

HUMAK[®]

Humak - Innovative, international and very Finnish



Hanna Kiuru
& Kim Lindblad (eds.)

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- Innovative,
international
and very Finnish**

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Introduction

Kim Lindblad & Hanna Kiuru

Humak University of Applied Sciences is a Finnish university of applied sciences, operating through a network of campuses, that offers studies in three focus areas. These are community education, cultural management, and interpreting and linguistic accessibility. Humak is the largest provider of education in its focus areas in Finland and a renowned expert in these fields in Europe.

Humak's English degree programmes include a Bachelor's Degree Programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education and a Master's Degree Programme in Sign Language Interpreting. Supporting the principle of lifelong learning, Humak also offers an increasing number of courses and competence modules in English as open university of applied sciences studies. In Finnish, Humak organises bachelor's and master's degree programmes in all its focus areas. The open university of applied sciences studies includes a wide variety of courses and competence modules to promote lifelong learning.

In Finland, universities of applied sciences are responsible for offering education, as well as for conducting research and development to support working life. At Humak, the aim is to connect research, development and innovation activities to teaching as closely as possible. This means that teaching is often integrated with RDI activities, and students have plenty of opportunities to engage in the development of their field in practice. This is part of Humak's pedagogical approach, which is based on a working life orientation and students' engagement in their learning process. The approach has been named coaching pedagogy. It aims to provide students with the best possible capabilities required to succeed in future working life.

Humak has both nationwide and international operations, and online pedagogy solutions are therefore currently an important area of development. Some of Humak's degree programmes are implemented entirely online. All Humak studies – both degree programmes and lifelong learning modules – include some studies in an online learning environment. Advanced online pedagogy solutions and learning environments enable flexible study paths and the provision of education that is not tied to a place or in some cases, to time. This means that Humak's playing field is truly global.

The aim of this publication is to describe Humak's wide-ranging operations and multidisciplinary expertise, which makes it an internationally competitive university and a desired partner for collaboration. The first part discusses Humak's pedagogical approach and how to coach students for their future working life. It also includes students' thoughts about their studies at Humak and their professional dreams.

The second part explores Humak's expertise and studies in its three focus areas. Each focus area includes a clear vision for the future concerning how to operate in a way that generates future competences and enables continuous participation in the development of working life. We cooperate closely with representatives of the focus areas to ensure that our studies match the requirements of future working life. The third part focuses on Humak's degree programmes in English even though these programmes are integrated with the activities of the focus area in question.

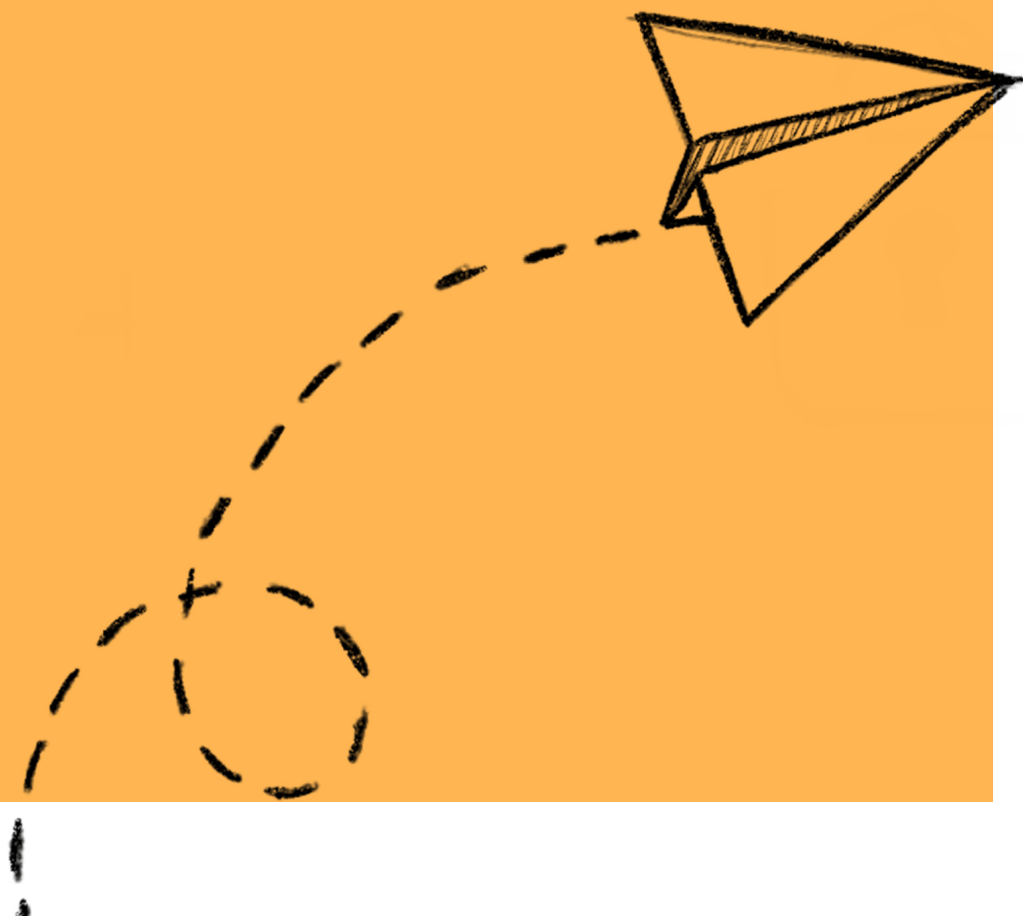
The fourth part discusses Humak's RDI activities and their objectives through example projects. These activities develop the expertise and operating models of both Humak and working life operators. In the epilogue, the President/CEO of Humak Jukka Määttä takes a look at the future.

The editors hope this publication gives the reader a clear overview of Humak's important role as an international education provider and player in development in its fields.

Our way of

teaching and

studying



Our pedagogical approach

Päivi Marjanen

PhD (Education), Docent (Education), Director of Education, Humak

Humak excels as a university of applied sciences thanks to its areas of competence: community education, cultural management, and interpreting and linguistic accessibility. Our values are strongly related to societal development, and they help us create a more equal society by developing competence that connects people. We aim to build a more humane world with the special expertise brought by our areas of competence.

The core of our strategy and pedagogy is developing competence. Humak trains experts for communal, people-oriented and interactive professions. The focus of our work is to train our students to be analytical, active and societal operators who study in a community-oriented and interactive way, take care of and respect each other, understand and appreciate diversity, and trust themselves. In the coming years, we seek to develop Humak into an efficient, top-class, student-focused educational institution that responds to the future competence needs of working life. Multiformal learning environments and student-oriented study paths are at the heart of this development, as is developing student guidance to support their learning.

The professional expertise developed with our areas of competence requires a clear pedagogical operating model to support it. The model is based on the values of Humak, which in turn are based on a humanistic view of human life and on our mission as a societal influencer and developer.

Working life orientation is a central element of our pedagogical model. A community-based approach and community-based learning are also important elements through which our students develop interactional and community competence. The aim is that in addition to learning individually, our students can also study in peer groups and versatile learning environments. The third cornerstone of our model is the digital campus, or Digikampus, which is connected with our strong expertise in digital learning environments and online pedagogy. Core to our operations is the concept of Humak as an international higher education institution open to all.

Working life orientation

Universities of applied sciences share higher education teaching methods that are working life-oriented. The aim of working life orientation is to improve our students' employment opportunities and ensure they graduate with the skills currently expected by

working life. Strong working life orientation helps to create competence that is deeply rooted in the practical activities of working life. The aim is that during their studies, students gain an understanding of the practices of working life and learn to apply their skills and knowledge. Finally, as their studies progress, students learn to contribute to the development of working life, developing the skills and competence to analyse their working environment, to think critically, to assess different working methods and to solve problems (Pedagoginen strategia 2021)

The different stages of a student's study path clearly and coherently promote the development of professional and general knowledge, and the skills and competence required in working life. This learning requires experience of actual working life settings or in settings that simulate working life. (Lämsä, Nyman & Sirkkilä 2015.) Strong working life- and project-based activities are at the core of our operations. These help us fulfil our statutory mission as a university of applied sciences, and ensure our students' competence.

Community-based approach

At Humak, every student is important. The aim of our coaching and of the training supporting our coaching pedagogy is to ensure that every student is heard, and that each student can build their own study path with a community-based approach.

The goal is that all professionals graduating from Humak have excellent interaction skills. Humak graduates are familiar with and can identify all the elements of interaction and understand that interaction is always context specific. They know how to act appropriately for the situation, environment and tools available. During their studies, our students also learn to interact in multilingual and multicultural situations.

Digitality

Humak's digitality is based on the Digikampus model. Humak's campus network operates in several locations in Finland, and its functions require both students and teachers to have the skills required for working in digital learning environments. In the coming years (2021–2024), one of our central goals is to build a top-class, efficient and student-oriented educational institution that caters to the needs of the future. The starting point for this development work is building multiform and high-quality learning environments that enable learning in a digital setting, as well as in in-person teaching, RDI-based learning environments, working life and non-formal learning environments. As part of the national Digivisio 2030 model, Humak aims to ensure that our students have the best and most flexible learning opportunities in the world.

In the future, competence in digital tools and an open-minded attitude to their use will be needed in working life. Working in digital environments requires a new set of interactional skills, and developing these skills is also an important part of teaching at Humak.

