

Memorandum of Understanding

UBIAS Directors' conference 2014

Taipei, Taiwan, Nov. 29 2014

The institutes present share the understanding that the UBIAS network offers them a privileged opportunity for international co-operation. They are willing to make the best possible use of and contributions to it.

Today they agree on the following measures which shall help them to intensify their cooperation:

1. Institutes agree to intensify bi- or multi-lateral exchanges.
2. They declare their willingness to send and receive one to two, or possibly more, guest researchers between member institutes (be they current or former members/fellows of the institute or highly reputed researchers from the respective universities). Guest researchers will give a distinguished lecture at the host institute. Institutes also declare their willingness to actively communicate opportunities for a research stay (e.g. in connection with an ongoing group activity, a major conference, or a tandem partnership with a given fellow).
3. Institutes agree to pursue joint activities on certain topics. They understand that it is necessary for a number of two, three or four institutes to take the lead on a certain activity and encourage members to team up for such activities.
4. A specific activity shall be considered/designated "supported by UBIAS" if it meets the following criteria
 - a. The project is led by two (or more) partner institutes (possibly including other cooperation partners).
 - b. It is completely open to participation from other member institutes (including frequent information to member institutes to secure accessibility).
 - c. It adheres to the ideas and principles of the network, namely supporting outstanding research and researchers in a way that will foster new collaborations between disciplines, lines of thought, cultures and countries.

5. The steering committee (or the assembly of the member institutes at the directors' conferences) shall decide on the title "supported by UBIAS".
6. The institutes will share relevant information about their current and prospective research activities, calls, major conferences and workshops in a structured way.
 - a. The coordinating institute will make available a membership area with restricted access only for the institutes.
 - b. Institutes will provide updates on this information every 6 months through a structured questionnaire.
7. The coordinating institute will look into the possibility of preparing a quarterly electronic newsletter for wider distribution that would include the information provided as far as it is relevant for a wider audience (e.g. fellowship calls by the institutes, major activities). The newsletter is expected to give the institutes and the network a better visibility.
8. The date for the next directors' conference should be spring/summer 2016.
9. The steering committee shall continue to provide leadership for the network for the time being. Members from North America and Africa shall be asked to reaffirm their commitment and actively take part in the work of the network.
10. There will be web-based meetings of the steering committee every 4 months to discuss the progress of UBIAS activities.
11. Member institutes will actively survey other institutions that fit the nature and aims of the network and ask them to consider their participation.
12. There will be a process of membership admission once every year (in responsibility of the steering committee).

The member institutes agree on the following activities:

1. Joint UBIAS annual topic (starting 2016)

The topic could be taken from the list of "Global Challenges"

 - They pursue this topic under the following principle: Joint topic, decentralized activities. Activities will be jointly documented, outcomes will be shared
 - Possible activities are:
 - Conferences,
 - Lecture series
 - Joint virtual seminars
 - Exchange of researchers
 - Summer schools for junior researchers
 - Dedicated fellowships
 - Research activities

- Possible Outcomes:
 - Policy paper integrating certain findings
 - Publication of research findings, e.g. in a “special issue” of an international journal
 - Podcasts
- 2. Additional joint workshops, seminars, research stays etc. on subjects that are chosen by two or three institutes under their responsibility and will be “Supported by UBIAS”
- 3. A second “Intercontinental Academia” organized by two partner institutions. [Bielefeld and Jerusalem have declared their intention to organize such a second ICA.]
- 4. An initiative to connect with foundations/funding agencies to support the activities of the UBIAS-network.

Current members of the Steering Committee

- IAS Perth, Australia
- Sao Paulo IAS, Brazil
- Peter Wall IAS, Vancouver, Canada
- Fudan IAS, Shanghai, China
- Helsinki IAS, Finland
- Réseau Français des Instituts d’Études Avancées (RFIEA), Paris, France
- Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS), Germany
- IAS Jerusalem, Israel
- Nagoya IAR (Institute for Advanced Research, Nagoya University), Japan
- Stellenbosch IAS (STIAS), South Africa
- Stanford Humanities Center, Palo Alto, USA