



UNIVERSITÀ
di VERONA



**COOPERATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN**

**UNIVERSITY OF VERONA
Graduate School for Life and Health Science
PhD in Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer**

AND

**UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA
PhD Program in Surgical Sciences**

The Graduate School for Life and Health Sciences of Verona University (hereinafter referred to as UNIVR), represented by its Director Prof. Vincenzo Bronte, and the PhD program in Surgical Sciences, University of Pennsylvania, (hereinafter referred to as Penn) represented by Prof. Charles Vollmer, recognising the educational and cultural exchanges that could mutually benefit the two Institutions, enter into this agreement to facilitate the exchange of their respective doctoral students and academic staff.

ART. 1

Purpose of the Agreement

The general purpose of this Agreement is to establish specific educational links and cooperation between the two Parties in order to facilitate academic and scientific connections and enrich cultural understanding between the two countries involved.

For this purpose, the Parties agree upon the following forms of collaboration:

- a. To develop common research in fields of mutual interest;
- b. To receive doctoral students and academic staff from the partner Institution for agreed periods of study and/or research;
- c. To organise and mutually participate in academic meetings, symposia and seminars;
- d. Mutual exchange of experiences and information regarding teaching programmes and academic methods and techniques;

Each Institution will provide scientific and material support in accordance with these aims, and will designate a *Programme Coordinator* to oversee and facilitate the implementation of this Agreement.

For UNIVR, the person responsible for implementing this Agreement will be the Director of the Graduate School for Life and Health Science.

For Penn, the person responsible for implementing this Agreement will be the Coordinator of the PhD programme in Surgical Sciences or his designee Prof. Charles Vollmer, Department of Surgery who will be included in the composition of the Teaching Committee of the Italian PhD programme.

ART. 2

Academic and cultural cooperation

The Parties agree on the principle of exchanging doctoral students and academic staff. Specifically, the programme exchange will concern doctoral students enrolled in the PhD Programme in Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer, at UNIVR and doctoral students enrolled in the PhD programme in the PhD Program in Surgical Sciences at Penn.

The first exchange of PhD students is expected to occur from 2020.



Participating doctoral students will be responsible for their own expenses related to travel, board, lodging and other incidental expenses.

Subject to the availability of specific funds reserved for this purpose, each Institution, through its respective competent structure (UNIVR: Graduate School for Life and Health Science, PhD Programme in Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer; Penn: PhD programme in Surgical Sciences), will be responsible for providing funds to partially/totally reimburse the travel expenses, board and lodging costs of its doctoral students and academic staff who participate in the International Exchange Programme and in the joint activities organised within the framework of this Agreement. The Parties shall not be responsible for any private arrangements made between participating staff members concerning exchange of accommodation, vehicles, etc.

ART. 3

Doctoral students and academic staff exchanges

UNIVR and Penn students participating in the International Exchange Programme will undertake a period of maximum 18 months of study and research at the Host Institution over the entire duration of the programme.

The Host Institution contribute to train and supervise the PhD students hosted at its premises, even giving them suggestions useful for their future postdoctoral career.

During their stay at the Host Institution PhD students will work alongside a "co-supervisor", who will supervise and direct the student's activities. This role will be carried out in collaboration with the student's academic supervisor belonging to the Home Institution.

Each Institution will offer incoming students the possibility to attend lessons, academic meetings, symposia and seminars, and agrees to register incoming doctoral students who are accepted under this Agreement as "non-degree" visiting students for the entire duration of their exchange.

Each Institution will screen exchange student applicants in a manner consistent with its respective procedures and recommend the most suitable applicants to the other University by the required application deadline set by the Host institution.

PhD students at Penn must apply to Verona by application to the PhD Programme in Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer, International Exchange Programme.

The application requires a letter of support from the programme coordinator at Penn, a brief description of the research project and a brief statement of the reasons for study at Verona in the framework of this International Exchange Programme.

PhD students at Verona must apply to Penn by application to the PhD programme in Surgical Sciences.

The application requires a letter of support from the programme coordinator at Verona, a brief description of the research project and a brief statement of the reasons for study at Penn in the framework of this International Exchange Programme.

Final acceptance will be made by the host institution. Final decisions will be made on the basis of the students' qualifications (e.g. language proficiency, ability to benefit from a particular course of study at the host institution, coherence of the research project with the aims of the PhD Programme at the host Institution).

UNIVR exchange students will be enrolled as non-degree students at Penn in the PhD Programme in Surgical Sciences, during the semester(s) in which they participate in the International Exchange Programme.

Penn exchange students will be enrolled as non-degree students at Verona in the PhD Programme in Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer, during the semester(s) in which they participate in the International Exchange Programme.

