

# InterGender – International Consortium for Interdisciplinary Feminist Research Training

## PREAMBLE

The InterGender consortium was established as such 1 January 2015, through an agreement that is hereby revised and largely renewed. The background was the successful work of InterGender, the Swedish-International Research School in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, funded by the Swedish Research Council with 12,5 million SEK, 2008-2014. Since its inception, the School has organized 31 international PhD courses in intersectional gender studies as well as three international conferences with a main focus on PhD students' participation and training. Moreover, sustainable networks with regular workshops for first-phase PhD students have been organized within the framework of InterGender.

InterGender is indebted to a predecessor: The Nordic Research School in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, NorsGender, funded by NordForsk with 5 million NOK, 2004-2009. NorsGender gathered 40 partner universities in 11 countries, and offered 29 international PhD courses. The School was run in collaboration with the Nordic Institute of Gender Research, Oslo, and an international board. It was very positively mid-term evaluated by an international peer review panel, and the experiences from this School gave impetus to the setting up of InterGender, as well as to a collaboration between the two Schools in the last phase of the NorsGender funding.

InterGender is building on these experiences, as well as on successful experiences of the participating gender research training organizations and schools in Sweden, Norway and The Netherlands. Inspiration has also emerged from Athena (The Socrates funded Thematic Network for European curriculum development in Gender Studies, 1998-2009) where many of the NorsGender and InterGender-partners also took actively part in joint PhD- and master level curriculum development.

# CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT

*for InterGender*

This agreement, referred to as the “Consortium Agreement”, is made on January 1, 2018, and it is entered between the following partner Higher Education Establishments and Partner Units:

1. Higher Education Establishment: **Linköping University**, Partner Units: **Unit of Gender Studies, Department of Thematic Studies**, Coordinating Partner
2. Higher Education Establishment: **Blekinge Institute of Technology**, Partner Unit: **Department of Technology and Aesthetics**, Full Partner
3. Higher Education Establishment: **Göteborg University**, Partner Unit: **Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Research**, Full Partner,
4. Higher Education Establishment: **Luleå University of Technology**, Partner Unit: **Research Subject Gender and Technology**, Full Partner
5. Higher Education Establishment: **Lund University**, Partner Unit: **Department of Gender Studies**, Full Partner.
6. Higher Education Establishment: **The Norwegian National Research School i Gender Studies**, Full partner
7. Higher Education Establishment: **Södertörn University**, Partner Unit: **Gender Studies**, Full Partner
8. Higher Education Establishment: **Umeå University**, Partner Unit: **Umeå Centre for Gender Studies**, Full Partner
9. Higher Education Establishment: **Utrecht University**, Partner Unit: **Graduate Gender Programme/Netherlands Research School of Gender Studies**, Full Partner
10. Higher Education Establishment: **Mid Sweden University**, Partner Unit: **Research Subject Sociology and Forum for Gender studies**, Full Partner

relating to the joint research training initiative: The International Consortium for Interdisciplinary Feminist Research Training – **InterGender**, hereafter designated “InterGender” or “the Consortium”

## 1. DEFINITIONS

### 1.1 Agreement

Sections 1 to 7 in this document constitute the consortium agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to define what the Consortium is, by laying down the framework for the interaction between the Partners in Consortium-related matters, and to define the relative roles of the Partners. The agreement is binding for the period as defined in section 3.3.

### 1.2 Annexes to the agreement

Sections A, B and C attached to this document constitute annexes to the agreement. The purpose of the annexes is to provide situational details supplementing the agreement, e.g. to describe the content and responsibilities for the course programme for a given period of time, or to explain the details of the economic agreement for a given period of time.

### 1.3 Types of Partners

The Consortium Agreement differentiates between two types of partners: a) Coordinating Partner, b) Full Partner. The Consortium is constituted by Coordinating and Full partners.

