



# UNIVERSEUM CHARTER

In 2000, the representatives of collections and museums of twelve European universities met at the University of Halle-Wittenberg, Germany, and created the Universeum network, aiming at the preservation and promotion of academic heritage in Europe. The meeting resulted in the Declaration of Halle 'Academic Heritage and Universities: Responsibility and Public Access' (16 April 2000).

Since then, Universeum has organised annual meetings, edited publications and promoted exchanges among academic heritage institutions across Europe. Universeum is open to heritage and museum professionals, researchers, students, university administrators and all those interested in university heritage.

## STATUTES

### Article 1. Name and Location

An association designated 'Universeum, the European Academic Heritage Network' (hereinafter Universeum) is thereby created by those who agree on its present Statutes.

This association is ruled by articles 21 to 79-III of the Local Civil Code prevailing in the county of Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin and Moselle, and by the present Statutes.

The location of the association is in Strasbourg, University of Strasbourg, Jardin des Sciences, 12, rue de l'Université, 67000 Strasbourg; the location can be moved only by decision of the Executive Committee.

The association is registered at the Associations' Register of the Tribunal of Strasbourg.

### Article 2. Objectives and Aims

Universeum is concerned with European academic heritage in its broad sense, tangible and intangible. It aims at the preservation, study, access and promotion of European university collections, museums, archives, libraries, botanical gardens, astronomical observatories, monuments, and in general all European institutions holding academic heritage of significance.

Universeum's main objectives are:

- to promote reflection and research in order to enhance our knowledge about European academic heritage;
- to provide support in the preservation, care and promotion of European academic heritage;
- to provide a European forum for collaborative projects and share experiences and knowledge;
- to establish links between European institutions and universities concerning their heritage;
- to encourage the creation of national networks in Europe aiming at the preservation, study and promotion of European academic heritage.
- to promote the use of European academic heritage for research and teaching;

Universeum is a non-profit association.

### Article 3. Means

Universeum will use the following means to develop its objectives:

- organisation of annual network meetings
- publications
- collaborative project among network members
- working groups
- website
- scholarships and grants
- European University Heritage Day (18 November)

As well as all other initiatives that can promote and develop Universeum's aims.

#### **Article 4. Duration**

The association is created for an indefinite period of time.

#### **Article 5. Incomes**

Universeum's incomes are as follows:

- membership fees;
- subsidies from public or private entities;
- donations and legacies;
- incomes from events organised by Universeum;
- incomes from own properties and belongings;
- all incomes that are not generated illegally.

#### **Article 6. Members**

Any individual or institution sharing Universeum's objectives and aims can become a Universeum member. When they join, members must agree to respect these Statutes.

Universeum consists of Individual Members, Institutional Members, Supporting Members, Honorary Members, and Student Members.

**Individual Members:** Universeum is open to all individuals who share its objectives and aims. Residence or work in Europe is not a precondition for membership. Individual members are actively involved in the life of Universeum. They have the right to vote and can be elected to the Executive Committee. Individual members pay an annual membership.

**Institutional members:** Universeum is open to all private or public institutions who share its objectives and aims. Institutional members are actively involved in the life of Universeum. They have the right to vote (one vote per institution), but are not eligible to the Executive Committee. Institutional members pay an annual membership.

**Student members:** Universeum is open to all post-graduate students of any nationality developing research linked to Universeum's objectives and aims. Student members pay an annual membership. They have the right to vote but are not eligible to the Executive Committee.

**Founding members:** Founding members have created the association, signed the Statutes and have participated in the first general assembly. They have the right to vote and can be elected to the Executive Committee. They pay an annual membership.

**Honorary Members:** Universeum may elect individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to Universeum or the promotion of European academic heritage as Honorary Members. Honorary Members have no voting rights and are not eligible to the Executive Committee as such, but may be consulted in General Assembly meetings. Honorary members are elected at the ordinary General Assembly upon recommendation from the Executive Committee.

**Supporting Members:** All natural or juridical persons wishing to support the purposes of Universeum and justifiably expressing this intent by personal application to the Executive Committee are eligible to be admitted as Supporting Members. Supporting Members have no voting rights and are not eligible to the Executive Committee as such, but may be consulted in General Assembly meetings.