Student-oriented study paths

Students today have more diverse needs for the organisation of their studies. By providing study paths targeted at a variety of student types, we aim to respond to the growing diversity of students' needs in a student-oriented way. Students can choose their own study paths by making use of the provided multiform learning environments. The study path for the traditional face-to-face teaching takes place on the campuses, with webinar-based remote teaching and independent self-studying methods included in the mix. Study paths for students who choose a completely digital degree programme are built on the same theoretical knowledge as the more traditional study paths, but unlike in the previous model, students in digital degree programmes will supplement their learning with study modules better suited to the digital learning environment. Students who choose a working life-based study path complete their studies either in Humak's projects or with the Creve entrepreneurship model, a national virtual service for businesses in the creative industries. After choosing a study path, students can supplement parts of their degree studies with modules from other study paths.

Competence from coaching pedagogy

The competence students acquire through further education and the relevance of this competence to working life are key considerations in the debate over what students should learn in higher education and how they should learn. The starting point of Humak's coaching pedagogy is encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning. The core of Humak's coaching pedagogy is to develop our students' skills and competence in analysing their working environment, in critical thinking, in assessing working methods and in problem solving. Professionals graduating from Humak have strong core competence in their field, and the ability to develop themselves and society by interacting with professionals from other fields (Pedagoginen strategia 2021).

Coaching pedagogy challenges students to seek out increasingly demanding tasks and problems to solve. It challenges them to operate at the upper threshold of their competence and push beyond that threshold by learning more. Expertise is a collective feature, and our aim is to support the development of our students' competence. Our vision is to equip our students with excellent meta-skills in self-reflection, interaction, problem solving and community-oriented action (Lämsä, Nyman & Sirkkilä 2015; Pedagoginen strategia 2021). The competence development study path is based on the principle that, during their studies, our students progressively hone their abilities and progress from understanding to applying their knowledge and skills, later contributing to the development of the area and becoming experts in their field.

The skills most often mentioned in discussions of future working life, are: (1) creativity, communication skills, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, curiosity, metacognitive skills; (2) digital, technological and ICT skills; (3) media, communications, funding, science and computational skills; (4) intercultural competence and leadership skills (5) initiative, tenacity, responsibility and adaptability; and (6) scientific knowledge and STEM skills (Marope, Griffin & Gallagher 2020). At Humak, students can increase both their

professional and personal competence at the conceptual and operational levels (see Delamare Le Deist & Winterton 2005). When comparing the competence goals of coaching pedagogy to the skills needed in working life, I feel that the goals of the coaching pedagogy model suit the competence needs of the future, and the model thus provides the skills needed in working life in the future.

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Preparing our students for the global labour market

Hanna-Kaisa Hokkanen
MA (Languages), Senior Lecturer, Humak

Studying at a university of applied sciences is practice-based and working life-oriented. We aim to prepare our students to enter international labour markets by providing them with language courses and opportunities to form connections to working life, both through exchange programmes and other international working environments.

Turning language studies into professional skills

The curricula of all Finnish bachelor level degree programmes at Humak include at least 10 ECTS of language studies, of which at least 5 ECTS must be in Swedish, and 5 in English. In addition, the students are provided 'preparatory courses' and literature courses as optional studies in both languages. Finland's official languages are Finnish and Swedish, and each student's linguistic background is considered in their language study paths. This means that students with Swedish as their native language choose Finnish language studies instead of Swedish. Similarly, if a student has not studied Swedish or English at comprehensive school, they can replace these languages with studies in another language. Students are also encouraged to enrol in language courses provided by other higher education institutions. Good language skills are seen as key to entering international operational environments.

English and Swedish studies are part of professional studies, which is why the content of the courses is field-specific. For example, cultural management students study the vocabulary, content and communication methods required by their future profession, whereas courses for students of interpreting and students of community education provide content related to these fields. This ensures that students gain the skills and knowledge they will need in their own careers in the future.

Our degree programmes provided in English include basic 1 and 2 studies (5+5 ECTS) in Finnish for all non-Finnish students. Non-Finnish students are also encouraged to continue learning Finnish independently after the basic studies. The development of language skills is also supported by providing all students with the opportunity to complete internships in Finnish working environments. The aim is to achieve sufficient competence in Finnish to ensure students can gain employment in Finland.

International network through student exchange

Students at Humak are encouraged to enrol in student exchange programmes, and to gain international expertise and contacts in other ways as well. Students can go on a longer exchange period in Europe via the Erasmus student exchange programme. The exchange period is usually between 3 and 6 months, but there are also programmes lasting a full academic year. Exchange students leave either to study in a higher education institution abroad or to complete an internship abroad in a non-Finnish or Finnish company, association, educational institution or even a theatre, for example. Some students combine these two options and first study in a higher education institution. They then continue to complete an internship in their host country. Some students enrol in exchange programmes outside Europe, either by applying for funding themselves or participating in a Humak project with activities outside Europe.



Image 1. Ice fishing. A group of Spanish students experiencing an authentic Finnish ice fishing trip. Finnish students act as instructors.
Photographer: Hanna-Kaisa Hokkanen.

Inspiration from study trips

Students are also provided the opportunity to leave Finland to study for shorter periods. Each year, we organise a variety of study trips, or intensive modules, lasting around five days, to visit our international partners. Some of these short study trips work on a reciprocal basis, which means that after our visit, Humak receives a group from the partner we visited. Among others, this reciprocal exchange is conducted between the students of community education at our Jyväskylä campus and the physical education students of the Jesuites Sarrià – Sant Ignasi institution in Barcelona. The Spanish students travel to Finland for a week to learn about adventure education and to try Finnish winter sports. In turn, Finnish students get to try the local sports activities on their trip to Barcelona.

The shorter study trips also include an annual trip to one of the Nordic countries. In recent years, these trips have mostly focused on intensive language and cultural studies in a Nordic culture centre, such as the Voksenåsen in Oslo, Norway, or the Schæffergården in Copenhagen, Denmark. In addition, the students visit local operators in their own field to create international contacts and possibly find a place for their internship.



Image 2. Study trip to Denmark. On their trip to Denmark, the students visited the news studio of the TV2 channel. Photographer: Hanna-Kaisa Hokkanen.

Benefits of internationalisation at home

The concept of internationalisation at home provides an alternative option for internationalisation. It is not always necessary to leave your home country to develop international skills. In addition to meeting student groups and lecturers from other countries, students can work on international tasks and in international operating environments during an internship in their home country, or in the different projects included in the study modules. Humak is also a member of SocNet98, the European network of universities in social work, for which Humak organised the International University Week in 2017 and will do so again in the spring of 2021. The students have been involved both as organisers of and participants in the seminar. The students are also provided with the opportunity to participate in the International University Week organised by other SocNet98 members.

On the changes in international work

International work is undergoing many changes. With internationalisation, creating international contacts and staying in touch remotely are increasingly important. At Humak, students learn to use a large variety of tools for remote communication. After all, some of their studies are also implemented remotely. For Humak students, holding online meetings, conferences and get-togethers is already an everyday matter.

With these activities, we aim to develop our students into international operators who confidently use their language skills and professional expertise in international working environments in Finland and around the world, both during their studies and after graduation.

What does it mean to be a full-time student at Humak in Finland?

Hanna-Kaisa Hokkanen

MA (Languages), Senior Lecturer, Humak

Kim Lindblad

MEd (primary school teacher), Manager of International Affairs, Humak

Since 2018, Humak has offered the Degree Programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education (Community Educator, Bachelor of Humanities, 210 ECTS). In this article, Kristiina Desroches and Marie Louise ter Horst, who started their studies in the programme in the autumn of 2018, explain why they wanted to move to Finland to enrol in the programme, how their time in Finland has been and what kind of plans they have for the future in adventure and outdoor education.

From Canada and the Netherlands to Finland

Kristiina Desroches is originally from Canada. Before moving to Finland, she lived for two years in Germany. Her father's side is French Canadian and Métis, and her mother's side is Finnish and Canadian. Kristiina speaks English, French and German and is currently trying (or struggling as she says) to learn Finnish. Kristiina chose the degree programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education because she has always had a passion for the outdoors and loves working with people. She also wanted to get to know her family in Finland and to learn Finnish.

Marie Louise comes from the Netherlands and moved to Finland because she wanted to start studying adventure and outdoor education. Prior to her studies at Humak, Marie Louise graduated with a Master's degree in Educational Science and Behavioral Change. She became interested in the degree programme offered by Humak because she was keen to learn more about how to apply her knowledge of education in different settings and contexts. The focus on technical as well as pedagogical skills in the curriculum appeals to her in particular.



Image 1. Suomenlinna. Students of the Degree Programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education during a Finnish lesson in Suomenlinna. Photographer: Hanna-Kaisa Hokkanen.

Great experiences and some challenges, too

For Marie Louise, the greatest experience during her studies has been going on field trips: kayaking, trekking and skiing, which are all part of the studies. Kristiina, on the other hand, feels that the greatest experience living in Finland has been the chance to meet and get to know her family here. She thinks that everyone speaks very good English in Finland. The nature is beautiful and in fact, it is quite similar to Canada, so it is easy to feel at home. She is also very pleased with the services provided by Kela (the Social Insurance Institution of Finland). Difficulties Kristiina faced in adjusting to living and studying in Finland have been: the short daylight hours in winter, public transportation to campus and being away from family and friends.

Living on campus has many advantages. It takes just one minute to walk from home to the classroom, and you are living in the middle of the forest, next to the beautiful lake Sääksjärvi. The best thing, according to Kristiina, is that, in spite of everything, you get to live together with the Erasmus exchange students, whom she is always eager to get to know. It makes the living environment even more international and provides good opportunities to make new friends.

Marie Louise sometimes feels that being an extrovert is not so highly appreciated in Finland. Certain habits – such as speaking or laughing loudly and not waiting for your turn before saying something – are not always seen as positive traits in Finland. This is one part of the culture that Marie Louise found a bit hard to get used to. Finding a job in Kiljava, where the campus is located, is not that easy either, and combining work with the studies is very challenging because of the multiday field trips and internships carried out at other locations in Finland or abroad.

