executive Committee will hold at least 3 meetings, one at the beginning of the Annual Network Meeting, one at the conclusion of the Annual Network Meeting, and one 6 months in advance of the following year's Annual Network Meeting;
- C. The members of the Executive Committee cannot be part of activities that are in conflict of interest with the Network or act in breach of the Statutes, Bylaws, Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles Document or decisions of the Network, or that unreasonably damage the Network;
- D. A member of the Executive Committee may be suspended or dismissed when the member concerned has acted in breach of the Statutes, Bylaws, Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles Document or decisions of the Network, or has performed an act that inflicted serious damage to the Network.

### Article 7: Vacancies

- A. Where a vacancy arises with the Chair of the Network, the Executive Committee will then nominate one of its elected members to act as Chair until the term of the former chair has expired ;
- B. Where a vacancy arises on the Executive Committee, an additional member shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

### Article 8: Attendance at meetings

- A. Executive Committee members are required to attend all the Executive Committee meetings.
- B. In case of incompatibility of agendas, Executive Committee members that are unable to attend an Executive Committee meeting shall inform the Secretary as soon as possible.

## Chapter IV: Committees and Task Forces

### Article 9: Committees

- A. As mentioned in Article 15 of the Statutes, the Executive Committee may form Committees, which will be permanent. Three have been formed: the Nominations Committee; the Dissemination Committee; and the Annual Network Meeting's Organizing Committee.
- B. *Annual Network Committee*. The Chair and Secretary are ex-officio members of the Annual Network Meeting's Organizing Committee, as is a chief representative from the host organization in a given year, plus preferably chief representatives of the host organizations of both the year that immediately precedes that year's Annual Network Meeting, and of the year that follows.
- C. Other members of the Annual Network Meeting's Organizing Committee shall be recruited preferably from among the signatories.
- D. The Chair serves as chairperson of the Annual Network Meeting's Organizing Committee.
- E. *Dissemination Committee*. The members of the Dissemination Committee nominate a chair that is to be approved by the Executive Committee. A member of the Executive Committee will be a member of the Dissemination Committee.
- F. *Nominations Committee*. The members of the Nominations Committee nominate a chair that is to be approved by the Executive Committee. The Secretary will be a member of the Nominations Committee.
- G. All vacancies for the three Committees will be advertised to the Network participants through the usual channels as they arise. A suitable period of time will be allowed to ensure that participants wishing to apply for a position on a Committee may do so. Applications will be sent to the Secretariat, and together with the chair of the Committee, a written summary of applications will be made for the Committee members who then rank their preferences. The outcomes are sent to the Executive Committee for approval.
- H. At least once a year the Committees shall have joint meetings with the Executive Committee.
- I. The Committees are obliged to look after the interests of all participants in a balanced way in the fulfilment of their tasks.
- J. All Committees shall have a document of Roles and Duties clearly describing their tasks and duties and term of office. The Executive Committee shall approve this document.

### Article 10: Task Forces

- A. In accordance with Article 16 of the Statutes of the Network, the Executive Committee may establish and dissolve Task Forces, appoint its members and determine its tasks and powers.
- B. Members of the Task Forces may be recruited preferably from among the signatories and from the Executive Committee and in case of too few candidates from the Network at large.
- C. Non-participants may be added as advisers.

- D. All Task Forces report to the Executive Committee and operate within the terms of reference and the time schedule set by the Executive Committee.
- E. If a budget is needed to operate the Task Forces, the budget must be approved by the Executive Committee.

## **Chapter V: Code of Conduct; Amendment of Statutes and Bylaws; Dissolution of Network**

### **Article 11: Code of Conduct**

- A. The Network has a Code of Conduct. Any changes will be proposed by the Executive Committee, carried out by the Secretariat, and publicized at the Annual Network Meeting.
- B. The Code of Conduct shall include a conflict of interest policy, in which it is stated that participants avoid any conflict between their personal, professional or business interests and the interests of the Network. In the event such a conflict exists, the participant has to refrain from certain specified actions or is forced to give up a certain office. Activities or transactions that (may) constitute a conflict of interest will be specifically mentioned.

### **Article 12: Amending the Bylaws/Statutes**

- A. Members of the Executive Committee can propose amendments to the Bylaws. The procedure described in Article 21 of the Statutes is applicable.
- B. Changes in the Bylaws and/or Statutes should only be done when absolutely necessary. The process should always allow for good discussion time in the Executive Committee.
- C. After the Executive Committee has resolved to amend the Statutes, the Secretary will be in charge of the procedures to have the amendments integrated into the Statutes.

### **Article 13: Dissolution of the Network**

- A. Proposal to dissolve the Network can be made by the Executive Committee. The procedure described in Article 22 of the Statutes is applicable.