

AUDIT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

Authors **Milena Žic Fuchs, Sebastian Neufeld, Mikael Pentikäinen, Marijk van der Wende, Sirpa Moitus & Mira Huusko, Self-assessment of the University of Turku (eds.) Juha Sainio & Ilona Tuominen**

Year of publication **2023**, FINEEC publications **26:2023**

Language **English**

ISBN **978-952-206-804-0 pdf**

2.3 Promoting renewal through the organisational culture

- HEI's self-assessment

Innovative work and co-operation to support renewal

Based on the value of creativity, UTU encourages UTU community *members to seek new and innovative perspectives and try new working methods*. Also, the Principles and Practices of Leadership at UTU promote the *renewal and culture of innovation and experimentation* in order to aid the realisation of the Strategy and the Personnel Policy.

On the University level, enhancing innovative culture includes providing infrastructure, such as spaces for teaching technology experimentation and collaborative spaces for the UTU community and stakeholders, as well as social recognition, moral support for leadership, and financial resources, such as internal strategic funding. Also, the University Services support multi-disciplinary networking and aid the flow of information and good practices between units. This takes place via dedicated initiatives (see chapter 3.2), voluntary and leadership training, and supporting the creation of informal peer groups.

The University wide strategic projects (Figure 12) have been especially successful in utilising the diverse expertise within UTU in order to create new solutions based on multidisciplinary co-operation which are appropriate to UTU's profile. The projects also allow learning and experimentation in the interface with the customer and stakeholder creating benefits also for them.

Futures Knowledge Distillery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > offers foresight services to organisations in developing their foresight skills and ability to prepare for changes in their operating environment > is based on the Finland Futures Research Centre's 30 years of experience together with the scientific research conducted at UTU 	Laboratory of Business Disruption Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > provides an open research platform for academia and business focused on business disruption phenomenon > develops new business models and concepts to support the development of new innovations and strategies for enabling or surviving under disruption
Sote Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > connects interdisciplinary scientific expertise with healthcare, social welfare and care, and educational authorities to develop accessible services > organises education for degree and open university students with more than 20 courses and 80 ECTS. > organises open interdisciplinary forums and seminars and participates in research projects 	AI Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > brings together different fields of science on artificial intelligence education > provides university students with an AI minor subject (25 ECTS) and a free introductory level AI & Cybersecurity MOOC for anybody interested

Figure 12. Strategic funding projects focused on societal interaction

Outside the strategic projects, UTU encourages faculties to implement outreach activities together with stakeholders. One example is the [Corporate Corner](#), a multi-disciplinary innovation and collaboration platform that provides opportunities for companies and UTU experts to network through tailored events. Overall, external expertise is critical in order to promote renewal at UTU. For example, by appointing professors of practice, UTU has been able to involve people with the kind of expertise society needs as teachers and research supervisors.

Based on the value of openness, students are engaged in the preparation and key decision-making at UTU. UTU also wants to inspire students and offers them a focused grant for entrepreneurial projects to test and pilot new ideas.

Collaboration and co-development in long-term and goal-oriented partnerships

UTU values close collaboration in regional, national and international networks and engages in long-term and goal-oriented partnerships to strengthen UTU's societal impact in education and research.

The six [strategic research and education profiles of UTU](#) strengthen internal collaboration and create platforms for networks, business collaboration, innovations, and strategic partnerships. The work conducted within the profiles advances sustainable development, decision-making based on researched information, application of expertise, and other societal impact of research. In several of the strategic profiles, UTU collaborates closely with important HE partners Åbo Akademi University and Turku University of Applied Sciences.

UTU operates within three *thematic campuses* ([Health Campus Turku](#); [TechCampus Turku](#); [Culture Campus Turku](#)) in Turku that bring together the expertise of HEIs and the local development company Turku Science Park for the benefit of the region's business (Figure 13).

HEALTH CAMPUS TURKU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A multidisciplinary knowledge cluster within medicine, social and health care, and technology which offers opportunities for research, innovation and corporate collaboration. > Members: Hospital District of Southwest Finland, University of Turku, Åbo Akademi University, Turku University of Applied Sciences, Novia University of Applied Sciences, and Turku Science Park Ltd.
TECHCAMPUS TURKU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The goal is to create a strong centre of technical expertise in Turku to promote the competitiveness of Southwest Finland and the development of companies. > Members: University of Turku, Åbo Akademi University, Turku University of Applied Sciences, and Novia University of Applied Sciences.
CULTURE CAMPUS TURKU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The goal is to make the culture sector and its impact more visible, create more jobs and business in the field of culture, and strengthen the attractiveness of the Turku region. > Members: University of Turku, Åbo Akademi University, Turku University of Applied Sciences, Novia University of Applied Sciences, Turku Conservatory, Turku Science Park Ltd, and the City of Turku.

Figure 13. Thematic campuses in the Turku region

At the end of 2022, UTU introduced a Code of Conduct for *Strategic and University-level Partnerships*. In accordance with the policy, UTU seeks partnerships with individual organisations that have regional, national or international influence in order to support sustainable growth, competitiveness and well-being through all activities. The strategic partnerships are formed so that multidisciplinary cooperation is conducted preferably with all UTU's faculties, while in the University-level partnerships the co-operation is more limited in terms of disciplines. The current strategic partners include Bayer Nordic SE, Meyer Turku Oy, Wärtsilä Finland Oy, and the City of Turku.

