

**Partnership agreement governing the joint supervision and awarding of a doctorate diploma between Vrije Universiteit Brussel and [insert name of partner institution].**

**Between**

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels (Belgium),  
hereinafter referred to as 'VUB',  
represented by Prof. dr. Paul De Knop, Rector,

and

- [insert name of institution], [insert institution address],  
hereinafter referred to as [insert abbreviation/ acronym],  
represented by [insert name], [insert position],

jointly referred to as the '**the partner institutions**'

and

- [insert name of PhD student], hereinafter referred to as 'the PhD student',

in which the aforementioned parties are jointly referred to as '**the parties**',

**and in due observance of the following :**

- the Higher Education Act of 4 April 2003, which reforms the structure of higher education in Flanders (*Structuurdecreet*), and in particular article 86 §1 and §4 and article 94 §4, as amended;
- the Higher Education Act of 30 April 2004 on the flexible organisation of education in Flanders, as amended;
- the Flemish Government's decision of 11 June 2004 establishing the form of the diplomas and the content of the accompanying diploma supplement awarded by institutions of higher education in Flanders, and annexes 5 and 6 in particular;
- the Central Regulations regarding the Conferment of PhD degrees of the VUB, approved by the Board of Directors on 27 January 2009;
- the Regulation on Valorisation of the VUB, approved by the Board of Directors on 17 March 1998;
- [insert legislation in force in partner institution's country/region]
- [insert partner institution's regulations]
- the readiness on the part of professors [insert name of VUB's PhD supervisor] (VUB) and [insert name of partner institution's PhD supervisor] (partner institution) to assume supervision of the joint doctorate in execution of the present agreement;

**the following has been agreed:**

## **Article 1 – JOINT SUPERVISION AND THE AWARD OF A DOCTORAL DEGREE**

The partner institutions hereby agree that they shall assume joint responsibility for the supervision of the PhD student's doctoral research project, the organisation of the doctoral examination and the award of a doctoral degree.

PhD student's personal details:

Surname and first name:

Official address (for correspondence):

Date of birth:

Place of birth:

Nationality:

## **Article 2 – SUPERVISION OF THE PHD STUDENT**

The PhD student shall be supervised by the following PhD supervisors:

- At the VUB:
  - Name: *[insert title, first name, surname]*
  - Faculty or Department:
  - Position: [e.g. ZAP]
- At *[insert name of partner institution]* :
  - Name: *[insert title, first name, surname]*
  - Faculty or Department:
  - Position:

The two PhD supervisors undertake to assume fully their responsibilities as the PhD student's supervisors, which includes holding consultations when required so as to be able to assess the progress being made in the research project.

## **Article 3 – ADMISSION TO DOCTORAL STUDIES – DOCTORAL THESIS SUBJECT**

The PhD student has been admitted to the doctoral programme by both partner institutions:

- At the VUB:
  - admission to the doctoral programme in *[insert official title of the doctoral programme (discipline)]*
  - on the following date: *[at the VUB: insert Faculty Council meeting date]*
- At *[insert name of partner institution]* :
  - admission to the doctoral programme in *[insert official title of the doctoral programme (discipline)]*
  - on the following date:

The subject of the doctoral thesis is:

*[insert thesis subject]*

#### **Article 4. – ENROLMENT AND REGISTRATION FEES**

Each academic year, the PhD student is required to (re-)register as a PhD student at the VUB and pay the fixed registration fee. Enrolment is compulsory from the moment this agreement takes effect.

*[insert partner institution's regulations regarding enrolment and registration fees]*

#### **Article 5. – AWARD OF THE DEGREE**

In conformity with the regulations in force within each institution and on the basis of a favourable report from the examination board, the two institutions undertake to award a *joint / double\** doctorate to the successful candidate - via two separate diplomas.

The two Institutions undertake to award a *joint / double\** degree of  
**Doctor in** [insert name of degree] **from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel**  
and  
**Doctor in** [insert name of degree] **from the** [insert name partner institution].

