

INTERNATIONALISATION

STRATEGY

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AARHUS UNIVERSITY

Aarhus University

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PREAMBLE

Aarhus University's strategy for 2013-2020 confirms and intensifies a course already set. Based on core disciplines of high quality, Aarhus University is committed to providing skills for the future, undertaking cutting-edge research and addressing challenges that cross traditional scientific disciplines. This requires an international approach, which can only be achieved through strong interaction and collaboration with researchers and lecturers, public authorities, NGOs and enterprises around the world.

Aarhus University regards internationalisation as a significant means to achieve quality through diversity and to deliver on the university's goal of being a leading university with a global reach. The strategy's objectives and instruments are prioritised according to their contribution to the four key goals of Aarhus University's strategy 2013-2020; research, education, talent development and knowledge exchange. The ambition of Aarhus University is that internationalisation permeates the institution as a whole and becomes a natural element in and across all core activities.

The implementation of this Internationalisation Strategy 2014-2020 will be rooted in the needs of the academic areas and will focus on how internationalisation adds value and contributes to Aarhus University reaching its full potential. To ensure relevance and follow-up the strategy will be supplemented by actions plans at faculty and department levels. Progress will be closely recorded and the internationalisation strategy as such will be evaluated and updated in 2017.

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RESEARCH

PRIORITIES

Aarhus University regards internationalisation as an indispensable element in delivering high quality research. With a long tradition of excellence and an attractive infrastructure, the research areas of Aarhus University are well positioned to maintain and expand their international links. The objective is to capitalise upon existing strengths and expand the number of research areas where the university belongs to the international elite. This endeavour will build upon strong researcher-to-researcher contacts as a sine qua non for international research collaboration.

While Aarhus University has been an active player in attracting international funding, unrealised potential exists. The university aims to increase the international visibility of its research and to make its voice heard in discussions on future priorities for European and international programmes. Moreover, the university will increase its focus on winning large-scale international grants as well as taking the lead in international research projects.

TARGETS

- **Strengthen research quality through international collaboration**
Aarhus University will strengthen its collaboration with leading international research environments in order to deliver cutting-edge research of highest quality.
- **Attract more international research funding**
Aarhus University will focus on winning more international research grants, especially EU Horizon2020 grants, and taking the lead in more international research projects.
- **Recruit excellent and internationally recognised researchers**
Aarhus University will recruit excellent international researchers, who will bring new ideas, networks and potentially also future research funding to the university.

INITIATIVES

- **Reap the full benefits of strategic alliances**
Building on a bottom-up approach, existing collaboration will be expanded with a view to improving quality and reach and diversifying funding streams. As part of such collaboration, Aarhus University will make its research infrastructure available to foreign researchers in order to advance common research objectives.
- **Improve pre-award research support and diversification of the funding portfolio**
Aarhus University will prioritise its research support targeting high-potential applications and improve information channels to make sure that all relevant funding opportunities are considered. This includes a pro-active servicing of applicants with a high potential for success.
- **Increase the number of Aarhus University coordinated international research projects and strengthen support for project administration**
Researchers will be encouraged and supported to become coordinators of international research projects. Furthermore, administrative post-award structures will be strengthened to simplify project coordination and/or management of large, international projects with multiple partners.
- **Strengthen the recruitment and retention of international researchers**
An action plan for international recruitment of researchers will be developed and pre-defined recruitment packages with improved support services for international junior and senior researchers will be offered. A coordination of existing instruments and services for researchers and spouses, strategic funding and proactive search processes will improve the competitiveness of the university in the market for international researchers.
- **Provide better opportunities for outbound researcher mobility**
Researchers will be encouraged to go abroad to strengthen their international research network. Sabbaticals will be used as an instrument to support such mobility. Moreover, international experience and network will be assessed positively in internal recruitment processes.
- **Influence international agenda setting**
Aarhus University wishes to influence the content of funding schemes and the international research agenda in a strategic and systematic way. This entails increased involvement at the prefunding stage. Participation in international expert and advisory boards will be pursued to achieve this. Moreover, the university will engage in close dialogue with national and international research authorities and foundations.



EDUCATION

PRIORITIES

The landscape of higher education is dramatically changing. Global demand for higher education is increasing and the engagement in international mobility is on the rise. At the same time global competencies are in high demand in the labour market, and universities are expected to adjust the content and the delivery of education accordingly.

