LETTER OF INTENT TO FORM AN ALLIANCE
OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS
INVOLVING
KTH ROYAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SWEDEN
STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY, SWEDEN,
AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN, USA

With this letter, and in recognition of significant existing and emerging collaborations among the faculty at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm University, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the executive leadership of the three institutions declare their intent to establish a sustained transnational higher education alliance, and to cooperate in mutually beneficial activities that contribute to their shared core institutional missions of research, education, and public service. While this letter of intent is not intended to create or imply legally binding obligations or contractual relations between any or all of the parties, it does set forth a common vision, and potential, desired outcomes from the alliance.

Designation and Identification of the Alliance. The alliance between the three institutions will be designated INSPIRE: Illinois–Sweden Program for Educational and Research Exchange, or in brief, the INSPIRE Alliance. The institutions acknowledge the value of establishing a recognizable and commonly held identity for the alliance and collaborative activities undertaken through its auspices among relevant internal and external constituents, including but not limited to: their faculty, administrative personnel, students and alumni; regional, national, and transnational governmental agencies concerned with higher education, research policy, and funding; non-governmental organizations and foundations; scholarly and professional societies; common or potential corporate partners; and other consortia of higher education institutions.

Scope of Collaborative Activities. The three partnering institutions intend to engage in active and sustained collaborative activities of mutual benefit and which advance the core values and missions of all three institutions. The institutions envision a broad, multi- and interdisciplinary partnership, acknowledging existing collaborations in a variety of academic disciplines and research areas, with the intention of actively promoting the alliance among its faculty and students in order to expand further the range of disciplines addressed.

Potential and Desired Outcomes. The leadership of the three allied institutions acknowledge the considerable potential for the INSPIRE Alliance to expand and enhance each institution’s ability to pursue its primary missions of education, research, and public service. In addition, the institutions see great value in establishing the INSPIRE Alliance as a conduit to facilitate and promote increased connections between the public administration and commercial sectors of the State of Illinois and the greater Stockholm region. With this potential in mind, the following desirable outcomes are envisioned:
**Education.** The INSPIRE Alliance should provide unique and innovative global learning experiences open to all students enrolled at the partner institutions. In addition to an increase in undergraduate and graduate student mobility between Illinois and Stockholm, the INSPIRE Alliance should facilitate more sophisticated cooperative education ventures, including structured curricular pathways and designated course equivalencies to ensure that study abroad experiences are more fully and seamlessly integrated into undergraduate and graduate degree programs; co-developed new curricula, and co-taught courses that take advantage of complementary expertise; and, eventually, joint or dual degree programs.

**Desired Outcome.** Within the next five years, the INSPIRE Alliance should identify direct course equivalencies or develop and implement co-taught courses in at least one engineering discipline, at least one natural or life sciences discipline, and at least one social sciences or humanities discipline.

**Research.** The INSPIRE Alliance should enhance each member institution’s ability to conduct innovative research and generate new knowledge. In particular, an effective, broad-based and sustained partnership among the institutions should foster novel multi- and interdisciplinary approaches to complex issues and problems with global ramifications.

**Desired Outcome.** Within the next five years, the INSPIRE Alliance should identify and implement at least one sustained collaborative research agenda involving faculty from each of the institutions and from a variety of disciplines. This research agenda should be united by a common, mutually agreed upon theme that is broad enough to take advantage of the breadth of excellence across disciplines found among the partner institutions, but focused enough to generate specific collaborative research projects and provide access to specific external funding sources.

**Public Service.** The INSPIRE Alliance offers unique opportunities to enhance the roles of the allied institutions in serving the civic societies of the state of Illinois, the Stockholm region, and the world.

**Desired Outcome.** Within the next five years, the INSPIRE Alliance should survey existing engagements and expertise to identify a particular site in the developing world and target that site for a sustained, high impact development project that will improve economic and societal conditions of the local populace. Shared development activities targeted at the selected site may include translational research, applied service projects and student volunteerism opportunities in areas such as public health, nutrition, higher education capacity building, energy and information technology infrastructures, clean water supply, and sustainable development.

**Economic Development.** The INSPIRE Alliance should enhance each member institution’s ability to foster economic development in the state of Illinois and the greater Stockholm region by facilitating connections between corporate partners based in the two regions. The INSPIRE Alliance should also contribute to enhanced innovation and efficiencies in public administration of the two regions, by providing a conduit for the exchange of expertise and best practices to address common issues and challenges.

**Desired Outcome.** Within the next five years, the INSPIRE Alliance should identify and cultivate at least one corporate partner based in Sweden, with ambitions to establish or expand operations in the United States, and at least one corporate partner based in Illinois, with ambitions to establish or expand operations in Sweden. Through research parks and other existing avenues of institutional interaction with the commercial sector, the allied institutions should facilitate the expansion of identified corporate partners activities into their respective regions.
This letter of intent acknowledges the common vision and aspirations of the senior leadership at the allied institutions for the INSPIRE Alliance. While not placing any legally binding obligations or establishing contractual relationships between any of the institutions, this letter does express the shared intention of the executive leadership of each institution to expand and sustain a wide range of collaborative activities over the next five years, within the context of the INSPIRE Alliance. As specific collaborative ventures are identified as mutually beneficial, any necessary contractual agreements between the relevant institutions will be negotiated in good faith and executed prior to initiating joint activities in support of these ventures.

FOR KTH ROYAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

[Signature]
Peter Gudmundson, President

Date: April 26, 2012

FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

[Signature]
Phyllis M. Wise,
Vice President, University of Illinois Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Date: 26 April 2012

FOR STOCKHOLMS UNIVERSITET

[Signature]
Kåre Bremer, Vice- Chancellor

Date: 26 April 2012