



University of Tartu
STRATEGIC PLAN
2009–2015 (A2015)

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The University of Tartu Strategic Plan 2009-2015 (A2015) was adopted by the Council of the University of Tartu, regulation no. 69 of 19 December 2008.

The Strategic Plan is available on the University of Tartu's website at www.ut.ee/strategy

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Foreword

Dear Reader,

The University of Tartu has adopted a new Strategic Plan for the years 2009-2015 (A2015). This means that members of the university community have agreed on a set of common aims and directions for development. In the Strategic Plan, the University of Tartu sets the goals of educating and training new generations of Estonia's leading intellectuals, strengthening the national university and internationalisation, ensuring the quality of studies and providing service to society.

The Strategic Plan is an important document for the university, as it maps out directions for development and principles to keep in mind. The university does not operate in isolation from the rest of society, and the question of what the university will be like in ten or twenty years is not merely an internal matter. The mission of the University of Tartu, as set forth in A2015, is to act as the leading force driving the development of knowledge-based society in Estonia and the guarantor of its continuity. A2015 thus also includes reference to national Estonian strategies, as the University of Tartu has a clear role in shaping the life of the Estonian state and society. The University of Tartu must fulfil the duties emanating from its status as the national university of Estonia, such as the study of Estonian culture, language and history. We also aim to become an internationally attractive learning and working environment, to develop influential centres of excellence of international importance, and, in cooperation with partners, to power Estonia's economic and cultural life and social development. In order to attain these goals, the university needs to be an active, flexible, modern organisation.

We live at a time when cooperation, both domestic and international, is fundamental. The future of Estonian higher education can only be built on close cooperation between Estonian universities. In order to find common ground and cooperate effectively, we need to be creative and open-minded. Productive cooperation must also be developed with partners in Europe and the world.

For the first time, the university's Strategic Plan will be linked to detailed operational plans, to be supplemented and updated annually. The present

document is thus nothing final; it simply charts directions for development. Activities to be undertaken in order to work toward the strategic aims of the university, however, will be specified in operational plans.

I hope that our university will thrive, and that it will be an active and trustworthy partner in Estonia's social development. I wish the University of Tartu to have its own image and its own role in the international community of universities. I believe that by working together toward our common aims, we will be able to attain the goals laid out in this Strategic Plan.

Professor Alar Karis
Rector of the University of Tartu

1. Mission

The mission of the University of Tartu is to act as the leading force driving the development of knowledge-based society in Estonia and the guarantor of its continuity.

In order to fulfil its mission, the University of Tartu advances research, education and culture and serves society through teaching and research, creating the preconditions for development of world-class research fields through international cooperation and, as Estonia's national university, assuming its share of responsibility for the preservation of the Estonian people and nation.

As the national university, the University of Tartu, in cooperation with the state, works to ensure the continuity of an educated Estonia and the development of Estonian language and culture. The university seeks to promote disciplines that are concerned with Estonia and the Estonian people, and to guarantee the preservation and development of its cultural heritage.

2. Vision

The University of Tartu is an internationally renowned research university, and the centre of academic life, culture and high-technology innovation in Estonia.

3. Strategic Aims

- 3.1. In all its fields of teaching and research, the University of Tartu ensures a standard that is internationally recognised and the best in Estonia.
- 3.2. The University of Tartu is an attractive learning and working environment, with an international staff and student body.
- 3.3. The University of Tartu has developed centres of excellence of international importance in teaching and research.
- 3.4. In cooperation with its partners, the University of Tartu exerts an active influence on Estonia's economic and cultural life and social development, communicates its activities to the public and promotes lifelong learning.
- 3.5. The University of Tartu is a flexible and smoothly functioning organisation endowed with modern infrastructure.

In order to implement its strategic aims, the university intends to carry out the following activities to develop its people, studies, research and organisational structure.

4. People

4.1. Students

The university has an international, talented, dedicated and motivated student body whose diverse backgrounds enrich the teaching and research environment. Students take an active part in developing the university as an organisation and voice their opinions in major issues of societal development. Graduates of the university possess international study experience and are competitive on the labour market. The numbers of doctoral students and adult learners, including those taking continuing education or retraining courses, has significantly increased.

