

The ISS PhD Alumni Association (IPAA)

I IPAA Rationale and vision

Why this association

ISS is, and wants to be, a development community for not only current staff, students and PhD researchers, but also for those of the past. We want to be such an enlarged community as we believe that, when reaching out to each other, we can amplify our individual voices to contribute and influence humanitarian changes. This directly links to the ISS vision of an interconnected world in which social justice is the norm.

Within this community, the group of over 220 PhD alumni stands out as these alumni have often engaged for longer periods with the institute. As such they have a strong link with the ISS and its research. PhD alumni working in academia and development research can give input for the future research programming of ISS, while alumni outside academia and research will be able to help thinking about how to link with the broader society. Both are valuable partners to consider in relation to the future ISS strategy.

II IPAA Goal and objectives

What the association will do

This association wants to build its community through discussion platforms, conferences, news sharing, blogs, newsletters and on/-offline events to connect, exchange and collaborate, revive memories and relationships with each other, supervisors, etc.

What the association wants to achieve

Starting from scratch in the short term, IPAA wants to:

- Reconnect with its PhD alumni. This means trying to get in touch with them and ask for permission to register their contact detail.
- Establish platforms to connect, such as LinkedIn, the ISS website and social events.
- Promote knowledge exchange and peer-to-peer and institutional collaborations in knowledge sharing to the global society
- Connect PhD alumni with current PhD community to enhance their research and PhD life
- Bridge the gap between current and post PhD life
- Offer a platform to promote alumni research through seminars, discussions and other similar activities

As this is a new initiative the association allows for some 'trial & error'. We need to test what works to re-build ties and what doesn't.

In the long run ISS hopes that PhD alumni have become a more effective part of the larger ISS community contributing to strategy, teaching ideas and tapping into networks.

III IPAA Management

How the association is run and linked to existing ISS structures

The ISS Institute Board and its Deputy Rector for Research Affairs are advocates of the initiative, while the ISS support organization (with as the PhD alumni coordinator) takes responsibility for rolling out activities and communication. The PhD alumni coordinator will be the association's designated key point of contact. The contact would be responsible for circulating the details of events and other significant organization news to the alumni via e-mail lists or at meetings.

Being a platform for PhD alumni and the institute, the association is owned by both the institute and the PhD alumni. A strong link with the current (not yet alumni) PhD researchers is of importance to secure that the association's approach is dove-tailed with alumni interest.

A PhD Task Force exists as a think tank for generating and discussing ideas and ways forward.

IV Roles and responsibilities of the PhD Task Force

The Committee members are appointed for two years, with the possibility to extend their term with another two years. Replacement should be guided so as to balance continuity and renewal.

A chair will be appointed.

Committee members are volunteers. Service on the Task Force is public knowledge, and the Committee members agree to have their biographical information publicized on the website, printed materials, social media channels, and the like.

Committee members should be willing to work with the ISS and contribute time. They should be enthusiastic about the association and have an ability to motivate and engage alumni.

Specifically committee members should support the key activities of the association including the development of various platforms, conferences, news sharing, blogs, newsletters and on/-offline events.

Committee members should actively participate in bi-monthly meetings.

In addition to the main meetings, Committee members may participate in working groups of the Task Force, which are being formed on an ad-hoc basis in order to advise IPAA or ISS on specific topics. Such working groups meet on a temporary basis and will be disbanded once their main purpose has been achieved

Committee members may address all issues related to alumni relations, marketing and reputation management.

Committee members act as ambassadors for the ISS.