



GOOD PRACTICES IN UNIVERSITIES: BUSINESS COOPERATION, ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Jade Hirvonen & Minna Nieminen (eds.)



South-Eastern Finland
University of Applied Sciences



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**XAMK
DEVELOPMENT**



ITMO UNIVERSITY



**BUSINESS INCUBATOR
INGRIA**
SAINT PETERSBURG TECHNOPARK



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**Good Practices
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Services and Sustainable
Development**

XAMK DEVELOPMENT 152

SOUTH-EASTERN FINLAND
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
KOTKA 2021

Preface

Which models of business cooperation, entrepreneurial support services and sustainable development operate in universities? To answer this question and investigate further, we benchmarked four Finnish universities: Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, University of Helsinki, LUT University and South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences (Xamk). This article series explores the good practices and operations models we discovered during the benchmarking process.

The goal of the Twin Campus project is to create suitable conditions to develop the competitiveness of university-based technologies and knowledge-based companies through further cooperation. The project aims to increase the talent attraction of the cooperation areas by creating the strategy and road map for cross-border cooperation model. As the groundwork for the strategy, we needed to investigate which operational models of business cooperation, entrepreneurial support services and sustainable development function well in universities.

During the autumn of 2020, we benchmarked Finnish universities: to see how they function in the areas of sustainable development, entrepreneurial support services, and business cooperation. In this article series, we explore the good practices and operations models we discovered during the benchmarking process. Benchmarking enables us to analyse the functionality of existing actions, practices, and strategies and also to identify possible targets for development. As a result, we can observe good practices and with the help of those, we can start developing a more well-functioning entity.

The choice of universities was influenced by the online research carried out earlier in the project on the activities of Finnish universities under our chosen themes. We selected the universities that emerged in the online survey and implement interesting cases as benchmark universities. The choice of universities was also influenced by geographical location, as the original plan was to conduct benchmarking as physical visits to campuses. For this reason, the selection was limited to universities in Southern and South-Eastern Finland. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, benchmarking was conducted as a remote implementation.

Based on our benchmarking, we organized two co-development workshops in the spring of 2021. In the workshops, representatives of project implementers and stakeholders gathered together and developed strategic blanks and preliminary implementation steps related to the themes to support the project team's strategy work.

This article series presents the good practices and operational models that have emerged in benchmarking. In the articles, we have addressed the issues raised in the benchmarking interviews. At the beginning of each article is a small introduction to the people interviewed for benchmarking. We have also asked each theme for a small introduction to the theme expert Xamk. At the end of the article, we will also talk about the workshops developed based on the benchmarking results, their results, and the future strategy plan.

We hope that our work starts a discussion and results in new actions and strategies that can be implemented in Xamk's new Kotka campus and ITMO University's new campus in St. Petersburg. We hope that people working in universities will benefit from the good practices developed in this project and also that this would improve international cooperation further.

Best Regards,
The Twin Campus Project Team



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The Twin Campus project is carried out during 01.06.2019 - 30.11.2021, in cooperation with South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences (FI), Kotka-Hamina regional development company Cursor (FI), Business Incubator Ingrian (RU), and St. Petersburg Foundation for SME and ITMO University (RU, project leader) The project is financed by Southeast Finland–Russia CBC 2014–2020 Programme.

Profiles of the Benchmarked Universities

SOUTH-EASTERN FINLAND UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, XAMK

South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, Xamk is an international institute of higher education. It focuses on wellbeing, technology, and creative industries. There are approximately 9500-degree students and over 800 employees studying and working in Xamk. Xamk offers more than 70 degree programs, some of which can be studied flexibly on the internet. Xamk also offers Open University of Applied Sciences courses and newly developed micro-courses. Xamk operates on four campuses: Mikkeli, Savonlinna, Kouvola, and Kotka.

Xamk's RDI (Research, Development and Innovation) activities aim to expand entrepreneurship and boost the South-Savo and Kymenlaakso region's vitality. Xamk's RDI activities are the largest of the all universities of the applied sciences in Finland. Annually, there are approximately 250 RDI projects and of those, approximately 50 are international. The international RDI activities concentrate mainly on Europe, the Baltic Sea area, and Russia.

At the end of 2020, Xamk began the reorganization of the entrepreneurship and innovation areas. The new organization structure came into effect 1.3.2021 by creating a new unit, Xentre – Unit of Entrepreneurship and Innovations.

HAAGA-HELIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences has over 11 000 students from 50 countries and 650+ experts working and studying over five different campuses. Haaga-Helia's new strategy for the years 2021 –2025 aims for the qualitative employment of their students and to open all doors to working life. The vision is to be an international and courageous reformer of working life. Haaga-Helia's has four main areas of teaching and research: service business, sales, entrepreneurship, and higher education pedagogy.

Haaga-Helia is an appreciated partner in RDI activities, which connects them to business life. Haaga-Helia has 40 ongoing RDI projects. The leading theme of the RDI activities is social effectiveness and open science from the 3AMK strategic alliance. The objective of Haaga Helia's RDI activities' is to create new solutions for business.

At the end of 2020, Haaga-Helia reorganized its core competence areas. The new organization structure became valid on 1.1.2021.

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

The University of Helsinki is Finland's largest and oldest university. The University of Helsinki is an international scientific community of more than 40 000 students and workers. The university operates on four campuses in Helsinki and in ten other localities in Finland. There are 11 faculties that include different departments, research centers, and research stations. There are various multidisciplinary research networks and units that work together to solve problems that concern all of us on a global scale.

The University of Helsinki serves as an active developer of society, as a construction worker of lasting welfare, and a solver of global challenges. Helsinki University's values of social responsibility guides all its operations and administration.

LUT UNIVERSITY

LUT University Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology, LUT is a technical university that combines technology and the economy. In 2019, there were approximately 5300 students and 550 research and teaching staff. In the latest university strategy, LUT concentrates on the essential elements of business - air, energy and water - in its scientific solutions.

At LUT University, research in technology and economics seeks solutions to improve clean energy, water, and air. Through its research, LUT helps society and companies to achieve sustainable development. A solid link to business research ensures effectiveness.

Xamk

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University of Helsinki

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LUT University

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BUSINESS COOPERATION

Business cooperation is especially vital for both universities and companies in the regions. Higher education institutions can be involved in developing companies' business through various study-related projects and RDI projects. In this cooperation, Universities receive information from businesses to develop their own operations. From this, they can then develop training content and launch new activities to meet companies' needs in the regions.

Companies can offer internships to students. Through internships, students become familiar with business practices and are able to practice skills that are important for their profession. For companies, internships are also an excellent method of recruitment.

In Universities of Applied Sciences, student theses are based on working life or its development, or showcasing a student's skills and problem solving expertise. Student theses can either be theoretical research, experimental, or based on a development need in working life.

It is also possible for companies to carry out projects with universities. These can be large or small scale. These working life projects may relate to some individual areas or include several areas of investigation. Teaching based on these collaborative projects develops students' professional skills and strongly links their studies to much needed working life skills. Students may implement cooperation projects on the educational institution's premises, for example, by developing one of the activities from a variety of possibilities. From this recommendation, the company can choose the course of action that would suit it best. It is also possible for students to carry out project implementations on a company's premises. Working life projects can also be multidisciplinary. This enables students from several fields to be involved in the implementation of a single project. In this case, students also learn the interpersonal skills needed to cooperation between disciplines and different professional groups.

Additionally, business cooperation creates opportunities for the development of both company and university staff. While collaborating with a company, teachers refresh and maintain their working life skills, and can develop education connected to their working life projects. On the other hand, the skills of the company's staff can be developed through the open university or in-service training.

Through close business cooperation, the university helps companies to develop their operations. In particular, universities of applied sciences play a vital role in regional development. At the same time, the university produces new expertise and new experts for regional companies.

Seija Aalto

Chief Learning Officer, Unit of Common Studies
South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences

Companies: Xamk “Our Polytechnic”

Written by Jade Hirvonen

We interviewed Heta Vilén (Business Cooperation Coordinator) regarding Xamk's business cooperation. Heta works in Xentre - Unit of Entrepreneurship and Innovation as a link between companies and Xamk, covering all Xamk campuses.

Xamk conducts business cooperation through various RDI projects, education, and other services. In RDI projects, the company undertakes the cooperation objectives of the projects. In 2019, Xamk had more than 700 business partners in various projects. Xamk also conducts international business cooperation with about 70 partner countries. On the teaching side, the most important elements of business cooperation are student internships and student and teacher exchanges. One of the goals of international business cooperation is to acquire the skills of exchange students in local companies.

PARTNER SERVICES ON ALL CAMPUSES

Xamk has a Business Cooperation Coordinator who finds experts for companies that do not yet have networks at Xamk. The coordinator also handles the key accounts and new initiatives. Education and training have strong partners in each field, and they take care of their own networks. For example, in information processing or information communication technology (ICT) there is a lot of business cooperation with large companies. The feedback from students involved in ICT cooperation projects is above the average. RDI also has its partners, who are taken care of by the project staff. Xamk works closely with regional business organizations.

Business cooperation with Xamk means that the company has the services of all four Xamk campuses at their disposal. Heta Vilén said that companies are less aware of this opportunity, but rather think that only the local campus services are available to them.

Education utilizes cooperation in working life and aims to deliver services through multidisciplinary learning environments. This need has come from the company side in particular, but demand has also risen from students. Xamk's campuses have 24 different permanent laboratories that serve as study environments and can also be utilized by companies. The Continuous Learning -unit plays a significant role in business cooperation, as the unit provides customized services and training services for both local and international companies.



Picture 1. “Working Life Day” event on the Kouvola campus in 2019. Photographer: Heta Vilén.

ACTIVE RESPONSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

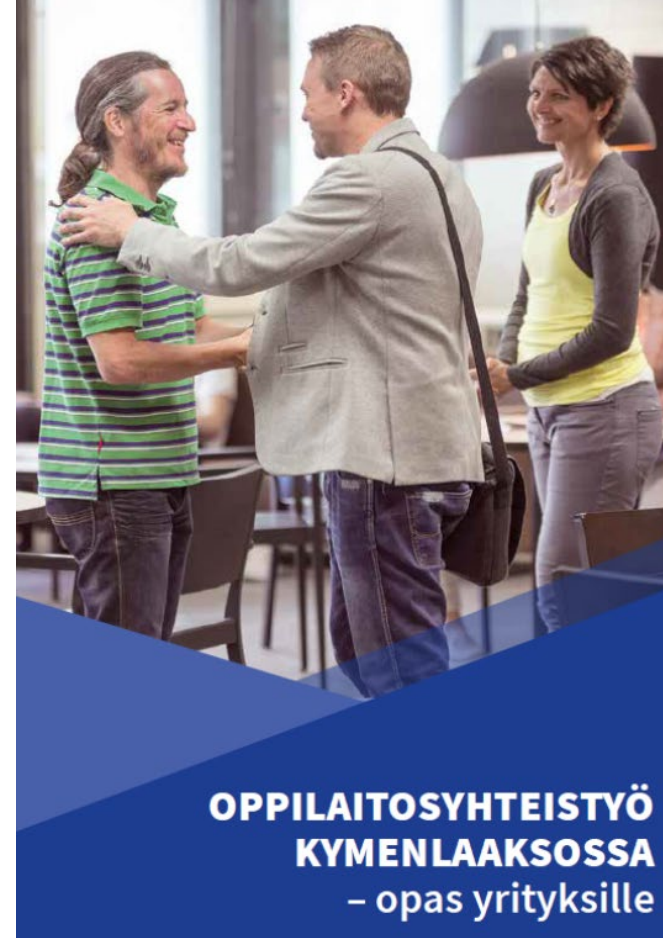
Business services are marketed through Xamk's websites and social media such as LinkedIn. Xamk's website identifies different services and opportunities that are on offer to businesses. There is a video about working life cooperation on the website, where representatives of various partner companies talk about their experiences (Xamk 2020). Currently, there is a lot of demand from companies for cooperation, and in the future there will be a newsletter for stakeholders. Xamk is active on social media platforms and for example, working life partners often comment positively on Xamk-related publications on LinkedIn.

INCREASING THE BUSINESS AND STUDENT COOPERATION

Xamk provides the possibility for companies to make themselves known to students. An excellent example of this is the marketing and recruitment event, which has previously been organized in connection with an event for those who are interested in bachelor studies at Xamk. Today, the marketing and recruitment event is known as "Working Life Day" and has brought together companies, students, Xamk employees and alumni. The event offers companies an excellent opportunity to raise their profile and network with other companies in the region. (Picture 1; Xamk s.a.)

In autumn 2020, the event took place virtually. Initially, the event was to be held on campus and was listed in the students' schedules. However, the feedback was still positive. The event is clearly needed, and it is hoped that there would be more Xamk-wide events held more frequently online.

