

The Constitution
of the ISS PhD Study Association
of the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS),
Erasmus University of Rotterdam

**International
Institute of
Social Studies**

The logo of Erasmus University, featuring the word "Erasmus" in a stylized, cursive script.

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ISS PHD STUDY ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I. Name and Effect

This study association will henceforth be known as the 'ISS PhD Study Association'—hereinafter 'IPSA'—of the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), part of Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR).

ARTICLE II. Purpose of the Study Association

The objectives of IPSA are:

1. To represent the interests and voices of IPSA members within the International Institute of Social Studies and Erasmus University Rotterdam;
2. To enhance accountability of PhD representatives and coordinators serving on the IPSA Executive Council and to ensure the proper handover of responsibilities to new representatives and coordinators in line with the protocols below;
3. To organize or encourage participation of IPSA members in a range of activities, including, but not limited to, social, educational, research-related, and fundraising activities.
4. To maintain one central budget for PhD activities, which may include, but are not limited to, social, fundraising activities, and the facilitation of hardship/emergency funds for IPSA members;
5. To function as a platform for information and support for new and existing PhD researchers; and
6. To serve as an institutional link between the ISS Staff, ISS Administration, MA Scholas and EUR PhD Councils.

ARTICLE III. Guiding Values and Principles

The IPSA values the diversity of the ISS PhD community. The IPSA believes that individual and systemic forms of bias and discrimination hinder the wellbeing of all members and will uphold the respect for diversity and equity within the IPSA on the basis of: race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, ability, class, caste, age, ancestry, place of origin, ethnicity, culture, religion, faith and other markers of difference. These principles guide the functioning of the IPSA and its Executive Council.

ARTICLE IV. Membership

All PhD researchers enrolled in a PhD degree at the ISS, whether resident or non-resident, as well as visiting PhD researchers who are physically present at the ISS for a minimum of four months, are deemed members of IPSA.

IPSA members will:

1. Be eligible to participate in the IPSA members' meetings;
2. Be eligible to vote in IPSA Executive Council elections or any other matters requiring a vote, whether online or at meetings;
3. Be eligible to nominate themselves or any other person for a position on the IPSA Executive Council;
4. Be eligible to participate as volunteers in organising IPSA activities;
5. Be eligible to bring any matter before fellow IPSA members at meetings or via email to the EC and/or contribute to any discussions raised during IPSA monthly members' meetings.

ARTICLE V. Structure of the IPSA Executive Council

The administrative functioning of the IPSA will be carried out by the Executive Council (EC), which will be a representative body within the IPSA comprising:

1. One IPSA Coordinator, who will act as the IPSA Treasurer and Secretary;
2. Two IPSA representatives serving on the Institute Council (IC);
3. Two IPSA representatives serving on the Research Degree Council (RDC);
4. One IPSA representative serving on the Research Committee (RC);
5. One IPSA representative serving on both the Erasmus Graduate School PhD Council and Erasmus PhD Association Rotterdam (EPAR); and
6. One IPSA Social Coordinator responsible for coordinating social activities within the IPSA.

Role of IPSA EC Members

IPSA Coordinator

The IPSA Coordinator will act as the Secretary and Treasurer of the IPSA. The Coordinator will be entitled to a stipend in line with the availability of funds.

As Treasurer, they are responsible for:

1. Preparing the central IPSA budget, as well as collecting, keeping account of, and disbursing the funds allocated to IPSA;
2. Submitting an income statement and balance sheet at the end of their term of office to the IPSA members in an IPSA members' meeting;
3. Giving bi-annual financial updates to IPSA members and preparing annual reports for auditing by the EC;
4. Maintaining complete and transparent records of all financial activities and operations of IPSA in a central location that is accessible to IPSA members for perusal;
5. Will have access to the bank card and bank account and is responsible for guarding IPSA funds.

As Secretary, they are responsible for:

1. Coordinating IPSA members' monthly meetings and regular EC meetings;
2. Being responsible for all internal communications within the IPSA EC;
3. Keeping a record of the Minutes of Meetings (MoMs) and circulating these to IPSA members after meetings;
4. Managing the ISS PhD digital platforms that include the email inbox (phd@iss.nl), IPSA Executive Council WhatsApp group, and shared online folders.
5. Organising the maintenance of the PhD Room.

If an IPSA Coordinator position becomes vacant, all IPSA members are eligible to nominate themselves or others for the position. In the event of multiple candidates, an online election will be held within one month of the closing of the nomination process. The election will be determined by a simple majority of votes. In case of tie, a re-vote will be held online within one week of the closing of the initial voting term.

