

Statutes of the Cluster of Excellence "Centre for Biological Signalling Studies – from Analysis to Synthesis" (bioss) of the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg

I. Formation of the Research Institute

On the recommendation of the Rectorate of the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, the University Council established the Centre for biological signalling studies – from analysis to synthesis (bioss) in accordance with Article 40(5) of the Federal State Higher Education Act (Landeshochschulgesetz – LHG) as amended on 1 January 2005 (Law Gazette (GBl) 2005, p. 1 ff) and last amended by the Act for the Implementation of Federalism Reform in the Higher Education Sector (Gesetz zur Umsetzung der Föderalismusreform im Hochschulbereich) dated 20 November 2007 (Law Gazette (GBl) 2007, p. 505 ff).

II. Statutes

On the basis of the resolution by the University Council, the Senate of the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg passed the following Statutes in accordance with Article 8(5), in conjunction with Article 19(1)(10), of the Federal State Higher Education Act (LHG).

Preamble

Scientists working at the Centre for Biological Signalling Studies - from Analysis to Synthesis (bioss) are guided by the aims of designing their research projects more efficiently; developing their creativity; linking their projects on an interdisciplinary level; communicating their results to the public; strengthening biological signalling research in Freiburg by means of an innovative research strategy using analytical and synthetic approaches; and making Freiburg's biological signalling research internationally visible.

In order to fulfil these aims, the following Statutes stipulate the responsibilities and organisational requirements of the Cluster of Excellence for biological signalling studies (bioss) at the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg.

Article 1 Responsibilities and Scientific Areas

(1) In addition to the scientific facilities of various faculties of the University of Freiburg, bioss also comprises the Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology and the Fraunhofer Institute for Physical Measurement Techniques. Other scientific institutions may also be incorporated; decisions thereon shall be taken by the Rectorate on the recommendation of bioss.

(2) bioss is responsible for interdisciplinary and interfaculty research in the field of biological signalling and synthetic biology. It is intended that bioss should become an internationally visible centre in this field.

(3) Its responsibilities include, in particular:

- teaching
- supporting junior scientists and their careers
- advanced scientific training
- transferring scientific knowledge to applied research
- using targeted public relations to disseminate results achieved through bioss research
- continuing to promote equal opportunities
- creating a shared infrastructure

bioss is striving to make the research location of Freiburg more attractive through its innovative research programme and active scientific exchange.

(4) bioss comprises the following scientific areas:

Research area A: Intracellular signalling pathways – from cascades to networks

Research area B: Supracellular signalling systems

Research area C: Rebuilding and synthesis of signalling systems

Research area D: Technology development

Administration Z: Central service area

Research areas A-D are led by coordinators.

Article 2 Organisation

The organisational structure of bioss comprises the following elements:

- General Meeting (Article 6)
- Steering Committee (Article 7)
- Spokesperson (Article 8)
- Advisory Board (Article 9)

Article 3 Membership

(1) bioss members are scientists from the University of Freiburg or members of the non-university research institutions cited in Article 1(1) who fulfil the responsibilities of bioss in accordance with Article 1(2) and (3) of these Statutes. Members actively participate in bioss research projects with their own independent scientific research. The 25 principal investigators of the project proposal in appendix one of these Statutes, and those who hold professorships or lead junior research groups that have recently been established using bioss funds, are original members as defined by this Article.

(2) Any scientist who is actively involved in the fields covered by bioss can apply for membership. An application shall be submitted to the bioss committee in writing

together with a CV in tabular format and a list of publications. The applicant shall specify the area from Article 1(4) of these Statutes to which he/she wishes to be assigned.

(3) Membership is not linked to funding from bioss and does not guarantee entitlement to funds.

(4) On request, the special status of associate member may be granted to scientists who are not directly involved in work on bioss research projects as defined by Article 1(2) of these Statutes, but who nevertheless substantially support the bioss research concept by means of independent scientific research. Special status is granted by the committee for a three-year period and may be renewed.

(5) Associate members do not contribute to the self-governance of bioss as defined by sentence one of Article 4(2), Articles 6–8 and Article 10 of these Statutes.

Article 4 Rights and Obligations of Members

(1) Members are entitled to access and use the bioss facilities and infrastructure. They may apply to the committee for project funding as part of bioss's internal funding programme. The spokesperson and the committee shall regularly inform members of the development of bioss.