Xamk is one of the creators of a working life cooperation guide produced in cooperation with all educational institutions in Kymenlaakso (picture 2). In addition to Xamk, EKAMI, KSAO, Taitaja, and LUT Kouvola's unit are involved. The guide informs companies of the opportunities available to them from educational institutions. Students benefit from this because the more companies know, the more possible options there might be for cooperation. Chamber of Commerce is also heavily involved giving companies a voice in the guide. The guide was published in early 2021, both in digital and printed formats (Aalto et al. 2021). An electronic version can be found on Xamk's business website.



Picture 2. Guide to Educational Cooperation in Kymenlaakso. (Aalto et al. 2021.)

MORE WORKING LIFE CASES THAT ARE BOUND TO TEACHING

Xamk has direct relationships with its partners and often receives positive feedback on working life cooperation. Indeed, some partners talk about Xamk as "our polytechnic". As there is a designated person to contact for business cooperation, it is easy for companies to contact Xamk and get the assistance they need. Some other polytechnics have benchmarked this model in use.

When working life projects are included as part of a course, students are happier to participate. On the other hand, separate or so-called "volunteer projects" have a more challenging time recruiting students. However, it is also clear that the time and topics of the volunteer projects play a key role in student interest. Students have given the feedback that working life projects should be more directly tied to teaching.

COLLABORATION SPACES AND COMPANY CLASSROOMS

Vilén highlighted the need for both business cooperation and the development of student entrepreneurship. Located in the center of Kotka, Xlab serves as a cooperation space for students, staff, and companies. Similar cooperation and co-development facilities are being developed for other campuses.

Companies will soon have the possibility to have their “own” classrooms on all campuses. For a fee, a company can name a classroom and decorate it as they wish. The space can be used for regular teaching, company work-life projects, and meetings between companies and students. In this way, the company increases its visibility amongst students. Company classrooms are already in use on the Kotka campus: Room 3007 - “The CTS Engtec” -classroom has been decorated by the company, with beanbags and logos, among other things.

Haaga-Helia Invests in Learning and Research Environments

Written by Heidi Kock

Heidi Kock runs Haaga-Helia's emotional intelligence labs and is actively involved in research projects and business collaboration.

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences carries out a variety of business cooperation in study courses, commercial assignments, and in applied research projects.

Haaga-Helia has an established partner cooperation model. This means that each partner has a designated coordinator. Cooperation with partners is long-term and comprehensive and may include, e.g., named workspace, various events, and recruitment and study collaboration. Haaga-Helia has over 100 partner companies from multiple industries. In addition to partnership cooperation, Haaga-Helia also carries out research and other activities with various companies.

LEARNING AND RESEARCH ENVIRONMENTS AS PLATFORMS FOR COLLABORATION

Haaga-Helia is constantly developing its learning and research environments to anticipate the competence needs of the future. These environments serve as platforms for learning, research, and business collaboration and are utilized by students, researchers, and business representatives alike.

Creative Agency Krea

Creative Office Krea is a marketing and communications student environment. At Krea, students work together in teams to create distinctive concepts and inspirational stories for various clients. Their work is often used for company events, campaigns, products, services, and branding. Students often find creative solutions that contain new ideas and fresh perspectives, which are often based on the latest researched knowledge and understanding of the customer's needs.

Sales & eCom Lab

Sales & eCom Lab is a research environment for improving a customer's digital experience and e-commerce transactions. At Sales & eCom lab, e-commerce and various multichannel sales and distribution platforms are researched and developed further. Companies can

develop their operational mandates either with research staff or in student courses. Sales & eCom Lab is assisted with versatile software, such as cameras that track eye moment, and emotional intelligence programs that can recognise emotions from facial expressions.

Interaction & Emotion Lab

In the Interaction & Emotion Lab, pedagogy and interaction are researched. This is an interactive laboratory that develops face-to-face and virtual encounters using psychophysiological measurements and video recording. Emotional reactions measured by reading facial expressions, for example by using sensors that monitor the intensity of the reaction, and/or eye-tracking cameras, and other research tools to help understand interaction in different situations and environments.

LAB8

The service businesses are being developed in several research and learning environments. LAB8 is a development laboratory for the development of the service experience, which combines creativity, service businesses, and learning development. The focus of operations is on service and experience design and how to utilise the latest technology in producing positive experiences. New technologies include augmented reality (AR), Mixed Reality (MR / XR) concepts, and the utilization of Multisensory technologies. Additionally, the Lab researches trends and provides event production services. (Picture 3.)

Place to be Haaga

'Place to be Haaga' is a learning concept that aims to innovate the hospitality industry through joint innovation with companies. 'Place to be Haaga' aims to revamp and enrich the hospitality industry through courageous thinking and the development of better information and practices. The learning concept brings together industry role models, competing companies, students and teachers. In doing so, 'Place to be Haaga' promotes a culture of experimentation, learning together and insight. This learning concept takes place at Haaga-Helia hotel, restaurant and tourism campus of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, located in Haaga, Helsinki

3D & Robo Lab

3D & Robo Lab supports the innovation and education of project work and IoT activities. The lab has several 3D printing devices, 3D scanners, 3D workstations, and a mechanical processing station. Together, these can design and manufacture prototypes of IoT devices, robotic Proof of Concept devices, and other products for the industry.

Softala

Softala provides companies with software prototypes and web-based and mobile solutions. Softala can provide companies with prototypes of the software they need. Additionally, it provides jobs for students and offers companies the possibility to recruit future experts in the field.



Picture 3. Haaga-Helia's LAB8 facilities. Photographer: Minna Kurjenluoma

COMPETITIONS, CONCEPTS AND ESCAPE ROOMS

The people of Haaga-Helia are always looking for ways to develop different concepts with companies, which would combine the education of future experts and cooperation with businesses. The best concepts become a long-term part of the business.

On the sales side, Haaga-Helia runs a Best Seller Competition. In this competition, students test their skills in simulated B2B sales meetings with company representatives, and try to sell actual products to them. The concept has been expanded internationally, and today students are also competing in the European Sales Competition and the South-East Asian Sales Competition.

Business students are required to take a basic course in compulsory financial management in the Escape Room, that is organized together with a partner company. This course has received an enthusiastic reception from students.

Verso Hub is a new concept where students, teachers, companies, researchers, and other partners work together to promote profitable, climate-positive business, and the circular economy.

Students find business cooperation very rewarding and these can open up better opportunities for employment. Many positions require students to engage in entrepreneurial activities in which teachers act as coaches and spar with them in practical hands-on work and self-directed learning.

Picture 4. Haaga-Helia's SalesLab facilities.
Photographer: Meeri Utti



NETWORKS, RESEARCH PROJECTS, AND THE NEW EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

Each learning and research environment has its own network of companies and university partners, and other actors. These networks are usually international. The same networks also carry out research projects, focusing on applied, business-friendly research. Haaga-Helia's main research areas are sales development and digitalization, service business development and design, professional pedagogy, and entrepreneurship and business reform.

Ulysseus Europe University

As the latest international activity, Haaga-Helia is involved in the creation of Ulysseus European University. Besides Haaga-Helia, Ulysseus includes the Universidad de Sevilla (USE, Spain), Università di Genova (UniGe, Italy), Université Cote d'Azur (UCA, France), Technická univerzita v Košiciach (TUKE, Slovakia) and MCI Management Center Innsbruck (MCI, Austria). The aim is to create a joint European campus where students, university staff, companies, and regional actors learn, research, and develop new types of innovation and promote employment.

Ulysseus operates on a digital and physical campus, which includes research centers, business incubators, living labs, open classrooms, and a digital platform for community-wide interaction. Living labs are user-driven open innovation ecosystems that combine research and innovation in real-life environments. The Ulysseus project has six innovation centers - one in each participating city. Innovation hubs focus on the following themes: aging and well-being (UCA), tourism, art and heritage (Unige), artificial intelligence (Haaga-Helia), energy, transport, mobility and smart cities (USE), digitalization (TUKE) and food, biotechnology and the circular economy (MCI). This emerging European university will provide completely new, international opportunities for its students, companies, and partner universities.

Research Cooperation at University of Helsinki

Written by Jade Hirvonen

Regarding University of Helsinki's business cooperation, we interviewed Maarit Haataja (Head of Business Collaboration). Maarit currently leads the research-enterprise cooperation team at the University of Helsinki. She has decades of experience in research and the practical use of research results. Maarit received her Ph.D. from Uppsala University in 2001.

The University of Helsinki offers companies and communities a wide range of cooperation opportunities, such as consulting, commissioned research, cooperation projects, and the use of their infrastructure. Cooperation and collaboration is organized and managed by the business cooperation team that was established in 2016. Currently, the team has six experts, and the recruitment process for a seventh expert is presently underway. Experts help researchers and companies to identify opportunities for collaboration.

REGIONAL COOPERATION WITH FACULTIES AND RESEARCHERS

University of Helsinki roughly divides its cooperation activities into three different levels: regional cooperation, cooperation with faculties and companies, and cooperation with researchers.

The city of Helsinki is a close partner in *regional cooperation*. As a university, the University of Helsinki strives, among other things, to improve employment in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The most recent cooperation is a three-year project that develops the Viikki campus area into an innovation hub. As an operational environment that supports innovation activities, the Viikki Innovation Platform brings together research, teaching, and companies. It also increases research-based innovation activities. The project is worth approximately 2 million EUR. Half the funding for the project comes from The City of Helsinki Innovation Fund and the rest from the University of Helsinki. (University of Helsinki 2020a.)

In *cooperation with the faculties*, assistance is provided to different faculties, such as by drawing up a strategic plan to increase business cooperation and by organizing training. For example, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine wanted to increase its commercialization and business cooperation expertise, so the team provided them with training. The team is currently assisting the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry by constructing a plan to turn an idea of local sustainable food, into a marketable product/service.

In a *research-business collaboration*, either a company or a researcher contacts the university. The cooperation begins with a discussion between the partner and the university representative, where the potential cooperation needs are discussed in more detail. At this stage, the appropriate course of action will be determined. In choosing the way forward, one important thing to agree on is who will use the results. In the case of a collaborative project in which the funding has been applied for together, the research results will be available to both parties. On the other hand, with things like custom surveys, the results would only be available to the partner, i.e., the company or community. (University of Helsinki 2019.)

The University of Helsinki's campuses have good facilities for corporate cooperation with plans to improve these further. In one such plan, The Think Company's (see page 50) operations will be expanded to include researchers. Additionally, all facilities on all campuses will soon be available to all researchers. The Terkko Health Hub on the Meilahti campus includes an open space to work and private rooms for companies to use. New faculties are being built in Viikki for spinouts and startups to use, but external companies will be able to reserve them for their own use as well. The Think Corner (picture 5) facilities can also be reserved for events and meetings. The university also shares several common spaces with the City of Helsinki, such as the Maria 01 startup campus. Incubator facilities are currently being planned for other campuses.



Picture 5. The Think Corner facilities. Photographer: Helsingin yliopisto / Sami Tuoriniemi

RESEARCHERS ARE NEEDED FOR NETWORKING

Over the years, University of Helsinki has belonged to many different networks. Haataja herself has participated in many different networks and would like more researchers to join innovation ecosystem networks in order to grow their own networks on the innovation side. Haataja represents University of Helsinki in the Europe-wide LERU ENTE (League of European Research Universities, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation Policy Group) network, whose main task is to influence the EU in matters related to research, development and innovation. The LERU network has been a good group for sparring and sharing experiences. The university is also a part of, for example, the EIT KIC (Knowledge and Innovation Communities) network and its sub-networks, EIT Food, EIT Digital, and EIT Climate. The national Finnovers network has also been very active, and in this group, people are free to ask about the different problems they experience.

DIFFERENT CONCEPTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Over the years, University of Helsinki has tested many different concepts on its campuses. At the moment, tailor-made collaboration with faculties has been found to be the best, because commitment is often exemplary from both management and academics in these concepts. Cooperation looks promising, even if the actual results will only come in a few years. Next, you can read more of some of the concepts that have been tested over the years.

Coffee Cart Tours

At the beginning of the business cooperation team's activities, the team carried out coffee cart tours to make its activities known on campuses. In this concept, the team walked with coffee carts filled with coffee and biscuits and talked to the researchers about the activities. The operation was effective, as several hundred researchers were able to meet in over a few days.

Innovation Agents

The Innovation Agents experiment trained researchers interested in learning about innovation-related issues and who were also interested helping their colleagues learn more. The agents were easily approachable. The goal was to make them available so that researchers could ask for their help or more information about ideas they were considering, and then direct the researchers to the relevant service. The Innovation Agents were partly funded externally, which paid 30% of the agents' salaries. The experiment ended when funding finished, as faculties were not yet willing to pay their share.

