

# Bylaws of the N<sup>2</sup> Network of Networks

## Preamble

N<sup>2</sup> - Network of Networks - is a meta network of independent representations of early career researchers, aiming for a doctoral degree.

N<sup>2</sup> aspires to give early career researchers opportunities for exchanging ideas, networking and collaboration and a joint voice when lobbying for conditions in their working environment that enable cutting-edge research.

The guiding principle of N<sup>2</sup> is the indivisibility of outstanding research and good working conditions for those conducting research. For the members of N<sup>2</sup>, this encompasses first-rate research conditions as well as surrounding factors such as supervision, extracurricular education, networking, equal opportunities, diversity and career perspectives inside and outside of academia as well as family support and fair payment. We identify these factors as key drivers in an open and successful scientific work environment and for good scientific practice.

Based on this guiding principle, the mission of N<sup>2</sup> is to serve as an interconnecting platform between interest groups formed by early career researchers. It facilitates continuous exchange, joint events, monitoring of the state of early career researchers and organisation of common actions. Furthermore, N<sup>2</sup> is to serve as a common political tool for concerted interaction with political decision makers of particular importance in the area of science policy and impactful media.

## Bylaws

### 1. Name, location and language

- a. The name of the organisation is “N<sup>2</sup>” [*Nsquared*].
- b. N<sup>2</sup> is organised in a decentralised manner. It has no central location.
- c. Working language of the organisation is English using spelling adhering to the British English.

### 2. Membership and representation

- a. N<sup>2</sup> is a network of networks. Therefore, its direct members are representative bodies of networks formed by early career researchers, especially doctoral researchers, from universities and non-university research organisations in Germany.
- b. Requirement for the membership in N<sup>2</sup> is the alignment of the member organisations' goals with the goals of N<sup>2</sup> as outlined in the preamble. Any member organisation itself must be constituted of elected representatives from their research institution(s).

- c. An organisation may enter N<sup>2</sup> either as *full member*, with the obligation to contribute in equal parts to joint actions and with the right to vote, or as *associated member* which is entitled to affiliation to N<sup>2</sup> but foregoes financial or personnel requirements, as well as voting rights.
- d. Each member organisation of N<sup>2</sup> is represented by two elected representatives from within that member organisation.

### 3. Organs and their functions

- a. N<sup>2</sup> consists of two organs, the *N<sup>2</sup> Board* and the *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board*.
- b. The *N<sup>2</sup> Board* is formed by the elected representatives from each member organisation.
- c. Task of the *N<sup>2</sup> Board* is representation and communication of N<sup>2</sup> interests to stakeholders, voting on joint actions, as well as to serve as the central contact point to the parent organisations of the members.
- d. The *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* is formed by the previous members of the *N<sup>2</sup> Board* who volunteer to provide their resources to the benefit of the network. The membership in the *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* is limited to one year after the respective member's term as a *N<sup>2</sup> Board* member.
- e. The *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* member may informally apply for an extension of membership after the first year by a vote from the *N<sup>2</sup> Board*, which will extend *membership* for an indefinite amount of time. At any time after the first year, the *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* membership can be revoked by a vote from the *N<sup>2</sup> Board*.
- f. The task of the *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* is to ensure the long-term continuity of initiatives taken by N<sup>2</sup> by providing the experience and guidance of its members to the *N<sup>2</sup> Board*. Furthermore, members of the *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* are encouraged to provide networking opportunities to the *N<sup>2</sup> Board* if that serves to further the agenda of N<sup>2</sup>.
- g. Members of the *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* may act as substitutes for members of *N<sup>2</sup> Board* in case the *N<sup>2</sup> Board* member is incapable of attending a meeting. Substituting members from *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* must be
  - (i) appointed by their respective member organisation and
  - (ii) named to the other members of the *N<sup>2</sup> Board* before the beginning of the meeting and
  - (iii) belong to the same member organisation as the substituted member.

This is the only case when *N<sup>2</sup> Advisory Board* may vote on behalf of their respective member organisation.

#### **4. Joint action**

- a. *Joint actions* are referred to as coordinated planning and execution of events, projects and interactions with relevant decision makers and influencers to forward the aims of the sub-networks.
- b. Full members of N<sup>2</sup> shall contribute to personnel and financial obligations of joint actions in equal parts as far as possible for each organisation.
- c. To facilitate administrative processes in N<sup>2</sup>, it is preferred to keep financial administration of a joint action within the administration of a single full member organisation which will then be reimbursed by the other contributing member organisations.
- d. Joint actions need to be adopted by a unanimous vote of the full members of N<sup>2</sup>.

#### **5. Voting and changes to the bylaws**

- a. Each full member organisation has a total of two votes in any decision making process.
- b. For each voting procedure, at least one representative or substituting representative representative per full member organisation must be present.
- c. Votes are assigned to the members of the N<sup>2</sup> Board.
- d. If both N<sup>2</sup> Board members from a member organisation are present during a vote, each representative shall have one vote. Each representative will cast their vote independently.
- e. Changes to the bylaws, including the preamble, require a unanimous vote of the full members of N<sup>2</sup>.
- f. All votes, except changes to the bylaws and votes on joint events, can be accepted by a simple majority of Board members with at least one supporting vote of each full member organisation.

#### **6. Admission of new members**

- a. New member organisations can be admitted during any meeting of the N<sup>2</sup> Board according to the voting procedures defined under section (5).  
*Admission of new members will necessitate an immediate change of the bylaws.*
- b. To initiate a vote on membership, an applying organisation must send in their written application at least four weeks before a physical meeting of the N<sup>2</sup> Board. If an application is send in at a date closer than four weeks, the vote will only occur during the meeting thereafter.

Application requires a valid resolution by the applying organization and must be communicated to N<sup>2</sup> by a person entitled to do so, according to that organisation's own by-laws.

- c. New members may be offered an *associated status* instead of full membership with the potential of a later change to full membership.

## **7. List of current members**

- a. Member organisation (in alphabetical order, *parent organisation*):

- (i) Helmholtz Juniors,  
*Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres*
- (ii) Leibniz PhD Network,  
*Leibniz Association*
- (iii) Max Planck PhDnet,  
*Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science*

- b. Associated member organisations:

- (i) PhD Representatives of the  
*International PhD Programme (IPP) Mainz*

## **8. Quitting membership and network dissolution**

- a. A member organisation may decide to quit its membership. This requires a valid resolution which is communicated to N<sup>2</sup> by a person entitled to do so, according to that organization's own by-laws.
- b. N<sup>2</sup> as a network is automatically dissolved if less than two member organisations remain.

## **9. Adoption and latest amendment**

- a. The bylaws of N<sup>2</sup> have been adopted 2018-09-26.
- b. The latest amendment has been introduced on the 2018-11-11. Associated membership of the PhD Representatives of the International PhD Programme (IPP) Mainz