(2) Members shall contribute actively to the self-governance of bioss in accordance with these Statutes. Each member shall report to both the committee and the advisory board at regular intervals or at the request of the former. Members undertake to cite bioss at the appropriate place in publications. Members also undertake to reference the external funding from the Excellence Initiative by means of a corresponding note and for the duration of said funding.

Article 5 Termination or Withdrawal of Membership

(1) Membership expires immediately when a member leaves the University of Freiburg or another participating institution; or when a member ceases to carry out a project in accordance with Article 1(2) of these Statutes and as such the member is deemed to be no longer actively participating in bioss research.

(2) Membership is also terminated via a notice of withdrawal to be submitted to the spokesperson.

(3) Following a hearing at the general meeting, the committee may withdraw membership where a member grossly fails to fulfil his/her obligations. The party concerned and members of the general meeting shall be given notice of the allegations in good time. The party concerned shall be granted the opportunity to make a statement.

(4) Apparatus, materials and other research aids purchased with bioss funding shall be returned to bioss where membership is terminated. In exceptional cases and on request, funding may be left in place for the former member to complete a research project for a period of time determined on a case by case basis. This period of time shall not exceed

one year. The committee shall decide on such exceptional cases. In the event of termination or withdrawal of membership, a member shall have two months to present a final report in writing to the spokesperson detailing the scientific work that he/she has completed. Where the project duration is extended in accordance with sentence two, the final report shall be presented to the spokesperson two months after completing the research project at the latest.

Article 6 General Meeting

(1) The general meeting shall be convened by the spokesperson at least once a year and notice shall be given no less than seven working days prior to the meeting, specifying the matters to be discussed (items on the agenda). The general meeting shall also be convened by the spokesperson at the request of no fewer than five members who shall specify the matter to be discussed. The general meeting is chaired by the spokesperson. The general meeting is quorate when no fewer than half of all members are present.

(2) The general meeting is responsible for the following:

- a) electing coordinators and deputy coordinators of the scientific areas
- b) electing and voting out the committee spokesperson
- c) electing and voting out additional committee members and their deputies
- d) approving the committee's annual activity report
- e) discussing important scientific results and providing information on new scientific equipment and facilities (e.g. service laboratories and large apparatus)
- f) making proposals to improve the bioss programme

(3) The spokesperson, coordinators of the scientific areas and other members of the bioss committee are each elected for a term of three years by a majority of two-thirds of members present. Re-election is possible. The term of office commences on the first day of the calendar month following the election. The existing election process shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to deputies.

(4) The general meeting elects a deputy for each committee member. Furthermore, the meeting elects up to two deputies for the spokesperson from among the committee members. The regulations stipulated in (3) of this Article apply *mutatis mutandis* in each of these cases.

(5) The election of the spokesperson and his/her deputies shall be ratified by the Rectorate.

(6) The general meeting is entitled to form advisory committees.

(7) Minutes will be taken of the general meeting and its resolutions. The minute-taker is appointed by the person who chairs the meeting. The minutes shall be signed by the chair of the meeting and the minute-taker. The minutes shall be distributed among all members within a month.

Article 7 Steering Committee

(1) The bioss steering committee (herein “committee”) comprises seven persons including the spokesperson and coordinators of all the scientific areas (A-D) in accordance with Article 1(4). The committee shall comprise at least one female scientist and one junior research group leader under forty years of age. In justified cases, committee members may be represented by their respective deputies to undertake committee responsibilities.

(2) Where a member can prove exceptional circumstances, he/she can be replaced by electing a successor. In this event, resolutions in writing (by circulation) shall be excluded.

(3) The committee shall be convened by the spokesperson and at least seven working days notice shall be given along with the agenda items to be discussed. The committee shall also be convened by the spokesperson at the request of no fewer than three committee members who shall specify the matter to be discussed. Committee meetings shall be chaired by the spokesperson.

(4) The committee is responsible for the overall development of the Cluster of Excellence. The particular remit of the committee is as follows:

a) to decide on the appointment of members and the withdrawal of membership as defined by Article 5(3) of these Statutes

b) to appoint personnel

c) to prepare a business plan at the start of each financial year in compliance with the German Research Foundation (DFG) allocation guidelines for excellence institutions

d) to draw up internal budgets and determine the allocation of funds within bioss, including decisions during the course of the financial year on necessary adjustments to project fund estimates

e) to pass a resolution on the establishment of a spokesperson fund, determining an appropriate available amount to enable the spokesperson to independently conduct ongoing administrative business

f) to select internal projects for funding

g) to decide on the allocation of funds for large apparatus

h) to determine regulations governing access to and use of bioss infrastructure

i) to coordinate and monitor programmes that support young scientists and equal opportunities

j) to prepare general meetings and advisory board meetings

k) to coordinate new funding applications

l) to prepare an annual activity report (general development and financial report) to be submitted to the Rectorate

(5) The responsibilities of the central university administration shall remain unaffected.