Impact Clinics

Impact Clinics have been in operation since 2014. Their purpose is to assist with describing effectiveness and impact for funding applications. Understanding effectiveness properly and being able to explain it clearly offers an excellent competitive advantage when applying for funding. The specific content of the clinic is tailored to the needs of the faculties or units. The clinics are free, but the practical arrangements are handled by the faculty or unit. The Impact Clinics are organized by University of Helsinki's business cooperation team. (University of Helsinki s.a.)

The business cooperation team has also produced Added Value, an impact publication. This is a so-called exercise workbook that helps the researcher to properly defining effectiveness for funders. The publication is intended to serve as a practical guide to effectiveness for researchers and Ph.D. students. (Talvinen 2020.)

Cup of Science

The Cup of Science is networking and collaboration concept for companies and researchers. The underlying idea is the Aim day concept, but on a much smaller scale. The Cup of Science concept brings together many companies that are facing similar problems or challenges for a single day, where a multidisciplinary team of researchers work together to find a solution. At the Cup of Science, the researchers share their expertise and work with the company to find different solutions. The concept is laborious to implement, as finding the correct factors (companies, researchers) sometimes presents challenges and building trust seldom happens in a day. However, it serves as an excellent opportunity to talk about the possibilities for cooperation offered by the university. (University of Helsinki 2019.)

Impact Accelerator

The Impact Accelerator is an acceleration program for researchers related to effectiveness and business collaboration. During the program, the research idea is accelerated, which brings it closer to the business cooperation or commercialization phase. The program is two months long and includes eight days on the campus. Participants are also required to participate in Impact Clinics. The program aims to get teams' ideas moving forward in a positive direction. The Impact Accelerator is also a laborious process, but the teams have always been found. There is a need for research mentors with business expertise, experience and skills.

MasterClass

Master Class is a three-month course aimed at students from different disciplines. The premise is that the company involved has a problem or a challenge that it needs help with to find a solution. Master Class is marketed to companies as a cooperation opportunity. The program is implemented when a suitable partner company is found.

University of Helsinki's Public Relations Unit developed Master Class together with Demos Helsinki and LähiTapiola. The reason for this program came from the university's wish to develop a cooperation partnership with LähiTapiola. After the common goals were agreed upon, the concept was created in 2012. The program has been organized four times with LähiTapiola.

In 2018, the University of Helsinki established HELSUS, the Institute of Sustainable Science, which became interested in the program and, together with the Public Relations Unit, set out to implement the Sustainable Master Class program on sustainable development challenges. HELSUS has implemented the program twice with Outotec and once with Valio.

Master Class requires that the company commit some working time of their own, as it is desirable to have at least one company representative at each meeting. Each team has its own mentor from the company and the university. Previous programs have shown that the more involved the company is in the process, the more productive the teams will be.

For the first time, Outotec had one employee involved in each team, which allowed the teams to understand the challenge much faster and in more detail. Outotec wanted to buy the rights to one team's solution; this is the only time this stage has been reached. In addition to the company representatives and researchers, the meetings may also involve sparring sessions with other mentors to move the process forward.

For the Master Class to serve both parties well, the topic must also be of interest from an academic perspective. The company pays a participation fee, so that it is possible to hire a project assistant to oversee the program and as a result of this the participants must be able to produce a concrete solution within three months.

Networking has a Firm Grip on LUT University's Business Cooperation

Written by Jade Hirvonen

Regarding LUT University's business cooperation, we interviewed Elina Hannikainen-Himanen (LUT Career Services & Alumni Relations). Elina is responsible for LUT University's recruitment services for companies and the operations of Firmatiimi, a team of students that promote cooperation between LUT University and LAB University of Applied Science.

LUT University has a long history of working with companies. In 2019, about 45% of funding came from companies (Avaintieto ja lukuja 2019 s.a.). LUT does not have a hierarchical organizational structure for business cooperation, but operates in a network-like manner. While this creates certain challenges, it also offers opportunities as well. LUT's business cooperation's development targets are to create a network operating model and a common corporate interface for the LUT group. LUT has many large cross-sectoral networks in which it plays an active role. LUT cooperates with different networked actors such as urban development companies, business organizations, chambers of commerce, and trade unions.

The majority of LUT's business contacts are nationwide. However, LUT also serves local companies and its international cooperation is growing rapid. Research teams often include researchers with a foreign background who bring their international networks to Finland.

The LUT Group is formed by LUT University and LAB University of Applied Sciences. This means that companies can meet with both higher education institutions at the same time and get a better range of services and receive more comprehensive information about the possibilities for cooperation.

SERVICES FOR COMPANIES

LUT University offers companies several low-threshold services, through which companies can easily access the university's operations. Cooperation can be deepened with companies when they have the need and willingness to do so. There are four low-threshold service providers on the campuses: The Business Mill, Firmatiimi, J.Hyneman center and Recruitment services.

The Business Mill incubator provides a comprehensive range of business development support to knowledge-based and growth-oriented South Karelian companies and teams. The services are free of charge and are firmly based on the networks of experts and stakeholders. The activities are financed by the City of Lappeenranta, the LAB University of Applied Sciences, the Otsakorpi Foundation, and Carel Capital Oy. The incubator is part of the LAB University of Applied Sciences.

Firmatiimi (The Company Team) operates as a so-called middleman between companies and students. Firmatiimi contacts companies to find assignments for students, such as training or thesis work, and internships. Firmatiimi consists of LUT and LAB students. The work of Firmatiimi has significantly lowered the threshold for cooperation, especially with small businesses. According to student reviews, Firmatiimi is a great operating model, and for companies, it is free of charge.

J. Hyneman center is a prototype workshop for LUT students, where ideas are made more substantial. Additionally, company assignments can be executed in the prototype workshop.

Recruitment services provide corporate jobs to students and organize several recruitment events that connect students and employers (picture 6). Companies are also offered a paid recruitment partnership service, the core of which is long-term cooperation based on the company's skills need.

Other services for businesses include:

- *In-service training*, such as management and expert training, and company-specific training
- *Research services*, including commissioned studies and research projects
- *Technical services* such as analysis, laboratory, measurement, and testing services
- *Space rental* and, for example, *library use*



Picture 6. The DuuniDay recruitment event brings companies and students together, 2014. Photographer: LUT University / Teemu Leinonen.

MARKETING THROUGH NETWORKING

Business cooperation services are usually marketed through networking. For example, an actor approaches the company, the company becomes involved, and opportunities for broader cooperation open up. In particular, this has often been done through the low-threshold services previously mentioned. To manage these networks, the company team, recruitment services, and in-service training use software developed for customer relationship management (CRM). Business Mill has its own system that is similar.

LUT University has communal facilities that promote networking. These facilities host a many events with companies. They also work in collaborative spaces, e.g., LUTES Student Entrepreneurship Association and Firmatiimi. Companies usually want to come to campuses to meet students and network, so recruitment events are held on campuses, even though they often lack the facilities required for such events.

International Entrepreneurship Challenge Program

The International Entrepreneurship Challenge (IEC) program is an excellent example of LUT's business cooperation. It is a semester-long course for final year students in the International Business and Entrepreneurship program. It is implemented as a traditional course, i.e., the result are a written-report and a final presentation. The companies that have participated in the program since 2006 include, e.g., Visma Severa and MeVEA. In the past, TEKES (nowadays Business Finland) has been a partner of LUT in the program.

The IEC program offers companies the opportunity to develop their operations with student assistance. Usually, the companies are often research or technology-based, and are in the startup phase or have a new business area that needs help. Often, the task of students is to create an actionable plan to go to market. As the best result, the company could receive a plan or result that might have costs thousands of euros elsewhere.

Students are divided into teams according to their interests. Where possible, exchange students' knowledge of their domestic market is utilized, which can be a huge benefit for companies. The program's target group is growth-oriented SMEs, for which internationalization is a realistic goal. The number of participating companies varies slightly from year to year. In the autumn 2021 IEC Program, there are five Finnish SMEs are involved. Companies have been referred from the Green Campus Open business accelerator and the Business Mill.

SUMMARY

At the heart of the future Twin Campus collaboration model is collaboration – both across borders and between universities and businesses. Therefore, it was fascinating to benchmark the operating models of other universities.

Almost every benchmarked university has a designated person or team that coordinates and is responsible for business cooperation. The exception here is LUT University, where business cooperation takes place in a network-like manner. LUT's career services coordinator said that while networking brings many benefits, it also creates challenges as well. At LUT, the current development targets are the development of the network operating model and a common corporate interface for the LUT group.

Some of the benchmarked universities have their facilities for operating in a corporate environment, and many utilize learning and research environments as platforms for business cooperation. Haaga-Helia invests in learning and research environments. Haaga-Helia has several different labs where research, service design, and virtual customer experiences can be researched and developed. Xamk has 24 permanent laboratories that business partners can use if they wish – including other campus cities, which often comes as a pleasant surprise to businesses.

Additionally, campus cities act as partners at many universities. For example, the three-year partnership project to develop Viikki's campus into an innovation hub between the University of Helsinki and the City of Helsinki. Also, Xamk is involved in, among other things, the working life cooperation guide implemented in cooperation with Kymenlaakso educational institutions, which tells companies about the possibilities of academic collaborations.

Ulyseus European University, created by Haaga-Helia and five other European universities, emerged as an impressive international collaboration. The cooperation aims to create a joint campus, both digitally and physically, which can be used by the staff and students of all the participating universities and companies.

Cooperation between universities and companies offers many opportunities for business development, renewal and the emergence of innovations. Many universities have established themselves as business partners in the field of research and innovation. Through collaboration, universities can identify and respond to the needs of business education, which is needed for a constantly evolving and advancing working life.

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ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

To support entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, universities have developed educational pathways and teamwork communities to help students identify opportunities and challenges for entrepreneurship. The goal is to encourage students to take the initiative to develop entrepreneurial ideas further and realise them. In this, teams can act as growth platforms that accelerate learning. They create new skills and innovations that benefit the entire university, its partners, and the team members. Universities offer the chance to develop a diverse range of national and international working-life networks. Universities act as enablers of entrepreneurship by providing facilities, expert mentoring, and seed-funding for start-ups or emerging businesses.

Higher education institutions support the emergence of new entrepreneurship by providing communal spaces and meeting places for the practical training of business skills. As well as services and space for the experimentation and incubation of new business ideas. These hubs also involve local entrepreneurs which provides a natural sparring environment for new business development. Together with their partners, educational institutes have also developed methods for identifying and funding startups with the most potential. Together, we create the conditions for the new growth of entrepreneurship. The broader ecosystem thinking of entrepreneurship is closely linked to the pathways for commercializing university R&D innovations, from which the new generation of products and services will be powered. Universities are promoters of research, development, and learning. The knowledge and skills produced in these institutions are channeled into companies, especially through talented new experts. Student entrepreneurship services are also targeted at established businesses. Renewing entrepreneurship constantly needs up-to-date services, such as in the form of professional or skill renewal, but also with researched and applied knowledge-based solutions, such as market-trend analysis, service concepts, product innovations, or even targeted data protection expertise.

New technology continues to revolutionize entrepreneurship and business. In order for a company to maintain its competitive edge, it must continually develop and improve its processes and products. The institute of higher education is the best sparring partner for any company looking for renewal, growth, and development.

