

CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT

CONCERNING

GENERAL PROVISIONS

for

**The Research School for Organic Agriculture and Food
Systems (SOAR)**

between

University of Copenhagen,
Faculty of Life Sciences,
Bülowsvej 17,
1870 Frederiksberg,
CVR nr. 29979812

and

Aarhus University,
The Faculty of Agricultural Sciences,
Blichers Alle 20,
8830 Tjele
CVR nr. 31119103

and

International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems
(ICROFS),
Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, University of Aarhus,
Postbox 50, DK-8830 Tjele
CVR nr. 31119103

General Provisions

Preamble

SOAR, The Research School for Organic Agriculture and Food Systems consists of the PhD programmes within organic food and farming research at Faculty of Life Sciences, LIFE, University of Copenhagen, the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, DJF, Aarhus University, and the research programmes under the International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems, ICROFS. All PhD students researching organic food and farming systems can be affiliated with SOAR. SOAR is managed on a day-to-day basis by a Head of SOAR reporting to a Steering Committee and is supported by a Scientific Panel. An Annual Stakeholders Conference advises the Head of SOAR on strategies and activities.

The sole purpose of this co-operation agreement is to create a practical structure for the activities and management of SOAR.

Structure, contributory institutions and location

Article 1.

Section 1. SOAR is the continuation of the Research School for Organic Agriculture and Food Systems (SOAR) founded on the 25th of June 2001 in collaboration by the former Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University (now the Faculty of Life Sciences at the University of Copenhagen – KU-LIFE), Danish Research Centre for Organic Farming (DARCOF) and all the research institutions, which were part of DARCOF now International Centre for Organic Food Systems "ICROFS".

Section 2. SOAR is established as a research school (Danish: Forskeruddannelsesprogram) for the period 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2012, ending with an evaluation. Negotiations for continuation beyond 2012 should be initiated by the SOAR Steering Committee no later than 1. September 2012.

Section 3. This continuation of SOAR is a collaboration between KU-LIFE and Faculty of Agriculture Sciences at the University of Aarhus (DFJ) and International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems "ICROFS" herinafter called "the partner institutions". The partner institutions may include other universities and research institutions in SOAR as partner institutions.

Section 4. For the sake of clarity, the partner institutions agree that no legal entity is formed by this agreement. Furthermore the partner institutions agree that, each partner institution is liable for its own grants and liable for the acts and omissions of its employees allocated to SOAR, hereunder without limitation employees allocated to the management of SOAR.

Mission statement

Article 2.

Section 1. SOAR is an open network between partners funding or contributing to research education within organic farming and food systems.

Section 2. SOAR aims to provide the opportunities for PhD students to develop their

- * understanding of the organic principles and the values on which organic agriculture is founded
- * competencies in interdisciplinary and systemic research approaches

Section 3. SOAR aims to provide a national and an international network for supervisors to offer courses relevant to organic food and farming research at highest international level, across institutions and disciplines.

Section 4. SOAR aims to be a valuable partner in a strong international network providing research education in the arena of organic farming and food systems research through internationally recognized courses, conferences, visiting scholars, and discussion forum.

The Objectives of the Research School

Article 3.

Section 1. SOAR organises thematic courses at the highest international level that can enhance the quality of the PhD research education within organic farming and food systems through discussion and reflection on the research in relation to the Organic Principles and relevant themes.

Section 2. In collaboration with national and international partners, SOAR provides networks, courses, and information to support the individual student's career development.

Section 3. SOAR expands alliances and partnerships with relevant institutions involved in research education in Europe and overseas.

Section 4. SOAR raises supplementary funding for educational activities and PhD scholarships.

The Organisation and Management of the Research School

Article 4.

The SOAR Steering Committee

Appointment, Responsibility and Mandate

Section 1. Each partner institution appoints one member to the SOAR Steering Committee. The purpose of the SOAR Steering Committee is to oversee the overall management of SOAR. The Steering Committee forms a quorum when all of the members of the Committee are present or represented by another member by proxy.