There are also many great things about Finland. Marie Louise really appreciates the untouched nature and the fact that everyone has the right to enjoy it to the fullest, without the kinds of restrictions that exist in her homecountry The Netherlands, where, for instance, you are not allowed to walk outside marked paths. She also finds things like Finnish sauna and swimming in a hole in the ice just amazing, not to mention the kindness of the Finns themselves.

Nature as your classroom

Kristiina describes how a normal school day can be anything from sleeping in a quin-zhee somewhere in Lapland to studying in class, learning about entrepreneurship and establishing your own company. School days are always unique; sometimes the classes are indoors and other times outdoors. There is a mix between theory and practice, which is Kristiina's favourite way of learning. She also appreciates how international the programme is. Most importantly of all, the content of the Degree Programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education supports Kristiina's future plans.

Kristiina likes her degree programme because it allows her to challenge herself, which supports her individual growth and learning process. Kristiina loves that the students have the opportunity to carry out internship periods in different countries. This, she says, enables us to gain experience and learn new skills in authentic settings; it also allows us to network and establish contacts with working life for the future. Kristiina's current dream for the future is to work in a social work environment where she can include adventure and outdoor education elements when working with people.

Before finishing her studies, Marie Louise would like to carry out an internship at an outdoor educational centre. In her final thesis, she would like to focus on a theme related to personal development supported by outdoor activities. After graduation, she would like to work as an outdoor educator, using the outdoors as an instrument in teaching and personal development.

Finally, Marie Louise notes that the adventure and outdoor studies have provided her with many valuable learning experiences. The studies allow you to steer your individual learning path in the direction of your own interests in adventure and outdoor education. Humak offers quite a bit of freedom, if you only know what you really want to focus on.

Learning Together - International virtual exchange project during the time of Covid-19

Laura Keihäs

MA, Senior Lecturer, Humak University of Applied Sciences

We live in a world where solving global challenges requires both more and new forms of international cooperation. In future working life, diversity and global networks are the new norm (Sitra 2019). As cultural diversity has increased steadily also in Finland, it is important that students learn international cooperation already during their studies.

Due to the Corona pandemic, all the classes at Humak were transferred online last year. The shift to online teaching led to some positive changes, such as developing e-learning and exploring cooperation opportunities more widely. At Turku campus, we were able to realise a virtual cooperation project with Chinese students in Education at Minzu University. The cooperation project took place as part of the course 'Developing International and Multicultural Activities for community education students.

Minzu-Humak Cooperation Project

Minzu University of China, founded in 1941, is a relatively small Chinese university located in Beijing. Minzu has 15,800 students and more than half of them represent China's 56 minority groups. Together with Professor of Multicultural Education at the University of Helsinki and Distinguished Professor at Minzu Fred Dervin we thought that the switch to online education could enable an international virtual exchange project for our students. As we were able to match the course schedules, we decided to give it a try.

In total 63 students from Humak and Minzu, divided into eight teams, participated in the project. The task for the student teams was to prepare an orientation day programme either for new international students of a university or for new international employees of a company. The Finnish-Chinese student teams prepared presentations of their orientation days for the last common online meeting. Besides Fred Dervin, also the Professor Mei Yuan from Minzu and Jun Peng participated in the project. My Humak colleagues Senior Lecturers Jenny Honka and Satu Riikonen helped facilitating the joint meetings and provided encouraging comments for all the student teams.

Due to a six-hour time difference, scheduling appointments was challenging for the student teams. On the other hand, taking into consideration the time difference and negotiating about the meetings was part of the learning process in a genuine international context. We only had about a month for the cooperation project at the end of the year. For similar future projects it would be good to allocate more time.

Learning together develops intercultural skills

At its best, international cooperation is genuine mutual learning, where all participants give and receive something. Different education systems can also learn from each other, as there are both good practices and practices that need to be improved everywhere (Dervin & Chen, 2019).

There are no “recipes” for intercultural encounters as each situation is unique. It is essential to communicate as openly as possible and respect one another. Questions, dialogue and working together can help understand differences and open up new perspectives.

In international cooperation, it is important to be as open as possible and discuss even difficult issues. We agreed since the first meeting with Minzu’s teachers and students that we would strive to hold an open discussion. Intercultural skills involve interaction skills, good self-awareness and deconstruction of personal prejudices and stereotypes. It is important to learn to analyze discourses critically and avoid stigmatization. (Dervin & Keihäs, 2013)

Deconstructing prejudices requires work

The media constantly conveys images and perceptions of countries and regions of the world that affect our encounters with others. For example, the Chinese are often described as a homogeneous group, forgetting individual differences, even though there are about 1.4 billion inhabitants and many different regions, languages and cultures in China (see Sude, Yuan & Dervin, 2020). Generalizations do not take cultural diversity or individuality into account. However, human activity cannot be viewed solely as something cultural: our behavior is always influenced by individual factors such as gender, age, education, social class and power relations. (Dervin & Keihäs, 2013)

Becoming aware of one’s own prejudices requires self-reflection and practice. It is human to try to simplify a complex reality. The human mind seeks to create order and a sense of continuity through simplifications such as stereotypes. According to sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2010), people are trying to strengthen their own identity especially when they feel insecure. At worst, insecurity and fear can lead to collective paranoia and incitement to hatred (Bauman, 2010).

One unfortunate example of stigmatization is that Trump called the Corona-virus ‘Chinese virus’, which increased racism: the Chinese and other people with Asian background living in the United States have been subjected to spitting, shouting, despise, threat and even physical violence (Tavernise & Oppel, 2020).

The Corona pandemic revealed how interdependent we are in today's world. Global problems require global solutions. As Bauman (2010) pointed out: "We can either swim together or drown together".

"It was brilliant that we had a real international project"

According to Humak students, the international cooperation project taught patience, communication skills and resilience to uncertainty. Most students experienced our virtual exchange project as a meaningful part of the 'Developing International and Multi-cultural Activities' -course. According to students' feedback, they learned "more about cultural sensitivity and how there really are different ways to think and act".

Minzu students and teachers also found the cooperation project useful. According to Jun Peng, a doctoral candidate at the University of Helsinki, the virtual exchange was a great opportunity to learn about intercultural communication in real life. Despite the time difference and a few linguistic and technical challenges, all Minzu-Humak teams did an excellent job and prepared great presentations.

In the presentations, the student teams described very well how inclusive activities and working together can strengthen a sense of security and belonging in a new country. It is good to look for similarities rather than to emphasize cultural differences. Part of the task was to describe what the student team had learnt from the project. One of the teams summed up the learning experience nicely: "International cooperation taught us different ways of thinking, open and clear communication, and flexibility."

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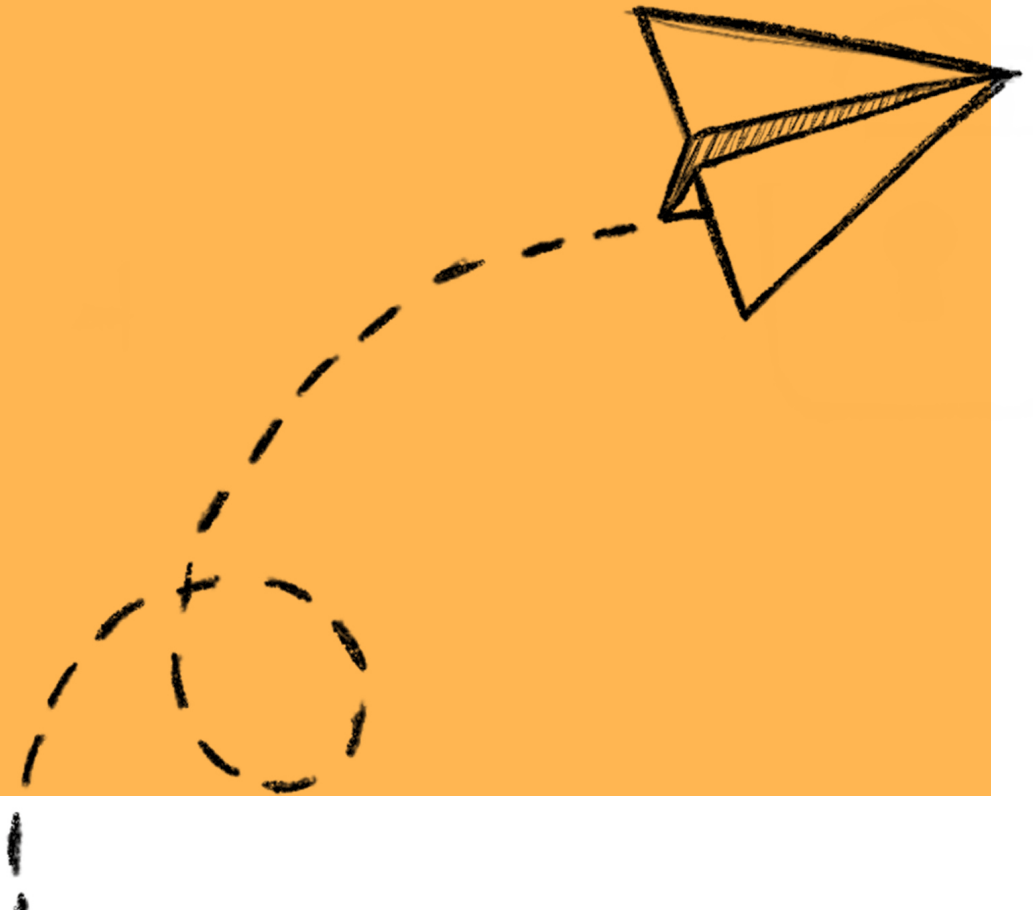
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Our fields

of expertise



Community education

Kim Lindblad

M.Ed (primary school teacher), Manager of International Affairs, Humak

Reijo Viitanen

MSSc (lecturer in international policy, history and social studies), Manager of Education, Humak

At Humak’s School of Community Education, we train community educators in four different degree programmes: one master’s programme, and three bachelor’s programmes. English is the language of instruction of the community education studies specialising in adventure and outdoor education. In addition to the degree programmes, we offer training in the form of competence modules in Finnish and increasingly in English. The competence modules are available through open UAS studies, for example.

