

# AUDIT OF HAAGA-HELIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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## 2.3 Promoting renewal through the organisational culture

- Korkeakoulun itsearviointi

### Promoting courageous and innovative organisational culture

Our [values](#) such as courage and collaboration, are the basis of our organisational culture. Experiments are encouraged, even if they contain a risk of failing or receiving fragmented results. The results of successful experiments are distributed within Haaga-Helia.

Supervisors are trained to act as reformers and encourage their team in applying collaborative and innovative methods. Teams and individuals take responsibility of their work and monitor and develop their processes, giving room for change and innovation. Our flexible curricula enable us to innovate and apply new solutions to societal needs.

Our management encourages competence sharing. Challenges are solved cooperatively, and best practices applied through organisation. Projects engage teachers and specialists from diverse areas of responsibility. For example, RDI area [engaging vocational pedagogy](#) recognises current and future pedagogical development goals and needs. By doing this, it promotes research, development, and innovation. There is lot of potential in the new organisational structure to bring education and RDI closer to each other. We need more consistent, clear, and structured procedures to enable the effective use of competences across Haaga-Helia.

Our international networks and RDI projects offer platforms for innovation and bringing people together around a theme, for example, through the Ulysseus Innovation Hub for Artificial Intelligence. Commercial Services also constantly innovate new products and projects, bringing together staff members from different areas of responsibility.

## Engaging alumni with our community

We have an alumni network of over 41 000 graduates. To develop our relationship management with them, we have automated the process of joining our alumni group. Our graduates can easily update their contact information online and join the network through which they receive, for example, invitations to our alumni events. When our staff members are travelling, they can meet our alumni working abroad.

[Alumni communication](#) is one of our strengths. We send automated welcome letters to all graduates within a week of graduation and invite them to join our activities. We use segmentation in communication via Customer Experience Management (CEM) tools.

We encourage alumni to participate in our mentoring programme, which is also offered via virtual tools. The mentoring programme is one of the strengths in our alumni relations. The programme is part of “Keys to career and competence” course, awarding study credits to the participants. An alumni of the year award is given annually, to a person who has contributed to advancing the mission, reputation, and standards of Haaga-Helia.

We invite alumni as guest speakers to our lectures and seminars, and to networking events to meet students. Virtual opportunities are also available. Exchange students can participate in alumni activities and access alumni LinkedIn and our alumni register.

## Relevant networks as part of our strategy

Our strongest regional network is the 3AMK at the Helsinki Metropolitan area. Through 3AMK, we strengthen the relationship with the cities and other HEI’s. It is a regional ecosystem, supporting businesses and organisations by offering knowledge and competence.

At the national level, we are active in networks developing continuous learning. There is the hands-on network working on Open UAS related challenges, and the director-driven network developing strategy and maintaining dialogue with [Arene](#). Moreover, the Higher education pedagogy, [HEIPEDA](#), network connects our specialists with colleagues in other HEIs and has proven to be a fruitful platform for cooperation.

Besides our HEI partners, we maintain commercial [partner collaboration network](#) providing services for an annual fee. Partner companies and organisations are supported and monitored by a designated Partner Manager. To ensure equal level of engagement, they meet regularly for internal training and sharing best practices. In 2022, Domestic Sales pilots a revised partner programme including customer segmentation. When planning the pilot, an extensive customer

survey and applied service design methods were used. Partner collaboration benefits us through partner fees and the engagement of companies with our projects. Students benefit from company visits, work-life related learning assignments, contacts, and job opportunities.

At the international level, Ulysseus is an important strategic network. We also have about 200 [international partner universities](#) around the world. International partnerships enable student and staff mobility, RDI cooperation, projects, and benchmarking. International Services develop and monitor collaboration activities and agreements regularly.

To facilitate education export, we cooperate with international agents promoting us abroad. Our Global Education Services have also initiated HERENET (Higher Education Recruitment Network) for joint planning and lobbying of education export. We also coordinate the [China-network UAS](#), funded by the Finnish government. The shared goals of the network include increasing research-based cooperation and staff mobility, educating specialists who have in-depth knowledge in China, and adapting and exporting the UAS model to China. We will explore through a research project how this network could be transformed from a network into an interdependent and innovative ecosystem.

### **Strengths**

Courage, experimenting and collaboration are promoted

Results from successful experiments distributed and applied

Alumni mentoring programme

We are an active partner in networks and projects

Ulysseus gives access to high level research and innovation ecosystem

### **Enhancement areas**

Partial lack of transparency and equal access to all the networks

Fragmented results of experiments

Strengthening international alumni network

Initiating new networks and projects

Common framework for Innovation Hubs together with Ulysseus partners

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Haaga-Helia's organisational culture based on courage supports innovative

## RDI activities that promise to create societal impact

Haaga-Helia has well-functioning procedures and platforms for managing and updating its stakeholder relations and collaboration networks which are suitable for supporting the use of competences possessed by its staff and students.

Haaga-Helia promotes courage and collaboration as essential values of its organisational culture. The audit team finds these values to support innovation within Haaga-Helia. According to the interviews, engaged teachers and researchers do not have to fear failure. One of the aims set for the new organisational structure along with competence areas is to allow more flexibility in teaching. Haaga-Helia aims for the new flexibility to bring education and RDI closer to each other. For the time being, this hypothesis can neither be confirmed nor rejected and should be monitored in the future.

Both interviewees and the self-assessment report have identified potential for enhancement in the management of projects, i.e., by a central project management office. For external stakeholders it should be very clear and obvious whom to contact within Haaga-Helia in case of interest. Teachers should gain more competence in the area of entrepreneurial activities and be encouraged to experimental activities.

## Membership in a European university alliance offers great opportunities

There is compelling evidence that Haaga-Helia maintains strong European and international networks. Among the ten most important RDI projects of the past years there were seven projects that were funded by the European Union, and three that were funded by the Finnish government (Ministry of Education and Culture or Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment). Haaga-Helia is one of only a few universities of applied sciences that is a member of one of the European University alliances. The European University alliance of Haaga-Helia (Ulyseus) offers great future opportunities for internationalization and enhances Haaga-Helia's attractiveness for international students and networks. One of the ambitious targets of Ulyseus is the establishment of innovation hubs at each partner university, thus providing relevance also at the regional level. In the interviews it became obvious that regional stakeholders are mostly not aware of the existence and importance of Ulyseus. In the future, Haaga-Helia should further integrate the regional stakeholders into the activities of Ulyseus. The staff members, students and external regional stakeholders could benefit from this network.

## Haaga-Helia's goal to establish a regional ecosystem is ambitious and should consequently be followed

At the regional level the 3AMK network strengthens relationships between cities and other HEIs. In the interviews, 3AMK did not play a significant role. If the ambitious objective to establish a regional ecosystem supporting business and organisations is taken seriously, Haaga-Helia should enhance the promotion of the potential of the network both internally and externally. The same

applies to the partner collaboration network.

Given Haaga-Helia's alumni network of more than 41,000 individuals, there is significant potential to leverage this resource for RDI activities beyond its current use for teaching, mentoring, and career services. Hence, the audit team recommends that the institution more actively engage this valuable network in its RDI efforts. For example, an annual event on one of the campuses of Haaga-Helia with an interesting programme for alumni could provide a platform to network with them.