Section 2. The SOAR Steering Committee members constitute themselves and appoint a chairman for a 3-year-period. The SOAR Steering Committee makes decisions in unanimity.

Section 3. The Steering Committee members convene ordinary committee meetings every half year, supported by contact through electronic media and phone. An extraordinary Steering Committee meeting can take place, if at least 2 members find it relevant and needed. The meetings are prepared and called by the chairman of the Committee. Within two weeks after each meeting, the chairman prepares and distributes meeting minutes which are considered

approved by the members if the chairman has not received any written objections at least two weeks after the date of distributing the minutes.

Section 4. The SOAR Steering Committee appoints the Head of SOAR for a 3-year-period. The Head of SOAR has to be employed at LIFE or DJF, and must be at the level of Senior Scientist or Associate Professor. The institution not hosting the Head of SOAR may upon expiry of the first period demand that the Head of SOAR is employed at said institution during the following period. The Head of SOAR participates without voting right in the meetings if the Steering Committee finds it relevant and needed.

Section 5. The SOAR Steering Committee approves members for a Scientific Panel, cf. article 4, section 10.

Section 6. The SOAR Steering Committee approves the annual strategy, the annual activity plan of SOAR, and the annual account and report prepared by the Head of SOAR.

Section 7. The SOAR Steering Committee approves the budget of SOAR prepared by the Head of SOAR. The budget shall comprise both entries already earmarked for a certain use as well as non earmarked entries.

Section 8. The SOAR Steering Committee may decide to invite other universities or research institutions to participate in SOAR on terms and conditions to be approved by the Faculty management at both KU-LIFE and DJF. If a new partner institution joins SOAR said partner institution may appoint a member to serve on the Steering Committee in accordance with this Co-Operation agreement.

Section 9. The SOAR Steering Committee does not have the mandate to legally bind and enter into commitments, financial or otherwise, on behalf of the partner institutions.

The SOAR Scientific Panel

Section 10. The role of the Scientific Panel is to support the development of quality education and stimulate the formation of networks within SOAR. The SOAR Scientific Panel will discuss and make recommendations to the draft for the annual strategy, the annual activity plan, the annual account and report and the budget prepared by the Head of SOAR, cf. section 14.

Section 11. The Scientific Panel shall consist of members with expertise which insure that the Scientific Panel overall will cover the scientific areas of organic livestock research, organic soil and plant research, environmental, economic, social sciences and food quality related to the organic context, in accordance with the objectives of SOAR (article 3).

Section 12. The Scientific Panel is appointed for a period of 3 years and can be re-appointed by the SOAR Steering Committee if it is decided to continue SOAR beyond the 3 year period. The Head of SOAR convenes meetings, issues the agenda and prepares discussion papers to be considered by the panel.

The Head of SOAR

Section 13. The Head of SOAR reports to the Steering Committee on the activities under SOAR.

Section 14. The Head of SOAR's main task is to manage the administration of the grants allocated to SOAR. Furthermore the Head of SOAR represents SOAR externally in the day-to-day business. The Head of SOAR establishes a secretariat. The main SOAR secretariat is

physically located at the department where the Head of SOAR is employed and is subordinated to the rules of the said institution.

Section 15. The overall task for the Head of SOAR is to ensure that the objectives and goals for SOAR are fulfilled as managing the budget and the practical day to day administration. The Head of SOAR shall within 2 months before the end of the calendar year prepare a draft for the annual strategy, the annual activity plan and budget for the coming year and present the drafts for discussion to the SOAR Scientific Panel, cf. section 9, and finally present to the Steering Committee for approval cf. section 6 and 7

Section 16. The Head of SOAR will involve the Scientific Panel in planning activities to fulfil the objectives of SOAR, hereunder regarding:

- Setting goals, discussing academic priorities and planning of SOAR activities;
- Planning the evaluation of SOAR;
- Establishing contacts and collaboration with the academic environments researching organic food and farming systems in Denmark and internationally.

