



## **Constitution of The Association of Human Rights Institutes (AHRI)**

### Article 1. Name

The name of the Association is The Association of Human Rights Institutes (AHRI), hereinafter referred to as 'the Association'.

### Article 2. Seat

The Association shall have a seat, which rotates according to elections referred to in Article 6.1. Where practicable the seat will follow the chairpersonship and/or the Secretariat.

### Article 3. Objectives

The objectives of the Association are to promote research, education and discussion in the field of human rights.

### Article 4. Activities

The activities of the Association are inter alia:

- Organising seminars or conferences as a platform for academic discussions;
- Promoting cooperation on research and education activities;
- Initiating new research and education activities;
- Facilitating the exchange of staff members and students between the participating institutes;
- Providing, on request or on its own initiative, advice and consultancy to inter-governmental organisations, other international bodies, governments, parliaments, political parties, the judiciary, the legal profession, social institutions and groups.

### Article 5. Official language

The official language of the Association is English.

## Article 6. The Assembly

### 6.1. Composition and duties

1. The Association shall have an Assembly that sees to the implementation of the objectives referred to in Article 3 and the other parts of this constitution. The Assembly shall consist of the directors of the member institutes or their representatives. The Assembly shall be presided by a Chair and vice-Chair, who will be elected by and from the members of the Assembly.

Chair and vice-Chair will be elected for a term of three years, and eligible to stand for re-election.

2. In the relationship with the Association, each Assembly member shall also act as his/her institute's authorised representative.

3. The rights and duties of the Assembly shall include:

- Approving the annual financial accounts proposed by the Executive Committee;
- Electing the Executive Committee, as referred to in Article 7;
- Appointing the Executive Secretary, as referred to in Article 8;
- The right to amend the constitution of the Association, as referred to in Article 12;
- The right to decide on the admission of new members and observers, as referred to in Article 9;
- The right to exclude members and observers, as referred to in Article 9;
- The right to dissolve the Association.

### 6.2. Assembly meetings

1. The Assembly shall be convened annually. The Assembly meeting will take place during one of the conferences organised by the Association.

2. The meetings shall be convened by or on behalf of the Chair.

3. The notice convening the meeting shall state the agenda, as well as the time and place of the meeting. The notice shall be sent out no later than one month before the meeting.

### 6.3. Decision-making

1. The Assembly may only adopt decisions if 2/5 of its members are present.
2. The Assembly shall adopt decisions by a simple majority of votes.

## Article 7. The Executive Committee

### 7.1. Composition and functions

1. The Association shall have an Executive Committee that is in charge of the implementation of the objectives as referred to in Article 3 and the other parts of this agreement. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair, the vice-Chair and additional member representatives who shall be elected by the Assembly for a term of three years, after which re-election is possible. The Assembly will decide how many members there will be on the Executive Committee.

2. The duties of the Executive Committee shall include:

- Determining a plan of activities based on the available budgetary means;
- Maintaining contacts with grant providers and governmental and non-governmental organisations, institutions and persons who are interested in the objectives of the Association;
- If required, setting up committees and working parties to assist the Executive Committee in the fulfilment of its duties.

### 7.2. Executive Committee meetings

1. The Executive Committee shall at least meet once a year.
2. The meetings shall be convened by on or behalf of the Chair.
3. The notice convening the meeting shall state the agenda, as well as the time and place of the meeting.

### 7.3. Decision-making

1. The Executive Committee may only adopt decisions when there is a quorum of six.
2. The Executive Committee shall adopt decisions by a simple majority of votes (decisions can be taken during "in-between" sessions by phone, e-mail or other means of communication).

## Article 8. Secretariat

1. The Association shall have a Secretariat charged with carrying out the work and managing the resources in accordance with the Committee's directions. The Secretariat shall consist of the Chair and an Executive Secretary.

1(a). The Secretariat shall prepare an annual financial statement be reviewed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Assembly.

2. The Secretariat shall be hosted by one of the participating institutes.

3. The appointment of the Secretariat by the Assembly is for a term of three years, after which re-appointment is possible.

## Article 9. Membership and observer status

### *Membership*

1. Membership in the Association shall be open to human rights institutes and comparable entities on the condition that they have a demonstrably independent and academic status and will subscribe to all provisions of this constitution. The Executive Committee shall carry out a provisional review of the applications to ensure that these conditions are met. Admission shall be decided upon by the Assembly on the basis of a two-third majority of votes.

2. A membership application must be supported by at least one existing member.

3. Every member-institute is entitled to withdraw its membership when it feels necessary, at any moment.

4. A member-institute may be excluded by the Assembly upon request by the Executive Committee and on the basis of a two-third majority of votes, if the member-institute is dissolved, if the member-institute no longer fulfils the criteria for membership, if the member-institute fails to pay its membership fee for two or more consecutive years, or if the member-institute brings the association into disrepute.

### *Observer status*

5. Observer status shall be open to human rights institutes and comparable entities which do not fully comply with the criteria for membership or which may not wish for other reasons a full membership. The Executive Committee shall carry out a provisional review of the applications. Admission shall be decided upon by the Assembly on the basis of a two-third majority of votes.

6. An application for observer status must be supported by at least one existing member.

7. Observers are invited to attend Assembly meetings without voting rights and to take part in AHRI initiatives.

8. Every observer is entitled to withdraw its observer status when it feels necessary, at any moment.

9. An observer-institute may be excluded by the Assembly upon request by the Executive Committee and on the basis of a two-third majority of votes, if the observer-institute is dissolved, if the observer-institute no longer fulfils the criteria for observer status, if the observer-institute fails to pay its observer fee for two or more consecutive years, or if the observer-institute brings the Association into disrepute.

#### Article 10. Resources

1. The Association is dependent on contributions from participating institutes and external grant providers.
2. An annual membership and observer fee is levied from all members, the amount of which is decided upon by the Assembly.
3. All participating institutes are encouraged to include the Association and its members in collective projects and grant applications.

#### Article 11. Representation

The Association shall be represented externally by the Chair, vice-Chair and/or Executive Secretary.

#### Article 12. Amendments to this constitution.

This constitution may only be amended by a two-third majority of the Assembly. Proposals to amendments shall be sent out in writing and sent to all parties.

Article 13. The Association can be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly. Proposals to dissolve the Association shall be sent out in writing and sent to all parties.

#### Article 14. Applicable law and competent court

This constitution is exclusively governed by Netherlands law.

Any disputes shall be submitted to the competent court of Utrecht, the Netherlands.

*Amended by the AHRI Assembly 28 April 2017.*