GLOBAL IMPACT

INTERNATIONALISATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI 2017–2020
SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

UNIVERSITIES OPERATE IN A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT. HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH IS CRITICAL FOR OUR SUCCESS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

Research is international by nature. Our university’s international recognition is based on its achievements in research and education. International reputation grows with visibility and a distinctive profile. They also attract researchers and students and improve the prerequisites for international funding. Along with these developments, the university assumes greater global responsibility.

A global university environment means tougher competition in attracting the best researchers and students. The same is true for visibility and the university’s position in relation to other universities. We want to stay at the top in our research, but so do many other ambitious universities.

Education is increasingly mobile. Degrees and parts of them are taken in different countries more and more. International skills are highly esteemed in the job market. Degrees are increasingly composed of components completed in other universities beyond the alma mater. We offer new international multidisciplinary degrees and courses completely in English.

In the future, we need to raise more and more competitive research funding. International research instruments will pay an increasing role in this. Access to them requires broadening research collaboration across borders. We have been highly successful in our fundraising in Finland and we continue to invest in it. However, there is larger scale potential in international fundraising. Fundraising is a long-term effort where it takes time to achieve results. This makes it even more crucial to start now.

Internationalisation is a task for every one of us at the University of Helsinki and a positive challenge for the university as a whole. This roadmap shows the steps for internationalisation in the Strategic Plan 2017–2020. We hope that our partners will also challenge us to become even better!

ANNA MAURANEN
VICE-RECTOR FOR INTERNATIONALISATION
WE WANT TO STAY AT THE TOP IN OUR RESEARCH, BUT SO DO MANY OTHER AMBITIOUS UNIVERSITIES.
TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The University of Helsinki holds a strong position among international research-based universities. Over the last few years, the university has made great progress in internationalising both its research and teaching. The basis for future progress is excellent, as shown by these figures:

56

Position in the Shanghai Ranking 2016
+45%  
NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL CO-AUTHORED PUBLICATIONS IN 2016: 9000  
NUMBER IN 2011: 6200

+214  
NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TEACHING STAFF IN 2016: 995  
NUMBER IN 2011: 781

+50%  
AMOUNT OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FUNDING IN 2016: 30 MEUR  
AMOUNT IN 2011: 20 MEUR

48%  
SHARE OF INTERNATIONAL MASTER’S PROGRAMMES IN 2016  
SHARE IN 2011: 25%  
SHARE IN 2006: 0%

+49%  
NUMBER OF INCOMING EXCHANGE STUDENTS IN 2016: 1268  
NUMBER IN 2011: 851

+225  
NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN 2016: 962  
NUMBER IN 2011: 737
STRATEGIC THEME 1

A CREATIVE, INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING AND WORLD CLASS RESEARCH

THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI MAKES A STRONG GLOBAL IMPACT TOGETHER WITH ITS PARTNERS.

WE CREATE SOLUTIONS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE WORLD

Achieving and maintaining research excellence is a primary goal and a matter of pride at the University of Helsinki. We monitor the quality of our research yearly through international rankings. Our target is to be among the top 50 universities in the world.

Our researchers publish in the best journals. We aim for a 15% increase in the number of top quality international scientific publications by 2020. The University of Helsinki will be a pioneer in open knowledge and aims to increase its number of Open Access publications by 40%.

We provide support for our researchers as they make even stronger research applications for international research funding. Our target is to increase international research funding up to 50 million euro annually.

We produce world class high-impact knowledge that contributes to solving global problems. Together with our partners we are building a better, more sustainable world.

WE BUILD HUBS OF EXPERTISE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT

In the next four years the university will raise its international profile further. We work hard to match our international reputation and recognition with the strength and impact of our research.

The university is building internationally appealing hubs of expertise. These include the Helsinki Institute of Life Science (HiLIFE), Helsinki Sustainability Science Centre (HSSC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Centre, Centre for Atmospheric Sciences and Helsinki Centre for Digital Humanities (HELDIG).

WE FORGE NEW GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

The University of Helsinki’s vision is encapsulated in the slogan “global impact in interaction”. We forge new partnerships from key areas for global impact. Partnerships boost research profiles, visibility and funding to the mutual benefit of both parties.

The University of Helsinki is one of the founding members of the League of European Research Universities (LERU). LERU is a vital channel for having a say in EU science policies. At the same time, cooperation with the best European universities gives a boost to our own activities and facilitates the sharing of best practices.