Section 17. After the end of a calendar year the Head of SOAR prepares an annual account and report. SOAR follows the accounting principles at the institution where the Head of SOAR is employed. The annual account and report is presented to the SOAR Scientific Panel for discussion and then presented to the SOAR Steering Committee for approval, cf. section 6.

Partners and the Annual Stakeholder Conference

Section 18. National and international partners contributing to activities in SOAR (e.g. as PhD supervisors, teachers or collaborating partners at PhD courses or in other ways contributing to the scientific and learning environment in SOAR) are affiliated partners and included in the stakeholder group of SOAR.

Section 19. The Head of SOAR can enter agreements with affiliated partners e.g. about "open/free courses" for PhD students from affiliated partner institutions. Any formal agreements, hereunder without limitation agreements regarding PhD collaborations are subject to prior approval by the management of the relevant partner institution.

Section 20. SOAR will, in collaboration with relevant partners, carry out an Annual Stakeholder Conference with focus on central topics about organic food and farming systems and / or about learning issues. The aim of this workshop is to contribute to a stimulating, inspiring interdisciplinary and enabling learning environment for SOAR's stakeholders and PhD students.

Evaluation of the Research School

Article 5.

Section 1. SOAR will be evaluated by the end of the 3-year-period. The SOAR Steering Committee will take the initiative and set the topics for the evaluation, while the Head of SOAR will organize the evaluation.

Section 2. The evaluation may form part of the basis for the decision of continuation of the Research School.

Section 3. A 6 months warning should be given in the case one of the partners of SOAR decides to withdraw. The SOAR Steering Committee shall subject to approval from the remaining partner institutions' management, in this case decide whether to close SOAR and if the SOAR Steering Committee decides to recommend to the partner institution's managements to close SOAR, the partner institution's managements shall at that time decide what will happen to any funding remaining in SOAR.

Section 24. If it is decided not to continue SOAR, the participating institutions are, however, obliged to continue all activities, including leadership, for a period suitable for SOAR to meet its obligations to PhD students who have already enrolled.

Amendment to the Co-operation Agreement

Article 6.

Section 1. The Co-operation agreement may be amended by the SOAR Steering Committee by unanimity. Amendments of the Co-operation agreement shall be approved by the management of LIFE/KU and DJF/AU.

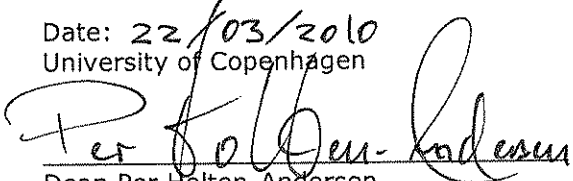
Section 2. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the management of the partner institutions may at all time decide to amend or cancel the Co-operation Agreement.

Commencement and Approval

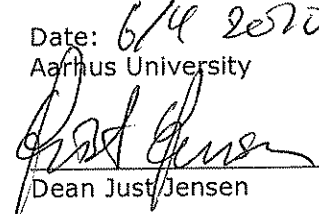
Article 7.

Section 1. The Co-operation agreement will come into force on the date of the endorsement of approval, cf. below, and will be effective from the time of the establishment of the Research School.


Section 2.

Date: 22/03/2010
University of Copenhagen


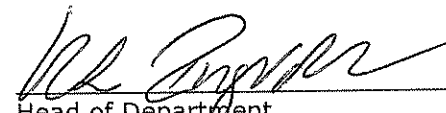
Dean Per Holten-Andersen

Date: 6/4 2010
Aarhus University


Dean Just Jensen

Date: 12/4 - 10
ICROFS


Niels Halberg
Director of ICROFS



Head of Department
Klaus Lønne Ingvarsen