New partners can be accepted as Full Partners. Acceptance as Full Partner is preceded by an application from the prospective partner and a decision by all the Partners. The status as Full Partner may also be granted by The Director if the following conditions apply: a) the total number of Full Partners in the Consortium does not, after acceptance of the new partner, exceed seventeen (17). b) the new partner has been invited to become a Full Partner in accordance to what is stipulated by the InterGender Consortium Board, under the previous Consortium Agreement, during the board meeting 9 – 10 October 2017 (Annex C, §12a.). The responsibilities, rights and obligations of the different types of partners are further stipulated in section 4.

### 1.4 Partner Unit and Partner Higher Education Establishment

The specific units, as designated above, are in this agreement and its annexes regarded as the Partner Units.

The higher education establishments of which the Partner Units are part, are in this agreement and its annexes regarded as Partner Higher Education Establishments, or Partners.

### 1.5 InterGender Course

A PhD course financed by the Common Funds, to the extent stipulated in Annex A, and organized by one or more local Partner Unit, according to provisions in sections 2c, 2d and 4c. Once the Board has decided to offer a course as an InterGender Course, the Consortium, on behalf of its Partners, commissions the local Partner Unit, or Partner Units, to offer the course to selected participants according to 4c and Annex B, provided this is done according to laws and regulations of the country of that Partner

### 1.6 InterGender certified courses

A PhD course, otherwise planned by a local Partner Unit, is regarded an InterGender Certified Course after having received an InterGender certificate, according to provisions described in sections 2c, 2d and 4c. Once the course outline is certified, the Consortium, on behalf of its Partners, commissions the local Partner Unit to offer the course to selected participants according to 4c. Admission to the individual courses, where relevant, is then done by each Higher Education Establishment.

### 1.7 Common funds

Common funds are resources collected from the Consortium members to guarantee that the costs for maintaining the Consortium according to this agreement including its annexes are covered.

### 1.8 Additional funds

Additional funds are any funding outside of the Common Funds at the disposal of one or more (or all) of the Partners and which in part or full are available for InterGender related activities. Additional funds are typically generated via applications to external or internal funding bodies, and the conditions for their use are determined by the agreement between the specific applicant/s and the agency/organization providing the funding. Additional funds cannot replace common funds.

### 1.9 Signatory

“Signatory”, in this document designates the representative of the Higher Education Establishment that is authorized to sign this contract. Signatories should either 1) be the rector, 2) be equivalent of rector, or 3) by delegation be an authorized representative of the Higher Education Establishment.

## 2. PURPOSE AND AIMS

The purpose of InterGender is to strengthen the quality, availability and recognition of interdisciplinary feminist research training on an international level, and to function as a complement and a strengthening measure to research training offered locally at each Partner. A number of distinct aims are set to ensure that this purpose is continuously fulfilled:

- a) To make up a framework for continuous scholarly reflections and development of cutting edge training within the field of interdisciplinary feminist research.
- b) To run an international office for joint international doctoral training within the field of interdisciplinary feminist research which functions as a node for a Consortium of Units with PhD-programmes, or with developed plans for establishing such programmes within the field (see list of Partners above).
- c) To offer a joint programme of PhD training activities within the field of interdisciplinary feminist studies. A rigorous method of aligning and monitoring local courses are used to make courses to be offered and accredited as certified InterGender courses fit the jointly developed InterGender format and cutting-edge contents.
- d) To ensure that the annual joint programme of activities, as far as it is financially possible depending on the Common Funds (see 1.7), and Additional Funding (see 1.8) and work contributed by the Partners, will comprise the following components:

- i. --- International PhD courses; courses may be offered both as InterGender Courses, according to 1.5, or as InterGender Certified Courses, according to 1.6. Throughout the three-year period of the Agreement, depending on the number of partners and available funds (see Annex A), between 1 and 6 courses will be offered as InterGender Courses according to 1.5.
  - ii. --- courses for PhD supervisors;
  - iii. --- networking seminars for PhD students from Partners;
  - iv. --- international conferences on field-relevant, cutting-edge topics and with a focus on PhD students' presentations in dialogue with internationally high-profiled scholars;
  - v. --- training in academic skills for PhD students (i.e. training in international publishing; written and oral academic performances; writing of funding applications; career development skills, including pedagogical skills).
- e) To work for the securing of additional funding from local, national and international funding bodies, such as for example the European Commission's Horizon 2020 programme, to support the activities of the International InterGender Consortium.
- f) To work for strengthening the Consortium's capacities by expanding the number of Consortium partners to 17.