Petteri Ikonen

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South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, Xamk

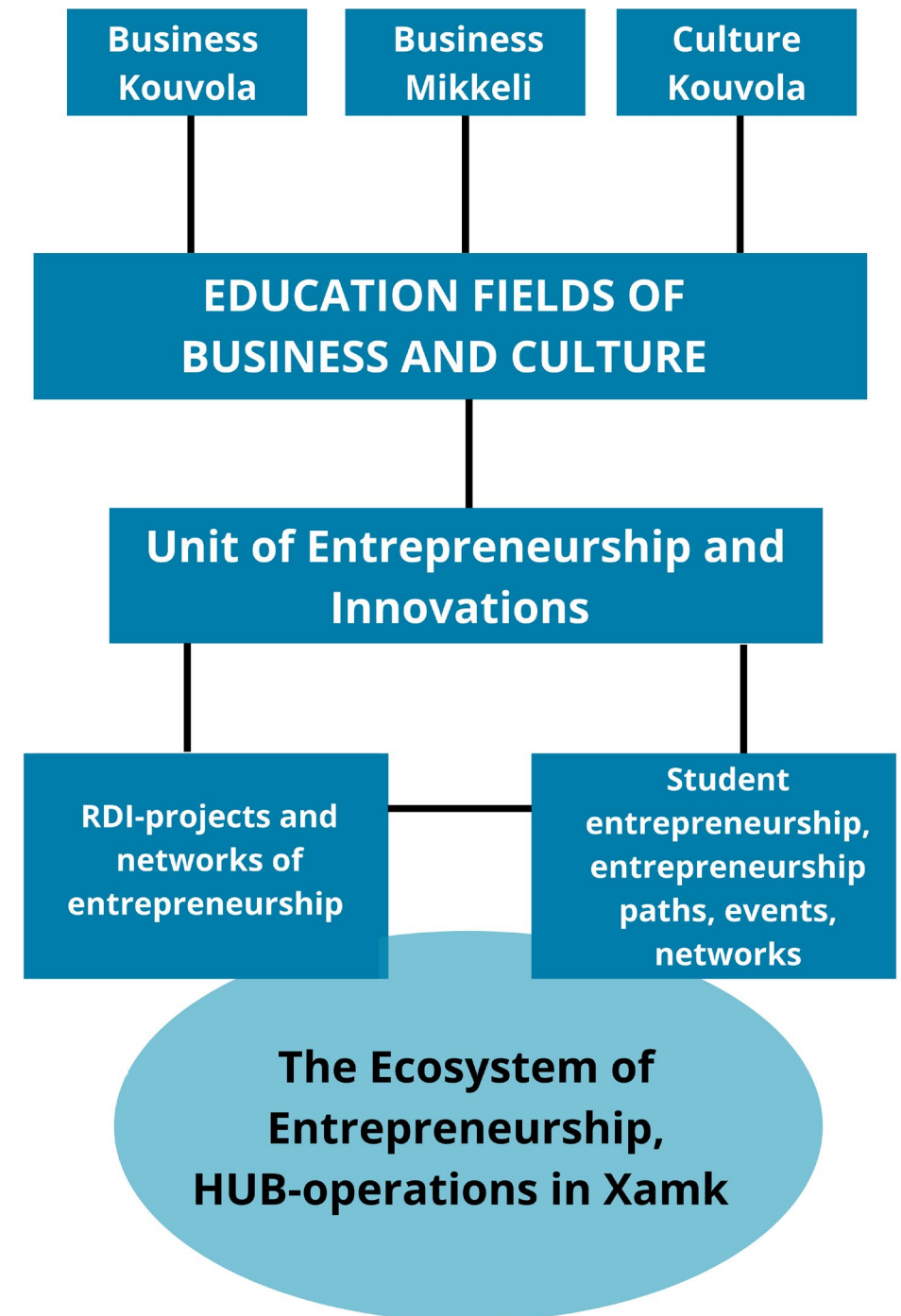
Xamk's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Written by Jade Hirvonen

In order to find out what the entrepreneurial ecosystem is at Xamk, we interviewed Petteri Ikonen (Ph.D.), Director of Education, Economics and Culture. Ikonen has extensive experience in the university field and is currently, among other things, in the National Steering Group for Road Map Work in the Creative Industries of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, OKM, and Business Finland.

For many years already, there have been good operations models and practices that support and develop entrepreneurship in Xamk. In every RDI field, there have been projects which have supported entrepreneurship in some way or another. In the South Savo and Kymenlaakso regions, there have been and are many projects that support student entrepreneurs, local entrepreneurs, and those interested in entrepreneurship and start-ups. However, the entrepreneurial support services' operations models have been rather fragmented and often only for a specific unit or project. At the end of 2020, Xamk reformed its entrepreneurship actions and its innovation actions, with the aim to collect all good operational practice together in one unit to serve all Xamk's entrepreneurial and business needs.

Xentre - Unit of Entrepreneurship and Innovations, began working in March 2021. The new unit gathered the ongoing projects related to entrepreneurship, commercialization and entrepreneurial research, and education under the same roof. Picture 1 shows location of the new RDI unit in Xamk's organisational structure, under Business and Culture. It operates on all campuses. The new unit combines RDI activities and education, and together these form Xamk's ecosystem of entrepreneurship. (Xamk 2021).



Picture 1. Organizational structure of the new unit of entrepreneurship and innovations in Xamk (Xamk 2021).

The entrepreneurship in Xamk is developed together with Xamk's networks. It is a continuous model that consists of five steps. In the first two steps, the Entrepreneurship and Teaching units are strongly involved. Students are guided to different entrepreneurship entities and courses, where they spar their business ideas to see if they are viable. In the third step, the RDI and companies become more involved to develop the concept further. In fourth step, the business concepts are advanced further or incubated with support and coaching from different businesses and startup projects. In the fifth step, the business concept is finished, and any potential spin-off operation is begun. At this stage, there is active company and institutional cooperation to enable business development. The last step is to utilize the expertise of networks and nurture their growth. Together, these steps lead to increased effectiveness, the creation of new companies and the development of existing ones.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The goal of Xamk's reform of entrepreneurial and innovation activities is to improve business cooperation and serve better the needs of companies in the region of South-Eastern Finland. Xamk's owners, the city municipalities, set the task to improve the vitality of the region and its attractiveness for business and education. With the reform, it is hoped that more companies, especially student-led companies, will not only be started, but will also prosper in the region. Xamk wants to invest in their students and train them to become business-oriented during their studies. It is hoped that students will qualify as entrepreneurs.

Additionally, Xamk intends to provide similar opportunities to current regional entrepreneurs, so that they can continue to develop their products and services through Xamk's RDI services. As previously mentioned, there were several good practices and operations models that existed on a small scale, but with this reform and current plans for development, the goal is to extend these to the whole of Xamk.

In 2022, Xamk will launch a new Master's degree specifically focusing on entrepreneurship. The new degree program is for anyone who is interested in entrepreneurship development or coaching. The degree consists of several modules, which deal with, e.g., digital business, knowledge management, enterprise growth, internationalization, circular economy, and business ethics. The starting point for the studies are to identify and develop the student's entrepreneurial and leadership skills and strengths. The student acquires a wide range of skills from their studies, for example, in strategic planning, anticipation of industry changes and shifts in the operating environment, and their own well-being and that of their staff and networks. (Wahlfors 2021.)

Xamk has collected all things relating to entrepreneurial services and functions on a dedicated Start-up site, on Xamk's homepage. The website clearly explains and shows all information

relating to entrepreneurship studies, future entrepreneurial-related events, Xamk Startup Fund financing, and ongoing projects related to entrepreneurship. (Startup your business s.a.)

XAMK'S GOOD PRACTICES AND OPERATIONS MODELS:

Xamk Startup Fund

Xamk, the William and Ester Otsakorpi -foundation, and the PatteriES entrepreneurship association have joined forces to offer the Xamk Startup Fund. The purpose of the fund, as the name might suggest, is to finance and support student entrepreneurship, start-ups, and student projects. The amount of funding ranges from between 500–1000 euros and is awarded to students and student teams to develop and test their ideas.

The Xamk Startup fund has the following criteria for granting funding: the applicant must be a student of Xamk or the team must have a connection to Xamk; the idea must be new, interesting and feasible; the applicants must be committed to the development of the idea; and the application must be clear and show how the funding will be used. The first application round of 2021 opened in December 2020 and has closed at the end of February 2021. The evaluation of applications and decisions on the funding recipients was made during March 2021. (Startup Fund s.a.)

*ship Startup festival

The *ship Startup Festival is an event for student start-up companies in their infancy. It is arranged every year in August since 2015. The purpose of the *ship event is to ready the participants to develop their business ideas. The event consists of a mentoring program and pitching sections. At the end of the event, there is a pitching competition called 'Pitch Captain'. The event is held in Merikeskus Vellamo Kotka (picture 2), and the Pitch Captain competition is held in the marketplace in the city of Kotka.

The first *ship Start-up Festival was arranged in 2015, and the event lasted one day. The event had 21 teams, ten international mentors, and 200 guests. Altogether 35 young entrepreneurs participated in the mentoring program, and a six-person team organized the event. (Häkkinen 2020.)

Each year the event has grown in size and scope, with an increasing number of participants. In 2018, the event was extended to two days and there were 200 attendees, although they were required to have an invitation andotaa register in order to attend. Due to its success, the organizers needed help to organise and run the event, so they hired more employees and offered tasks for volunteers. In 2019, there were more than 300 attendees, however it is worth noting that the numbers of the start-ups and mentors stayed nearly the same

as the previous year. In 2020, due to the pandemic, the *ship was organized as a hybrid event. The mentoring program and Pitch Captain competition were arranged online until the semi-finals, and the final was arranged in the marketplace of Kotka. (Häkkinen 2020.)

The *ship Startup Festival has had numerous partners who have participated and financed the event in different ways. For example, the event has received been funding from Google, Kotka-Hamina regional development company Cursor, and various other foundations. The financiers and funding sources have varied a little every year. However, Xamk has committed funds to the event every year since the beginning. The upcoming event in 2021 will be mainly financed by Xamk's project funds. About half of the *ship event's expenses will go to paying the staff salaries. The other half will go to covering the event's costs such as marketing, venue, accommodation for staff and mentors during the event, mentoring fees, and other expenses. (Häkkinen 2020.)



Business Cafe -operation

We interviewed the Business Cafe team: Johanna Koponen from Mikkeli, Maarit Vahvanen from Kotka and Sabine Suorsa from Kouvola. Johanna (Project Manager, Xentre - Unit of Entrepreneurship and Innovations) works as a project manager in the Yrittäjyyden kolmas aalto -project. Johanna is the person in charge of the Business Cafe on Mikkeli's campus, together with lecturer Marika Vartiainen. Maarit's (Project manager, Digital Economy) passion is innovation, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial development. Sabine (Project manager, Creative Industries) works on international projects in Xamk. Sabine promotes student entrepreneurship and acts as a start-up mentor and trainer in the international entrepreneurship programs.

Business Cafe -activities are a good example of a way to boost student entrepreneurship in Xamk. The idea of the Business Cafe came from the education side of Xamk, although there were some background factors that were based in entrepreneurship and sparring-related activities from ongoing projects. In the spring of 2020, a questionnaire was sent to Xamk's students to find out what they would need regarding entrepreneurship. The Business Cafe's activities and areas of operation arose from the results of the questionnaire.

The Business Cafe brings together different entrepreneurial support services. Activities are carried out by staff from entrepreneurial RDI projects and teaching. Every campus has a contact person that students can talk to regarding the activities of the Business Cafe. There are weekly meetings arranged on all campuses, where students can get spar to their business ideas and ask questions and advice on matters relating to entrepreneurship. The Business Cafe meetings were planned to be organised on the campuses, but due to Covid-19, the meetings were held online. There are not yet a large number of participants. However, those that have used this service have benefited significantly from their meetings, for example, during the sparring sessions, or information sessions on such matters as Light Entrepreneurship. Students have given the feedback that: "it is good that there is a place where we can find out all information we need about entrepreneurship".

Picture 2. *ship Startup Festival -event in Merikeskus Vellamo, Kotka. Kuvaaja: Tapio Auvinen.



Picture: Tapio Auvinen

Continuing Studies in Entrepreneurship, Haaga-Helia StartUp School

Written by Jade Hirvonen

We interviewed Timo-Pekka Uotila (Researcher, Entrepreneurship and Business Development) to find out more about Haaga-Helia's entrepreneurial support services. Timo-Pekka Uotila is responsible for developing the research of Haaga-Helia StartUp School. He sees that entrepreneurial thinking and leadership are needed in the future. Successful companies can use the changing environment to their advantage. Alongside solid planning, testing ideas, experimentation, and learning from these experiments are of increasing significance in the business world. Universities can provide a platform for the development of this sort of thinking.

In 2020, Haaga-Helia's theme was entrepreneurship. The theme's objective was to increase students' understanding and interest in entrepreneurship. Throughout the year, entrepreneurship was examined from different perspectives, with the imagine of increasing the visibility and use of Haaga-Helia's entrepreneurship support services, such as StartUp School's study courses. (Haaga-Helia s.a.)

In 2012, Haaga Helia StartUp School was established in Helsinki. StartUp School offers versatile studies of entrepreneurship and mentoring to improve the development of business ideas. StartUp School is an excellent example of a business accelerator operating in connection to a university. StartUp School was created because often students that started their own business dropped out of their studies to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions. StartUp School aims to solve this problem by enabling students to complete their studies simultaneously as they are starting their own business.

StartUp School serves all Haaga-Helia's students, on all campuses. This is due to the coach network which consists of Haaga-Helia's teachers. StartUp School has its own space on campus in Pasila meant for business partner meetings and student work. They have tried to make the space as lounge-like as possible, so that it is comfortable and open. Although there is no designated space on the other campuses, there StartUp School uses the other campuses' co-working areas. Recently, StartUp School has invested in digital visibility using social media (Instagram) and information screens on campus.

In order to serve as wide group as possible, StartUp School operates under Haaga Helia's RDI activities. Most of the financing comes from the RDI projects, and for example, the

3AMK cooperation makes larger project applications possible. The 3AMK cooperation is the strategic coordination of research and education between Haaga-Helia, Laurea University of Applied Sciences, and Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. StartUp School cooperates with Entrepreneurship Societies which are student-led entrepreneurship organizations. Haaga-Helia supports the Entrepreneurship Society (ES) activities and leads the 3AMK Entrepreneurship Society Alliance project.