#### **Article 7. Membership**

Membership applications should be submitted to the Executive Committee by post or by email. In case of membership rejection, the Executive Committee should justify the decision to the applicant in writing.

#### **Article 8. Membership Termination**

Membership is terminated by death.

Members may terminate their membership by giving notice of resignation in writing to the President.

Memberships may be discontinued by the Executive Committee due to non-payment of the membership fees.

A member may be expelled for good cause by the ordinary General Assembly. The concerned member will be invited to provide written explanation to the Executive Committee.

## **Article 9. Ordinary General Assembly**

The Ordinary General Assembly is composed of all members of Universeum. It should be held at least once a year.

The Ordinary General Assembly meets upon call by the President of the Executive Committee or upon request of at least 10% of the members.

The Ordinary General Assembly call must include the agenda of the meeting and should be delivered in writing at least with one-month notice.

Voting procedures:

Decisions of the Ordinary General Assembly are taken by a simple majority of votes by members present and entitled to vote (Article 6).

Votes will be expressed by raising hand except for decisions dealing with individuals (ex: expulsion, election of the Executive Committee).

Organisation

The agenda is established by the Executive Committee. Only decisions on topics included in the agenda are valid for deliberation.

The President of the Executive Committee acts as the President of the Ordinary General Assembly. All decisions taken by the Ordinary General Assembly are registered in the minutes which are signed by the President and the Secretary. Minutes should be accompanied by a list of members present at the Ordinary General Assembly.

## **Article 10. Duties of the Ordinary General Assembly**

In accordance with the power given by the local civil code and these Statutes, the Ordinary General Assembly is the supreme authority of Universeum and its decisions commit all members, even those absent.

The Ordinary General Assembly has the following responsibilities:

- to receive the reports of the Executive Committee,
- to receive and vote the annual activities programme and annual budget for the coming year,
- to determine the host of the next network meeting,
- to decide the theme for next European Academic Heritage Day (18 November),
- to elect the members of the Executive Committee (see Article 11),
- to establish the membership fees,
- to elect the members of the Scientific Council (Articles 16),
- to elect two members as auditors (see Article 20),
- to approve the financial and activities report,
- to deal with any other items of business proposed by the Executive Committee or by members,
- finally, it has the power to decide upon expulsion of members due to severe damage to Universeum.

## **Article 11. The Executive Committee**

Universeum is administrated by an Executive Committee composed of five members.

Mandate duration: Members of the Universeum Executive Committee are elected for three years by the Ordinary General Assembly and are chosen among members as specified in article 12. Should a vacancy occur, the remaining executive committee members shall temporarily designate a replacement until the next Ordinary General Assembly. The Ordinary General Assembly has to validate this temporary replacement for the whole duration of the original mandate.

## **Article 12. Eligibility to the Executive Committee**

Only founding and individual members are eligible to the Executive Committee provided they have paid their membership dues.

## **Article 13. Executive Committee Members**

The members of the Universeum's Executive Committee are: the President, two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.

**The President:** The President supervises compliance with the Statutes and the preservation of Universeum's interests. He/she shall be the executive head of the Executive Committee and Universeum's legal, judicial and extra-judicial representative. He/she can delegate on one of the two Vice-Presidents his/her representation duties. He/she supervises the development of Universeum's strategy and policies, as well as the implementation of the activities plan. He/she shall act as President of the Ordinary and Extraordinary General Assemblies. The President shall be elected for a period of three years and may be re-elected once.

**The Vice-Presidents:** Should the President be prevented from completing the term of office, one Vice-President shall act as deputy until the next meeting of the Ordinary General Assembly. The Vice-President shall also substitute the President in his/her absence. Vice-Presidents shall divide scientific activities of the network, namely working groups, projects, publications, network meetings and website. They shall be elected for a period of three years and may be re-elected once.

**The Secretary:** The Secretary shall conduct the day-to-day affairs of Universeum, including correspondence and memberships. He/she is responsible for the minutes of the Ordinary/Extraordinary General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings. He/she is responsible for Universeum's archives. The Secretary shall be elected for a period of three years and may be re-elected on an unlimited number of occasions.