Four key competence areas

The School of Community Education has four key competences: youth work; NGO work; adventure and outdoor education; and workplace development. Community education is the umbrella concept that combines these key competences.

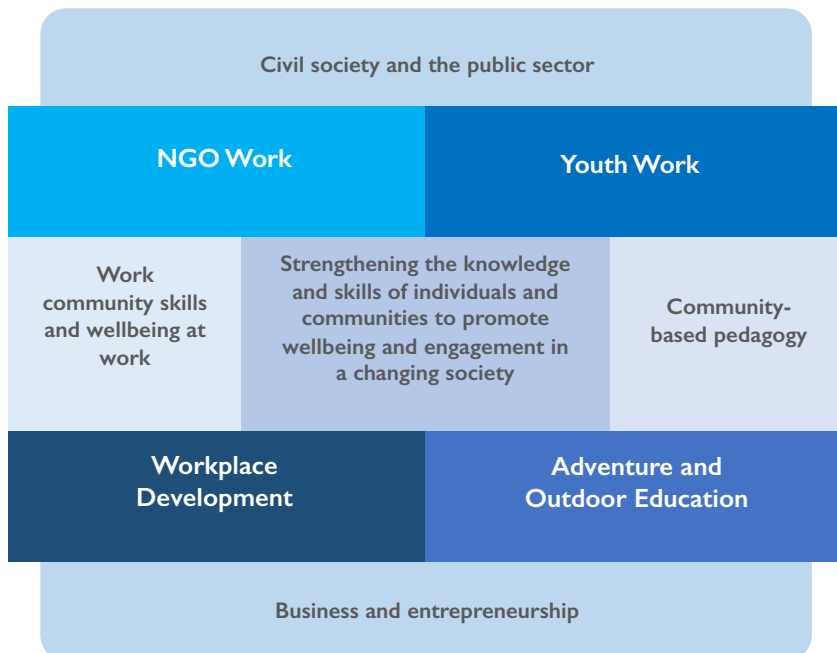


Figure 1. The School of Community Education and its four key competences (Viitanen 2020, 46).

Background of community education studies

The purpose and objective of community education programmes in Finland have been debated throughout their existence, i.e. for more than 20 years. The community education programme begun in the early days of Humak was not created from scratch but was based on the post-secondary youth work education provided in certain folk high schools preceding Humak in the 1980s and 1990s (Soanjärvi 2014, 17). From the outset, civic activities and related education were introduced as another key competence alongside youth work. However, the concept of civic activities was found to be somewhat vague and was gradually replaced by the concept of NGO work to clarify the study profiles. UAS-level community education studies aim to develop the skills needed in NGO work, rather than general skills needed in civic and leisure activities (Viitanen 2020, 45).

NGO work and youth work have remained at the heart of Humak's community education studies over the years. However, we recognized the need for a wider application of the skills of community educators, and actively sought out and identified new opportunities. The key competences respond to a number of societal needs and have provided the basis for new degree programmes. In 2015, Humak took a bold and controversial step towards extending the scope of community education (Kylmäkoski & Viitanen 2018, 68–69).

Today, there are three parallel bachelor's degree programmes in community education studies: NGO and youth work; adventure and outdoor education; and workplace development. In the future, these will also be more clearly introduced as optional parts of master's-level UAS studies.

Despite this, Humak has maintained its position as the largest higher education provider in the field of youth work in Finland and in Europe. Through our international cooperation networks, RDI projects and expanding English-language training offering, we aim to strengthen our own expertise in both the old and new key competences. The common objective of the key competences is to contribute to positive societal development at international level.

The competence produced by community education studies meets the needs of tomorrow's society

In today's rapidly changing society, we need to constantly review our policies and develop new community approaches and interaction methods to meet new challenges, among other things. The development-oriented and critical approach to work, which is part of the competence produced by community education studies, is at the heart of the renewed community competence.

The first challenge is the increasing migration flows in the world. Immigration creates new customer groups for youth work, NGO work and third-sector services. Community educators respond to the challenges of integrating different people into society and into communities, and are capable of developing solutions to the issues of integration and

effective inter-ethnic coexistence. Community educators also contribute to the building of more transparent learning, as well as work and leisure communities that are sensitive to the equal needs of different minority groups and that eliminate structural discrimination.

Another major challenge is social polarisation and inequality. Polarisation and inequality lead to experiences of exclusion, loneliness and insecurity, and remain major societal problems. People are especially discriminated against in education, in employment, in social relations and community belonging, and in housing. Community educators can operate in different sectors and work tasks, and contribute to the building of a socially sustainable society, using the preventive work approach and pedagogical skills gained through their education. These skills and competences enable community educators to address the challenges of inequality, and work towards preventing social exclusion and deprivation.

Social instability has also created a breeding ground for political polarisation; increasing uncertainty and feelings of injustice have strengthened populism. One of the core competences of community educators is positive reinforcement of the interaction between different groups, which has been identified as an effective means of preventing differences developing into hostility. By strengthening the dialogue, it is possible to reverse the intensification of stereotypes and supposed antagonisms between groups.

The third challenge is global environmental problems, which need to be addressed through local action. In community education studies, the focus is on the perceptions, attitudes, values and everyday agency of individuals, groups and communities. In the training, community educators learn to participate, engage and influence in communities and in society. The different areas of competence emphasise environmental responsibility and awareness alongside social responsibility and sustainability as elements of communal and societal agency. Especially in the area of adventure and outdoor education, the emphasis is on enhancing the relationship with nature and the use of natural environments as learning environments.

The challenge that unites all the key competences is the increasingly fast pace of change and transition in working life. Working practices, and therefore the organisation and integration of work communities, are changing more quickly than ever. To improve labour productivity, we need both technological and community innovations to improve well-being at work and create socially sustainable solutions. These themes are highlighted in the content of the degree programme for workplace development.

Summary

The competences produced by community education studies have valuable applications in all sectors of society. Professional skills are needed in the private, public and third sectors to modernise and strengthen communities. In addition, the new forms of organisation typical of the fourth sector, such as self-employment (light entrepreneurship), the sharing economy and urban activism, challenge traditional approaches and encourage

community educators to constantly renew their skills. Creativity, inventiveness and flexibility require practical ingenuity in the activities of these new types of community. The importance of social innovation is also emphasised alongside technological innovation. All community educators have the capabilities needed for entrepreneurship and, especially, for developing the operations of public-interest organisations.

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School of Arts and Cultural Management – professional cultural management for all sectors of society

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In School of Arts and Cultural Management we develop art and cultural production and their related services in multidisciplinary and diverse environments. The Degree Programme in Cultural Management provides a large selection of educational formats, and the RDI activities included in the programme develop and promote the field of arts and culture in all sectors in Finland. Our international partner network also helps us support the development of entrepreneurship in the creative and cultural industries internationally.

Strategic principles for the school's operations

Humak is Finland's largest and most significant institution in the education of cultural managers. During the last two decades, Humak University of Applied Sciences has trained numerous experts for duties in the cultural field and in other industries throughout Finland. As a national educational organisation, Humak has produced professional cultural management for different Finnish regions, and has thus also been part of regional development. Cultural managers graduating from Humak work for businesses ranging from small to large; for the public sector as municipal or city employees; for the third sector in associations and societies; as independent professionals beyond the scope of the system of central government transfers; and, increasingly, as entrepreneurs.

Our aim is to grow the field of operations of cultural managers via our education and RDI activities, bringing the cultural managers' expertise in networking and mediating to fields beyond the art and cultural industries. Many industries have a demand for artistic content and the creative competence of art and cultural professionals, but society has yet to fully utilise this competence. We believe the mediating and management expertise we provide is the solution to this problem. We operate with versatility at the interfaces of different industries, collaborating with operators from the fields of tourism, technology, social welfare and healthcare in developing different sectors of society.

The need for increased competence in cultural management and expert mediating skills is also growing internationally, as the cultural, art, and entertainment industries become more international. Multiprofessional and quickly evolving operational environments require expert cultural managers who are ready to take on tasks related to design, production, guidance and advising, marketing and sales. Our aim is therefore to strengthen our international networks and form partnerships that truly impact the international development of the field in both training and RDI activities.

Key competences guide our operations

In the operations of the School of Arts and Cultural Management, we have two clearly defined fields of expertise, i.e. key competences.

First, the task of our production and project management key competence is to develop the multiform production environments and processes of art and cultural productions such as events, services and projects. Our expertise related to these helps us develop cultural management competence for the use of different industries in all sectors of society, and to improve the accessibility of art and culture. There has been a notable shift towards increasing interaction and cooperation in culture services and content production. In addition to commercially realised culture, independent production and different subcultures are emerging with the help of crowdfunding, communities and local activity. Professional cultural managers can support this trend and lower the threshold for everyone wishing to participate in making, creating and enjoying arts and culture.

Another strong trend is for increasingly rapid changes to the art and cultural industries brought about by new technology. The advancement of technology also brings changes to the content of artistic and cultural experiences and content production methods, as well as to the productisation, funding, distribution and regulation of activities. This change requires new innovations in cultural management, as well as the critical assessment and research-based development of solutions and operational models, both nationally and internationally. Alongside these developments, our work in the key competence of production and project management is steered by the overarching objective of promoting culturally, socially and ecologically sustainable cultural management.