We continue to strengthen our international alumni network. In addition to Berlin and Beijing, we will open new alumni clubs in Brussels, London, and Stockholm among others.
THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI AIMS TO RANK AMONG THE WORLD’S TOP 50 UNIVERSITIES.
STRATEGIC THEME 2

FOCUS ON THE STUDENT

A MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL STUDENT COMMUNITY ENHANCES OUR GLOBAL PROFILE.

The University has renewed its Master’s and doctoral programmes. One of the main incentives has been to promote internationalisation. In the next four years the university aims to achieve significant growth in the number and quality of international students.

NEW MASTER’S PROGRAMMES MULTIPLY THE AMOUNT OF TEACHING IN ENGLISH

All tuition at the University of Helsinki is based on high-level research. The new Master’s programmes starting in 2017 represent a significant change towards a truly international education environment. Half of all Master’s programmes are available in English. Our international and home students together make up an international student community. Our goal is that at least every fifth student comes from abroad in the future.

The quality of students will be ensured by more active recruitment and marketing. The university’s own scholarships and grants enable us to attract the best students. They support the university’s global responsibility and, thanks to them, bright and ambitious students from developing countries also have a chance to study at our university.

The new Master’s programmes will further improve student experience and provide opportunities for innovative learning. They also offer attractive employability skills together with networks and ties with future employers. They will thus significantly boost the success of our students in the global job markets. Digital learning environments, online learning and mobile services for students highlight the interactive character of studying and learning at Helsinki.

WORLD-CLASS DOCTORAL EDUCATION ATTRACTS INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ON A LARGE SCALE

The University of Helsinki’s doctoral education is based on four graduate schools which offer altogether 32 doctoral programmes. We have witnessed a significant growth in international doctoral students over the last few years. In addition, the pool of countries has grown more versatile: we educate more students from different countries than before, and the number of non-EU students has grown by almost 30% in five years.

Our target is to increase the number of international doctoral students up to 35% by 2020. In other words, the current total will almost double. We will offer even better working conditions for doctoral students while investing in international recruitment and marketing. New key partnerships will be forged to offer an attractive environment for our international cooperation. These will also help us to establish new educational initiatives and networks and thus support career promotion by boosting mobility.
OUR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM OPENS UP OPPORTUNITIES FOR TALENTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.
STRATEGIC THEME 3

RESOURCES FOR REFORM

INTERNATIONALISATION REQUIRES BOLD INVESTMENTS AND NEW OPENINGS.

AN OPEN AND INNOVATIVE OPERATIONAL CULTURE

The new English-language Master's programmes provide an excellent illustration of our practices based on our Language Policy. In these Master's programmes, home students mingle with international students in multilingual and multicultural groups where people from different backgrounds enrich teaching and learning.

At the moment, one fifth of our teachers and researchers are not Finnish by nationality. In the future, the share will be even greater, meaning that all our activities must be based on a strong multicultural university community. Besides Finnish and Swedish, the role of the English language will gain ground as a language of daily activities and communication. All services provided by the University will also be fully available in English.

Staff who are fluent in different languages are crucial for making this change possible. A focus on language skills is essential in recruiting new service and support staff. For the next four-year period, a new programme to internationalise our University Services will be launched. This programme will focus on developing the international skills and networks of individual workers as well as entire service sectors and their critical success factors. The target is also to significantly increase the number of international administrative staff as well as international trainees. In hiring researchers and teachers, particular attention will be given to their ability to recruit the best students and to carry out internationally recognised research and high-quality teaching. We will also develop skills that facilitate communal integration of both students and staff.

VERSATILE AND FLEXIBLE FUNDING

International research funding is increasingly important. Our strategic target is to grow our annual international research funding from the current 30 million to 50 million euro. This implies we need to enhance our competitiveness in current research instruments along with finding new openings. The University will particularly focus on growing its share from the EU's Framework Programme as well as from the European Research Council. International foundations and enterprises will also be more important in the future. We will make our funding more versatile by investing in international fundraising and transnational education.

Central means to achieve this are research excellence, international partnerships, the capacity of our researchers to acquire funding, and results-oriented research funding services. Tuition fees introduced for non-EU/EEA students partly contribute towards the costs of internationalisation. The fees support English-language study programmes and strengthen the services offered for students.
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FUNDING, FUNDRAISING, TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION AND TUITION FEES AS ENABLERS OF INTERNATIONALISATION
CASE CHINA

CHINA IS A RISING POWER IN EDUCATION. WE SOLVE GLOBAL CHALLENGES TOGETHER WITH OUR CHINESE PARTNERS.

COOPERATION BASED ON INNOVATIVE RESEARCH
The University of Helsinki and Peking University are strategic partners. Our partnership is based on innovative joint research. The four spearheads in research cooperation are air quality, comparative law, teaching and learning as well as medicine, particularly cancer research. Together they form a unique multidisciplinary combination that generates new insights. Through cooperation, we are solving global challenges that neither of us can tackle alone.