The awarded diplomas will mention the partnership with the other institution and the joint supervision of the thesis.

*[\* 'joint' in case there is full equivalence between the doctoral degrees of the partner institutions: 'double' in case there is no degree equivalence. Please delete as appropriate.]*

#### **Article 6. – INSURANCE COVER**

The PhD student undertakes to take all necessary steps in order to arrange health insurance, insurance cover against physical injuries and third party liability whilst performing his/her duties within the framework of the doctoral research project at the two partner institutions, in accordance with the national and institutional rules and regulations in force.

#### **Article 7. – RESEARCH AT PARTNER INSTITUTION**

The PhD student shall spend alternate or consecutive research periods at both partner institutions. The research periods are to be agreed following consultation between the PhD student and the supervisors. The supervisors shall see to it that the PhD student spends a minimum of 6 months of research at each of the partner institutions.

#### **Article 8. – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

Any contribution towards the costs related to periods of research spent at the partner institution, attendance of national and international conferences, the organisation of the PhD defence, and other costs specific to the PhD programme shall be discussed and determined in mutual agreement between the supervisors from the partner institutions.

#### **Article 9. – EXAMINATION BOARD FOR THE DOCTORAL EXAMINATION**

The examination board set up for the doctoral examination (doctoral thesis and the defence of the thesis) shall be composed by mutual consent between the partner institutions, in accordance with the regulations in force at the institutions. The examination board shall consist of a minimum of two members from each institution.

#### **Article 10. – DOCTORAL THESIS DEFENCE**

The public defence of the doctoral thesis shall take place at one of the partner institutions (in principle this is the home institution) but is recognised by all institutions involved.

In the present case the public defence will take place at *[insert name of institution]* .

Prior to the public defence a private defence will be organized at *[insert name of institution]* according to VUB's regulations.

#### **Article 11. – LANGUAGE**

DOCTORAL THESIS:

The doctoral thesis shall be written in *[insert language]* .

An abstract of the doctoral thesis shall be supplied in *[insert language]* .

DEFENCE:

The defence of the doctoral thesis is to take place in *[insert language]* .

#### **Article 12. – PROTECTION OF RESEARCH RESULTS AND PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The research results arising from the doctoral research project shall be the property of the VUB and *[insert name of partner institution]* .

The protection of the research results resulting from the doctoral research project, as well as any matter related to filing them, making them accessible, their publication and exploitation shall be discussed and agreed by the partner institutions and be in accordance with the national and institutional regulations in force.

#### **Article 13. – COMMENCEMENT AND VALIDITY OF THE AGREEMENT**

The present agreement shall take effect on *[insert date]* and expire on *[insert date]* at the latest.

In the event the PhD student has failed to defend his/her doctoral thesis before this date, the agreement may be extended by common consent.

**Article 14. – VALIDITY OF THE AGREEMENT AND SETTLEMENTS OF DISPUTES**

The stipulations of this agreement may not conflict with the provisions of the Central Regulations regarding the Conferring of PhD degrees at the VUB, nor with the supplementary faculty regulations in place at the VUB faculty where the PhD project takes shape.

The stipulations of this agreement may not conflict with [insert partner institution's regulations] .

In the event of conflicting stipulations VUB regulations shall take precedence.

This agreement shall be governed by Belgian law. Any disputes which may not be settled amicably shall be submitted to the competent courts of Brussels.

Drawn up in Brussels in three original copies, [insert date] ,

Prof. dr. Paul De Knop,  
Rector Vrije Universiteit Brussel

*[insert name of head of partner  
institution]*

*[insert position of head of partner  
institution]*

Prof. *[insert name of VUB supervisor]* ,  
Supervisor, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Prof. *[insert name of supervisor at partner  
institution]*

Supervisor, *[name of partner institution]*

*[insert name of PhD student]* ,  
PhD student