**The Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall assume the customary duties and responsibilities of this office. The Treasurer presents the financial report to the Ordinary General Assembly. The Treasurer shall be elected for a period of three years and may be re-elected on an unlimited number of occasions.

#### **Article 14. Executive Committee Meetings**

The Executive Committee convenes at least once a year. It is summoned by the President or by request of three of its members.

The agenda is established by the President and sent with the call to the members of the Executive Committee at least 30 days before the meeting.

Only the points explicitly mentioned in the agenda are eligible for deliberation.

At least three members should be present at the meeting to validate any decision.

Decisions are taken by majority of members present at the meeting. Members vote by raising their hands.

Executive Committee meetings shall have minutes, accompanied by a list of members present at the meeting. These should be signed by the President and the Secretary.

#### **Article 15. Duties of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee makes all the necessary decisions to ensure the day to day management of Universeum that are fall outside the responsibilities of the Ordinary General Assembly. It supervises the development of Universeum's strategy and policies, as well as the implementation of the activities plan. It is responsible for the organisation and secretariat of the Ordinary and Extraordinary General Assemblies and guarantees the implementation of all decisions made during the Ordinary General Assembly.

It organises Universeum's annual network meetings.

It promotes Universeum's objectives.

It is responsible for Universeum's budget and accounts.

The Executive Committee can co-opt members as *ex-officio* Executive Committee members in order to support the development of specific tasks.

#### **Article 16. The Scientific Committee**

The Scientific Committee supports and advises the Executive Committee in the development of Universeum's objectives, strategy, policies and activities. It is composed of nine members.

Duration of the mandate: Members of the scientific committee are elected for three years by the Ordinary General Assembly. Should a vacancy occur among the members of the Scientific Committee, the members of the Executive

Committee shall temporarily designate a replacement until the following Ordinary General Assembly; the Ordinary General Assembly has to validate this temporary replacement for the whole duration of the original mandate.

#### **Article 17. Scientific Committee Members**

Any individual members with proven scientific excellence in areas relevant to the development of Universeum's objectives, strategy, policies and activities can be elected as members of the Scientific Committee.

#### **Article 18. Honoraries**

Members of the Executive and Scientific Committees cannot receive honoraries for their Universeum-related activities.

#### **Article 19. Extraordinary General Assembly: Call and Organisation**

Any change of the Statutes or the dissolution of Universeum (Articles 20 and 21) can only be decided by the Extraordinary General Assembly.

At least 25% of the voting members shall be present to validate the decisions. In case this does not happen, the Extraordinary General Assembly will reconvene with deliberative power half an hour later with any number of voting members. Procedures for call, agenda and minutes are the same as with the Ordinary General Assembly (Article 9).

#### **Article 20. Modification of the Statutes**

Any change of the Universeum's Statutes can only be decided at the Extraordinary General Assembly by a 2/3 majority.

Decisions can only be made on proposals submitted to the Executive Committee and included in the agenda.

Approved statutory changes shall be registered in the minutes which are to be signed by the President and the Secretary and shall be sent to the tribunal within three months.

#### **Article 21. Dissolution of Universeum**

In the event that the General Assembly, on the proposal of the Executive Committee or of one tenth of the members, shall decide by the votes of three quarters of those present and voting, that Universeum is unable to fulfil its purposes as specified in Article 2, it shall be dissolved.

The Extraordinary General Assembly shall designate one or more individuals, members or non-members, to conduct the dissolution process. Upon dissolution, Universeum's assets remaining after payment or provision for payment of all debts and liabilities shall be distributed to an international non profit-making fund or foundation, preferably concerned with academic heritage.

The dissolution shall be registered in the minutes which are signed by the President and the Secretary and shall be sent to the tribunal immediately.

#### **Article 22. Auditors**

Accounts administered by the Treasurer are overseen every year by two auditors, who have to provide a written report to the Ordinary General Assembly. Auditors are elected for three years by the Ordinary General Assembly and can be re-elected.

#### **Article 23. Approval of the Statutes**

These Statutes were approved by the constitutive general assembly that took place at the Museum Gustavianum, University of Uppsala, Sweden.

Date: 18 June 2010