

PARTNER STATUS
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
GLOBAL NETWORK OF MASTER'S IN DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to delineate the roles and responsibilities of the **Master's in Development Practice Secretariat** and those accorded **Partner Status** in the **Global Network of Master's in Development Practice Programs** in the achievement of the objectives of the Network. It also outlines the benefits associated with participation in the Network. In order for the Network to succeed, all participating institutions and organizations must fulfill their responsibilities.

This Memorandum of Understanding is not a legally binding agreement nor does it obligate any of the participants to any financial expenditures. Network members may only represent their institutions as a member of the Network and not as a branch or designated entity of the Earth Institute or Columbia University.

The terms of participation in this Global Network will be revised as needed.

I. BACKGROUND

The new Master's in Development Practice (MDP) program is a two-year, graduate level program that has been designed to train aspiring practitioners to understand and manage integrated approaches to sustainable development challenges across the health sciences, natural sciences, social sciences and management. This rigorous cross-disciplinary, academic curriculum emphasizes the development of critical knowledge, skills and attributes of an effective professional in developing societies.

The MacArthur Foundation has committed \$16 million dollars to create MDP programs at up to 20 universities worldwide over the next three years.

II. NETWORK DEFINED

The Global Network of MDP Programs refers to all universities or academic institutions that have developed MDP programs or are interested in developing MDP programs. There are three levels of membership within the Network— Partners, Members and Affiliates. Institutions with full MDP programs are considered “Partners” and those that are interested in building their

capacity to eventually offer such a program are “Members.” Members are also institutions that are interested in participating in some of the activities of the Global Network of MDP Programs including the global online course, Global Classroom; the development of the virtual repository; and, MDP related meetings and conferences. “Affiliates” are institutions that do not have and are not in the process of building an MDP program but wish to partake In the Global Network of MDP Programs.

The Network comprises both MacArthur Foundation funded institutions and other universities that do not receive MacArthur funds. All of the institutions in the Network are committed to inter-disciplinary, rigorous, and practice-based training in sustainable development.

III. NETWORK OBJECTIVES

The Network has the following objectives:

- To create exemplary MDP programs worldwide in accordance with the curricular recommendations of the International Commission on Education for Sustainable Development Practice report.
- To build international dialogue on the training of sustainable development practitioners through conferences, resources and information exchange on the Secretariat and Global MDP Websites: (<http://mdp.ei.columbia.edu> and www.globalmdp.org).

IV. NETWORK PRINCIPLES

The Global Network of MDP Programs is based on the following principles:

- *Reciprocity*: The Network is strengthened on the basis of inputs from all its participants. In return, Network members can expect benefits and the added value of belonging to a Global Network of MDP programs.
- *Cross-Disciplinarity*: The Network believes in the creation of graduate degree programs that are inter-disciplinary, rigorous and grounded in practice-based training in sustainable development.
- *Institutional Innovation*: The interdisciplinary nature of the MDP program fosters collaboration among multiple departments, schools, colleges, universities, institutes, and governments and NGOs and serves as a broad-based lens and catalyst for innovative problem-solving.
- *Leadership*: The Network aims to become the leader in the development and implementation of Master’s in Development Practice programs by developing and expanding its membership and activities worldwide.

- *Language:* The working Network language is English. Whenever possible, translation of resources into the following five United Nations languages (French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Mandarin) will be provided.

V. NETWORK MEMBERS: PARTNERS

The Global Network of MDP Programs “Partners” are universities or other academic institutions that have received seed funding in 2009 or 2010 from the MacArthur Foundation to develop MDP programs . Partners can also include universities or institutions that have developed MDP programs without the financial assistance of the MacArthur Foundation. All Partners will have developed MDP programs in accordance with the curricular recommendations of the *International Commission on Education for Sustainable Development Practice*, and will offer MDP programs that are based on the recommendations found at http://mdp.ei.columbia.edu/?id=mdp_curriculumn.

