

APPROVED by the Rector of the University of Tartu Decree no. 21 of 2 December 2020 (effective as of 1 January 2021)

AMENDED by the Rector of the University of Tartu Decree no. 24 of 4 December 2020 (effective as of 4 December 2020)

AMENDED by the Rector of the University of Tartu Decree no. 10 of 1 June 2022 (effective as of 1 May 2022)

## **Statutes of the Institute of Genomics**

Based on clause 15 (2) 8) and subsection 24 (1) of the Statutes of the University of Tartu, and pursuant to the Human Genes Research Act, I approve the Statutes of the Institute of Genomics.

### **I. General provisions**

1. The Institute of Genomics ('institute') is an institute in the Faculty of Science and Technology of the University of Tartu ('university'), operating in accordance with the University of Tartu Act, the Higher Education Act, the Organisation of Research and Development Act, the Human Genes Research Act, the statutes of the university, the statutes of the institute and other legislation.
2. The institute is the successor of the Institute of Genomics that operated as an institution of the university, which in turn is the successor of the University of Tartu Estonian Genome Centre and Estonian Biocentre that was established based on the Estonian Genome Foundation.
3. The main tasks of the institute are
  - 3.1. to conduct genomics-based transdisciplinary fundamental and applied research and provide education;
  - 3.2. to perform the tasks of the controller of the Estonian Gene Bank ('gene bank') under the Human Genes Research Act.
4. To perform its main task specified in clause 3.1, the institute
  - 4.1. conducts fundamental and applied research and organises development work;
  - 4.2. cooperates with other institutions and persons in Estonia and abroad who conduct genomics research and related transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research, as well as with international organisations;
  - 4.3. participates in Estonian and international research and development programmes and projects, and carries out scientific and technology cooperation with domestic and international partners;
  - 4.4. participates in teaching and supervising students of all levels of higher education within the scope of its competence, considering the teaching needs and research directions;
  - 4.5. makes suggestions to relevant decision-making bodies of the university about the organisation of teaching and studies in genomics and related fields;
  - 4.6. engages in all other activities that help to perform the main tasks of the institute.
5. As the controller of the gene bank, the institute collects data on the health and genetic information of the Estonian population, conducts genomics research and applies their results to improve public health. For that purpose, the institute
  - 5.1. collects tissue samples of gene donors to the gene bank and organises their processing;
  - 5.2. collects, pseudonymises, stores, supplements, de-pseudonymises, issues and destroys data on the state of health and genetic data of the gene bank's gene donors;
  - 5.3. collects, prepares, pseudonymises, stores, analyses, de-pseudonymises, issues and destroys information treated as genealogies;

- 5.4. performs the quality control of the processing of gene donors' data and tissue samples;
  - 5.5. ensures that the maintenance and processing of the gene bank complies with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC, the Personal Data Protection Act, the Human Genes Research Act, the Public Information Act and other legislation;
  - 5.6. participates in the application of personalised medicine in Estonia;
  - 5.7. counsels gene donors during research projects;
  - 5.8. organises conferences and seminars, promotes scientific world view and informs the public about its activities;
  - 5.9. performs other tasks which contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the university as the controller of the gene bank.
6. The name of the institute in English is Institute of Genomics.
  7. The institute comprises the Estonian Biobank as a work organisation unit. Other work organisation units are formed by the institute council based on the proposal by the director of institute.
  8. The Estonian Biobank has its own insignia in accordance with the procedure established by the university.
  9. In questions relating to the maintenance and processing of the gene bank, the director of institute reports to the senate and rector.