Second, the task of our key competence of entrepreneurship and the creative economy is to support the utilisation of creative competence in the business operations of different industries and in the evolving business environment. Creative professionals do not always recognise their competence and many lack the ability to productise, sell and set a price for their skills. Other industries may not recognise the potential of creative competence and cannot tap into that potential.

The role of public funding in cultural activities is diminishing, while changes to working life, digitalisation, and the internationalisation of the cultural and entertainment industries are quickly and radically altering the operational capabilities of art producers. The utilisation of the competence, products and services of the creative industries in other fields has become a significant factor in competitiveness, both nationally and



Image 1. Creve business service. An innovative model for hub activities was developed at the XcitED event for entrepreneurs in the creative industries. The event also included discussions of new tools for business service providers. Photographer: Henry Paananen.

internationally. Accessible training services for businesses and operators in the creative industries, more efficient support and mediation services, and improved funding opportunities are required. We are therefore creating a service concept providing business advising and training based on the principles of lifelong learning and improving the business skills of operators in the creative industries.

Creve – Humak’s business service for the creative industries – is a virtual service concept with services aimed at anyone interested in starting a creative business, as well as those already engaged in their own business operations in the creative industries. The principle of sustainability – especially ecological and financial sustainability – also steers our operations related to this area of key competence.

Multiform educational offering **and development activities in our school**

The educational offering of our cultural management programme is diverse and enriched by an active programme of research, development and innovation. Providing a range of educational methods, we can respond to a variety of educational needs. The UAS Degree Programme in Cultural Management is offered as traditional contact teaching in three different regions: Turku in Southwest Finland, Jyväskylä in Central Finland, and Helsinki

and Kauniainen in the Capital Region. Since 2018, the degree studies have also been provided as an online degree in a completely digital format.

The curriculum for the Degree Programme in Cultural Management includes general studies, vocational studies, vocational specialisation studies, studies in development practices and optional studies, for a total of 240 study credits (bachelor's level). The scale of the master's degree programme in cultural management is 60 study credits.

We provide a variety of alternative pathways to enter the degree programme, offering students greater flexibility in applying to the programme. Everyone can apply, whatever their educational background, age and location. Students can also study alongside their work. In addition to the bachelor's and master's level cultural management degree programmes, we also offer specialised additional training and lifelong learning training products, developed using the latest communications and teaching technologies.

Our curriculum includes study modules on culture and funding, cultural politics, art, marketing and communications, productisation, entrepreneurship and volunteer management. Studies are offered as open UAS courses, via the CampusOnline cooperation between Finnish higher education institutions, as well as in cooperation with other educational institutions and commercially. For exchange students, we provide study modules for cultural management in English. We are looking to expand our online course offerings in English for the Degree Programme in Cultural Management, and we are systematically increasing our range of training products in English, providing more opportunities for international cooperation.

Our educational activities are supported by active RDI work for the renewal and development of competence in our specialist areas. All employees of the School are involved in the RDI activities, planning and implementing projects and bringing their expertise to our research and publication operations. Similarly, all students enrolled in our degree programmes take modules in innovation studies, development and project work. With our development activities, we fulfil our societal mission as a national developer of the cultural and creative industries. With our international partner networks and our joint RDI activities, we also contribute to the development of the industries internationally.

In the School of Arts and Cultural Management we develop art and cultural production and their related services in multidisciplinary and diverse environments. The degree programme for cultural management provides a large selection of educational formats, and the RDI activities included in the programme enhance the field of arts and culture in all sectors in Finland. Our international partner network also helps us support the development of entrepreneurship in the creative and cultural industries internationally.

Interpreting and linguistic accessibility

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Humak University of Applied Sciences Degree Programme in Interpreting and Linguistic Accessibility trains interpreters in Kuopio and Helsinki. The four-year bachelor's degree programme in interpreting consists of 240 ECTS. The aim of the degree is to provide interpreter students a versatile competence in interaction and linguistic accessibility, and to create opportunities to gain employment in a variety of tasks. The degree studies are integrated in separately funded national and international projects that aim to support the business sector and involve students in the multiprofessional development of working life. Humak also offers one national master's degree programme in interpreting and another international EUMASLI (European Master in Sign Language Interpreting) degree, which is implemented in cooperation with the Scottish Heriot-Watt University and the German University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal. Moreover, we are also the leading educational institution in training sign language interpreters in Finland-Swedish Sign Language.



Image 1. Students and teachers of the European Master in Sign Language Interpreting (EUMASLI) met at a 'speed dating' event to discuss topics such as pilot study research themes, at the Valkea Talo event venue in Helsinki during an in-person teaching period. In the picture, PhD Robyn Dean is talking with Samantha Riddle, student. Photographer: Jens Hessmann.

Interpreters' work and education and statutory interpreting services in Finland

Interpreting is one of the oldest professions, but sign language interpreting and interpreting services for persons with a speech impairments are relatively new fields. Interpreting services and interpreter training have significantly improved over a short period. Finland is a pioneer in interpreter training and in guaranteeing a subjective right to interpretation with legislation for persons with hearing and speech impairments and people with deafblindness. In Finland, all trained professional interpreters are bound by the same professional ethics. This professional Code of Ethics aims to protect both the customer and the interpreter. The Code of Ethics applies to all interpreters, whether they work with spoken languages, sign languages, speech-to-text interpreting, or augmentative and alternative communication (Kieliasiantuntijat 2020).

In Finland, the provision of interpreting services is based on the Act on Interpretation Services for Persons with Disabilities (133/2010). Interpreting services enable equal opportunities for all to participate in society. The rights of those who require interpreting or translation services are guaranteed in the Constitution of Finland. Finland also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2016. The Convention ensures human rights for people with disabilities, prevents discrimination and promotes accessibility. Interpreting services promote the acceptance of diversity and enable the participation for those requiring linguistic support, as well as guaranteeing autonomy and the fulfilment of linguistic rights for all in society, both nationally and internationally.

In Finland, the party responsible for implementing the Act on Interpretation Services for Persons with Disabilities is Kela (the Finnish Social Insurance Institution), and it is from here that interpreting services are requested. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health oversees the implementation of the act. The service is free for those who need it. In Finland, all persons with hearing or speech impairments and people with deafblindness who can express themselves via an interpreter are entitled to interpreting services. A person with a speech impairments is someone who can hear but has difficulty expressing themselves through speech in everyday communication (Papunet 2020). People with speech impairment can have difficulties with speech production or with understanding speech, and very often the impairment is connected with reading and writing difficulties.

In medicine, the diagnosis of a medical condition or impairment is used in determining communication difficulty, because speech impairments can be caused by many neurological diseases, cerebrovascular disorders and by dementia. According to the Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, there are some 65,000 people in Finland who experience difficulties in expressing themselves through speech or writing. Of these, around 30,000 people require augmentative and alternative communication methods to communicate (e.g., images, drawing, facial expressions and gestures). (Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities 2020; Papunet 2020). Interpreting can be used in all life events such as handling everyday errands, hobbies, celebrations and parties, study or training, or when dealing with the authorities.

Interpreter training at Humak University of Applied Sciences

Humak's Degree Programme in Interpreting and Linguistic Accessibility produces professionals in multimodal interaction and pioneering interpreters for sign languages and other communication methods based on signs or augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Linguistic accessibility concerns all of us; it is not just a concept confined to special groups of people. In many countries, the baseline is to take accessibility into account in urban planning, construction and public spaces. In addition to physical accessibility, attention should increasingly be paid to linguistic accessibility. The definition of linguistic accessibility goes beyond a person's linguistics rights.

Linguistic accessibility means, in practice, that each of us – in our role as customer or patient, for example - is aware of all the services we are entitled to, and that when we access these services, we are both understood and able to understand the information we are given. Linguistic accessibility ensures that everyone can understand the instructions provided, for instance, by the authorities or by healthcare providers and enables individuals to manage their own care. It requires, among other things: multimodal communications, guidance and help, widespread availability of interpreting services and accessibility of electronic services, regardless of which language the customer speaks or whether a patient has a visual or a hearing impairment, developmental disability or physical disability.

The cornerstones of Humak's interpreter degree programme are strong expertise in sign languages as well as practical competence in communication and interaction in a variety of interpreting events. One of the overarching themes of the degree programme is multimodal interaction. Multimodal interaction is communication using facial expressions, gestures, the body, prosody, the surrounding environment and its objects, and various AAC devices in addition to spoken language. Students in the interpreting programme learn different visual and physical communication methods, which enables them to work



Image 1. Senior Researcher, PhD, Docent Päivi Rainò's lecture being interpreted in written Finnish and Finnish sign language. Photographer: Emilia Reponen.

as interpreters for a variety of communities of customer groups and increase interaction through their activities. The students also learn to instruct all parties participating in the communication event. Interpreters enable communication between hearing people, people with hearing impairments, people with deafblindness and people with speech impairments in a variety of situations, nationally and internationally.

The interpreter degree programme has two areas of competence: ‘sign languages and interpreting’; and ‘communication expertise and AAC interpreting and guidance’. The task of both areas is to promote various visual and physical methods of communication in interaction and interpreting. Our mission is to improve the linguistic accessibility of face-to-face interaction, of physical and technological communication environments and of websites. In the programme, we work with interpreting clients to further the research on sign language interpreting and AAC-mediated interpreting. We also participate in the development of technology to support linguistic accessibility.

The interpreter degree programme produces professionals with a multifaceted competence in interpreting and different communication methods they can bring to all sectors of society. An interpreter’s working environment is multicultural. The degree programme therefore highlights international expertise to ensure our graduates can respond to society’s need for professionals who can operate in international interpreting tasks and specialist positions. The primary goals of interpreting are to enable communication and ensure linguistic accessibility. An interpreter’s work increases equality and autonomy, so interpreters play an important role in the realisation of human rights.