### 3. FORCE, DURATION AND RENEWAL

#### 3.1 Entry into force

This agreement enters into force when signed by the signatory of the Coordinating Partner Higher Education Establishment. Other Partners are considered to have committed themselves to the agreement upon signature of the signatory of their respective organization.

#### 3.2 New Partners

New Full Partners can become members of the Consortium after application and a unanimous board decision (see section 5.1.4) and the Partner Higher Education Establishment's written accession to this Consortium Agreement. New Full Partners can also become members of the Consortium after invitation by The Director if the following conditions apply: a) the total number of Full Partners in the Consortium does not, after acceptance of the New Full Partner, exceed seventeen (17). b) the new partner has been invited to become a Full Partner in accordance to what is stipulated by the InterGender Consortium Board, under the previous Consortium Agreement, during the board meeting 9 – 10 October 2017 (Annex C, §12a.).

#### 3.3 Duration

Once signed by the concerned parties, this agreement is in force for three years from the date stated above, and may be renewed by an amendment to this Agreement.

#### 3.4 Renewal

On a date set by the Consortium board – appropriate in relation to 3.3 and taking the renewal process into account – partners who wish to remain within the Consortium shall declare this in a letter of intent to the Consortium Coordinator (see 5.3).

Upon receipt of the letters of intent the Partners may propose changes to the contract and its annexes for the following contract period. When possible changes have been accepted by all Partners, the signatory of each Partner confirms that the Partner remain within the Consortium by signing the renewed contract and send it to the Coordinating Partner which then will circulate all originals to all the other Partners.

### 3.5 Independent Partners

This Consortium Agreement is not intended to constitute an agency, joint venture, company or other such form of association, as provided by law or otherwise.

### 3.6 Choice of law and Settlement of disputes

This Consortium Agreement is subject to Swedish substantive law, without reference to its conflict-of-laws rules.

The parties concerned shall first use all reasonable efforts to amicably settle any dispute arising out of or in connection with this Consortium agreement. Where the dispute directly relates to the implementation of the activities to which the agreement has been entered, the board shall first act as mediator. In case the dispute cannot be amicably settled, any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of or in connection with this Agreement, or the breach, termination or invalidity thereof, shall be solved by mediation in accordance with the Rules of the Mediation Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce ("Mediation Rules").

Where the dispute is not solved by mediation, within the period of time prescribed by the Mediation Rules, the dispute shall be finally settled by arbitration at the Arbitration Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce in accordance with its Rules for Expedited Arbitrations.

The seat of arbitration shall be Linköping, Sweden.

The language to be used in the arbitral proceedings shall be English.

The above provisions do not prevent either Party from submitting a definite and payable claim to a court or other authority of competent jurisdiction.

### 3.7 Termination

A Partner's participation in this Consortium Agreement may be terminated in the following ways: 1) If the Partner repeatedly and after having been notified in writing by the Board, has failed to fulfill its obligations and responsibilities according to this Consortium Agreement including its annexes. 2) A Partner can choose to terminate its participation in this Consortium Agreement by two months' written notice to the other Partners. Termination according to instance 1) requires a qualified majority decision by the board (see section 5.1.3).

## 4 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTNERS

The Consortium agreement distributes rights and obligations between the different types of partners, according to the stipulations below:

- a) The **Coordinating Partner** is obliged to:
- manage the Consortium's common funds

- administer day-to-day activities of the Consortium (eg travel and meeting arrangements)
- manage the Consortium website and other kinds of public relations
- lead the Consortium's efforts to generate further funding. It is required that all Partner Units implicated in a funding application have expressed their consent either by agreeing to a board decision, or in writing, before the Coordinating Partner may submit the application.
- give advice to the Partners' PhD students in regards to funding applications for travel and participation costs
- chair the Board
- announce InterGender Courses, and InterGender Certified Courses
- ensure the selection of successful applicants to InterGender Courses, and InterGender Certified Courses by means of the Consortium Coordinator (5.3)
- by means of the Consortium Coordinator (5.3), to report to the board how the selection of participants to InterGender certified courses is distributed between the Partners. If the board finds that the distribution is uneven, the Consortium Coordinator shall compensate for this in future selections.
- ensure that participants in InterGender Courses, and InterGender Certified Courses, upon request, receive a certificate of their participation, in which a recommendation is provided regarding the amount of ECTS participants should be accredited by their respective home institution.