To attain its aims in relation to students, the university shall:

- 4.1.1. engage in close cooperation with establishments providing secondary education and other partners, in order to prepare highly motivated student candidates, including offering advanced study opportunities for gifted and talented secondary school students;
- 4.1.2. improve the admissions, career and academic counselling support systems and the dissemination of relevant information to target groups;
- 4.1.3. initiate a development programme in the fields of science and technology in order to motivate students in primary and secondary education to engage more intensively with these fields and to pursue



higher education, including cooperating closely with teachers in these fields on all levels of the education system;

- 4.1.4. support various target groups studying at the university, including the promotion of student mobility and linguistic and cultural integration, initiation of an equal opportunities programme, promotion of continuing education and retraining programmes, and development of relevant support services;
- 4.1.5. expand marketing activities to recruit motivated international student candidates;
- 4.1.6. guarantee the opportunity for students to develop their English language skills and other transferable skills, in order to ensure their competitiveness on the international labour market;
- 4.1.7. motivate and support students and other potential target groups to enter doctoral studies, including developing doctoral schools, cooperating with employers and actively promoting PhD opportunities;
- 4.1.8. in cooperation with partners, develop a system of grants to facilitate various target groups coming to the university to study;
- 4.1.9. involve students in the work of the university's decision-making bodies and in the university's development activity; in cooperation with academic and other organisations, promote entrepreneurial attitudes and social activism of students;
- 4.1.10. develop a learner-centred teaching environment and promote a lifelong learning approach.

4.2. Employees

The university employs international, highly qualified (in both research and teaching), and creative academic staff, whose diversity enriches the teaching and research environment and ensures a high standard of teaching and research in the university. The university's non-academic staff are highly qualified and capable of ensuring the effective and high-quality operation of the university. University staff are active in professional development, and they participate in developing the university and contribute to the development of society.

To attain its aims in relation to employees, the university shall:

- 4.2.1. develop the requirements for filling academic vacancies at the university, including a mandatory mobility requirement for vacancies requiring a doctoral degree; provide regular professional development opportunities for teaching skills; consider teaching and popularisation of science and research in assessing the performance of researchers; and implement a system of measures to ensure the observation of these principles;
- 4.2.2. create a system of incentives to support academic careers, taking into account employees' work in contributing to the university or in enterprises related to the university, and considering employees' performance based on their proportion of teaching and research work and on participation in the university's decision-making bodies and in the university's development;
- 4.2.3. promote the professional development and mobility of employees, consolidating relevant information and creating the necessary preconditions (grants, flexible work arrangements);
- 4.2.4. develop measures to attract Estonian lecturers and researchers who have defended their doctoral degrees abroad, or who are working abroad;

- 4.2.5. create the conditions for recruiting international teaching and research staff to the university, including the development of support services intended for international employees and readiness and motivation among the university's employees to involve international lecturers, researchers and experts in the work of the university;
- 4.2.6. support the continuous development of employees' professional skills and knowledge, including the development of management skills of managers and improvement of skills required for working in an international academic environment (Estonian language skills for international lecturers and researchers, English language skills, intercultural communication, etc.);
- 4.2.7. promote social activism of employees, and facilitate the provision of services to public and private partners on the basis of contracts with the university; make provisions for flexible arrangements concerning working hours, for distance work and part-time work;
- 4.2.8. through regular analysis of human resources, formulate principles for announcing vacancies and filling and eliminating positions, and implement those principles to ensure the development of the university;
- 4.2.9. facilitate the involvement of experts and creative artists in teaching;
- 4.2.10. in cooperation with the University of Tartu Clinics Foundation, motivate medical doctors on the university's teaching staff to take an active part in teaching and research, and increase the involvement of Estonia's top clinics in postgraduate training of physicians and in related research.

4.3. Other Members of the University and Alumni

The university's professors emeriti, senior lecturers emeriti, honorary doctors and honorary fellows, medical residents and alumni take an active part in the university's core and development activities and in the work of the university's decision-making bodies. With their experience, diverse international and professional backgrounds and personal initiative, they contribute to the development of the university and to fulfilling the university's mission.

To attain this aim, the university shall:

- 4.3.1. create a functioning network of professors and senior lecturers emeriti, honorary doctors and fellows, medical residents and alumni by the regular dissemination of information and requests for feedback;
- 4.3.2. involve professors and senior lecturers emeriti, honorary doctors and fellows, medical residents and alumni in advisory capacities in the work of decision-making bodies, programme committees, working groups and other bodies of the university;
- 4.3.3. develop the work of the Alumni Council, including the creation of a database for the university's alumni and diversifying opportunities for involving alumni as partners in the work of the university.



5. Core Activities

5.1. Studies

The university offers research-based degree programmes, continuing education and retraining courses, based on positively accredited curricula which meet the needs of society. The high quality of the university's teaching rests on the use of appropriate teaching methods and forms, professional lecturers with excellent teaching and supervisory skills, cooperation with other universities, enterprise, and other partners in Estonia and abroad, and the continuous development of the university's learning environment. The university's flexible and purposeful organisation of studies takes into consideration the needs and interests of learners with various linguistic, cultural, age and socio-economic profiles. As a research university, the University of Tartu devotes special attention to increasing the proportion of Master's and PhD studies in order to advance the knowledge-based society.

