§1 The Gothenburg and Umeå Vascular Study Group (hereafter called the Study Group) is a network of researchers at Sahlgrenska University Hospital, University of Gothenburg, and Norrland University Hospital. Members are clinicians and researchers who are dedicated to vascular research and contribute to the activities of the Study Group. Members may also be active elsewhere. A person can become a member after approval by the Study Group. Each member represents a defined research group or organisation. A member can be excluded if he or she no longer contributes to the activities of the study group. This action is based on a majority decision in the Study Group.

§2 The Study Group performs research on the aetiology, pathology and clinical aspects of vascular disease with the specific aim of creating a biobank of excised human atheromas and other tissues related to the vascular system. The biobank also includes clinical information on each patient together with frozen blood, serum, and plasma.

§3 Matters of interest are dealt with at regularly scheduled meetings of the Study Group. The agenda shall be sent out at least two weeks before each meeting. Decisions are taken by a simple majority of the members present. Each year, a Working Group is elected to handle communications and to document decisions of the Study Group. The Working Group comprises a chairman, a secretary, a representative from the Department of Vascular Surgery at Sahlgrenska University Hospital, and a representative from Norrland University Hospital.

§4 Changes to these rules are decided upon either at two successive Study Group meetings or in two successive voting rounds by e-mail under supervision and documentation by the Working Group. Notice of proposed changes shall be sent out at least two weeks in advance. The second voting round will take place after the result of the first voting round has been presented together with any comments. A decision is valid if at least 2/3 of the voting members, representing a majority of the research groups or organisations constituting the Study Group, have voted for this decision.

§5 The PI with overall responsibility of an individual study is responsible for applications to ethics committees for that study. The Working Group is responsible for the daily operative management of the biobank, including adherence to conditions given by ethics committees and the Data Inspection Board.

§6 New projects based on the biobank and its materials as well as contacts with other researchers and the industry are presented to the Working Group by the PI, preferably as a concise document sent by e-mail. The Working Group will inform the Study Group. If no objections have been received from the Study Group within two weeks, the Working Group will approve the suggested project. Disapproval of a project must be based on a majority decision in a voting round done either by e-mail or at a Study Group meeting.

§7 Publication policy
1. All publications containing material or data from this biobank shall acknowledge the study group. Example: “Endarterectomies, serum samples and clinical data were obtained from the Göteborg Atheroma Study Group (http://www.wlab.gu.se/GASG)”
2. Authors are the persons taking a direct initiative and responsibility for study design, realization, applications to ethics committees, compilation of results and authorship.
3. The Study Group shall have the right to comment on a manuscript two weeks before its proposed submission date. The title page and abstract shall be e-mailed to the Study Group members. The manuscript can be submitted after two weeks if no requests for further information and/or comments are received.