## **II. Governance**

10. The institute has a council, the composition of which is approved by the dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology ('dean') on the proposal of the director of institute. The council chair is the director of institute ('director').
11. The council comprises the director, assistant directors and the head of the Estonian Biobank as ex officio members, six representatives of employees, one representative of doctoral students of the institute and up to four members from outside the institute based on the joint proposal by the representatives of employees and doctoral students.
12. Employees of the institute elect their representatives to the council by a secret vote every three years in May. The director announces the elections and the deadline for submission of candidates at least two weeks before the elections. Candidates can be submitted by all employees of the institute. Each voter has two votes. The election results are approved in the form of a ranking list. If multiple candidates receive an equal number of votes, their ranking is determined by drawing lots.
13. Doctoral students of the institute elect their representative to the council by a secret vote according to the Statutes of the student body. The representative of doctoral students is elected to the council for one year. The mandate of the elected representative starts at the beginning of July and is effective until the new representative takes office.
14. The mandate of the elected representatives starts at the beginning of July and is effective until new representatives take office. If a council member is unable to participate in the work of the council, the dean, on the proposal of the director, may appoint the next person in the ranking list to substitute for the withdrawn council member until the withdrawn member returns, but no longer than until the next elections.
15. The mandate of the members from outside the institute involved in the council based on the proposal by the representatives of employees and doctoral students is four years.
16. Council meetings are convened by the chair as needed, but at least four times a year. The chair must also call a council meeting at the request of at least one third of the council members.
17. The council has a quorum if more than half of its members are present at the meeting. It is

also possible to participate in the meeting using two-way audio and video technology. A decision is deemed adopted if more than half of the members present at the meeting have voted in favour. A decision of an electronic meeting is deemed adopted if more than half of the council members have voted in favour. [effective as of 1 May 2022]

18. The chair may invite individuals who are not members of the council to take part in a council meeting with the right to speak but without the right to vote.

19. The council

- 19.1. establishes its rules of procedure;
- 19.2. defines the main development goals of the institute;
- 19.3. selects the research fellows, lecturers, junior lecturers and teachers of the institute and takes a stand regarding the applicants to the positions of professors and associate professors; [effective as of 1 May 2022]
- 19.4. analyses the organisation of research and teaching in areas overlapping with and adjacent to genomics research at the university, and makes suggestions to the dean and the rector on the organisation of research and teaching;
- 19.5. forms the work organisation units of the institute and defines their tasks on the proposal of the director;
- 19.6. hears the activity report and the research overview of the institute's work organisation units;
- 19.7. approves the size and composition of the international advisory board of the institute;
- 19.8. on the proposal of the director of institute or members of the institute council, discusses other issues related to the institute and adopts a position on the discussed topics;
- 19.9. performs other tasks imposed on the council by legislation and bylaws.

20. The institute is managed by the director, who is elected for a term of three years by the institute council by a secret vote according to the university's Regulations for secret votes from among the employees of the institute who hold a doctoral degree or an equivalent qualification. The director performs the duties of a head of institute as an additional assignment.

21. The dean announces the election of the director at least two weeks before the elections. Candidates may be submitted by the dean, jointly by at least five academic staff members of the institute, and by the student council of the Faculty of Science and Technology. A person cannot hold the position of the director for more than three consecutive terms of office.

22. The results of the election of the director are approved by the dean. If no candidates who meet the requirements are submitted to the position of the director or if the none of the candidates is elected, the dean appoints an acting director until the election of the new director but for no longer than one year.

23. The director

- 23.1. represents the university within the scope of authority granted by the rector;
- 23.2. manages the institute and ensures that its activities are in line with its main development goals, these statutes, the statutes of the university, and other legislation;
- 23.3. is responsible for the general status and development of the institute and manages the work of the institute by ensuring the lawful and expedient use of money and other assets;
- 23.4. designates the individuals who have access to the personalised data of gene donors in the gene bank and who pseudonymise or de-pseudonymise data and issue pseudonymised or de-pseudonymised tissue samples, descriptions of DNA and descriptions of state of health;
- 23.5. establishes the price lists of paid services provided by the institute;
- 23.6. recruits up to three assistant directors and defines their tasks;
- 23.7. makes a proposal to the council on the forming of work organisation units and recruits the head of the Estonian Biobank and the heads of other work organisation units;
- 23.8. does everything else that is necessary for carrying out the statutory tasks and ensuring the successful operation of the institute.