In recent years, Aarhus University has consolidated services for its international students. Now a supplementary approach is warranted; one that focuses on quality in recruitment and outgoing mobility schemes as well as curricular development in order to further embed internationalisation into educational programmes.

Hitherto, Aarhus University has recruited the majority of its international full degree students from Europe. A further emphasis will be placed on the recruitment of the most talented international full degree students to increase diversity of the student body and strengthen ties to high-growth economies such as the BRICs and the Next Eleven Countries.

Aarhus University confirms its commitment to internationalisation at home and developing the global and intercultural competencies of its students. Thus, the university will strive to balance the number of incoming and outgoing students by encouraging and supporting that an increasing share of its students engage in international mobility during their studies.

Finally, Aarhus University will work with partners around the world to improve quality and reach through international educational collaboration ranging from structured mobility schemes to joint programmes awarding double and joint degrees.

TARGETS

- **Recruit highly talented full degree students**
A high concentration of talented international full degree students will strengthen international ties, stimulate internationalisation-at-home and provide attractive graduates for the labour market.
- **Encourage more students to go abroad**
Aarhus University will encourage more students to go abroad to acquire global and intercultural competences preparing students for a global workplace.

INITIATIVES

- **Internationalise study programmes**

The supply of Master programmes provided in English will be increased, and the university will offer more full degree programmes or semester packages in English at the Bachelor level. Furthermore, Aarhus University will improve the quality of education by embedding an international dimension in its curriculum among other things through the use of methodology, perspectives, cases and examples. Moreover, the university will ensure sufficient language competencies among its lecturers and make provisions to provide academic staff with intercultural competencies to teach in an international classroom and in a global context.

- **Develop tools for recruiting the most talented students**

Increased international marketing and an Aarhus University recruitment strategy combined with action plans developed by each of the main academic areas will act as means to attract an increasing number and diversity of international full degree students with strong academic qualifications. Aarhus University will build on its strong reputation as a top university in research and education and be a frontrunner in combining these two. A strong focus on research-based learning will help to consolidate Aarhus University's international profile.

- **Develop a professional support structure for full degree students**

To attract and retain international students, Aarhus University will develop a comprehensive "from admission to employment" support structure targeting the needs of international full degree students and complementing procedures at department and faculty level.

- **Education collaboration with high quality environments abroad**

Aarhus University will provide additional opportunities for mobility and adding a global dimension of high quality to student learning outcomes. To this end, Aarhus University will make agreements on educational collaboration with world leading universities and fully exploit opportunities in Nordic and European funding schemes.

- **Provide mobility windows in study programmes**

Mobility windows where the curriculum opens for studies abroad in certain semesters will be introduced at either the Bachelor or Master level. In addition, the university will aim at offering a more diversified range of mobility windows with educational partners – from traditional exchange mobility to more structured mobility forms such as networked or embedded mobility.

- **Joint and double degrees**

An increasing number of international double or joint degree programmes will be developed through alliances with high quality environments and institutions abroad. As national regulations covering this area continue to be a challenge and impediment, Aarhus University will lobby for an amended policy.



TALENT DEVELOPMENT

PRIORITIES

Aarhus University aims to be one of the most attractive places in Northern Europe for young researchers to launch their careers. The university offers strong PhD programmes across its research areas, attractive stipends and solid quality assurance mechanisms, e.g. due to its structured approach and provision in four graduate schools. Moreover, Aarhus University strives to uphold a strong focus on attracting talented international junior faculty as well as providing opportunities for early career researchers to collaborate internationally.

In recent years, the university has placed particular emphasis on developing a strong international dimension in its doctoral programmes. Currently, almost 30 per cent of the PhD student population originates outside Denmark.

In the coming years Aarhus University will refine and strengthen its efforts to recruit promising PhD students and early career researchers. The emphasis will be on the potential for research excellence, but also on individuals with exceptional abilities to fulfil future needs of business and industry as well as managerial positions in the public and private sectors.