STARTUP SCHOOL'S BEST PRACTICES

One of the best practices in StartUp School are, for example, the study of entrepreneurship, internationalisation, and different concepts. StartUp School offers various study modules of entrepreneurship from which the students can choose the relevant or interesting for their needs. There are study modules of different types of entrepreneurship, such as light entrepreneurship and the development of an entrepreneurial mindset. Furthermore, students can get up to 20 study credits for the development of their own business idea and business as this directly relates to the core themes of the StartUp School.

Coaching

With coaching activities, Haaga-Helia offers university staff the possibility to participate in and join the activities of the StartUp School. Haaga-Helia's teachers act as coaches, and they help students set objectives, systematically put ideas into practice, and solve questions. Coaching is carried out widely at Haaga-Helia, and there are coaches on every campus (picture 3).



Picture 3. The StartUp School has published the Coaching Guidebook. In the guidebook, there are instructions and principles for teachers and coaches. StartUp School's coaching methods and processes are explored in more detail in the guidebook.

Work and Study for Entrepreneurs

The study module 'Work and Study for Entrepreneurs' is one of StartUp School's best practices. This module makes it possible for students to earn study credits at the same time as they are developing their idea or business. In practice, it means that the student participates in Work & Study meetings, works on their business idea or business development, and reports their learning. Before participating, the student needs to plan the studies with their supervisor, so that they are able to demonstrate the development of their own areas of competence and expertise. The student can earn between 5–20 ECTS study credits through different courses in this module.

International Cooperation

StartUp School collaborates internationally through various RDI projects and commercial activities. StartUp School aims to develop an international network of partners. For example, StartUp School has exported its entrepreneurship pedagogy to South Africa and is helping Tshwane's technical university open its own StartUp School. (Haaga-Helia StartUp School 2021).

StartUp Week is an excellent example of StartUp School's international cooperation and its commercialization. In this weeklong event, training organizations and accelerators are brought together. In 2017, StartUp Week became StartUp School's first step into education export. Participants have been from Botswana, South Africa, Germany, and Bolivia. The international guests learnt more about Finnish education and supporting entrepreneurship in universities of applied sciences. (Haaga-Helia StartUp School s.a.)

Good examples of international project cooperation are the Erasmus+ financed Corship project, and Interreg Central Baltic financed NOCCA-project:

In the *Corship project*, a consortium of companies and universities have produced a micro-credential qualification, consisting of a Massively Open Online Course (MOOC) and a Masterclass module. The core theme of the project is cooperation between start-ups and companies. To that end, the project has created a digital tool set for facilitating this collaboration, which can be found on the project's website. (Corship s.a.)

NOCCA – Novel Opportunities for new Company Creation and Accelerated growth has created an innovation program. The project's goal was to mix ecosystems and students in the Baltic Sea region (Tallinn, Riga, and Helsinki). The project has also organized multidisciplinary hackathons, growth workshops, and entrepreneurship boot camps. (NOCCA s.a.)

StartUp School goes Africa

Internationalisation and education export are emphasized in the joint StartUp School goes Africa -project, operated by StartUp School and Ambitious Africa. This is a cooperation project between Nordic and African students, where they are developing a new environment for entrepreneurship. Students are also supported by local governments and universities, among others. (Haaga-Helia StartUp School 2020.)

The project started due to interest in StartUp School from abroad. The StartUp School concept has already been exported to several countries and it has helped establish business accelerators in South Africa and Botswana, so the cooperation with Ambitious African is an excellent continuation. This collaborative project offers students internships and voluntary projects to replace some of the events that were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, such as Slush and the Nordic Business Forum.

During Africa Week in November 2020, the project launched the study course Work & Study Africa. The course provides students with the opportunity to explore and promote education export and participate in the construction of business accelerator operations to African countries. (Picture 4; Haaga-Helia StartUp School 2020.)



Picture 4. StartUp School goes Africa Hackathon was arranged in November 2020. (Haaga-Helia StartUp School 2020.)

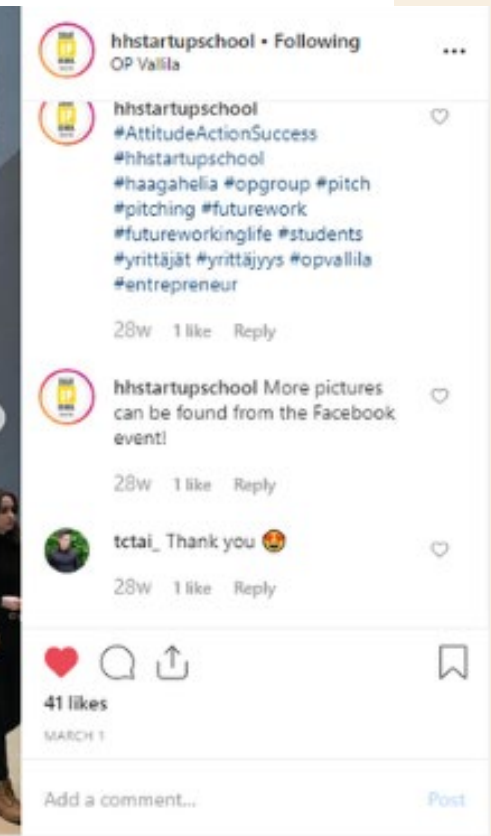
10 days 100 Challenges Concept

The 10 days 100 challenges concept is an intensive ten-day program organised by Haaga-Helia, Laurea, and Metropolia universities of applied sciences. During the program, working life are learned as the participants solve real problems facing companies by using the service design process. Anyone can enrol to the program, and so it is not just for the students of universities. The participant can choose which challenge they want to tackle. Companies are provided the opportunity to work closely with the teams to get the best possible solution for them. The last 10 days 100 challenges event was held in 2019 with the theme of the Future of Work and Sustainability. (10 Days 100 Challenges s.a.)

Pitching Evening -concept

The Pitching Evening event is organised by the StartUp School for student-teams to pitch their business ideas. The concept 'pitching' comes from the term elevator pitch, which means a short sales pitch where an idea, product, or service is presented briefly and concisely.

Mentors and entrepreneurs are invited to the pitching events, which are held in the cooperation companies' own premises. Previously, investors have also been invited, but it is clear that students benefit from additional mentoring before meeting the investors. Usually, there are 5-8 student teams that make a 3-5 minute pitch about their idea. The student teams receive written and oral feedback on their presentation by the jury. The latest event was arranged in January 2019 in cooperation with the OP Financial Services Group in their head office. (Picture 5; Haaga-Helia StartUp School 2018.)



Picture 5. The Pitching Evening enables companies to renew their corporate culture, find new ideas and build cooperation with educational institutions. The concept offers the companies' staff the possibility to work as mentors, often to the benefit of both staff and student (Finell ym. 2019.)

Co-Creation at the University of Helsinki

Written by Jade Hirvonen

We interviewed Rosa Salmivuori (CEO, Helsinki Think Company) and Suvipäivikki Mikola (Contact Manager, Communications and Public Relations, Business Partnerships) regarding the University of Helsinki's entrepreneurship support services. Rosa has been the CEO of Helsinki Think Company since 2019. She has been involved in the activities for more than six years, and during that time, she has seen a growing interest in entrepreneurship at the university. Academic entrepreneurship, people, and social influence inspire Rosa in her work at Think Company. Suvipäivikki works in the Public Relations Unit of the University of Helsinki as part of the fundraising team. She is responsible for the university's corporate fundraising and building business partnerships.

At the University of Helsinki, students interested in entrepreneurship are mainly referred to Helsinki Think Company. The Helsinki Think Company encourages students and researchers to be entrepreneurial, and its mission is to put academia into practice. The operation began in 2013 when the first cooperation space was opened. Today, there are operations on all campuses of the University of Helsinki. Think Company offers open and free collaboration spaces (picture 6) for everyone that can also act as event spaces. The facilities are able to be booked free of charge if the event is related to entrepreneurship, working life, or taking academia into practice. In addition to the facilities, Think Company offers a variety of activities that involve companies in collaboration with the university and researchers.



Picture 6. Helsinki Think Company's premises also have a kitchen area. Photographer: Jonas Simberg.

Helsinki Think Company has a clear core target group: students, researchers, and early-stage entrepreneurs. The broader target group includes *curious people* interested in entrepreneurship and current topics, *experimenters* who participate in events and programs, and *applicants* who want to put their own case or idea into practice.

Think Company's CEO Rosa Salmivuori thinks entrepreneurship has been a difficult topic to approach at the university. At Think Company, they have noticed that taking a more straightforward approach has been easier, addressing entrepreneurship from perspective of what the person can do with their own expertise. Think Company's success stories are the new business ideas that emerge as well as the spark for career change and entrepreneurship that develops in its clients. Think Company's activities benefit both the participating students and the companies. Students gain modern working life skills, problem-solving and teamwork skills, and their professional self-esteem improves. Companies are able to elevate their image and promote topics and areas they want.

Think Company employs about 20 students. Companies often seek new perspectives and contacts from young experts at Think Company. The essential funding for the activities comes from the City of Helsinki, the University of Helsinki, and corporate sponsorship. In addition to hired employees, there are also a handful of volunteers who work, especially in the student interface, by collaborating with other Entrepreneurship Societies and developing new concepts.

THINK COMPANY'S CONCEPTS AND PROGRAMS

Helsinki Think Company organizes events in a design sprint-style, which are not traditional coding hackathons but co-creation challenges. In these challenges, teams innovate, conceptualize, make a product or service prototype, and test its functionality with users over a few days. Each year, 3–4 short programs are organized along with 2–3 extended programs. The challenges are usually linked to a specific campus. These themes motivate participants, and the competition element brings ambition and personal drive into the mix. Students are often motivated to participate, not only because of the interesting themes, but also because of the participating partner organizations, which give the opportunity to network and impress potential future employers.

4UNI – Think Company Concept

The 4UNI solution competition aims to develop entrepreneurial skills. This is targeted at early-stage entrepreneurs that might not have a fully-formed idea or team yet. The program is for students in higher education institutes that will form multidisciplinary teams. The program lasts 5 to 7 weeks. In the program teams will work together to develop business concepts to solve a specific problem. The program culminates in the final event (picture 7). Each year, a few teams have continued their vision, and several participants have set up their own company,



Picture 7. Final event of the 4UNI Solution Competition. Photographer: Samuli Vienola.

The number of participants in the programs depends a lot on the theme. There are usually 20 to 50 participants, but there may be more than 70 applicants if the theme is topical. Accordingly, if there is a theme that appeals to a smaller audience or is less relevant, there are usually 15 to 20 participants. Students are motivated by the opportunity to be part of the solution. Student can also apply for study credits to participate in the programs, but the Think Company has not needed to market its events by offering credits. This indicates that the programs are of interest to students themselves. The student organization's email lists work best to advertise the events.

With the Covid-19 pandemic, the program has been translated into a digital format, and as such there have been more international participants than ever before. With this online format participants have a lower threshold for dropping out, but calling participants and ensuring participation has significantly reduced no shows (i.e., non-attendance).

OTHER GOOD PRACTICES:

HELSEED Entrepreneurship Program

In the spring of 2020, University of Helsinki launched the HELSEED entrepreneurship program together with the Helsinki Think Company. During the program, students receive support and guidance in how to start a start-up. The program does not include any compulsory studies, but students can choose their own studies and get support from Think Company. In the programme, students work on producing a written business plan for their idea within a six-month time frame. The authors of the most promising business plans will be able to participate in a pitching competition, where, if successful, they can win funding to implement their business plan. (University of Helsinki 2021.)

Helsinki Challenge

The Helsinki Challenge is a research-based idea competition for researchers from Finnish universities. Multidisciplinary teams develop solutions to a variety of global problems. Simultaneously, the concept serves as a competition, an accelerator of researchers' ideas, and a showcase of Finnish science. (Helsinki Challenge s.a.)

Helsinki Challenge concept was created in 2015, to honor the 375th anniversary of the University of Helsinki. The concept was intended to promote international visibility and highlight what the University of Helsinki could do to solve global problems. The University of Helsinki implemented the concept in partnership with Demos Helsinki. In 2017, the second round of the Helsinki Challenge was held to honor Finland's 100th anniversary. In the second round, the competition wanted to develop solutions to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

The Helsinki Challenge is targeted to research groups. Often, researchers have difficulty crystallizing their own ideas. The Helsinki Challenge's participants have said that the competition has helped them to clarify their ideas because they work with the ideas concretely throughout the program. Their ideas were developed using the design-thinking method. Researchers are also offered international and domestic networking opportunities.

However, the Helsinki Challenge is very expensive to organize. It is a large entity that takes more than a year of working time from employees. On both occasions, there have been two full-time employees working with the concept. It cannot be achieved with the university's existing resources but requires external funding and resources. Participating in the concept also requires a lot of time from researchers, a long-term commitment, and the energy to start something new. The organizers have learned a lot from the two large competitions, and since then, smaller entities have been organized.