The Web Accessibility Directive, linguistic accessibility, and interpreting

In addition to sign language interpreting and interpreting for people with speech impairments, the interaction and communication expertise provided by the degree programme can also be used by other special groups such as the authorities and other public bodies to ensure their services meet the requirements of the Web Accessibility Directive. In Europe and in Finland, the continuous growth of the digital world has already been recognised, which is why it is seen as important that websites and mobile applications are accessible to all citizens, including those with hearing, visual, motor or physical impairments. The European Parliament adopted the Web Accessibility Directive in October 2016. The aim of the Directive is to ensure that everyone, including those with disabilities, has access to the public sector’s online services and can use them. The Web Accessibility Directive is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Since 2019, the national legislation implementing the Web Accessibility Directive has required the Finnish authorities to ensure that all the public sector’s online services are accessible (including websites and mobile applications).

In 2015, the Finnish Sign Language Act (359/2015) entered into force. The Act requires the Finnish authorities to work towards offering sign language users the opportunity to deal with the authorities and gain information in their own language. This means,

for example, that Finnish authorities are required to add content in sign language to their websites. Finland has two official sign languages, Finnish Sign Language and Finland-Swedish Sign Language. Humak is the only educational institution in Finland to train deaf interpreters. We were also a partner in the European Developing Deaf Interpreting project (2015–2018), aimed at promoting the education of deaf interpreters. The project was the first international project to focus on deaf interpreters, and was coordinated by the Danish Deaf Association.

Humak has been training deaf interpreters since 1998 and acted as one of the project's implementers in Finland. One of the project's most important objectives was creating the Recommendations for a Curriculum for Deaf Interpreters and a curriculum guide. The curriculum is already used in the educational institutions of the parties involved in the implementation of the project. Before this project, there were no curricula in Europe designed purely to suit the learning needs of deaf people, so creating the curriculum was a central objective. The curriculum was designed to respond to the needs of working life and to promote the employment of deaf interpreters throughout Europe.

The expertise of deaf interpreters must be considered and utilised in a completely new way now that the Web Accessibility Directive is also in force in Finland. Recognition of the expertise of deaf interpreters and interpreting in general will play an even larger role in the work of the authorities in the future. Currently, Finland is one of the few countries that view interpreting for people with speech impairments as a profession. In many countries, AAC methods are used in early childhood education, for example, but the need for an interpreter is not recognised, and interpreting for people with speech impairments has not been established as a profession as it has in Finland. Linguistic accessibility is important to ensure that everyone feels that they are understood. We must ensure that individuals in vulnerable groups have the same opportunities to participate in the different functions of society and in relation to everyday life, education, work, political influencing and decision making and that these opportunities are also ensured in face-to-face interaction, in physical and technological communication environments and on websites.

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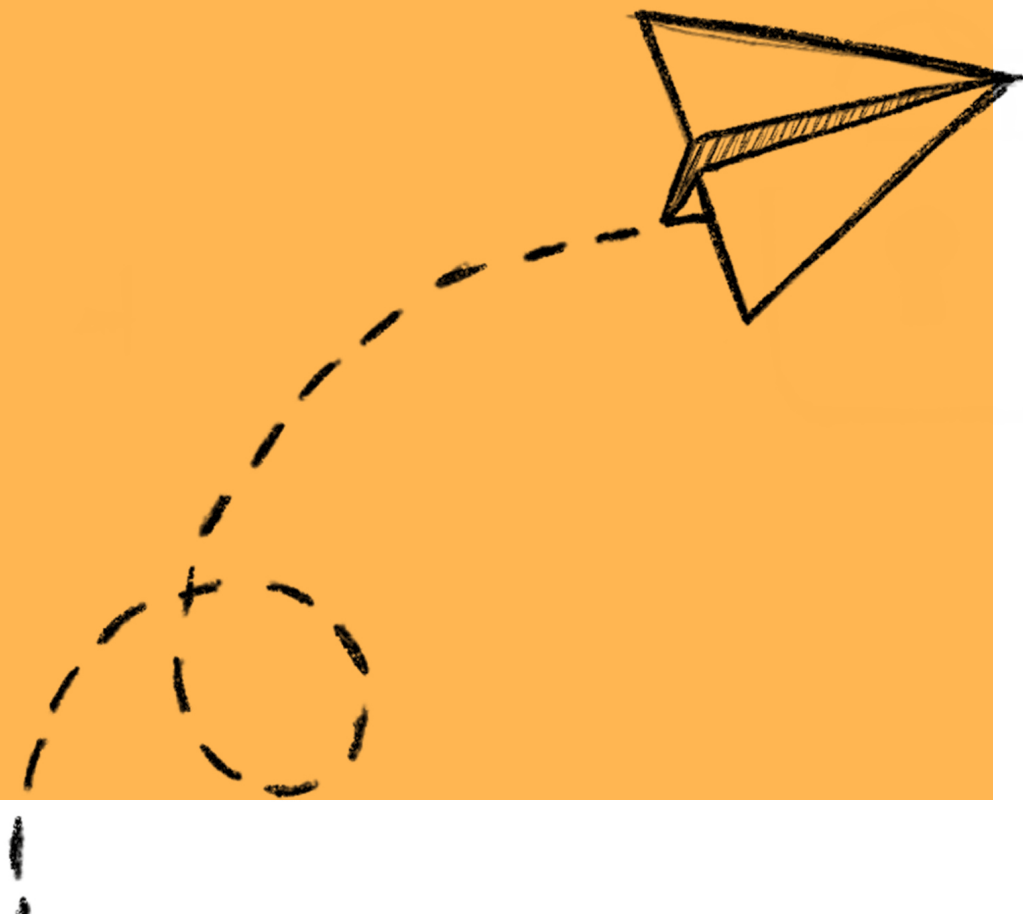
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International

studies at Humak



Bachelor's Degree in Adventure and Outdoor Education

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In the autumn of 2018, Humak launched a new international bachelor's degree programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education (Community Educator, Bachelor of Humanities, 210 ECTS). The degree programme is the first, and currently, the only higher education level degree programme within the field of Adventure and Outdoor Education (AOE) in Finland. In addition, it is the only degree in the field of AOE with English as the language of instruction. Moreover, the programme is the first and only bachelor's degree offered in English in the field of community education. The degree meets the criteria set by the Finnish qualifications system for universities of applied sciences and by the European qualifications framework and the national framework for qualifications and other competence modules in Finland (level 6) (Humak University of Applied Sciences 2018).

Long story short

In brief, Adventure Education refers to an approach where experiential, activity- and adventure-based methods and processes are utilised to support and promote the growth, development, agency, and learning of individuals, groups, and communities. Adventure education can be implemented by an educator, instructor, teacher, or therapist, and can be applied in early education, youth work, schools and colleges, and rehabilitation. (Karppinen, Marttila & Saaranen-Kauppinen 2020.)

Humak UAS has a long tradition in carrying out adventure educational study modules in Finnish as open studies and professional studies for students in community education degree programmes. In addition, Humak has offered Erasmus courses for international exchange students in English. In fact, the story of Humak's adventure and outdoor education begins particularly with the courses conducted in English: In 1993, the Peräpohjola Institute (Peräpohjolan Opisto) in Tornio, Northern Finland, started to organise Outdoor Adventure Education courses. In OAE, the focus is on adventure education taking place outdoors and in natural environments. Over the years, the international courses became very popular.

In 2002, Adventure Education became part of Humak University of Applied Sciences, and both English and Finnish studies were offered at Tornio Campus, in Tornio. The northern regional unit was closed down during the years 2013–15, and from 2014 onwards, Nurmijärvi Campus, in Nurmijärvi, Southern Finland, has operated as the “base camp” of adventure and outdoor studies. (Saaranen-Kauppinen 2020.)

International degree programme

In the autumn of 2018, Humak launched a new international Bachelor's Degree Programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education. The course title, Adventure and Outdoor Education, is a nod to the Anglo-American, European, and Finnish adventure education traditions and concepts the programme incorporates (Karppinen 2020; Saaranen-Kauppinen 2020). It further invokes the concept of learning out-of-doors or outdoor learning and a variety of nature and outdoor skills.

During their studies, community education students specializing in adventure and outdoor education gain the knowledge and skills needed in the public and third sector, such as essential principles and practices of preventive youth work (Saaranen-Kauppinen 2019) and community work; participation and engagement; promotion of agency and well-being; reinforcement of the sense of community; and building and maintaining networks and partnerships. In addition, students familiarize themselves with the field of the experience economy and its relationship with adventure and outdoor education.

In recent years, people's interest in nature, the outdoors, health and wellbeing, and gaining new experiences has grown significantly. Therefore, students of the degree programme acquire competencies to work in the entrepreneurial sector, within the field of nature-, outdoor-, adventure-, experience- and wellbeing tourism and services. Due to the international and multicultural nature of the programme, future graduates of the programme can choose their career paths in both national and international working environments.

Open online studies

Since the summer of 2020, Humak UAS has also offered open online courses in adventure and outdoor education. The first available course, Community Educators as Adventure Education Experts (5 ECTS), is part of the degree programme curriculum (Humak University of Applied Sciences 2018), and is open for everyone, not only for degree students.

The course sheds light on adventure education both in the context of community education studies and in general. It provides a learning opportunity for everyone interested in the theory and practice of adventure education. During the course, students will familiarize themselves with the basic ideas, frame of reference, and principles of adventure education. Students will also deepen their awareness of the multiple professional fields and possibilities of application.