**b) Full Partners** are obliged to:

- ensure that they are properly represented in the board

Full Partners have the right to

- be part of decisions as regards the joint course programme as planned by the Consortium
- be part of decisions as regards other jointly planned activities

**c) All Partners** are obliged to

- provide information about the Partner Units regular course programme
- at least once a year and before a specified deadline, report to the board if they for the coming year intend to offer part of the Partner Units' course programme as InterGender Certified Course, and if yes, which part.
- at least once a year report to the Board if they are willing for the coming year to partake in the organization of an InterGender Course
- It is to be jointly agreed by the board which courses are to be offered as the annual InterGender programme, and which of these are offered as InterGender Certified Courses, and which are offered as InterGender Courses
- adjust the course format to the InterGender model, for courses offered with the InterGender certificate
- offer places on InterGender Courses, and InterGender Certified Courses, to PhD students from other Partner Units and Partner Higher Education Establishments, according to InterGender rules for distributing PhD student places on InterGender certified courses (see Annex B).
- allow the Consortium Coordinator (5.3) to select participants to InterGender Courses, and InterGender Certified Courses.
- co-finance the Consortium in accordance with the budget specifications of ANNEX A.

The spirit among the Partners shall be such that responsibility for ensuring the sufficiency of the common funds and the course programme is shared with solidarity and with consideration to conditions that may temporarily impede individual Partner Units.

All Partners have the right to

- be part of decisions as regards the joint course programme as planned by the Consortium, in accordance with section 5.1.3.
- be part of decisions as regards other jointly planned activities, in accordance with section 5.1.3.
- award their own PhD students ECTS credits for participation in InterGender Courses, and InterGender Certified Courses in accordance with each Partner's rules and regulation for accreditation. This right is exclusive to each Partner.

PhD students enrolled at any of the Partner Units and Partner Higher Education Establishments have the right to

- a place in the PhD courses, networking and other activities arranged by the Consortium, on condition that enough places are available (specific rules for distribution of places among Consortium members in case of too many applicants for courses and other activities with limited participation are specified in Annex B)
- get Consortium based advice about funding applications for travel and participation costs

## 5. BOARD AND MANAGEMENT

### 5.1. Board

#### 5.1.1 Composition

The Consortium is led by a board, consisting of 1 teacher representative, 1 doctoral student representative, and 1 replacement, from each Partner Unit. Each Partner Unit appoints their representatives, following local rules for such appointments. Teacher representatives are appointed for 3 years, while doctoral student representatives are appointed for 1 year at a time. The Consortium board convenes twice a year.

#### 5.1.2 Practicalities

Unless the Board on a case to case basis decides otherwise, one board-meeting each year is organized as a face-to-face meeting and one meeting is organized as an electronic meeting. In connection to face-to-face meetings, InterGender covers the costs for accommodation for 1 and food for 2 representatives from each Partner Unit; travel costs are covered directly by the Partner in question.

#### 5.1.3 Decision-making

In general, decisions are based on a regular majority vote. In certain cases, e.g. in membership matters (see section 3.7), qualified majority is required. In exceptional cases, e.g. for changes in the size of the Partners' co-financing when an agreement is already in place (see 6.1), unanimous decisions are required. The different kinds of majority are defined as follows:

**Regular majority:** Board decisions are based on majority vote. Each board member has one vote, and a minimum of 35 % of the board members has to be represented at the time of the decision. Decisions are made during board meetings.

A qualified majority decision requires no less than 2/3 of the votes to be in favor. Each board member has one vote, and a minimum of 2/3 of the board members has to be represented at the time of the decision. Qualified majority decisions are preceded by a voting process that allows for votes to be submitted via e-mail for up to two weeks after the board meeting on which the decision was an agenda item.