To attain its aims in relation to studies, the university shall:

- 5.1.1. reduce the fragmentation of curricula, among other things by integrating the strengths of various curricula into interdisciplinary, attractive and competitive curricula, developing further the credit-based accounting system, and creating joint curricula, where practical, with other institutions of higher education and research and development institutions;
- 5.1.2. use curriculum development to react flexibly to the changing needs of society, develop international curricula and continue to improve the quality assurance system for curricula, involving students, employers and other stakeholders in this process;
- 5.1.3. guarantee that studies in the first level of higher education are based on Estonian-language curricula in every field of study, which also contain courses or modules taught in other languages;
- 5.1.4. promote student exchange through curriculum development, organisation of studies and the development of corresponding support services, with a special focus on offering opportunities

for mobility in Master's level studies, and on actively using mobility opportunities in PhD studies;

- 5.1.5. support the use of diverse teaching methods, and of flexibility in organisation of studies, considering the needs of the students (especially gifted and talented students) and of other groups of learners;
- 5.1.6. develop support services intended for students and adult learners, including implementing more broadly the principles of accreditation of prior and experiential learning, and offer alternative opportunities for students with special needs to complete their chosen curricula;
- 5.1.7. implement measures to improve the effectiveness of doctoral studies in respect of students studying both part-time and full-time, including international doctoral students and paying special attention to the quality of supervision offered;
- 5.1.8. in cooperation with Estonian and international partners, create a network of internship facilities, integrating internships into Bachelor's studies and increasing the proportion of internships in Master's studies;
- 5.1.9. agree on the principles of lifelong learning and disseminate them;
- 5.1.10. in cooperation with partners, develop continuing education and retraining courses, including the creation of continuing education courses linked to degree studies and offering these across Estonia, and expand the summer university programmes.



5.2. Research and Development

The university's research and development work is internationally competitive and meets high standards in every discipline engaged in at the university. The university's success in research and development is based on academic competence, modern infrastructure and internal and external collaboration of the university's research teams and units. In addition to the creation of new knowledge and skills, the university's research and development activities also focus on ensuring the continuation of Estonia's national culture and independence, supporting the socio-economic development of Estonian society, improving public health, innovation, promoting research-intensive business ventures and raising public awareness of scientific research and its results.

To attain its aims in connection with research and development, the university shall:

- 5.2.1. establish a development fund to support strategic initiatives. The fund will primarily finance teaching and research themes with the potential to become international centres of excellence, based on research competence, sustainability, and demand for and prospects of the initiative;
- 5.2.2. create conditions conducive to participation in applications for funding to carry out major research and development projects, by offering support for project coordination, project management and information exchange;
- 5.2.3. continue to develop a system of intellectual property management and further elaborate the principles of the university's participation in business ventures, including the creation and development of spin-off companies;
- 5.2.4. develop a uniform system for providing support services to protect and market intellectual property belonging to the university's employees, in order to promote the transfer of knowledge and technology;
- 5.2.5. coordinate the procurement and shared use of expensive equipment and the creation of core facilities;
- 5.2.6. develop the infrastructure for data processing and data management, in order to provide researchers with access to shared resources and global databases;
- 5.2.7. supply complex, interdisciplinary research, consultation and expert assessment services to the government and be open to partnerships with other sectors, particularly the enterprise sector;
- 5.2.8. promote cooperation in Estonia and internationally, including participating in the work of international organisations, taking part in joint projects as a coordinator or partner and supporting the organisation of high-level international scientific conferences at the university;
- 5.2.9. in cooperation with the national government, implement measures to develop scientific terminology in Estonian and promote disciplines studying Estonian language and culture;
- 5.2.10. implement measures to popularise the outcomes of scientific research and to promote research careers.



6. The University as an Organisation

6.1. Leadership and Communication

The university's quality assurance system rests on the qualities of professional, motivated, proactive and responsible leaders at all levels, and on performing regular analyses of the university's operation, trends in society, and the needs of stakeholders. Partners and stakeholders of the university take part in an advisory capacity in the strategic management of the university.