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Master's recipe – developing interpreting with European cooperation

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Three European higher education institutions joined forces in 2006 to establish a master's degree programme for sign language interpreters. About every four years, a group of 24 students starts their journey towards a degree that provides them with the skills required for interpreting research and international cooperation in the interpreting industry. Cultural diversity, multilingualism and reflective practice are integrated into the degree programme. The intensive training leaves no student unchanged. Graduates contribute to the development of their profession both nationally and internationally.

The result of multicultural cooperation

Taught in English, the European Master in Sign Language Interpreting, i.e. EUMASLI, is a joint degree programme of three higher education institutions that aims to develop the field of sign language interpreting. Together, Humak in Finland, the Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences in Germany, and Heriot-Watt University in Scotland train future researchers and developers for the interpreting industry. The scale of the master's programme is 90 ECTS, completed over 2.5 years. The purpose is to study part-time for two years and then focus on completing the master's dissertation (or final thesis) full-time during the last six months.

The programme is based on a project funded by the EU in 2016 that focused on creating the basic curriculum for the programme. The programme is centred around three themes: international competence, development competence and research competence. The programme is directed by the Study Directors appointed by each institution. A Board of Examiners, consisting of five members with one external reviewer, regularly reviews the examination procedures. Professors and lecturers of the higher education institutions participate in the teaching and the development of the programme. Teaching responsibilities are divided among the institutions with the aim of finding the right person with the right expertise for each subject.

The students are not promised an easy journey to the top. The programme is demanding, but it also gives back in equal measure. In addition to the degree and achieving the official objectives, the students gain an international network of colleagues, and become experts in communicating in a multilingual and cultural environment, and most importantly, they learn from each other. The programme's core principles are community and shared learning (see Hessmann et al. 2011).

Each new group of students on their part guarantee continuous development. They learn from each other and can influence the delivery of the degree studies. Feedback is regularly collected from students at several points of the programme, and taken into consideration in shaping upcoming studies.

A two-and-a-half-year marathon

The third group of EUMASLI students graduated in the autumn of 2019. Their journey began with the application process three years earlier, and its grand finale was in Copenhagen in August 2019, where the students presented their master's dissertations.

The students first met each other at the Kick off! online meeting in January 2017. This was followed by three intensive in-person teaching weeks ("block seminar" weeks) in the spring, with one week spent at each partner higher education institution. The first six months of the programme focus on building a solid knowledge base in terms of linguistics and language awareness, the diversity of deaf cultures, and academic and learning skills.

After the introductory studies, we quickly advance to theory and practice. Practical skills are honed, for example, in International Sign, interpreting, translation and self-reflection. Theoretical knowledge is provided in interpreting research and professional development, among other things. After the first semester, the EUMASLI3 group convened for three more two-week intensive modules, which took place at intervals of a few months.



Image 1. The third group of EUMASLI students celebrating their graduation in Copenhagen in the autumn of 2019. Photographer: Jens Hessmann.

Near the end of the programme, the students met for a two-day seminar: first, to discuss pilot studies and complete interpreting examinations and finally, to present their dissertations to a large audience.

The fourth group started their studies in January 2021.

Multidimensional competence puzzle

The student groups have primarily comprised both deaf and hearing students. Although the programme is officially delivered in English, International Sign is also used in communication and especially in in-person teaching. International Sign is not a fully formed sign language. Instead, it is a pidgin-like contact sign language (WASLI 2014). The degree programme does not officially result in a qualification to act as an International Sign interpreter, but International Sign still plays a large role in the programme. It could be considered a by-product of the research-focused degree.

The programme studies are divided into 9+1 study modules, with the final +1 being a larger module of 30 ECTS for writing the master's dissertation. The other modules are 5–10 ECTS in scale, including a significant amount of in-person teaching during the intensive modules. Students must reserve enough time for independent study before and after the intensive weeks. The independent assignments include plenty of literature to read, essays, analysis, learning journals, group discussions and practice in interpreting and translation. The information needed for the programme is collected in a PDF handbook that includes everything from the Study and Examination Regulations to instructions on completing the individual modules. (EUMASLI Handbook 2017.)

Several objectives are defined for each module both in relation to subject mastery and personal abilities. For example, after the first module – Similarity and Diversity in European Sign Languages – students are expected to be familiar with the sign languages and deaf cultures of different countries and the basics of sign language linguistics. Students develop their language awareness and language skills, particularly in written academic English and International Sign - skills they will need throughout their studies.

One of the 2019 EUMASLI graduates summarised their experience as follows:

For me, EUMASLI was rich with learning experiences and encounters, both with experts in the profession and the 23 other participants from 13 different countries. I've learned so much that I can only recommend that you take part in this wonderful adventure!

More information: www.eumasli.eu

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Students' experiences of Humak's Erasmus+ exchange programmes

Timo Sorvoja

MSSc, Erasmus Coordinator, Humak

Student exchange has always played an important role in developing students' international competence. Humak's aim has been to offer visiting exchange students study programmes that are as interesting as possible, complementing the studies offered by their own higher education institution and representing Humak's key expertise. Currently, Humak offers the following three programmes to exchange students: Expertise in Youth and NGO Work (30 ECTS) for students in the fields of youth and NGO work, social work and education. In the autumn semesters we offer the Adventure Education programme (30 ECTS), which is suitable for second- and third-year students in the field of youth work, social work or education who have already completed basic studies in outdoor education, adventure education or a related field. The third programme is Cultural Management (30 + 30 ECTS) for students in culture and the arts. This cultural management programme in English is continuously available to exchange students, and it is possible to attend the programme for one or two semesters. The Jyväskylä and Turku campuses take turns in offering this programme. Humak's Erasmus+ programmes are integrated with its degree programmes, and exchange students get thus to study with local students.

From Erasmus to an international degree

Humak's most popular study programme offered to exchange students has been the Adventure Education module developed at Tornio campus and later moved to Nurmijärvi campus. There has been a continuous interest in these studies among Erasmus exchange students. Based on the positive feedback and broad interest, Humak has developed an entire Bachelor's Degree Programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education for community educators. The first students in the degree programme began their studies in Nurmijärvi in 2018. Therefore, students may now apply for exchange studies, as well as for studies at the Degree Programme in Adventure and Outdoor Education.

Humak's pedagogical approach and working life collaboration

Humak has its own pedagogical approach, coaching pedagogy, which means that the study programmes do not include many conventional lectures. Instead, students play a strong role in the development of their own competence, and the lecturers' role is to coach and support the learning process. Students often work in small groups, which strengthens their project, collaboration and interaction skills in addition to studying the content of the course.

An aim of the programmes offered to exchange students at Humak is to strengthen the students' competence in their field in a Finnish context. During their studies, students have opportunities to familiarise themselves with Finnish working life through various learning activities and assignments. The studies include short internships, guest lecturers and project activities to provide students with direct contacts with working life.

Student exchange strengthens students' international competence

Among other goals, the aim of student mobility is to promote interdisciplinary, global and critical thinking in students. It is also important that students learn to appreciate the strengths of their own culture and understand possible criticisms of their culture. Global education increases students' knowledge of foreign cultures and develops their ability to work in multinational and multicultural environments. At the same time, they gain stronger skills to meet people from diverse backgrounds.

Leisure time is an important part of student exchange

Leisure time and activities are also an important part of exchange students' lives. Finland has a very effective public transport system, which makes it possible for students to visit different parts of the country. A visit to Lapland has been a memorable experience for many exchange students. St Petersburg, Tallinn and Stockholm, for example, are also easily accessible from Finland for weekend trips. Besides travel, many leisure facilities are available to students, and the active student union Humako organises various events during the academic year.

“Having had adventures in Finland for six weeks, we were ready for something new. So we decided to leave this lovely country and take the ferry to Sweden! The boat trip was amazing. We sailed through the stunning islands on the coast at sunrise and through the archipelago of Åland during the afternoon.”

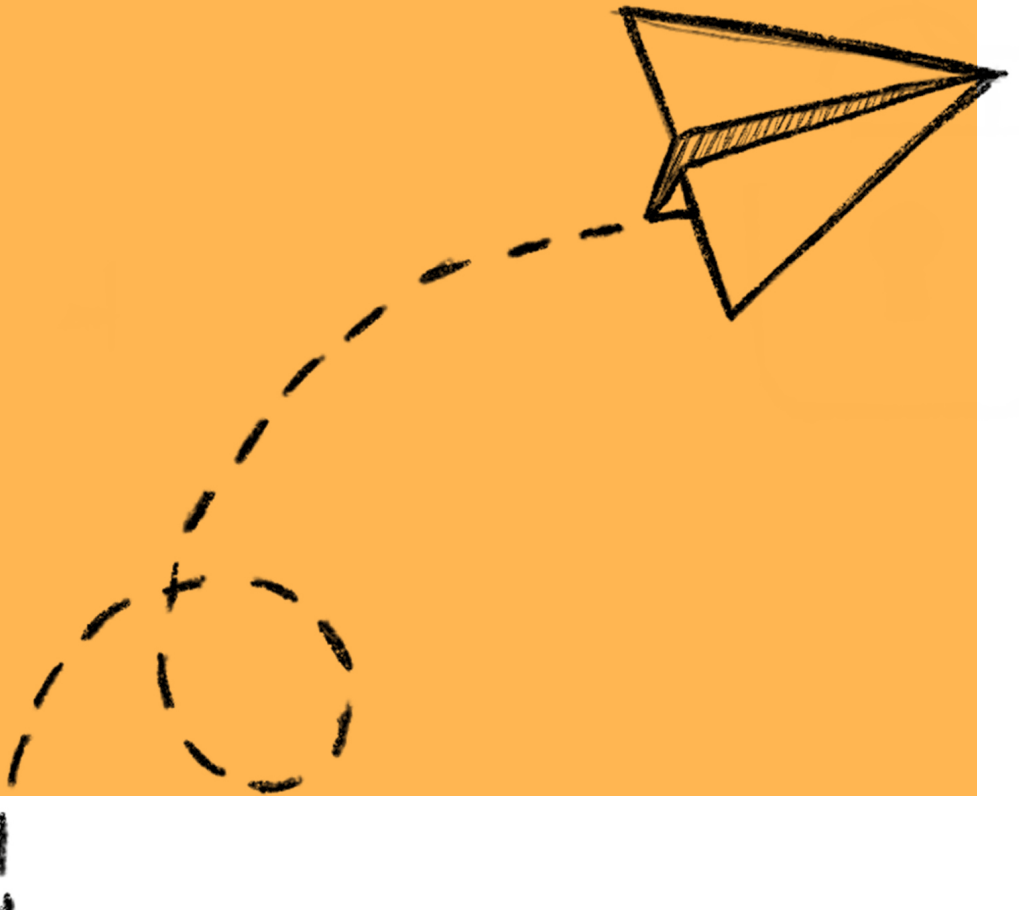
You can read more about the experiences of exchange students who visit Humak on the Humak blog HUMAK BEINGS.