An unanimous decision requires 100 % of the votes to be in favor or abstaining. Each board member has one vote, and a minimum of 100 % of the board members has to be represented at the time of the decision. Unanimous decisions are preceded by a voting process that allows for votes to be submitted via e-mail for up to two weeks after the board meeting on which the decision was an agenda item. In the event that a board member does not, after due reminder, vote within two weeks after board meeting, their vote will be considered abstaining.

Decision items have to be announced on the agenda for the board meeting and no less than two weeks prior to the meeting. Notwithstanding the above majority requirements, all Partners may request that a specific decision item is to be decided after a qualified majority decision, rather than after a regular majority decision, so that 2/3 of the board members have to be present and 2/3 of the present members have to vote in favor of a decision. The request shall be sent in writing to the Consortium Coordinator no later than one week prior to the meeting. The Consortium Coordinator then notifies the Partners which decisions are to be decided with qualified majority. For the avoidance of doubt, a request for qualified majority decision cannot be denied.

## 5.2. Executive Committee

From its midst, the board elects to the Executive Committee a Chair, four Co-Chairs and a minimum of one representatives for the doctoral students. Together with the Director (see 5.3) and the Consortium Coordinator (see 5.3), the Chair, Co-Chairs and the doctoral students' representative(s) form an executive committee which normally convenes 2 - 4 times per term, normally via Skype/Internet. The purpose of the executive committee is to prepare board meetings, and to represent the board in between board meetings. It operates as a forum in which the Director and Consortium Coordinator can be advised about, and get assistance in, the execution of the board's decisions. The board may delegate its power of decision in specific matters, so that the executive committee can act in the board's place in between board meetings. Delegations are decided by the board, and either specified in the board meeting minutes, on a case to case basis, or in the form of an annex to the consortium agreement. The executive committee agrees on its own statutes which is to be presented before and decided by the board.

## 5.3. Management: Director, Consortium Coordinator and Administrative Support

The Director (professor or docent) is responsible vis-a-vis the Board that the Coordinating partner carries out its obligations according to 4a, and that the Board's decisions are properly carried out. The Director is appointed by the Coordinating Partner.

The Consortium Coordinator (post doc level) performs the tasks associated with the Coordinating Partner's obligation according to 4a. The Consortium Coordinator is employed by the Coordinating Partner, and partly funded by the Common Funds (see 1.7).

The Coordinating Partner may delegate some of the tasks of the Consortium Coordinator to administrative support staff.

The roles of Director and Consortium Coordinator may be taken on by the same person.

## 6. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

### 6.1 Size and composition of the common funds

The size of the Common Funds, the size of the co-financing from each Partner, and the budget is set in the agreement renewal process (see section 3.4), on a three-year basis, and specified in ANNEX A to the consortium agreement.

During the three-year period for which the budget is decided, the size of the Partners' co-financing can be changed only after a unanimous decision (see section 5.1.3).

In the event that the Common Funds end on a surplus at the end of this Contract, the surplus will be divided proportionally between the remaining Partners.

### 6.2 Buffer

In addition to the yearly co-financing, each Partner contributes to a consortium buffer that may be used to cover unforeseen deficit, or, after unanimous agreement in the board, to undertake exceptional efforts. The size of the buffer is stipulated in ANNEX A.

A Partner that is to be released from the Consortium Agreement, has the right to use its entry contribution to cover part of its co-financing contribution to the consortium common funds for its last year as a member.

If the size of the buffer changes, refunds to units to be released are changed proportionally.

Changes in the size of the buffer shall be regarded as an indication that the size of the co-financing contributions from participating institutions has to be recalibrated.

### 6.3 Transfer of Funds

The yearly co-financing is to be transferred from the Partners to the Coordinating Partner yearly. The method and exact date for transfers are agreed between the Coordinating Partner and the Partners, normally in connection to a board meeting

The buffer contribution is to be transferred upon entry of a new Partner into the consortium.

## 7. CHANGES OF AGREEMENT

In order to be in force, changes and amendments to this agreement shall be added in writing and signed by the signatory of the Partner Higher Education Establishment.