(6) The committee shall make decisions by a simple majority vote of members present. In the event of tied votes, the spokesperson shall have the casting vote. The committee is quorate when at least half of its members are present at the meeting.

(7) Formal approval of the committee's activities is given by the Rectorate on the basis of the activity report.

(8) Article 6(7) applies mutatis mutandis to committee meetings.

Article 8 Spokesperson

(1) The spokesperson conducts the ongoing affairs of bioss and represents its interests within the university and externally. He/she is responsible for complying with the stipulations set out in letters of approval from third-party funding sources, in particular the German Research Foundation (DFG) allocation guidelines for excellence institutions.

(2) The spokesperson is also responsible for the following:

- a) regularly informing the committee of all important matters regarding the Cluster of Excellence;
- b) preparing and implementing resolutions from the general meeting and the committee;
- c) monitoring management;
- d) coordinating scientific activities.

(3) The spokesperson is supported by up to two deputies who shall represent the spokesperson in the event that he/she is unable to carry out his/her duties. With prior agreement from the committee, the spokesperson may delegate certain management tasks to his/her deputies to be conducted independently by them.

Article 9 Advisory Board

(1) An advisory board is formed to support bioss and to advise the Rectorate. This board shall comprise between a minimum of five and a maximum of twelve independent external members. One precondition for membership is international recognition in the bioss research areas. Furthermore, members of the University of Freiburg or a research institution involved in bioss as defined in Article 1(1) may not become members. At least one member shall come from industry.

(2) The advisory board acts in an advisory capacity. To fulfil its responsibilities, it has the right and obligation to be fully informed of research work at bioss. Its responsibilities include giving advice on scientific development and providing recommendations for bioss's further objectives and strategies. To fulfil these responsibilities, the advisory board is entitled to invite advisory members from the university to its meetings.

(3) Board members are appointed by the Rectorate on the recommendation of the committee for a period of five years. Reappointment is possible.

(4) The board elects a chair and deputy chair from among its members. This person shall summon a meeting at least twice during the advisory period (five years) or at the request of no fewer than four members. The advisory board shall also be summoned by the chair at the request of the Rectorate, spokesperson or committee.

Article 10 Evaluation

(1) bioss activities shall be reviewed every five years by an independent external expert panel. The first review will take place three years subsequent to the expiry of funding from the German Research Foundation (DFG). Criteria for evaluating the centre's quality and achievements are as follows:

- a) quality of scientific research and teaching;
- b) importance of the institution for improving the university's profile;
- c) efficiency of the structure and organisation of bioss.

(2) bioss shall inform the Rectorate in advance of planned evaluations to be carried out by the DFG. Throughout the period that bioss receives funding from the DFG, the committee shall report in writing to the Rectorate on the execution of evaluations conducted by the DFG and the ensuing results. The report shall be submitted immediately after evaluations have been conducted by the DFG.

(3) The external expert panel shall be appointed by the Rectorate on the recommendation of the committee. This panel shall comprise a minimum of five and a maximum of seven external scientists. The committee shall make the necessary information available for the expert panel to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities. The expert panel shall draw up a written report on the centre's progress which shall be made available to the Rectorate and committee.

(4) Within three months of receiving the expert panel's report, the committee shall submit a statement to the Rectorate on the contents thereof. The statement shall detail the suggestions and conclusions of the expert panel's work as regards the further development of bioss.

(5) The Rectorate shall decide on the continuation of the institution and shall instigate, where necessary, the resolutions of the relevant committees required for this.

Article 11 Management

(1) The management provides administrative support for the spokesperson, his/her deputies and the committee in fulfilling their responsibilities. It also supports the advisory board in preparing its meetings.

(2) The management also fulfils the following responsibilities:

- a) establishing and coordinating infrastructure
- b) ongoing administration of resources;
- c) promoting internal support programmes and equal opportunities measures
- d) instigating negotiations with external partners regarding industry collaborations
- e) providing support for securing and exploiting copyrights and inventors' rights in close collaboration with the relevant employees in central administration;
- f) participating in public relations work;
- g) designing and maintaining the bioss website and bioss intranet to enable effective communication between members.

