



## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### on joint initiatives aimed at supporting refugee and asylum seekers and scientists

Memorandum of understanding between:

- The University of Trieste, hereinafter referred to as "UniTS", in the person of the Rector Maurizio Femeglia;
  - The Italian School for Advanced Studies, hereinafter referred to as "SISSA", in the person of Director Stefano Ruffo;
  - The National Institute of Oceanography and Experimental Geophysics, hereinafter referred to as "OGS", in the person of the President Maria Cristina Pedicchio;
  - The Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, hereinafter referred to as "ICTP", in the person of Director Fernando Quevedo;
  - The International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, hereinafter referred to as "ICGEB", in the person of the Director General Mauro Giacca;
  - The World Academy of Sciences hereafter referred to as "TWAS" and the Inter Academy Partnership, hereinafter referred to as "IAP", in the person of Executive Director Romain Murenzi;
  - The University of Udine hereinafter referred to as "UniUD", in the person of the Rector Alberto Felice De Toni;
  - The Trieste International Foundation for Progress and Freedom of Sciences, hereinafter referred to as "FIT", in the person of the President Stefano Fantoni;
  - The National Institute for Astrophysics – INAF, hereinafter referred to as "INAF", in the person of Giovanni Vladilo, on behalf of the President Nicolò D'Amico;
- hereinafter collectively referred to as the "scientific institutions of Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG)" or "the Parties",



## **CONSIDERING THAT:**

- demographic data show an increase in forced migration, making it necessary to adopt non-emergency and inclusive measures for asylum seekers and refugees;
- the region of FVG is characterized by the presence of a high percentage of researchers and high-level national and international scientific institutions;
- historically FVG has demonstrated a particular sensitivity in receiving and integrating refugees and asylum seekers, as well as support for scientists from fragile, developing and/or countries in economic transition;
- FVG's scientific institutions have a consolidated experience in "science diplomacy" which has led them to play an international leadership role;
- as an example, TWAS and OGS with other institutions in the region, recently organized a workshop on 'Refugee Scientists: Transnational resources' in Trieste, which developed recommendations on how to respond effectively to the needs of scientists forced to leave their country due to conflicts and instability;
- the scientific institutions present in FVG have promoted with various actions and initiatives in favour of refugee and asylum seeking researchers and academics, showing common interests and objectives this issue;

## **THEY AGREE AND STIPULATE THE FOLLOWING:**

### **Article 1 – Premises**

The premises form an integral and substantial part of this Memorandum of Understanding.

### **Article 2 – Purpose**

The Parties intend to work together, while respecting their specificities and institutional aims, to promote, develop and consolidate opportunities and common initiatives to identify, enhance and develop professional and scientific expertise of refugees and



asylum seekers, while ensuring respect for national regulations and international standards.

The Parties will offer opportunities to affected scientists to enrich their professional skills, to foster their human and professional development and integration, and encourage their reintegration in their country of origin once conditions allow.

### **Article 3 - Principles of collaboration**

By signing this MoU, the Parties intend to cooperate, while respecting the mandate of each institution, to develop a better collective response to migration flows while ensuring improved efficiency and coordination between them.

It is assumed that Parties will share all the information needed to define the general framework and the priorities of national and international intervention, and consult on the modalities and implementation of the initiatives proposed in the following article.

The Parties intend to put in place appropriate measures to ensure the coordination of initiatives in support of affected scientists, maintaining contacts with hosting scientific institutions, the institutions of FVG, the refugee/asylum seeking hospitality network, the international network of organizations active in supporting refugee scientists (Scholar Rescue Fund, Scholars at Risk, Council for At-Risk Academics, etc.) and the scientific diaspora.

### **Article 4 - Initiatives at national and international level**

The MoU aims to operate simultaneously on national and international levels.

At national level, the objective is to contribute to the integration and strengthening of the affected scientists in Italy and Friuli Venezia Giulia according to a framework of interventions to be subsequently agreed and further detailed by the Parties.

Some initial steps, which could be part of an integrated intervention process, have been identified:



- 1) mapping and identification of skills and existing competencies of affected scientists.
- 2) creation and dissemination of a multilingual web page and other communication tools dedicated to the initiative, where all the events and opportunities available from FVG's scientific institutions will be collated.
- 3) research and training positions (short-term internships, or other similar activities) of affected scientists specifically selected according to their skills, in the network of the scientific institutions of FVG.
- 4) inclusion in study and research programmes, such as the CRUI and other international scholarships for refugees, according to their availability and guidelines.
- 5) explore and offer possible re-entry opportunities, exploiting the networks, contacts and transnational resources that connect FVG to the countries of origin and to the diaspora communities.

These initiatives might also coordinate with already existing national initiatives such as SPRAR network and other institutions involved in the system of hospitality for refugees and asylum seekers.

At international level, this MoU encourages the Parties to:

- 1) use their existing networks, contacts and resources to connect to the main entry points into and routes through Europe, and to the diaspora communities.
- 2) Identify opportunities for temporary hospitality to scientists and researchers coming from countries in conflict or refugees.
- 3) develop collaborations with organizations, institutions and international donors already active in these fields (Scholar Rescue Fund, EURAXESS, Science4refugees, Scholar at Risk, etc.).
- 4) organize advocacy, sensitizing and dissemination events on the topic;
- 5) explore the possibility of involving European and international partners in the issues



covered by this MoU and developing activities and collaborative projects to be submitted for possible financing.

#### **Article 5- Contact points**

For the purposes of implementing this Protocol, the following points / contact persons are identified for each institution involved:

- Roberta Altin and Ilaria Micheli (UniTS)
- Alessandro Treves (SISSA)
- Mounir Ghribi (OGS)
- Matteo Marsili (ICTP)
- Maria Luisa Fichera (ICGEB)
- Peter McGrath (IAP)
- Edward Lempinen (TWAS)
- Lucia Piani (UniUD)
- Paola Rodari (FIT)
- Andrea Biviano and Paolo Molaro (INAF-OATs)

These will meet at least once every six months, to check the progress of the joint initiatives undertaken, the activities referred to in Article 3 and agree priorities for the following period.

#### **Article 6- Final provisions**

The Memorandum of Understanding has a duration of 24 months from the date of its signature. The duration may be subsequently renewed for a further 12 (twelve) month period subject to written agreement between the Parties.

The text of the present MoU can be amended only in writing after agreement between the Parties.

For legal purposes, the text in English is to be given priority of interpretation.



The present MoU does not involve financial commitments by the Parties.

Trieste, .. ... ..

Università degli Studi di Trieste  
The Rector  
Maurizio Fermeglia

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Università degli Studi di Udine  
The Rector  
Alberto Felice De Toni

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Abdus Salam International Centre for  
Theoretical Physics – ICTP  
The Director  
Fernando Quevedo

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Inter Academy Partnership – IAP  
The executive Director  
Romain Murenzi

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Fondazione Internazionale per il Progresso e la  
Libertà delle Scienze - FIT  
The President  
Stefano Fantoni

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Scuola Internazionale Superiore di Studi  
Avanzati - SISSA  
The Director  
Stefano Ruffo

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Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e Geofisica  
Sperimentale - OGS  
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The executive Director  
Romain Murenzi

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National Institute for Astrophysics – INAF  
On behalf of the President

Giovanni Vladilo

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