TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOL

SISSA – the International School for Advanced Studies – is a leading institute for research and postgraduate training on the national and international stage.

Founded in 1978, the School aims to promote the development of culture and of scientific research and to prepare young graduate students for advanced research, both pure and applied. The School was actually the first institute in Italy to offer post-graduate studies culminating in a PhD degree.

SISSA’s international strategy focuses on the strengthening of external collaboration and relies on a consolidated network of Universities and research organisations in other countries.

The School has several active International Scientific Agreements with foreign Universities and research institutes all over the world.

SISSA promotes and carries out its research activities in different areas of physics, mathematics and neuroscience, with regard to both basic and applied research.

The research activity of the School is characterised by strong interdisciplinarity, even in emerging scientific fields (e.g. Data Science, Artificial Intelligence, Dipartimenti di eccellenza)

The research projects are coordinated by internationally renowned scientists. Some members of the School have received “honoris causa” degrees in prestigious universities, they were given important prizes or are members of leading scientific academies. SISSA scientists obtain each year substantial international and Italian grants.

In particular, SISSA ranks in the highest positions among the Italian scientific institutions in terms of awarded ERC grants, especially when considering the small faculty size. In 2018, 12 ERC-funded projects were active, of which 7 under Horizon 2020 and 5 under the previous framework program FP7. The evaluation of SISSA research is performed at the national level by an independent governmental agency, ANVUR. The most recent evaluation procedure (VQR, Research Quality Assessment) finished in 2016 and concerned the years 2011-2014. SISSA had excellent results in the evaluation and was classed in top positions for all the Areas, Research Groups and disciplines.

Besides its traditional pillars (Higher education and Research), SISSA has been constantly working to promote new activities and initiatives focused on knowledge valorization and public engagement:

- The Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Natural Sciences and Humanities (hereafter ILAS) obtained extensive funding through time from both private and public, but also European sources, for the intense activity of science dissemination which unfolds in various directions, including but not limited to, by way of example, several initiatives in the field of health communication, in scientific studies and in the organisation of events on a variety of topics including addictions, domestic accidents, the study of the brain and of the emotions. It also organises professional Master courses at the highest level in Science Communication and in High Performance Computing.
SISSA owns the in-house company SISSA Medialab Ltd, who publishes, in collaboration with Springer and the Institute of Physics (IoP), leading electronic journals like the Journal of High Energy Physics (JHEP), the Journal of Statistical Mechanics: Theory and Experiment (JSTAT) and the Journal of Cosmology and Astroparticle Physics (JCAP). SISSA Medialab Ltd is also engaged in outreach activities.

The operational structure of the School is characterised by a relatively number of professors/scientists each of which is a Principal Investigator (PI), which carries out her/his independent research in collaboration with young post docs and PhD students.

Research activity is coordinated within each of the three scientific Areas (Physics, Mathematics and Neuroscience) and organised in Research Groups, which carry out scientific and educational activities contributing to the management of a PhD Course. Each Area organises autonomously its didactic and research activity, administers the financial resources assigned yearly by the Board of Directors, but also organises the PhD courses. Each course is managed by a Teaching Board and a Coordinator and is linked to one or more-research groups. SISSA's PhD courses are characterised by a small number of selected students, a well-structured, high-quality training offer, a large variety of research activities that students have to engage in throughout their course of study, but also by an interdisciplinary internationally-oriented approach, as certified by the procedures for accreditation of PhD courses by ANVUR.

The governing bodies (Director, Academic Senate, Board of Directors, Secretary General and School Council) have decisional and executive power on the opening or closing of research groups or PhD courses, on the policy of recruitment of teaching and administrative staff, on the relations with other research institutions or universities, on internal organisation and strategic directives. Governing bodies are supported by Commissions or Committees provided for by law, but also set by SISSA with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of institutional bodies.

As at 31 December 2018, SISSA was organised as follows:
- 3 scientific Areas (Physics, Mathematics, Neuroscience)
- Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Natural and Humanistic Sciences (ILAS)
- 2 inter-institutional structures (IGAP, IFPU)
- ITCS (Information Technology and Computing Services)
- Safety (Occupational Health and Safety Management)
- 4 administrative Areas
- 13 administration offices
- 2 administrative positions in staff to the Secretary General
- 1 administrative services in staff to the Research and Academic Services Area

SISSA is characterised by a relatively limited number of professors, researchers, and administrative and technical staff. As at 31 December 2018, SISSA employed 64 among professors and researchers,
18 fixed-term researchers, a Secretary General who acts as sole manager, 114 administrative and technical staff of which 13 with a fixed-term contract, 4 technologists and 100 post-docs (FTE).

SISSA operates in a complex multi-level context:

**International and national research context**: the School cooperates with, but also (and often) competes against the major national and international scientific institutions to obtain grants and competitive research fundings, and to attract junior and senior researchers of high scientific profile;

**International and national context of higher education**: the School competes with scientific training institutions for the attraction of top-level students;

**Context of the Italian university system**: the School has an excellent position among the higher education Schools (the Italian “Scuole speciali”, i.e. “special Schools”);

**Local context**: SISSA is located in a region with a high concentration of research institutions (in addition to the School, there are 2 universities, more than 20 research institutions, 4 scientific&technological parks), with which collaborative relationships are constantly held.

SISSA’s stakeholder**s are:
- a technical-scientific community of limited size (about 600 people) but whose four main components (teachers and researchers; temporary research staff; doctoral students; administrative and technical staff) are highly integrated;
- public and private institutions that finance SISSA’s research and higher education activities;
- the international scientific community in direct contact with SISSA;
- the local scientific community;
- the local community (institutions; political representatives; citizens);
- all potential scientists/researchers/students;
- the SISSA alumni community;
- the local, national and international labour-market and productive system;
- the system of providers and entities with business-relations with the School.

Documents and explanatory texts uploaded in the SUA_Schools database are available on the Quality page of SISSA website, in the section relative to accreditation: [https://www.sissa.it/cevs](https://www.sissa.it/cevs)