They will have access to the same facilities as home students (such as libraries, desks and printing facilities) and will be invited to attend seminars, lectures and other events organised by both the PhD programme in Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer, Department of Medicine (Graduate School for Life and Health) and the PhD Programme in Surgical Sciences. According to the principles of reciprocity and fair treatment, they will be exempt from Host Institution fees (tuition and registration



fees), except for fixed fees established by the university's regulations in force and required by law (e.g. fee related to the insurance against injuries and public-liability at workplace).

At the end of their exchange period at the Host Institution, doctoral students will not be provided with an official transcript but a nominative letter stating the activities carried out during the period of their stay and the lectures and seminars attended. Such a letter, signed by the relevant authority, will be issued for each student participating in this International Exchange Programme.

All doctoral students and academic staff who participate in the International Exchange Programme are required to purchase suitable accident and health insurance and any other insurance required by the Host University or the country in which the host university is located. The insurance must cover the entire duration of their stay abroad.

The Parties shall agree on the number of doctoral students that each university will send out and accept from the other university, six (6) months prior to their departure.

It is intended that the International Exchange Programme is to be balanced and reciprocal over the life of the Agreement. The number of graduate students exchanged between the Parties shall be reviewed annually. The Parties mutually discuss and agree upon a method to remedy any imbalance at the end of each academic year.

Doctoral students will be subject to the academic requirements and rules of conduct of the Host University. The Home University will advise its own students of the Host University's academic and cultural expectations.

In addition to the procedure reported above, the Parties will promote the stipulation of bilateral agreements for doctoral thesis joint supervisions in order to allow doctoral students of both institutions to attend a co-tutored programme and obtain a double/joint degree at the end of it. Rules and procedure which regulate the joint supervision will be reported in a specific Agreement that will be signed by the Parties for each single interested PhD student. An example of this agreement is reported in Annex D.

ART. 4 Services

In the spirit of exchange, the Parties will endeavour to facilitate the admission procedures, academic progress, physical relocation and cultural orientation of the students and academic members accepted under this Agreement, in particular by providing:

- a. Access to university facilities (such as libraries, local language courses and canteens);
- b. Information on health insurance requirements and the extent of the medical cover;
- c. Assistance in finding accommodation;
- d. Documents necessary for obtaining the appropriate visa.

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

Exchange doctoral students from the Home University will be responsible for:

- a. Paying their Home University tuition fees prior to participating in the International Exchange Programme;
- b. Paying for their own room and board in the host country, including utility bills;
- c. Organising and paying for transport to, from and within the Host University;
- d. Arranging and paying for suitable medical insurance;
- e. Any expenses in excess of their medical insurance cover;
- f. Purchasing any required textbooks, clothing and personal items;



- g. Obtaining and paying for the appropriate visa;
- h. Settling all other debts incurred by them or on their behalf during their student exchange or regarding their participation in the International Exchange Programme, as applicable.

Any student's exchange can be terminated by the host institution if it has been determined that the exchange student is not making acceptable academic progress, is not fulfilling the requirements of the exchange, has contravened the host institution's disciplinary policy, or has violated the laws of the host country. The program coordinators for the Parties must discuss conditions leading to the termination of the status of the exchange student prior to the termination.

ART. 5

Reviewing the International Exchange Programme

The Parties will be responsible for reviewing this International Exchange Programme annually in order to make appropriate and mutually agreed modifications as may be required.

ART 6

Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual property rights will be in accordance with accepted international standards.

ART 7

Regulations for reference and resolution of disputes

For any matters not specified in this Agreement for inter-university cooperation, 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 chairman. The arbitral proceedings shall be ritual and based upon current regulations. Decisions will be binding to all parties.

ART. 8

Duration and language of the Agreement

This Agreement for inter-university cooperation comes into force from the date it is signed by both Parties. It will be valid for five (5) years and may be renewed in writing in accordance with the Parties' wishes. Either Party may terminate the Agreement at any time and for any reason by notifying the other Institution six (6) months in advance. Notice of termination will not affect any individual students or faculty members who have already commenced or been accepted by either Institution. The Agreement may be amended at any time by the mutual consent of the Parties.

This Agreement is written and signed in two original copies in English. Each Party will receive one original signed by both Institutions.

Any notice or other communications concerning the Agreement must be made in writing. The address for any such notices is as follows:

Università degli Studi di Verona PhD Programme in Inflammation, Immunity and Cancer: Name: Prof. Gabriela Constantin Position: PhD programme coordinator E-mail: gabriela.constantin@univr.it	University of Pennsylvania PhD Programme in Surgical Sciences, Prof. Charles Vollmer Department of Surgery Designee for International Exchange Coordination
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ART. 9

Annexes

The following Annexes are an integral part of this Agreement:

Annex A - Academic Staff of Penn who are involved in the International Exchange Programme.

Annex B - Facilities and equipment made available by the Parties for PhD students participating in the International Exchange Programme.

Annex C - Joint activities organised within the framework of this Agreement

Annex D – Example of co-tutoring agreement

SIGNED: 12.05.2020