(3) The management is led by a scientific employee who is directly assigned to the spokesperson. In agreement with the spokesperson, the scientific employee shall decide on the deployment of personnel and resources assigned to the administrative office.

Article 12 Supporting Junior Scientists

Supporting junior scientists is an important part of bioss research activities. This support comprises the following elements:

- a) Training programme on “Biotechnology, synthetic biology and biological signalling pathways” for Abiturienten [school-leavers with university entrance qualifications] from general Gymnasien [Grammar Schools] and specialised Gymnasien (on biology courses)
- b) academic teaching support with contributions on “biological signalling research” and “synthetic biology”
- c) supporting the participation of bachelors students from the life sciences in the latest research activities as part of project work in the field of synthetic biology
- d) structured doctoral studies in the context of the Spemann Graduate School and the International Graduate Academy of the University of Freiburg
- e) supporting the participation of junior scientists in international science competitions in the field of “Reconstructing biological signalling chains” (signal engineering)
- f) funding post-doctoral researchers via the “signalling incubator” by providing resources for independent research
- g) providing resources for junior research group leaders with tenure track options subsequent to competitive evaluation

The selection of doctoral candidates is conducted by the relevant group leader with support from and in collaboration with the Spemann Graduate School for Biology and Medicine.

Article 13 Appointing Professors and Junior Research Group Leaders

Professorships that are financed by or directly associated with bioss are filled in accordance with the provisions of the applicable Federal State Higher Education Act (LHG) and the Constitution of the University of Freiburg. In preparation for the appointment proposals, the Rectorate shall form an appointment committee in consultation with the respective faculty and the bioss spokesperson. The provisions in the legislation on higher education in the state of Baden-Württemberg shall apply to the composition of said appointment committee. Sentences one and two shall apply mutatis mutandis to the appointment of junior professors at bioss.

Article 14 Other Regulations

(1) Within the provisions of the Federal State Higher Education Act (LHG) and these Statutes, bioss may establish its own rules of procedure to govern the institute's internal procedures.

(2) Unless otherwise provided for herein, the procedural regulations (Verfahrensordnung) of the University of Freiburg shall apply in the version currently in force.

(3) bioss is subject to the supervision of the Rectorate on questions pertaining to the legality of its administrative activities.

Article 15 Date of Legal Force

These Statutes shall come into legal force the day after their publication in the Official Announcements (Amtliche Bekanntmachungen) of the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg.

Freiburg, 15 October 2008

Prof. Dr Hans-Jochen Schiewer
Rector

Appendix 1

Principle Investigators of the bioss project proposal

Name	Institute
Prof. Dr Klaus Aktories	Institute of Experimental and Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology
Dr Katja Arndt	Emmy Noether group leader; Institute of Biology III
Prof. Dr Ralf Baumeister	Institute of Biology III
Prof. Dr Peter Beyer	Institute of Biology III
Prof. Dr Thomas Böhm	Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology, Freiburg
Prof. Dr Christoph Borner	Institute of Molecular Medicine
Prof. Dr Albrecht Brandenburg	Fraunhofer Institute for Physical Measurement Techniques, Freiburg
Prof. Dr Leena Bruckner-Tuderman	Department of Dermatology, University Medical Centre
Prof. Dr Hans Burkhardt	Institute of Computer Science, Pattern Recognition and Image Processing
Prof. Dr Wolfgang Driever	Institute of Biology I
Prof. Dr Bernd Fakler	Institute of Physiology II
Prof. Dr Rudolf Grosschedl	Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology, Freiburg
Prof. Dr Thomas Laux	Institute of Biology III
Prof. Dr Annette Neubüser	Institute of Biology I
Prof. Dr Klaus Palme	Institute of Biology II
Prof. Dr Nikolaus Pfanner	Institute of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Prof. Dr Ralf Reski	Institute of Biology II
Prof. Dr Michael Reth	Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology, Freiburg
Prof. Dr Sabine Rospert	Institute of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Dr Simona Sacconi	Group Leader, Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology
Prof. Dr Eberhard Schäfer	Institute of Biology II
Prof. Dr Roland Schüle	University Women's Hospital
Prof. Dr. Jens Timmer	Institute of Physics
Prof. Dr. Gerd Walz	Department of Internal Medicine IV, University Medical Centre
Prof. Dr Roland Zengerle	Department of Microsystems Engineering