Commercializing Research at LUT University

Written by Jade Hirvonen

We interviewed Jari Varis (expert, GCO) to discuss the entrepreneurial support services on offer at LUT University. The interview focused on the Green Campus Open unit. Jari (D.Sc., MBA) works at the Green Campus Open business accelerator as an innovation expert. His background is in research, teaching, and projects at LUT University. He has also worked in sales and marketing in international companies and business development positions, such as Imatra Region Development Company. Currently, his tasks focus on LUT University's "research to business" activities.

The Green Campus Open (GCO) -unit (LUT University s.a) promotes the commercialization of research in LUT University and helps research teams generate business from research-based ideas. It is a business accelerator, which is part of the LUT University's administration organization. The unit's activities were supported by the European Regional Development Fund until the end of 2020. The activities are based on LUT University's strategy and desire to invest in effectiveness. A three-person team runs the GCO with its own office space and meeting room.

The GCO-unit serves researchers, companies, and investors. GCO helps research groups in applying for Research to Business funding from Business Finland. Investor Days are organized, where teams can present their ideas to Venture Capital companies. GCO's focus is entirely on university-based start-up teams and companies, so they direct other business ideas elsewhere. GCO serves companies, for example, by help them to network with LUT's research teams. LUT University is also one of the owners of the investment company Green Campus Innovations Oy. The company acts as an investor in the early stages of start-ups.

GCO cooperates with Business Mill, a modern-day business incubator for knowledge-based companies that want to grow or internationalize. For example, Business Mill can help organize student theses that directly serve companies. Business Mill operates on the Skinnarila campus at the LAB University of Applied Sciences and as such serves as an open door to the expertise on available on campus.

Each year, on average, LUT University generates around 50–60 invention notifications, and 20 patent applications. This is more than other universities in Finland, in proportion to the staff. The goal is to encourage 4–5 research-based start-ups to emerge each year. Good examples of start-ups created from LUT's research are, for example, AXCO-Motors Oy, Mevea, and Visedo. Dozens of products used worldwide have also emerged through the research carried out LUT. GCO also handles patent and IPR matters at LUT University and sells rights to external companies.



GREEN
CAMPUS



SUMMARY

The Entrepreneurship Recommendations (2018) and the Entrepreneurship Education Guidelines (2017) guide the operation and planning of entrepreneurship support services in universities in Finland. Therefore, it came as no surprise that similarities arose in the entrepreneurship activities of the benchmarked higher education institutes.

In these universities, entrepreneurship support services are centralized in a specific university unit: the new Xentre – Unit of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Xamk, StartUp School in Haaga-Helia, Helsinki Think Company at University of Helsinki, and Green Campus Open business accelerator at LUT University. Each entity also serves companies, for example, by organizing events or coaching. LUT's Green Campus Open unit focuses more on developing research-based business. This unit helps researchers to find research funding, for example.

The students are offered, e.g., mentoring, sparring, and various coaching and study packages to develop their business ideas. Almost every benchmarked university has an event or coaching concepts for business development. Helsinki Think Company's leading service is program packages of different lengths, co-development challenges that are very popular among students when the topic is interesting.

The study of entrepreneurship also emerged as a similarity in these benchmarked institutions. Entrepreneurship-related studies can be completed through individual courses or study modules. The activities of the StartUp School are very impressive, as it enables students to start and develop a business and complete their studies at the same time. They have also exported their pedagogy abroad. Xamk's forthcoming Master's degree in Entrepreneurship also aroused interest, as there wasn't a similar program on offer in the other universities.

Entrepreneurship support services are available at universities for early-stage entrepreneurs, students and startups. Universities provide a good knowledge base on entrepreneurship and education for interested students and novice student entrepreneurs. Universities are the home base of early-stage entrepreneurship that provides a secure environment and ready-made networks to develop business forward towards new challenges.

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SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

It is clear that human activity needs to change. To make a change in the right direction, we need research-based information and skills. Therefore, universities must take action.

At the end of 2020, the Rector's Council of the university of applied science published its sustainable development and responsibility program. The goal is to increase their “hand-print” and reduce their carbon footprint of operations. Universities of applied science are committed to training professionals who promote sustainable development and combat the adverse effects of climate change. RDI activities, on the other hand, seek solutions to sustainability challenges. At a practical level, this means, among other things, that all students graduating from universities of applied sciences have at least a basic knowledge of responsibility and sustainable development, regardless of their study field. For RDI activities require that there are established criteria for the sustainable design, development, evaluation, and implementation of research and results.

At the same time, the Rectors' Council of the Universities published its own thesis. The thesis are intended to accelerate the universities' own activities in particular, but they also take a broader view. Like universities of applied sciences, universities naturally invest in research and education for environmental accountability and sustainable development, with perhaps a slightly different emphasis. Universities are also committed to sustainable and responsible operations, e.g., human resource management and well-being. Sustainable development is also visible in campus activities. Universities see their role as solid partners and agents of change. They also want sustainable development to be reflected in funding, for example.

Both universities and universities of applied sciences emphasize the need to move from plans to action. This is easy to agree with. This year will show just how vigorously we are moving forward.

Olli Ervaala

Director of Education and Responsibility
South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, Xamk

A Carbon Neutral Xamk by 2025

Written by Nicole Javanainen

Regarding Xamk's sustainability and responsibility, we interviewed Olli Ervaala (Director of Education Services and Director of Responsibility). Olli manages Xamk's teaching support services (E-campus, publishing and production services, library services, international services, student services, information management services) as well as study welfare services. Olli leads Xamk's responsibility work together with the development group.

Responsibility is a key part of Xamk's strategy and part of the daily lives of staff members and students. Xamk seeks to continually develop its responsibility and monitors its results. The Sustainable Development Group coordinates sustainable development and is guided by, e.g., Xamk's responsibility program (Picture 1), a performance agreement concluded with the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the sustainable development and responsibility program of Rector's Council of the university of applied sciences. Xamk is committed to being carbon neutral by 2025. A common model created by several universities of applied sciences' is used to calculate Xamk's carbon footprint. (Xamk s.a.)



Picture 1. Xamk's responsibility program is built on three promises and is divided into three themes (Xamk 2020a).

Xamk wants to be actively involved in international responsibility networks. Xamk is the first university in Finland to be committed to the UN Global Compact. This corporate responsibility initiative aims to develop the ecological, social, and economic responsibility of companies and communities worldwide. By committing to the Global Compact, Xamk promotes the UN's goals, declarations, and agreements. (Xamk s.a.)

KOTKA'S NEW ENERGY-EFFICIENT CAMPUS

The construction of Kotka's new campus in Kantasatama will begin in summer 2021, and the campus will be completed in summer 2023. Sustainable development and responsibility have been taken into account in the planning and construction of the property. The building will apply for RTS environmental certification, and there is special attention paid to energy efficiency and intelligent energy solutions. Solar panels will be installed in the building and charging points will be provided for electric cars and bicycles. The campus design also takes into account the event center, since some of the facilities like the restaurant, will be shared with the event center. (Picture 2.)



Picture 2. Outline of the interior view of Kotka's new campus (Xamk 2019).

XAMK'S GOOD PRACTICES

Green office activities

All Xamk campuses are part of the Green Office network and have received certification. Each campus has its own Green Office team that both students and staff are welcome to join. The aim is to make the campus more sustainable and raise awareness of everyday eco-activities.

The Green Office team organizes various events that aim to inspire staff and students alike to make more environmentally friendly everyday life choices. Every year several theme weeks are organized, such as *item exchange and trade*, *energy saving*, and *waste* as well as longer *cycling kilometer competitions*. During Covid-19, the Green Office team created a new event – *plogging*, which was held for the first time in October 2020. Plogging means garbage collecting while running.

Encouraging Sustainable Mobility

More sustainable mobility practices are currently being developed at Xamk. In Autumn 2020, a study was carried out that was a part of the *Xlab – connection to business* project and the Green Office. As part of this study, an open workshop was organised for Xamk's employees. This workshop highlighted several important measures that should be taken, which were later compiled into recommendations for action. These recommendations include, more flexible working from home policies, a business travel ticket that encourages the use of public transport (to be investigated more thoroughly in 2021), and improving the commuting opportunities for the new Kotka campus. (Xamk 2020b.)

Xamk encourages the use of public transport for business trips. Public transportation is the preferred option for travel along with Xamk's cars. Some of Xamk's cars have been replaced with electric vehicles, and all campuses will have electric-assisted bikes by the end of 2021. On the Kotka and Mikkeli campuses, electric bikes are already in use. (Xamk 2020b.)

Issues of sustainable mobility are also regularly discussed, e.g., at Green Office meetings. Xamk is also involved in Kotka's employer network for sustainable mobility, where partner organizations' best practices are shared. (Xamk 2020b.)

Haaga-Helia's Sustainable Porvoo Campus

Written by Nicole Javanainen

Regarding Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences' sustainable development and responsibility, we interviewed Kiti Häkkinen (Director of the Degree Program) and Malin Lahdensuo (Director of the Degree Program). The interview focused on the Porvoo campus.

At Haaga-Helia, responsibility is key part of the university's strategy. Responsibility has been taken into account in the university's everyday life, teaching, and energy consumption. The common goal of all five campuses is to reduce the amount of waste, as well as electricity, heat and water consumption. (Haaga-Helia 2020.)

Haaga-Helia joined Finland's Chamber of Commerce's climate commitment, in which it commits to being carbon neutral by 2030. Haaga-Helia is also one of the City of Helsinki's climate partners, which promotes a carbon-neutral capital. In terms of environmental responsibility, Haaga-Helia is one of the universities of applied science that has a clear carbon neutrality goal and a roadmap to achieve it. (Haaga-Helia 2020.)

Haaga-Helia is committed to taking responsible business practices into account in its curriculum and RDI activities. Responsible business forms a part of all business students' studies. Haaga-Helia is also Finland's first university of applied science to sign the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PREM) for business educators, aiming to commit to sustainable and internationally recognized values for education and research. (Vastuullisuus s.a.)

In tourism education, all interested lecturers are offered sustainable tourism education, which commits them to plan their courses following sustainable development principles. Haaga-Helia is also actively involved in the Sustainable Travel Finland program and the Helsinki Declaration 2.0, which is the Finnish tourism industry's commitment to responsible tourism.

COMMUNAL AND SUSTAINABLE PORVOO CAMPUS

In the benchmarking interview, we focused on the Porvoo campus, as this campus is an excellent example of Haaga-Helia's environmentally responsible operations. The Porvoo campus was completed in 2011 and is located near the city center. Approximately 1 100 students from more than 50 different countries study at this campus (Porvoo kampus s.a.).

The campus was designed and implemented as a co-creation project. During the construction phase, the staff were actively involved in the design process, and everyone celebrated the project's milestones together. Transparency and openness, ecology, teamwork, and closeness to people were taken into account during the construction. This is shown from the use of glass and timber that endures well over time. Sustainability has also been considered in energy consumption. Solar panels have been installed on the roof, and renewable solar electricity power plants will cover part of the campus's electricity consumption. The campus uses green heat and electricity. (Picture 3.)

The campus offers a modern and innovative learning environment where studies are conducted in close cooperation with working life. The campus has plenty of workspaces for groups and small meeting rooms where students also work. Employees do not have their own rooms, but are able to use large co-working spaces instead.



Picture 3. Haaga-Helia's Porvoo campus.
Picture: STT Viestintäpalvelut Oy

Porvoo campus users are proud of the “community-spirit” on the campus. Students study using a project-model in close cooperation with companies, for example in work-life-oriented projects. There is a grand piano in the lobby of the Porvoo campus that is said to enhance the atmosphere as students and staff play to cheer up of the entire campus. The walls are also decorated with artwork. The campus serves as an open meeting place for locals and is an integral part of the city’s dynamics.

There is a Sustainable Development team on campus that meets regularly and has its own channel in Microsoft Teams. Students have thus far been well committed to the sustainable development measures and often are already well informed about sustainable practices. This can be seen when students and the student union bring new sustainable ideas to the university management.

At the Porvoo campus, sustainable mobility centres around, among other things, campus bikes, which are significantly used by international students. Employees are encouraged to use public transport with various commuting campaigns (not active during the Covid-19 pandemic). Staff are also given bus passes, for example, when traveling to Helsinki. Despite the central location in the town of Porvoo, there are plenty of parking spaces for the staff, and some are also available for students. There could be more charging stations for electric cars, but this would be a significant investment to make afterward.

The University of Helsinki: a Pioneer in Sustainability and Responsibility

Written by Nicole Javanainen

Regarding the University of Helsinki's sustainable development, we interviewed Riina Koivuranta (MMM, environmental planner). Riina is a specialist in the field and in her work, she develops and coordinates the university's sustainability and responsibility work and acts as the university's point of contact in various networks.