IPSA Representatives serving on the Institute Council (IC)

The IPSA representatives serving on the Institute Council (IC) will be responsible for representing the IPSA at IC meetings. The representatives will be entitled to a stipend in line with the rate specified by the ISS Administration.

As representatives of IPSA members at IC meetings, they are responsible for:

1. Providing inputs from the IPSA members for IC discussions, and for following up with the IPSA members on the IC discussions and outcomes of such discussions;
2. Representing IPSA members' interests during the IC and IC/Institute Board (IB) formal meetings and IC informal lunches;
3. Attending all IC meetings unless extenuating circumstances prevail.

The two IPSA representatives serving on the IC are elected by IPSA members through an election organised by the ISS administration on behalf of the IC. In the event of only two candidates being nominated, the nominees will be elected uncontested.

IPSA Representatives serving on the Research Degree Committee (RDC)

The IPSA representatives serving on the Research Degree Committee (RDC) will be responsible for representing the IPSA at RDC meetings. The representatives will be entitled to a stipend in line with the rate specified by the ISS Administration.

As representatives of IPSA members at RDC meetings, they are responsible for:

1. Providing inputs from the IPSA members for RDC discussions, and for following up with the IPSA members on the RDC discussions and outcomes of such discussions;
2. Representing IPSA members' interests during the RDC meetings;
3. Attending all RDC meetings unless extenuating circumstances prevail.

If an IPSA RDC representative position becomes vacant, all IPSA members are eligible to nominate themselves or others for the position. In the event of multiple candidates, an online election will be held within one month of the closing of the nomination process. The election will be determined by a simple majority of votes. In case of tie, a re-vote will be held online within one week of the closing of the initial voting term.

IPSA Representative serving on the Research Committee (RC)

The IPSA representative serving on the Research Committee (RC) will be responsible for representing IPSA at RC meetings. The representative will be entitled to a stipend in line with the rate specified by the ISS Administration.

As representatives of IPSA members at RDC meetings, they are responsible for:

1. Providing inputs from the IPSA members for RC discussions, and for following up with the IPSA members on the RC discussions and outcomes of such discussions;
2. Representing IPSA members' interests during the RC meetings;
3. Attending all RC meetings unless extenuating circumstances prevail.

If an IPSA RC representative position becomes vacant, all IPSA members are eligible to nominate themselves or others for the position. In the event of multiple candidates, an online election will be held within one month of the closing of the nomination

process. The election will be determined by a simple majority of votes. In case of tie, a re-vote will be held online within one week of the closing of the initial voting term.

IPSA Representative serving on the Erasmus Graduate School PhD Council and EPAR

The IPSA representative serving on both the Erasmus Graduate School PhD Council and EPAR will be responsible for representing the IPSA at the meetings of these two councils. The representative will be entitled to a stipend in line with the rate specified by the ISS Administration.

As representatives of IPSA members at EGSB Council and EPAR meetings, they are responsible for:

1. Representing the ISS PhD community on the Erasmus Graduate School of Social Sciences and the Humanities (EGSH) PhD Council and EPAR;
2. Providing input into the yearly PhD survey, PhD handbook, and yearly report to EGSB board (advice on courses needed, feedback, etc.);
3. Coordinating with the EGSB Communications Officer to help develop and improve PhD courses and interdepartmental collaboration within EUR;
4. Attending all meetings at EUR or online unless extenuating circumstances prevail.

If an IPSA representative position for serving on the EGSB Council and EPAR becomes vacant, all IPSA members are eligible to nominate themselves or others for the position. In the event of multiple candidates, an online election will be held within one month of the closing of the nomination process. The election will be determined by a simple majority of votes. In case of tie, a re-vote will be held online within one week of the closing of the initial voting term.

IPSA Social Coordinator

The IPSA Social Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating all social and educational activities among and for the benefit of IPSA members and community cohesion.

As IPSA Social Coordinator, they are responsible for:

1. Planning and/or coordinating regular social, cultural, educational, or sport activities for socialization among IPSA members with the support of volunteers;
2. Planning and/or coordinating fundraising activities for IPSA with the support of volunteers;

3. Arranging flowers and a card to be given to newly graduated PhD candidates after their public defence;
4. Promoting participation from the IPSA members in ISS MA and SCHOLAS events;
5. Ensuring regular contact and cooperation with the ISS MA and SCHOLAS representatives on issues that concern both the MA and PhD communities;
6. Will have access to the bank card and bank account and are responsible for guarding the IPSA funds held in this account.