TARGETS

- **Embed an international dimension into all PhD programmes**

Aarhus University will continue to enhance the international dimension and quality of its doctoral education alone and in collaboration with international partners. A comprehensive international approach will be applied to all PhD programmes and PhD students will be prepared for a career in an international environment.
- **Expect PhD students to go abroad**

Researchers increasingly work across cultures and mobility has become the norm in most disciplines. Hence, Aarhus University aims to prepare its PhD students for this reality by expecting the highest possible number of individuals to engage in international mobility as part of their PhD studies.
- **Focus on quality in international recruitment**

A strategic approach with a strong focus on quality will be taken in the recruitment efforts. Notably, the university will strive to attract PhD students and junior faculty through its research networks as well as to enhance visibility in targeted international markets in order to increase competition at the admission stage.

INITIATIVES

- **Develop more joint PhD courses and PhD degrees with international partners**

Building on a bottom-up approach, Aarhus University will collaborate with international partners in prioritised areas on the content, delivery and quality assurance of doctoral education. As part of this effort, the university will pursue opportunities for establishing joint courses and joint degree programmes as well as develop support structures to facilitate the establishment of more international collaboration on doctoral education.

- **Add an international dimension to the quality assurance of doctoral education at Aarhus University**

Aarhus University has a framework for solid and continuous quality assurance in doctoral education. The university wishes to extend this with an international dimension. International reviewers will be invited to evaluate all elements of the PhD experience at Aarhus University in order to put forward recommendations for improvement.

- **Develop international mobility schemes**

The university expects young researchers to engage in international mobility. Aarhus University regards first-hand experience with research environments abroad as an integral part of the formation of a researcher. To this end, all PhD students will be expected to spend a minimum of three months abroad and supported through targeted supervision and guidance. Moreover, all young researchers aiming at an academic career are expected to have experience from research environments abroad.

- **Focus on recruitment to PhD programmes and junior faculty employment opportunities**

A recruitment strategy will be developed to ensure a strong international intake of talented PhD students and junior faculty. Moreover, the Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies will be used to attract some of the best, young researchers from around the world.



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

PRIORITIES

Aarhus University contributes to innovation and welfare through extensive collaboration with the private and public partners. The university has developed extensive knowledge exchange competencies and is a major supplier of research-based consultancy services and continued professional development.

Knowledge exchange activities have significant international potential. Furthermore, innovation is increasingly global and characterised by strong competition, emerging market opportunities and fast-growing technological developments. Aarhus University acknowledges its global and social responsibility, which calls for extensive international collaboration with a broad range of partners.

TARGETS

- **Expand participation in international consultancy services**

Aarhus University will strengthen its collaboration with international organisations and authorities on international monitoring, analyses, evaluations and policy advice.

- **Increase contribution to global welfare through capacity building**

Aarhus University will strengthen its contribution to global welfare through capacity building and knowledge exchange activities.

- **Strengthen collaboration with industry and business internationally**

Aarhus University will use the potential of its network with companies nationally and internationally as a platform for developing employment opportunities, establishing research collaboration and contributing to innovation.

INITIATIVES

- **Provide better opportunities for business collaboration internationally**

Aarhus University will continue to expand its network of international companies and Danish companies with representation abroad to provide new opportunities for research, education and business collaboration. Special efforts will be made to attract funding from the Horizon 2020 program for joint projects with private companies, particularly small and medium sized enterprises, to create innovation and meet the demands of society for knowledge, technology and talent.

- **Retention of international graduates**

Aarhus University will improve opportunities for employment and internships for international students and graduates through targeted career guidance and strong interaction with private enterprises.

- **Make knowledge exchange competences more visible**

Special efforts will be made to increase international visibility of the potential for innovation, commercialisation and research-based consultancy between Aarhus University and partners abroad. Inter alia, international development organisations will be approached. To this end, the university will increase participation in advisory groups, boards and committees internationally to monitor the content of tender schemes and create new opportunities for engaging in international consultancy.

- **Intensify engagement in international capacity building in less developed countries**

Aarhus University will contribute to capacity building by collaborating with local authorities and key partners in selected developing countries. Furthermore, through a strategic use of scholarships Aarhus University will recruit talented students from developing countries and provide them with qualifications that will allow them to contribute to capacity building in their home countries.

- **Supply continued professional development internationally**

Aarhus University will utilise existing strongholds within research and education to provide continued professional development and in-service training for an international audience.



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