The University of Helsinki's strategy has made sustainability and responsibility a priority and has hired a specialist to promote these issues (presently, Riina Koivuranta). The University of Helsinki is committed to promoting sustainable development in all three its most essential tasks: research, teaching, and social interaction. Sustainability is also reflected in the university's operations and everyday practices.

The goal of University of Helsinki is to be a pioneer in responsibility and sustainability. The university is moving towards ecological sustainability by, among other things, reducing the carbon footprint of its operations and enhancing the efficiency of the circular economy. The goal is to be carbon neutral by 2030. The UN Agenda 2030 provides a framework for achieving sustainable development and responsibility. (Helsingin yliopiston strategia 2021–2030 s.a., 21.)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY AS PART OF THE UNIVERSITY'S BASIC TASKS

The University of Helsinki's multidisciplinary nature offers opportunities for solving some of the complex problems of sustainable development and environmental issues. At University of Helsinki, sustainability issues are studied in various ways, from indigenous issues to sustainable space. Among other things, the university conducts diverse Arctic and Baltic Sea research. It is also involved in the Climate Alliance's climate research, which includes the world's leading universities in the field of climate research (Helsingin yliopisto 2020a).

The Institute of Sustainability Science, HELSUS is an interdisciplinary unit that combines research and education in sustainability science from seven faculties. The faculties organize many events together. During 2019, about 40 events were organized. The unit collaborates with several domestic and international academic, public, and private actors. (Yhteistyö s.a.)

Themes related to sustainable development and responsibility are taught in almost all faculties. The Master's Program in Environmental Change and Global Sustainability (s.a.) educates students to respond to the global challenges related to environment and sustainability. A university-wide environmental course will be piloted in Spring 2021. More than 160 volunteer university students from all faculties participated in creating the course content. It is planned that this online course might be made available to everyone through the open university in the future.

The University of Helsinki is an active partner in several sustainability and responsibility networks and is currently involved in about 40 related partnerships and commitments. The university is a member of UNA Europa - the European University Cooperation Network, the corporate responsibility network FIBS, and the national sustainability panel. Riina Koivuranta emphasizes that University of Helsinki creates a more sustainable world together with other actors. Communal, transparency, and working together are a precondition for a university to be a sustainability and responsibility pioneer. The ambitious goals of the strategy can only be achieved through cooperation. One example of cooperation is UNIFI's theses of sustainability and responsibility. The working group that created the theses was chaired by Tom Böhling, Vice-Rector of the University of Helsinki, and Riina Koivuranta was a member of the working group. Some of the sustainability and responsibility networks also include companies, which brings numerous opportunities for the business sector and increases cooperation between companies and the university.

GOOD PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL INFLUENCING

HELUS Co-Creation Lab

The HELUS Co-Creation Lab is a supervised thesis process for master's students interested in sustainability issues. The process consists of six scheduled co-creation meetings. The Lab brings together actors working in sustainable development and students interested in conducting multidisciplinary research for a company or public sector actor. (University of Helsinki 2021a.)

Sustainability Science Days

Sustainability Science Days are Finland's largest sustainability science event. The event has been held since 2018. The 2021 conference will focus on the UN Sustainable Development Goal 9 (sustainable industry, innovation and infrastructure) and 11 (sustainable cities and communities). Themes from previous years have included climate action and sustainable consumption. Over the last few years, the event has attracted more than 500 guests, including business decision-makers, politicians, and researchers. (University of Helsinki 2020b.)



Picture 4. The University of Helsinki's Think Corner is an arena for discussion, working together, and it is open to everyone. Photographer: Helsingin yliopisto / Matti Pyykkö.

Thinkfest

Thinkfest is an excellent example of decision-making collaboration. The annual event celebrates science, thinking, and learning together. Thinkfest brings together researchers and social actors to solve Finland's most critical issues. (University of Helsinki 2021b.)

Think Corner

Think Corner is a multipurpose space open to all. Many interactive activities and events are organised here with several different actors. There have been many sustainability-related events held here. The facilities work well for learning together and facilitating new creative discussion and collaboration. Sustainability is embedded into the Think Corner's physical structure. Solar panels have been installed on the roof, waste heat is used for domestic hot water heating, and district cooling is used for cooling the building. (Picture 4; University of Helsinki 2021c.)

Viikki Sustainability Research Seminar

Viikki Sustainability Research Seminar focuses on various sustainable development topics and is organized by the Finnish Environment Institute, the Natural Resources Center of Finland, and HELSUS. The seminar invites researchers and other interested guests to discuss current research on sustainable development. (University of Helsinki 2021d.)

Voices for Sustainability Blog

The idea of the Voices for Sustainability Blog's is to provide a forum for researchers, students, and other experts on current sustainability issues, as well as share information with a wider audience, and stimulate discussion. This blog is the result of a collaboration HELSUS, ECGS, and Resilience. (Voices for Sustainability 2019.)

GOOD PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE CHOICES IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Sustainable Mobility

University of Helsinki is taking numerous steps to encourage sustainable mobility. The university tries to make sustainable mobility as easy as possible or as the “default choice”. For example, encouraging staff and students to cycle requires good washrooms, lockers, and bike storage facilities.

The university compensated for its flight emissions for 2018, after which the compensation has been waived. These actions are somewhat criticised as the university would rather look for ways to influence its own actions directly. During 2021, the university aims to create a carbon neutrality roadmap, which will prepare targets and proposals for measures to reduce, and possibly compensate, for climate emissions. The goal is that it would achieve the 2030 target for carbon neutrality.

Responsible Purchasing

Furniture is often recycled from one university premise to another, and all tender invitations need to consider different aspects of responsibility. There is a community in Yammer to recycle the staff’s own items. In 2013, the University of Helsinki became a Fair Trade College after an initiative started by university students.

Responsible Investing

University of Helsinki is committed to stop investing in fossil fuel companies during its strategy period (2021–2030) and aims to achieve a carbon-neutral portfolio by 2030. (Helsingin yliopiston strategia 2021–2030 s.a., 21.) Sustainable development has been strongly promoted, and the number of fossil fuel producers in the portfolio has been reduced to zero by the end of 2020.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Energy efficiency is part of property maintenance and construction. The university is taking steps to improve its energy efficiency, for example the energy use of the computer rooms has been improved and, for example, waste heat is utilized to warm greenhouses. Renewable energy is also produced in university properties. For example, solar power is generated in the Viikki campus and the the Lammi Biological Station uses wood chips.

LUT University Harnesses Data Collection and Data Mining to Promote Carbon Negativity

Written by Nicole Javanainen

Regarding the sustainable development of LUT University, we interviewed Kati Koikkalainen (M.Sc.), Sustainability Manager of LUT University and LAB University of Applied Sciences. Kati has a long employment history at LUT University. She has worked in the coordination, teaching, and development tasks of the environmental technology degree program. Kati has also worked in constructing the environmental system (ISO 14001), and at LUT Junior University. She is also involved in the national sustainability and responsibility working groups of universities and universities of applied sciences.

LUT University belongs to the same group as LAB University of Applied Sciences. In benchmarking, we focused only on LUT University.

Ecological, economic, and social sustainability guides LUT University's strategic choices in research, education and social interaction. LUT has set a goal to achieve carbon-negativity in all its campuses by 2024. (Kestävä kehitys ja vastuullisuus s.a.) A sustainability manager has been hired to promote sustainability. To achieve carbon negativity, a data platform has been built that refines the carbon balance through data collection and data mining. The goal is to be able to control all consumption, and the resulting emissions based on data with lower forecasts and intelligent real-time control. (LUT University 2020a.)

The university's research team calculates the carbon footprint by following the Greenhouse Gas protocol. The carbon footprint calculations take into account its direct greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., cars), indirect emissions (e.g., electricity, heat, cooling), and indirect greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., staff travel, meals, waste, training, research). It is challenging to collect data from the last one, as there are many data inaccuracies. The first results of the calculations are from 2019. Based on this data, the carbon footprint was approximately 2 600 tons of CO₂. In the autumn of 2020, a survey was conducted for staff and students to find out that the most significant emissions came from travel between home and work, meals, and business trips. LUT is preparing a Climate Action Plan based on a carbon footprint calculation made by the research group. The research team promotes the calculation of LUT's carbon handprint.



Picture: LUT-yliopisto / Teemu Leinonen.

To promote sustainable mobility, a study on the possibilities for employer-subsidised commuter tickets and the acquisition of bicycles is underway. In 2021, a sustainability team of students is planned to become operation if funding is acquired for the activity. For example, the team would run various campaigns to motivate students and make sustainable operations more visible (at the time of the interview, funding had not yet been secured). From the beginning of 2021, the Student Union (LTKY) appointed a Sustainability, Responsibility, and Communications Officer, with whom LUT's Sustainability Manager actively cooperates. LTKY's representative has also been appointed a member of LUT's Quality and Environmental System Steering Group.

All new students are introduced to LUT's environmentally responsible thinking and research, and LUT strives to include sustainable development themes (Kestävyys akateemisessa koulutuksessa s.a.) in all degree programs. In the academic year 2019–2020, a total of 72 percent of LUT's undergraduate programs have included these themes.

The research of LUT focus on the interrelated basic elements—energy, water and air—business regeneration research. The research activities focuses among other things, securing the conditions for action to combat climate change, and to ensure the conditions of operation

environmentally, socially and economically responsible. LUT's research activities have laid the foundation for several successful global products and new businesses. (Kestävyys tieteellisessä tutkimuksessa s.a.)

LUT has signed the SDG Accord. By signing the commitment, LUT commits itself to promote the UN Sustainable Development Goals. LUT is also committed to the PREME Declaration and is involved in the WWF Green Office. LUT particularly promotes seven Sustainable Development Goals (picture 5) and submits the data to The Times Higher Education Impact Ranking. LUT's goal is to be among the top 100 universities.



Picture 5. LUT promotes specifically these 7 UN Sustainable Development Goals (Kestävä kehitys ja vastuullisuus s.a.).

LUT University belongs to numerous sustainable development networks. Since 2010, LUT has been involved in the Nordic Sustainable Campus Network, NSCN and International Sustainable Campus Network, ISCN networks. Among other things, the NSCN network shares proven practices to support sustainable campus activities. The ISCN acts as a global forum and promotes the exchange of ideas and information, and the sharing of best practices between universities and companies on matters relating to sustainable development. (Kestävän kehityksen verkostot s.a.). LUT's Sustainability manager, Kati Koikkalainen, says that the most significant benefits of belonging to these networks are the ability to benchmark other universities practices, getting support from colleagues, and being able to implement the university's know-how for the benefit of others. LUT also cooperates regionally and nationally. Regionally, LUT works closely with the campus cities, Lahti (European Green Capital 2021) and Lappeenranta (European Green Leaf 2021).

LUT'S GOOD PRACTICES

LUT Junior University

At LUT Junior University, students ranging from pre-schoolers to high school students are challenged to find solutions to mitigate climate change and promote business sustainability. Through its activities, LUT's high level of expertise is implemented to benefit children, young people, and their teachers in their local area. Young people learn, e.g., to set up sustainable and responsible small businesses, circular economy skills, and opportunities to influence their own and their families' carbon footprint.

The operating model of the educational cooperation between LUT and the City of Lappeenranta. It also forms a part of the school curriculum (see www.uniori.fi/in-english/). The contents have been designed in collaboration with pre-school, primary, secondary, and upper secondary teachers. The contents are based on LUT's three priorities: clean energy, circular economy, sustainable business, and entrepreneurship. (LUT Junior University s.a.)

In 2020, ISCN awarded LUT Junior University as the best model for cooperation that promotes sustainable development. The concept has also received good feedback from various stakeholders and the European Green Leaf competition jury. It has been identified as a good practice that could be disseminated to other European university cities.

Green Campus

The Green Campus was launched on the Lappeenranta campus in 2011. The Green Campus is LUT's study and work environment, where sustainable solutions to global challenges are created by utilizing interdisciplinary research and teaching. It is also a way of thinking that brings about sustainable development and positive environmental impacts. (Green Campus – Vihreitä edistysaskelia s.a.). Numerous sustainable development measures have been taken into practice on Lappeenranta campus. The campus operates with green electricity, and LUT has its own solar electric power plants (picture 6). Green Campus won the ISNC campus series in 2013.



Picture 6. Solar power plants produce 5.4% of the electricity consumed by LUT. Picture by: LUT University / Teemu Leinonen

The Environmental System

LUT's environmental system is based on ISO 14001 (certified 2014–2016). Although the system is no longer certified, it is still in use. There is no perceived need for re-certification, as expertise and development proposals come from inside the university. The most important aspects of the environmental system are (LUT University 2020b):

1. Scientific research and academic education,
2. Energy, natural resources, waste, and transport,
3. Environmental cooperation with external stakeholders.