The social coordinator and/or IPSA member(s) will be compensated for organizing an event or a social activity (in total 10% of incurred expenses of up to and including 500 Euro or 5% of incurred expenses of over 500 Euro). The coordination of an event or activity will not amount to financial compensation. The social coordinator and/or IPSA member(s) organizing a fundraising activity will be compensated for their effort (in total 10% of the amount raised up to and including 500 Euro or 5% of the amount raised over 500 Euro). This limit may be adjusted from time to time by the EC in consultation with IPSA members.

If an IPSA Social Coordinator position becomes vacant, all IPSA members are eligible to nominate themselves or others for the position. In the event of multiple candidates, an online election will be held within one month of the closing of the nomination process. The election will be determined by a simple majority of votes. In case of tie, a re-vote will be held online within one week of the closing of the initial voting term.

ARTICLE VI. Decision-Making Mechanism

IPSA members will be the final authority in all matters concerning the IPSA. IPSA members will meet on the first Monday of each month (or any other day found to be convenient for most IPSA members if the meeting cannot be held on the first Monday of the month), which will be coordinated by the EC. Meetings may also be convened with shorter notice given of the meeting for urgent matters as 'extraordinary meetings' whenever considered necessary by the EC. The EC will provide reports during the IPSA members' meetings.

IPSA members' meeting(s) are organised as follows:

1. The EC proposes the agenda before every meeting. Any member can propose or bring matters before the EC to be included in the agenda. Only agenda items pre-circulated to IPSA members can be discussed in and/or brought to vote in the monthly IPSA members' meeting.
2. The agenda must be finalized at least 24 hours before the meeting(s).
3. Decisions will be made during the monthly members' meeting(s) through a consensus attained among members present at the meeting. In the event of

consensus not being achieved, a decision will be made on the basis of a simple majority vote of members present at the meeting.

4. During the meeting, if IPSA member(s) agree on the need for the broader involvement of IPSA members not present at the meeting, an online vote can be organised by the EC. The EC must provide a background document in advance of the online vote. In case of an online vote, the simple majority of voters will decide the outcome of the matter at hand.
5. Decisions made during the monthly IPSA members' meeting(s) will be communicated through MoMs, which will be shared among all IPSA members via email. Members can express objections to the MoMs during the next monthly meeting (with advance notice given to the IPSA Coordinator so that the item can be added to the agenda) or via email.
6. Extraordinary meetings require at least one week's notice and the same process with regards to agenda and decision making as the IPSA members' monthly meetings applies.

ARTICLE VII. EC Decision-Making Mechanism in the Event of Emergencies

1. Any matter or issue(s) brought to the EC that requires an urgent decision/response on the part of IPSA members, wherein a decision/response must be made or initiated in less than one week, may be reverted to the EC who are given the mandate to take action on behalf of IPSA members.
2. The EC resolves to represent the interests of IPSA members at all times in the making of such decisions and will report the proceedings and outcome to IPSA members as soon as possible after the decision has been made.
3. The decision-making mechanism within the EC is as follows:
 - a. During the decision-making process, the EC will identify an appropriate member of the ISS administration to communicate the issue/matter for consultation of the issue in relation to the ISS institutional position.
 - b. All decisions are based on attaining EC quorum (50% + 1) of the entire EC during the called meeting, whether physically present at the meeting or not. The meeting should have the participation of all EC members, and those who may not be present physically may join over Skype or through other means of communication. A final decision will be made during said meeting, unless further consultations are necessary.

ARTICLE VIII. Executive Council Terms

All IPSA members can serve as representatives of IPSA members on the EC.

1. All EC representatives will ideally commit to serving their positions for at least one year;

2. The EC representatives will inform IPSA members of their intention to leave a position at least one month prior to their departure;
3. At the end of their term, each representative will prepare a short report of their activities and ensure a timely and informed handover to their successor;
4. The EC will be responsible for inviting nominations for vacant positions when needed.

ARTICLE IX. Removal and Suspension of Executive Council Member(s)

If an EC member is subject to any investigation within the ISS, they are expected to inform the EC of the same. If institutional or legal mechanisms are triggered, the EC member will be subject to immediate suspension. If the EC member is found guilty of any wrongdoing, they will be removed from the post with immediate effect.

