

LAUREA European Policy Statement - EPS

Institution's international (EU and non EU) strategy:

Laurea's internationalisation strategy is based on its strategic intent and general strategy. The strategic intent defines Laurea's goal "to be an internationally acknowledged university of applied sciences in future expertise and regional development in the metropolitan area in 2015". The strategy further defines that "Laurea works as a transmitter and mediator of international competence and focuses increasingly on international partnerships", and that "Laurea operates as a creator of international networks" in participation with "the higher education community of the Greater Helsinki Metropolitan Area", "in close interaction with the development of the European Research Area (ERA)."

To put these strategic directions into practice, Laurea has defined that its international mission is based on the development needs of the Greater Helsinki Metropolitan Region. Laurea will increase the region's long-term competitiveness and well-being by creating and transmitting competence and resources in a bidirectional process between the home region and the surrounding world.

To fulfil the mission, four strategic action lines have been defined: Local is global, World class, Virtual is real and Networking for success. By advancing in these four action lines, Laurea can reach an internationally acknowledged status as the developer of the Greater Helsinki Metropolitan Region as well as a role as a preferred RDI-partner.

According to the strategy Laurea in 2015 will be a genuinely international and multicultural study and work community. All of Laurea's operations will take place in an international environment. The global processes are brought into the active surroundings of all the members of the Laurea community, especially through use of international RDI-projects as LbD -learning environments.

To support the internationalisation of the region, Laurea will have two internal working languages, English and Finnish. The official communication and instructions will be provided in both languages.

Laurea's staff will be considerably more international than in 2012. More non-Finnish personnel will be employed in expert positions. In recruitment, additional emphasis will be paid on the proven capability to produce international results, either in academia or praxis, preferably in both areas. The amount of long-term exchanges of personnel will increase, and the short-term staff exchanges will be better utilized via co-operation between units. Every staff member is fluent in English and competent to work in international projects and/or teaching tasks. This development will be supported by a language and cultural competence development program focusing on competencies needed to work in an international academic community. The development of Finnish skills of non-Finnish staff members is supported and strongly encouraged.

The pedagogic process should ensure that each student will be able to work both in Finland and in international environments. This requires them to have adequate proficiency in Finnish and English, as well as good intercultural competence. To support the development of international working competence and language skills of all students, the Finnish- and English-speaking degree programs and projects will become highly integrated. Both Finnish and English modules will be offered to all students. Other language skills are also considered important; additional language learning possibilities will be provided according to the needs defined in units and focus areas. The importance of international working capabilities is emphasized through internationally oriented studies at home and participation in student exchange programs. The Bachelor and Master –level students have good opportunities for studies abroad, these are reciprocally

offered to foreign students wishing to study at Laurea. Student and trainee mobility strengthen the key skills needed in job market. Master-level students, who generally are adult students, may have some limitations for longer mobility, the possibility for short cycle mobility is promoted. More shared learning environments will be developed with Laurea's international partners. Virtual tools grow continuously into a more important role in international environment. The effect of the internet and social media has revolutionized the operating processes both in organizations and private lives. The virtual tools will be increasingly used to support the international co-operation between Laurea and its partners. The shared communication and working platforms will be taken into wider use and Laurea's e-services will be developed accordingly. Laurea offers also some joint degrees in different fields of study, and some more joint programmes are being developed.

Strategy for the organisation and implementation of international cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the programme:

Laurea will seek a major increase in international RDI-activities. To ensure this, Laurea will become an active partner in a high ambition-level academic network per each of the strategic focus areas. Through these, Laurea will be able to connect local partners to the cutting edge of international research, development and innovation projects and the competence they produce. The networks will be used as the primary tool for acquiring international financing from the RDI-programs of the EU. Thus, each network should contain at least 3-5 higher education institutions within the EU. The networks should also contain one or more members with high academic prestige to increase the possibilities for knowledge transfer. 1-3 members outside the EU should be included according to the customer and competence needs of the focus area. When selecting these members, the focus areas should take into account the amount of co-operation between the regions and the expected development rate of their home countries. Co-operation with Russian, Chinese and Indian higher education institutions would provide focus areas possibilities to tap into fast-growing markets with excellent levels of knowledge. The network should also have some members from other types of organizations, for example multinational companies or public organizations. Based on the needs of the focus area, Laurea may also partner in shared multinational research centres. In addition to actual R&D projects, project work focuses on the development of curricula, e.g. joint degrees, and learning. Laurea will also seek an active role in the internationalisation of its local partners through LbD-integrated RDI-projects. Laurea will seek and offer international funding, knowledge and networking opportunities for its stakeholders, maximizing the flow of international resources to the region. Laurea's units will also manage the practical valorisation of research, development and innovation project results for local partners.

Expected impact of participation in the programme on the modernization of the institution (5 priorities of the modernization agenda):

The number of students is decided by the ministry, an individual institution cannot increase attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers much. However, the advancement of studies is enhanced and drop-out rates reduced through high-quality study offer and student services. Possibilities to study and complete traineeships abroad contribute to the advancement of studies. International cooperation in the development of education, mobility and cross-border co-operation, improves the quality and relevance of

higher education offered at Laurea, the quality of the programmes and services. Being part of a multi-national alliance of higher education institutions would support the multi-directional creation and sharing of competence. The alliance should be based on shared view on pedagogical goals. The employers need competent and development-oriented employees. The current student generation sees international activities and skills as natural parts of their development. The future careers of Laurea's alumni will take place in an even more limitless world with global dimensions. Thus, it is a shared need of the employers and employees to provide Laurea graduates with the best possible international competence. Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development is a primary aim in Laurea internationalization strategy. Laurea's need for increased internationalisation emerges from the requirements of three stakeholders. The areas in which Laurea will support the development of the region, students and partner organizations are defined in Laurea's strategy. In these areas, Laurea will need to produce state-of-the-art competence for the benefit of its operating region. New knowledge must be created and externally existing knowledge transferred. Because of these requirements, Laurea will need to be in constant research and development dialogue with its international networks. A majority of the international operations of the local partners are aimed at countries within the EU, especially in the Baltic Sea region, as well as in Russia. Thus, competence related to these areas is in a central role. The possibilities arising from the emerging markets, like China or India, should be considered based on the needs of the operating region. Laurea should use its international networks, as well as research and development capabilities, in bringing new innovations to benefit the renewal of the Greater Helsinki Metropolitan Region. The overall long-term well-being and competitiveness of the region must be supported through an efficient and effective process of higher education. Laurea should constantly improve its governance and funding, search for new ways to improve the cost-effectiveness and enhanced quality. Being a part of global structural development is required in order to increase the quality and cost-effectiveness of education and RDI-tasks, as well as to support the sharing of competence between regions.