We aim to increase joint publications, doctoral education and researcher exchanges as well as research funding.

A GREAT INTEREST IN CHINA
The importance attached to China is on the rise. Our new alumni club in Beijing strengthens our links with our Chinese alumni and other stakeholders. We are expanding our visibility in Chinese social media and investing in attractive research-based events in China.

In Finland we are making our collaborations with and our expertise on China more visible.

STRONG EXPERTISE ON CHINA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSBINKI

CLIMATE CHANGE
Pan-Eurasian Experiment (PEEX) and Global SMEAR research station network

EDUCATION
Sino-Finnish Joint Learning Innovation Institute

INTERNATIONAL LAW
Finnish China Law Centre

CULTURE AND SOCIETY
University of Helsinki Chinese Studies and Confucius Institute

Together with other Finnish universities, we are joining forces and engaging more effectively with our stakeholders.

We have a diverse pool of partner universities for student exchange, through which our students gain hands-on experience of operating in China. Excellent teaching of Chinese is offered by the only Confucius Institute in Finland.

...AND FROM THE CHINESE
Finland is increasingly interesting for China. Our renowned education system which scores high in Pisa evaluations attracts a great deal of interest among the Chinese. In collaboration with our Chinese colleagues, we are helping develop Chinese education from early childhood to university. Our research on air quality is helping to solve China’s serious problems with pollution.

The University of Helsinki is attractive to Chinese students. The Chinese form the largest group of our international Master’s and doctoral students. Our new international study programmes offer high-quality Master’s programmes in English with truly global and intercultural elements to attract Asian students as well.

Peking University is the strategic partner of the University of Helsinki. Other particularly important partners for us are Beijing Normal University, Renmin University of China, Nanjing University, Fudan University, Xi’an Jiaotong University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, University of Hong Kong, Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and Social Sciences (CASS).
MARKKU KULMALA’S RESEARCH GROUP HAS A MISSION TO BUILD A GLOBAL SMEAR RESEARCH STATION NETWORK.
CASE RUSSIA

THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI IS KNOWN FOR ITS STRONG AND VERSATILE RESEARCH ON RUSSIA.

WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH ON RUSSIA

The University of Helsinki offers a unique combination of high-level research, engagement with society and an excellent research infrastructure. Together they form an internationally attractive hub.

CROSSING BOUNDARIES TO MAKE NEW OPENINGS

During the 2017–2020 strategy period we will boldly cross disciplinary boundaries with new research initiatives. We will create a platform where social sciences and humanities meet natural sciences to solve the grand challenges of our time, such as climate change, together.

Multidisciplinary Russian studies is an integral part of the University of Helsinki profile. We are opening new research positions in Russian politics, Russian environmental studies, Russian law and administration as well as Big Data methodology. We are also investing in security studies together with our partners.

EXPERTISE FOR THE BEST OF THE WORLD

We are also known for our active engagement and dialogue with our stakeholders. We implement new effective ways to share knowledge to meet societal needs. Our RussiaHUB Helsinki initiative brings together experts from different domains of society.

In 2018 we will start a new international Master’s programme in Russian studies where we educate the next generation of experts and researchers on the basis of our multidisciplinary research.

The Aleksanteri Institute at the University of Helsinki is a multidisciplinary research centre focusing on Russia and Eastern Europe. Its popular Visiting Fellows programme offers grants for short-term visits that enable international researchers to visit the Institute and become part of its scholarly community and network. The Slavonic library is a world-renowned treasure, especially for scholars of Russian history and culture. At the Faculty of Arts, students can also study Russian as a native tongue.
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

STRATEGIC TARGETS FOR 2020

+15% TARGET GROWTH OF HIGH-QUALITY INTERNATIONAL ARTICLES FOR 2020
CURRENT NUMBER OF ARTICLES: 2700

30% RATIO OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TEACHING STAFF IN 2020
RATIO IN 2016: 22% (950)

35% RATIO OF INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN 2020
RATIO IN 2016: 19% (900)

20% RATIO OF INTERNATIONAL MASTER’S DEGREE STUDENTS IN 2020
RATIO IN 2016: 9% (800)

50% AVERAGE PLACEMENT IN RANKINGS
RANKING IN 2016: 77

50 MEUR AMOUNT OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FUNDING IN 2020
AMOUNT IN 2016: 30 MEUR

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY
Student mobility is a cornerstone in an international university. Our goal is to enhance its effectiveness together with growing the numbers.