24. To perform the statutory goals of the institute, the director is entitled to sign, within the limits of the institute's budget and taking into consideration the bylaws of the university, the following on behalf of the university:
- 24.1. contracts for the supply of services with natural persons for the provision of services;
  - 24.2. contracts for providing laboratory services;
  - 24.3. contracts for use for taking movable property into use;
  - 24.4. cooperation agreements on issues regarding the activities of the gene bank, excluding agreements made in the framework of projects funded by the institutions of the European Union and third countries;
  - 24.5. agreements with the processors of the gene bank;
  - 24.6. contracts for the grant of rights to use the data and biological material of the gene bank;
  - 24.7. confidentiality agreements made in the course of scientific research;
  - 24.8. contracts for the use of gene data and biological material made in the course of scientific research;
  - 24.9. licence agreements to take into use intellectual property that is protected by copyright;
  - 24.10. grant agreements with the Estonian Ministry of Culture, the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, local governments and their associations; and to sign applications, reports and other documents in connection with these agreements.
25. The director's right to sign contracts on behalf of the university for buying movables and ordering services that are necessary for the institute is provided in the Procurement Rules.
26. If the position of the director becomes vacant before the end of the term of office, the dean appoints an acting director until the new director takes office but for no longer than one year.
27. In the director's absence, the director is substituted by one of the assistant directors, appointed by the dean's directive based on the director's proposal.
28. The institute has an international advisory board comprising top-level researchers and specialists in the field; its composition is approved by the council on the proposal of the director. The advisory board meets once a year to assess the work of the institute and its main development goals, advise the director and the council on choosing the directions for research and development activities, and on the issues regarding the development of the gene bank and make suggestions on other issues.

### **III. Financing**

29. When the university council approves the university's budget, it also approves the budget of the Faculty of Science and Technology as a part of the university's budget, and the budget of the Estonian Biobank separately within the faculty's budget.
30. The activities of the institute are funded from state budget allocations, allocations for the implementation of targeted projects, funds received for paid services related to main activities, donations and other financial resources. The maintenance and storage of the gene bank are funded from the state budget by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

### **IV. Implementing provisions**

31. Until the director takes office, the director of the university's institution Institute of Genomics performs the director's duties. The elections of the director are held in January 2021 at the latest; the term of office of the elected director starts on 1 February 2021. After the entry into force of the statutes of the institute, the person who held the position of the director of the university's institution Institute of Genomics as at 31 December 2020 cannot be elected as the director of institute for more than two consecutive terms of office.
32. Employees elect their representatives to the council in December 2020 at the latest. The

mandate of the elected representatives starts on 1 January 2021 and ends on 30 June 2023. Doctoral students elect their representative to the council in December 2020 at the latest. The mandate of the elected representative starts on 1 January 2021 and ends on 30 June 2021.

33. Individuals who are employees of the university's institution Institute of Genomics as at 1 December 2020 participate in electing the employees' representatives to the council. The elections are organised according to clause 12 of these statutes.

[effective as of 4 December 2020]

33<sup>1</sup>. Individuals who are doctoral students of the university as at 1 December 2020 and whose main supervisor is an employee of the university's institution Institute of Genomics participate in electing the doctoral students' representative to the council. The director of the university's institution Institute of Genomics announces the elections and the deadline for submission of candidates at least two weeks before the elections. Candidates may be submitted by eligible voters. Each voter has one vote. The election results are approved in the form of a ranking list. If multiple candidates receive an equal number of votes, their ranking is determined by drawing lots.

[effective as of 4 December 2020]

34. On 30 December 2020 at the latest, representatives of employees and doctoral students submit a joint proposal on which people from outside the institute to involve in the institute council.

35. I repeal the Statutes of Institute of Genomics, approved by the rector's decree no. 22 of 29 December 2017 and amended by decrees no. 17 of 15 June 2018 and no. 12 of 8 November 2019.

36. The statutes take effect on 1 January 2021.