Faculties, departments and research groups have extensive co-operation with *domestic and international stakeholders in different fields* (such as private, public and third sector organisations as well as individuals in different roles). They operate independently in forming these partnerships and related agreements while ensuring that they are appropriate to UTU's profile and support the realisation of the Strategy. However, they are supported by the Partnerships and Strategic Engagement.

International collaboration is essential in achieving UTU's strategic goals. [The International Programme of UTU](#) outlines key measures for increasing and improving quality, productivity and impact in all three missions. The Programme ensures internationally high-quality research and education, increases UTU's attraction, strengthens partnerships that promote responsibility and sustainability as well as communality and multiculturalism. The most essential long-term networks are EUA, EC2U Alliance (European Universities Alliance) and the Coimbra Group. Also, UTU coordinates two of the eight strategic Global Networks of the International Programme of the Ministry of Education and Culture. UTU has been a long-term member in international education-related networks, such as EUCEN. On the other hand, UTU actively seeks new strategic networks. Currently, it maps international networks for research impact.

Supporting current students as future alumni and the existing *alumni* community is a part of UTU's societal impact. Alumni are provided with access to events and continuous education in order to help them adapt to an ever-changing society. In return, they can contribute to education

by participating in the teaching and motivating current students. Alumni are invited to plan alumni activities and give feedback about their experiences of working with UTU through surveys, alumni events and by sharing information about currently needed working life skills. In addition, notable alumni are important in terms of promoting the reputation of UTU.

UTU manages partnership agreements in the ASTA Case Management System. Partnerships management is supported also by the CRM system which is currently being developed to support stakeholder co-operation even more efficiently.

Strengths	Enhancement areas
UTU's internal organisational culture based on the UTU Strategy is sound and manages to create joint rules and instructions for all units	Utilisation of the new University-level partnership model to support and create more clarity, also in the faculty-level activities
UTU has versatile networks and partnerships that are based on UTU's key research and education areas	Faculties' alumni relations should be enhanced further via communications and other activities in order to increase the turnover rate from alumni to registered alumni (current rate is approx. 40%)
UTU has a synergistic and very active relationship with the City of Turku as well as with other local organisations and key actors	The new partnership management system (CRM) will be developed to support stakeholder co-operation in terms of visibility, interaction, and reporting to support decision-making and strategic engagement

2.3 Promoting renewal through the organisational culture

- Assessment of the audit team

UTU engages with stakeholders and partners in activities which enable renewal and enhancement. It aims to be in close contact and collaboration with its stakeholders and to take their feedback seriously. According to the audit interviews, the organisational structure is flat, and the faculties are quite independent. As indicated in the interviews, the culture of the University encourages the whole community, staff, students and external stakeholders to communicate with UTU management and benefit from the joint support function. As described in Chapter 1, the Student Union (TYY) and students have a strong representation and voice in the University's development overall, especially in education. External stakeholders are represented in the university- and faculty-level advisory boards and UTU generally works closely with its stakeholders.

The University sees its cooperation with alumni as part of its societal impact. Alumni constitute an important category of UTU stakeholder involvement and management and are to be used in

enhancement activities. Beyond these ambitious statements, the University's action and support in this area are still unfolding (see Chapter 4.1). The audit team recommends that UTU develop its alumni cooperation further.

The University of Turku values close collaboration in regional, national and international networks and sees its mission to stretch from local to global. UTU uses field-specific, regional, national and international networks in activities enhancement. The European Campus of City-Universities (EC2U), one of the European Universities Alliances, is one of UTU's most prominent international networks. Its research performance has benefitted from growth in international collaboration. UTU is still actively seeking new strategic networks and mapping international networks. The audit team recommends that the University utilise its existing international networks more and take full advantage of being part of the EC2U Alliance and developing multidisciplinary. The University of Turku should also develop criteria for attracting international partnerships.

Strategic alignment of regional, national and international ambitions will be essential to UTU's success. An innovation ecosystem approach with a regional focus will be enriched by international networking. Stakeholders expect the University of Turku to bring international academic talent, knowledge and resources to the region to broaden, attract, and retain the talent base and to improve the investment climate. Considering the relatively low number of international experts, extra efforts should be made to bring in international expertise and attract foreign talent. The University of Turku could especially welcome multidisciplinary research expertise.

Good examples of partnerships promoting impact and renewal include Bayer Nordic SE and Mayer Turku. Through strategic partnerships, UTU wants to build strengths-based cooperation that promotes both parties' sustainable growth, competitiveness and vitality, supported by research, educational provision and societal engagement.

There are also good initiatives to support entrepreneurship. One of those is Konttori, Entrepreneurial Hub and a working space for students and staff focusing especially on start-ups. Cooperation with Liedon Säästöpankki has made this possible.

There are two universities in Turku, UTU and Åbo Akademi, and several universities of applied sciences. There is considerable potential for cooperation between these higher education institutions. Although there is already good cooperation between the University of Turku and Åbo Akademi, this cooperation could be deepened further.

UTU aims to have well-functioning procedures for managing and updating its stakeholder relations and collaboration networks. It listed work on its CRM under enhancement areas, and its CRM and alumni database is still under development. The audit team recommends enhancing partnership relationship management and the alumni database.