VI. PREREQUISITES FOR PARTNER STATUS

The criteria below are a prerequisite for those universities or academic institutions that wish to apply for Partner status in the Global Network of MDP programs:

- **MDP Curriculum.** The university or academic institution agrees to offer an MDP program whose majority core courses at graduate-level covers areas of health, natural, social and management sciences. Some recommended courses include *Health and Epidemiology, Nutrition, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Management, Energy, Engineering and Urban and Rural Planning, Delivery Science, Governance, Economics, Statistics, Budget and Financial Management, Gender and Development, Geographic Information Systems, Project Design and Management and Climate Change*.
- **MDP Field Training Program.** The university or academic institution agrees to offer an MDP Curriculum that includes two rigorous “hands-on” field experiences of at least six to nine weeks, each one providing students the opportunity to gain firsthand experience on integrated development approaches within the real-world context.
- **MDP Global Classroom.** The university or academic institution agrees to offer the Global Classroom course, *Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Development* facilitated by the MDP Secretariat. (Please see www.globalmdp.org for more information on Global Classroom.)

VII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTNERS

In addition to meeting the Prerequisites for Partner Status, the university or academic institution agrees to:

- Collaborate with the MDP Secretariat and other members of the MDP Network to update and revise MDP curriculum standards and programmatic guidelines.
- Uphold the basic MDP curriculum standards, as disseminated by the MDP Secretariat, ensuring that high-quality, cross-disciplinary programs are supported at all MDP Network members.
- Contribute to the virtual MDP repository with resources such as case studies, course syllabi, readings and other materials.
- Conduct or participate in local, regional, national or international events or activities that increase the awareness of the MDP approach to sustainable development.
- Exchange experiences and share knowledge as well as carry out long term cooperation on specific topics and projects of relevance to MDP programs.
- Provide relevant information to the Secretariat for the MDP website and newsletter.
- Submit an annual report on the progress of its MDP program (e.g., report enrollment and degrees conferred annually in an attempt to help assess the impact of the MDP program.)
- Support the engagement and enthusiasm for the MDP program from the highest leadership of the institution to the departments, institutes, schools and members that will participate in the MDP program.
- Designate a person to serve as liaison officer with the MDP Secretariat
- Non-monetary support of MDP program site review and visit by the MDP Secretariat within the first three to four years.
- Use the official MDP logo on its MDP website.
- Provide a link on its website to the MDP Secretariat website.
- Share employment and contact information of MDP graduates to contribute to an MDP alumni network.
- Participate in faculty and student exchanges.

VIII. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MDP SECRETARIAT

In its roles as the umbrella organization overseeing all Master's in Development Practice (MDP) programs and activities worldwide, the MDP Secretariat agrees to:

- Provide relevant news, information and resources to the Network via the Master's in Development Practice Secretariat website <http://mdp.ei.columbia.edu> and the Global MDP website www.globalmdp.org
- Develop a virtual repository of MDP resources that are aligned with the MDP curriculum
- Promote the Network and its members via the website and other media
- Offer opportunities for sharing of MDP experiences and "best practices" through meetings and conferences, both online and face-to-face.
- Provide virtual and real time global partnerships and networking opportunities.

- Offer online, blended, global courses including the Global Classroom: Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Development.
- Raise awareness of the MDP programs through the dissemination of articles, papers and presentations.
- Provide guidance in the development of the MDP field training programs and student and faculty exchanges.
- Provide assistance with strategic planning for developing MDP programs and field trainings.
- Develop an alumni network
- Provide access to employer and career information

IX. PARTNER STATUS FEE

Participating in the Global Network as a Partner is free. It is based on an application and approval process. At some time in the future the Secretariat may wish to consider voluntary membership fees to help it sustain its work when MacArthur Foundation funding expires. The Secretariat will also seek other donor support.

X. NETWORK MANAGEMENT

The MDP Secretariat manages the day-to-day operations of the Network.

- The MDP Secretariat serves as the umbrella organization overseeing all Master's in Development Practice (MDP) programs and activities worldwide.
- The MDP Secretariat is the official representative of the Network to the public. The Director acts in close co-operation with the International Advisory Board and the Network.
- The MDP Secretariat is housed at Columbia University's Earth Institute in New York City.
- More information on the Secretariat is available at <http://mdp.ei.columbia.edu>

This Memorandum of Understanding is understood and agreed:

University Name

_____ Date _____

**Academic Committee of the
International Advisory Board**

_____ Date _____

MDP Secretariat

_____ Date _____