To achieve its aims in relation to leadership and communication, the university shall:

- 6.1.1. elaborate, implement, and maintain a comprehensive, continually updated quality assurance system with respect to its core activities;
- 6.1.2. modernise the academic, administrative and financial management of the university's units and procedures, continue to develop requirements applicable to vacancies for leading positions, and create an in-service professional development scheme for managers;
- 6.1.3. develop partnerships with government agencies, local authorities, other universities, research and development institutions, enterprises and other organisations, involving these in the work of the university's decision-making bodies in an advisory capacity;
- 6.1.4. strengthen the identity of the University of Tartu as Estonia's national university, preserve the university's academic values and traditions, develop the university as a learning organisation, and create an environment and a system of values to support organisational learning;
- 6.1.5. elaborate and implement a plan for internal and external communication, including image building and marketing, and taking into account the interests of internal and external stakeholders;

- 6.1.6. communicate the university's scientific achievements, and disseminate information on opportunities for working and studying at the university, in Estonia and abroad.

6.2. Organisational Structure

The university structure comprises comprehensive faculties that support interdisciplinarity, bringing together teaching and research by research area and high-quality teaching and research-based services; as well as colleges and research and development institutions. The University Library, museums and the Botanical Garden are establishments which are open to the public and which preserve, display and develop their collections, making them available for the purposes of research and using them to offer a variety of services to various groups of visitors.

To attain its aims in relation to the organisational structure, the university shall:

- 6.2.1. enhance interdisciplinary integration in the research areas of humanities, medicine, natural and exact sciences, and social sciences, through faculties which are composed of viable institutes and join the university's teaching and research activities;
- 6.2.2. adapt the work of the university's support structure in accordance with the needs of academic activity;
- 6.2.3. in cooperation with partners, develop and strengthen the university's colleges as training and competency centres, in order to promote balanced development in Estonia through the transfer of knowledge and skills;
- 6.2.4. establish an academic bridgehead of the university in Tallinn by increasing the diversity of courses offered there;
- 6.2.5. cooperate with the municipal authorities of Tartu, Tallinn, Narva, Pärnu, Viljandi and Türi to develop compact, functional campus complexes of the university;

- 6.2.6. develop the University of Tartu Library into an advisory and competency centre for Estonia's university and research libraries;
- 6.2.7. develop the tourism and educational services offered to the public by the university's museums and the Botanical Garden in cooperation with the AHHA Science Centre and other partners;
- 6.2.8. in collaboration with the national government, implement measures to preserve, study and present to the public the arts and natural science collections of the University of Tartu as part of the heritage of Estonian culture, based on the best professional competence;
- 6.2.9. develop the University Library, museums and Botanical Garden as teaching and research facilities, providing for the use of their information systems and collections in degree programmes and continuing education courses;
- 6.2.10. develop the Maarjamõisa medical campus in cooperation with the University of Tartu Clinics Foundation, arranging for the campus to have the facilities and equipment required for teaching and research.

6.3. Study and Work Environment

The University provides an attractive environment for studying, working and creative processes and possesses a modern, developing system of support services.

In order to attain its aims in relation to the study and work environment, the university shall:

- 6.3.1. ensure that the conditions for studying and working in the university's buildings meet modern standards, including planning and launching a programme to adapt buildings for use by people with special needs;

- 6.3.2. develop IT support functions and information and document management systems, enhancing their functionality and user-friendliness and digitalising basic administrative procedures;
- 6.3.3. agree on principles regarding the use of Estonian and other languages in the university, and ensure that members and partners of the university have access to information in English and communication in English in a professional capacity;
- 6.3.4. abide by principles of environmental friendliness and promote environmental awareness and sustainability among students and staff;
- 6.3.5. create conditions conducive to the engagement of members of the university in cultural activities and in recreational and professional sports;
- 6.3.6. cooperate with local authorities as well as with other partners and stakeholders, in order to adapt the university's study and work environment to the standards of international best practice. This includes dedicating special attention to supporting a multicultural and tolerant atmosphere, characterised by equal opportunities for individuals regardless of their sex, ethnicity and religious or other convictions. All members of the university must be guaranteed a safe environment to study and work in.



7. Implementation

- 7.1. The Strategic Plan of the university is a strategic document that forms the basis for the operational plan for the following financial year and the three years following that. The operational plan shall be updated each year; and consists of strategic goals, indicators and key figures used to determine whether these goals have been attained, and measures required to achieve the aims within the timeframe established, together with the budgetary framework to support implementation. The operational plan constitutes the basis for the university's budgetary planning procedures.
- 7.2. Arrangements for the implementation of the Strategic Plan shall be the responsibility of the Rector. The University Advisory Board and the University Council shall assess the operational plan and progress toward achieving the aims established in the Strategic Plan once a year on the basis of relevant reports.

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