For all other circumstances, a formal request for removal of an Executive Council member can be made by any IPSA member through the following procedure:

1. The formal request for removal must be made to the EC or an individual EC member, along with a stated reason; the EC will choose either to convene a sub-committee or to put the matter on the agenda for the following IPSA members' meeting.
2. A smaller sub-committee from the IPSA members may be constituted to aid and assist the process of investigation. The sub-committee involved in the investigation will be selected from the IPSA members at large with at least one EC member on the committee; it will consist of five members. One external member may be added depending on the case. The accused cannot be on the committee.
3. Once constituted, the sub-committee in conjunction with the EC can decide if it is appropriate to bring the removal to all IPSA members for vote.
4. If the matter is brought to an IPSA members' meeting for vote, then the party to which the charges are being brought against must be informed of the request for removal at least two weeks prior to the IPSA monthly meeting so that they may have proper time to prepare a defence. Only then will the request for the removal be added to the agenda and appropriate information circulated to the entire IPSA Community.
5. The vote will be conducted following ARTICLE VI of the Constitution.
6. The removal of an EC member will be based on one or more of the following grounds:
 - a) Committing any act that is illegal, improper, or wrongful in accordance with the Dutch law or EUR/ISS policies and those laid out in the Constitution of the IPSA;
 - b) Misrepresentation of the university and the IPSA in front of any public entity;

- c) Failure to fulfill obligated functions as underlined within the Constitution of IPSA.

ARTICLE X. Amendments to the Constitution

The Constitution may be amended according to the following procedure:

1. Proposals for amendments to the Constitution can be submitted by any member of the IPSA to the EC, who will add the proposal to the agenda of the next members' meeting; at least nine other IPSA members attending the meeting should support the proposal at the meeting before it is brought for an online vote;
2. The proposal will be circulated among the IPSA members at least one week before the online vote commences;
3. The amendments will be approved by a simple majority (50% of total online votes +1) from the online vote. The vote will be opened for at least one week and the proposed amendment is to be publicised at least one week before the actual week of voting commences. In the event of a tie, a re-vote will take place.

ARTICLE XI. Budget and Conduct of Financial Affairs

1. The budget of the IPSA will be drawn up by the IPSA Coordinator by the end of each calendar year and will be approved in consultation with IPSA members by the last members' meeting of the calendar year preceding the new calendar year. Funds will be mobilised primarily from institutional funding, as well as by means of fundraising activities;
2. All expenses incurred for IPSA activities will be recorded according to transparent and timely accounting procedures;
3. All IPSA activities should be presented by initiators in the IPSA monthly members' meetings with a tentative budget for discussion. Based on the successful outcome of the discussion in the meeting, the activity will be coordinated by the IPSA Social Coordinator. Fixed budget items e.g the end-of-year dinner or flowers for PhD candidates following their public defence will be clarified by the PhD Social Coordinator to IPSA members during PhD monthly members' meetings as a means of informing the decision among IPSA members to accept proposed budgets for activities as is or request an adjustment of the budgeted amount;
4. Requisitions for the withdrawal of funds to be used for IPSA activities can be made by any IPSA member(s) to the IPSA Social Coordinator by submitting a budget request form to them. The IPSA Social Coordinator will coordinate the functioning of the activity, including the disbursement of funds, with the IPSA

member(s). If the budgeted amount is greater than 500 Euro, the activity request requires the approval of the entire EC;

5. The IPSA Social Coordinator in conjunction with IPSA member(s) organising activities will be responsible for the submission of all invoices and receipts of expenditure to the IPSA Coordinator within 30 days after the completion of activities;
6. The EC will be responsible for the distribution of IPSA financial reports, along with all bills and receipts, at the end of the financial year to IPSA members;
7. If requested by the ISS administration, the IPSA Coordinator should be able to provide a financial report to the ISS administration within one month of the request being made.

ARTICLE XII. Jurisdiction

1. In matters of law this document is subordinated to the articles of incorporation of the “Studieassociation” in any other cases of ambiguity this document is considered the primary operating document of IPSA and will supersede the articles.

ARTICLE X: Amendments to the IPSA Constitution

1. IPSA Membership Fees

- a. Each member of IPSA shall pay 5 euros per year as membership fees, up to a maximum of 4 years (20 euros)
- b. Visiting researchers may pay a one-time fee for a four-year period or for a one-year period, as they deem fit.
Visiting researchers are eligible to pay the membership fees in cash, strictly in exchange for an official receipt of payment from the IPSA EC
- c. To facilitate collection of membership fees, the IPSA EC will circulate two reminder mails annually to the community, at the end of the first and third quarters of a calendar year.
The mails shall contain a brief introduction to the association and a payment link to the IPSA bank account
- d. If a member of IPSA is unable to pay the annual contribution, they can inform any of the IPSA EC members through an email
- e. Membership fees are not meant to be a barrier to participation in IPSA activities or to serve in IPSA EC positions