Sustainability manager Kati highlights the environmental system's development as one of the university's best practices as it enables the reporting of actions to management, monitoring of operations, and the possibility to achieve carbon negativity in the future. The work is done systematically, with a clear division of responsibilities.



SUMMARY

Sustainability, responsibility, and carbon neutrality are highlighted in the commitments of the Rector's Council of Universities of Applied Sciences and the Rectors' Council of the Universities. As a result, the themes also appear in the activities and strategies of the benchmarked universities. The universities have also set emission reduction targets and are committed to taking various measures to further reduce emissions and achieve carbon neutrality.

During the benchmarking, it was noteworthy that while higher education institutions have common sustainability goals, each higher education institution promotes the goals based on its own strengths and specificities. Several higher education institutions also have a designated person in charge, who develops and coordinates the university's sustainability and responsibility work, and acts as the contact person in various networks.

Sustainability issues also arose with the topic of campus construction. Haaga-Helia's Porvoo campus construction, the durability of construction and building materials and energy use was emphasised. Considering Xamk's new Kotka campus, a crucial takeaway was the inclusion of electric car charging points in parking lots during the construction phase, as this would be an expensive investment made later.

The co-creation workshops (page 86) of the Twin Campus project held in the spring of 2021 discussed sustainable development practices in the context of the Twin Campus operating model. The strategic goals of the partner organizations, as well as their strengths and specificities should be taken into account when planning cooperation and projects. When developing a strategy and goals, a good practice is to work with the sustainability officer to find the best ways to incorporate sustainable development goals.

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CREATING AN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION STRATEGY IN USER-DRIVEN METHODS

Written by Minna Nieminen

Twin Campus project creates a user-driven strategy model, that serves the users and commits them to implement the international cooperation strategy action. Users, in this case, Twin Campus project partners, universities and regional development companies in Russia and Finland, were involved in the development of the strategy through workshops, interviews, and surveys. The advantage of user-oriented design is to create a collaborative operating model that truly serves the users and is based on their needs. They have been able to identify and develop themselves. At the same time, the strategy becomes familiar to them, which ensures a better commitment to the agreed activities.

The initial framework of the strategy will be evaluated and developed during the planning stage. Testing the themes of the strategy with different user and stakeholder groups provides new information and perspectives for creating the strategy. Once the strategy is completed and implemented, its performance should be regularly evaluated and developed to serve its users properly.

STRATEGY GOALS AND USER UNDERSTANDING

Xamk's work package in Twin Campus project includes creating an international operational strategy and compiling a roadmap for its implementation between Xamk, St. Petersburg University of Technology ITMO and their stakeholders. The most important themes in the strategy are entrepreneurial support services, business cooperation and sustainable development practices.

In order to develop the strategy, we asked the question: What sort of cooperation is needed, so that it serves the interests of universities, companies, and development organisations as well as possible? The resulting strategy would need to be realistic and easy to implement so that it would be brought into practice.

The international operational strategy should create impact and facilitate cooperation between Xamk, ITMO, and their partners. The purpose of the strategy is:

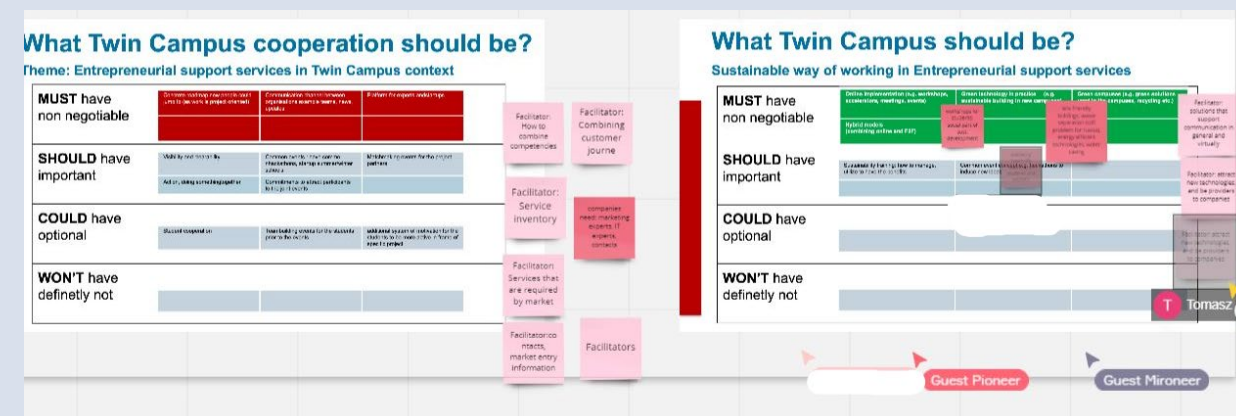
- To create effective cooperation and operating model to foster international connections and career opportunities between cooperating universities and companies
- To find talented workers for companies

- To produce meaningful work and international experience for students
- To create an open and active communication platform for the development and maintenance of cooperation
- To increase the attractiveness of cooperation

To create the strategy, the preliminary information was collected in this project by benchmarking the good practices of other universities of applied science on the themes previously mentioned. As the implementation of the strategy is a collaborative approach, two virtual workshops were held on the topic. The themes of the strategy were created together with the project partners and stakeholders in the workshops. The workshops aimed to find the right people from each organization who will implement the strategy in their work. A survey was conducted to gather additional information from the workshop participants about their needs, goals, and challenges. The survey provided a comprehensive picture of the initial situation, which was used to create a common view of the strategy. The project workshops were assisted by a facilitator, service designer Tomasz Tracewski from Solita Oy, who compiled information and guided the activities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORKSHOPS

In the first workshop, we discussed the workshops' objectives and formed a shared vision of the strategy's needs. The first workshop aimed to understand the challenges identified in the collaboration and create a vision of a working collaboration model. Various ideas and solutions were produced for the vision. The participants discussed the ideas and proposed solutions in their organizations, and feedback was collected.



Picture 1. The workshops explored shared vision using the Miro-Collaborative whiteboard platform. Photographer: Minna Nieminen.

The workshop highlighted several themes, most notably systematic actions to facilitate information sharing, discussion, and cooperation.

- Smooth communication to avoid the duplication of effort.
- The activity and initiative of the strategy user is necessary.
- The strategy should be renewed and its operation reliably evaluated.
- It would be essential to designate a person responsible for cooperation and strategy implementation in each organization.
- The operating model can be implemented regardless of a project's duration or the turnover of people.
- A steering group for the cooperation, which includes representatives from each cooperation organization.
- Internships into the cooperation model and international company-oriented projects.

In the second workshop, the themes were explored in more detail, and three main themes were chosen to guide the strategy: Joint Virtual Platform, Entrepreneurship Service Path, and Sustainable Development

Joint Virtual Platform

The success of communication between the parties implementing the strategy was identified as the basis for a successful strategy. The aim is to create a channel or platform where information about available projects, services, and responsible people can be found easily and from one source. The goal is to create an open collaboration channel such as Microsoft Teams or some other platform where sharing information and discussion can occur on with a threshold. At the same time, regular weekly or monthly meetings between actors was felt to be necessary. For example, Xamk has a broader cooperation meeting with ITMO twice a month, but there was also an identified need for a joint meeting between project partners to exchange news and information about each party's activities.

Entrepreneurship Service Path

It was seen as necessary to map the service path of entrepreneurs across borders. Though this mapping, it would determine what services are already available and what sort of services would be needed. The aim is to create a clear model for companies to develop their operations in Finland or Russia, and to have support and a service network for their operations on both sides of the border. The service path is mainly intended for the clients of the project partners and student companies, and business ideas.

Sustainable Development

The values of sustainable development go hand-in-hand with the strategy, which is implemented mainly in a virtual formate. Utilizing annual wheel thinking strengthens the continuity of operations and enables the setting of long-term operational goals for cooperation. With the help of technology, new ways can be found to develop virtual interaction and take advantage of new campus facilities. For example, technology can create workspaces suitable for the hybrid model, where participants can be present both live and virtually. Possibly, the facilities could be used for the activities of a larger group with their technical solutions, which would need to include large common screens and good sound system.

In addition, companies and students would need to be trained in sustainable development topics. It is a good idea to consider the different regulations between countries before moving into international markets. Various educational cooperation projects or hackathons can also be organized under the theme of sustainable development.

STUDENT MEETUP

For the strategy work, a virtual meeting was also held to develop student collaboration and networking. The Student Meetup was held as a virtual coffee event in March 2021. The aim was to create a relaxed and informal opportunity to discuss possible cooperation with student associations of Xamk and ITMO and gauge interest. The event was attended by active students from Xamk interested in international collaboration and members of the student associations Virta and PatteriES. Representatives of several student clubs from ITMO were present and they presented their activities to others. The aim of the first meeting was to get to know other participants and the student associations and clubs' activities.

The event was for invited students only. In the future, the intention is to plan a common program open to all students, such as lectures and guest speakers organized around different themes. The meeting raised interest in sharing information about internationally available student events and projects. There is no clear model for student cooperation between schools, but there would be interest in developing one if students are active and engaged.

STRATEGY AND ROADMAP COMPILATION

The strategy work begins with compiling the information gathered around the identified themes raised in the workshops. The themes form the main objectives that the entire operational strategy aims to achieve. Under the main objectives, the sub-objectives are defined, which help the strategy to move towards the primary goal. The implementation of the strategy is monitored, measured, and evaluated.

A step-by-step roadmap will be drawn up for the operation of the strategy. The roadmap describes the necessary actions to implement the strategy and achieve its objectives. The roadmap describes the concrete steps that will support the achievement of the goals. For example, the roadmap can describe the measures used to establish a common platform for communication. The roadmap can also be used to assess whether the strategic objectives are being successfully achieved.

A strategy is not just a once decided upon operating model, it needs to live and develop during operation. Users who implement the strategy evaluate its success and, if necessary, set new strategic goals and directions. A good strategy provides the framework and direction for action, but at the same time is a flexible, self-renewed operating model that serves every user and stakeholder in the right way.



THE KEYSTONES OF THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION MODEL

Written by Jade Hirvonen

The Twin Campus project is developing a cross-border cooperation model. Underlying this is the idea of Twin City, where two cities in physically different locations have identical functions. An excellent example of the Twin City concept is Copenhagen and Malmö, which are connected not only by the almost 8 km long Öresund Bridge, but also served by cross-border police cooperation. It would have been fascinating to benchmark the existing Twin Campus concept so that the cooperation model developed in the project could use the successful operating models that had already been proven to work. However, as a similar concept was not yet in place, we identified good practice on the three themes of business cooperation, entrepreneurial support services, and sustainable development.

In addition to Xamk, one university of applied science, Haaga-Helia, and two universities, the University of Helsinki and LUT University, were selected for the benchmarking. As graduates of the university of applied science, it was interesting to get to know the activities of the university world in more detail. Universities and universities of applied sciences have many similarities and their own strengths, which are reflected in daily activities.

The benchmarking revealed that entrepreneurial support services and business cooperation very strongly go hand-in-hand. Companies are involved in various programs and concepts that support entrepreneurship. Most entrepreneurship support services have been centralized in a specific unit. When starting business cooperation, the company is assisted by a business cooperation coordinator, contact person, or team.

Sustainability operating models are strongly guided by the commitments of the Rector's Council of Universities of Applied Sciences and the Rectors' Council of the Universities. Promoting carbon neutrality was a clear common goal, and LUT University is the most ambitious with a goal to achieve carbon negativity by 2024. Despite the same goals, higher education institutions promote the goals of sustainable development in accordance with their own strengths.

THE STRATEGY AND ROADMAP OF THE TWIN CAMPUS MODEL ARE CREATED TOGETHER

The benchmarking results provide detailed background information for developing the upcoming strategy and roadmap of the Twin Campus cross-border cooperation model. The strategy work was started in collaboration with project partners and their stakeholder representatives in co-creation workshops.

The co-creation workshops provided a sound basis for the future strategy of the Twin Campus cooperation model.

The results of the workshops were further developed and formed the basis of the future strategy. The future strategy consists of two main themes: international cooperation and network, and entrepreneurial support services. The main themes cover the areas of cooperation that have emerged in the workshops: the cooperation steering group, the cooperation platform, the entrepreneurial service path, sustainable development, and student cooperation. The strategy roadmap is created by the main objectives and sub-objectives of the strategy.

The strategy is being developed together with project partners and future strategy users. This provides a strategy that serves all parties and is operational, which is easy to implement. Involving prospective users in strategy work engages and helps them implement the strategy. The cross-border Twin Campus cooperation model and the roadmap developed for its implementation are the outcomes for the strategy work.

A good strategy provides clear frameworks and guidelines for practical work. The vision of the cooperation strategy of the Twin Campus project is to be a flexible, transformative, and user-developed working model that supports the goal-oriented development and implementation of activities.