Student exchange in the future

At Humak we are well aware of that we will need new modes of learning for exchange students in the future. Humak's aim is to develop more online courses in English that creates certain competence modules. This development work is already underway, and the first courses have been established. For example, Humak's lifelong learning studies includes a course in adventure and outdoor education "Community Educators as Adventure Education Experts" (5 ECTS), and a course in interpreting "Multimodal Interaction in Professional Contexts" (3 ECTS), but also a whole module of 15ECTS for students interested in cultural management, "Culture, Organisation and Sustainability Management," which all can be found in Humak's webstore, available for the general public.

It is possible that virtual degree programme study modules will be available to a broader group of students in the future, and they would thus complement the traditional mobility periods. Our aim is to develop flexible and practical new modes of learning that will improve our students' learning experiences in the future.

RDI-activities and student participation



RDI activities at Humak

Timo Parkkola

MA (literature and social sciences), Director of RDI, Humak

In Finland, universities of applied sciences carry out – as the name suggests – applied research consisting of the seamless merging of research, development and innovation activities. The operations are governed by the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (2014/932, section 4), which also determines Humak’s position in the Finnish innovation system. According to the Universities of Applied Sciences Act, universities of applied sciences “carry out applied research, development and innovation activities and artistic activities that serve education in universities of applied sciences, promote industry, business and regional development and regenerate the industrial structure of the region. In carrying out their mission, universities of applied sciences shall promote lifelong learning.” The act also requires that the education provided in universities of applied sciences be based on research and business, as well as the development of the latter. From these starting points, RDI operations provide a similar operational foundation for universities of applied sciences as scientific research does for regular universities.

In the case of Humak, this means versatile RDI operations. Our research operations annually give rise to hundreds of publications; in the field of development, we create new prerequisites for the operating environments of our industries; and in the field of innovation, we focus especially on creating new operating models and social innovation, as well as on supporting business.

Research based on practical needs

In our research operations, we primarily produce information to be utilised by society, businesses and the industrial sector. Despite the fact that our publications also include research data which can be considered basic research, our approach and goals focus especially on applied research, the results of which can be directly utilised for the practical needs of working life or society. This requires us to respond quickly to different information needs, and our research, therefore, often aims - with the aid of diverse studies and surveys - to provide answers to practical questions or information to be used in new education that anticipates future changes. In most cases, applied research cannot be carried out in a researcher’s den, because it requires close cooperation with a variety of parties such as business partners, non-governmental organisations and parties active in the public sector and politics. As a sociological higher education institution, Humak is not afraid to take a stand, as long as the background and opinions are properly justified and ethically sustainable.



Image 1. The COVID-19 pandemic has radically changed event production practices and the opportunities available. Humak is responding to this need with a project called Virtualähde, which develops digital event production. Photo by Kari Keuru.

Development to support a changing society

In our development operations, we always strive to find new solutions for socially significant issues at the regional, national or international level. Our development is directly connected with our fields of expertise: cultural management, youth work, workplace development, adventure and outdoor education, entrepreneurship, communication competence, NGO work and sign language interpreting. A key part of our development activities is active participation in the development of the operating environments in which our graduates work. This also allows us to offer our students the opportunity to participate in the development of their future profession during their studies.

Development activities implemented with the aid of project funding are often considered a key part of RDI operations. Most research is directly linked to a variety of development projects, and the results achieved by the projects are developed into practical innovations through the innovation operations. Being able to participate in the development of a humane world and society is especially important to us, and we aim to do just that by cherishing cultural heritage; by improving the quality of life of young people through the development of youth work; and by developing the linguistic capabilities and education of the Deaf community, which is often a neglected area, especially in less developed countries.

Innovation: turning ideas into action

As the name suggests, our innovation work aims to create successful new operations or products. The applied research approach of universities of applied sciences can also be seen in this work. Mere production of research data is not enough; rather, this research data should be mobilised for the benefit of society. In practice, this refers to a process of idea management with the end goal of introducing an actual operating method or product. Humak University of Applied Sciences specifically operates in society, which consists of people. Neither the education we provide nor our fields of expertise are directly linked to any field of technology or business sector that produces patents. Instead, they are most often linked to intangible services, the understanding of culture and the arts, educational products, social innovation in work communities or tourism products, for example. Functional innovations pertaining to the public sector and civic activities are also part of our goals. Examples of such innovations include educational games or games to promote the understanding of culture and the arts, rescue operation training simulations, and an app using visual communication to facilitate the everyday life of immigrants and support the work done by the authorities. We have realised all of the above.

Our key goal is not to produce innovations ourselves, however, but to assist other parties in the development of their innovations. For this reason, supporting entrepreneurs in the development of their business and the planning of their products is important to us. Hundreds of companies have participated in our enterprise accelerator operations. We have also delivered many training courses for companies on the development of their business or products, attended by thousands of people from a variety of sectors. Through our project-based operations, we have also supported industrial companies in the utilisation of creative expertise in their business. Several innovative operating models and products have been created in this manner. In many cases, the starting point has been the development of cooperation between companies operating in creative industries and industrial companies. Innovations for industries like construction and shipbuilding have been created with the help of this operating model.

Focusing on learning and the demands of future jobs

One of the key goals of Humak's RDI operations is to develop expertise both within the university of applied sciences and in the surrounding society. Research results in information that can be directly used to produce new learning materials or educational content for all our degrees and lifelong learning products. Participation in development projects offers our teaching personnel the opportunity to update their expertise in current working conditions and to address questions pertaining to the future of work communities. Meanwhile, our partners are involved in the process, developing their own operations and learning from the cooperation.

Our RDI activities are also open to students. Our partners value the new and modern perspectives offered by students involved in development work. Students are also encouraged to seek new ideas, trends and signals we can use in responding to the development needs of different communities. Students also have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the challenges they will face in their future work and to focus on solutions.

This form of practical learning facilitates the students' transition to the labour market. In innovation operations, the ideas and perspectives provided by students offer more information to use as the basis for experiments. The significant number of our students who decide to become entrepreneurs can utilise Humak's entrepreneurship services. The link between our RDI operations and the education we provide highlights what is at the core of our educational programme: an RDI-focused learning philosophy, based on our coaching pedagogy.

Benefits for society at large

The importance of RDI operations at Humak – and indeed, at all Finnish universities of applied sciences – is no coincidence: RDI activities have been promoted for years. The statutory duty of the universities of applied sciences to conduct applied research is the result of a direct need. The mission of universities of applied sciences is to provide vocational education at the highest level in Finland. Vocational education cannot constitute tertiary level education without a clear link to research in the different vocational fields, in the development of operating environments and in innovation operations. The RDI operations guarantee that learning corresponds to the current vocational requirements, and that the education provided and the expertise of the staff are constantly being updated. Meanwhile, these research activities enable a continuous cyclical transfer of knowledge and expertise, jointly accomplished by students, teachers and professionals working in different areas.

Visual Sign News – For European deaf people with difficulties in accessing news in written form

Mikko Äärinen

MH, Interpreter, Manager of RDI, Humak



With the support of the
Google News Innovation
Initiative Fund



*'For the first time in my life
- I understand what is happening in the world,
- I understand what they say in the news,
- I feel equal watching the news.'*

Views from deaf VISN viewers in Western Balkans.

VISN – Visual Sign News is a news service designed specifically for those deaf people who are not reached by traditional news channels. The basic idea behind VISN is to enable access to information and to promote equality.

The world's first accessible news

The Visual Sign News project developed the world's first easy-to-access news service. Tasked with producing understandable news, their audience included deaf individuals with low or no literacy, individuals who lacked sufficient fluency in the sign language of their country, and people affected by inadequate sign language coverage of national news. For other target groups, such as deaf migrants, the news service can serve as a complementary source of information. The news content and its significance are communicated to viewers through different means of communication and interaction. Multimodal news combines clear visual signs, communicative images, photographs and brief texts.

The idea of Visual Sign News emerged through the 'Deaf People in Albania' research project. The study found that up to 97% of Albanian deaf people were functionally

illiterate (Rojba & Lahtinen 2016, 58), and only 7% were familiar with their mother tongue, Albanian Sign Language (Rainò & Martikainen 2016, 46). Even now, the majority of deaf people in Albania are forced to cope with everyday life through their own unique gestures or without any language at all. Unable to access written language or sign language news, these individuals face great challenges in acquiring sufficient information about the world around them. The situation is also similar elsewhere in the Balkans, as well as in many Eastern European countries. In these countries, deaf people depend to a large extent on what their hearing friends and family members convey to them about the news (Rojba 2016, 48). Päivi Rainò, a senior researcher at Humak, had an idea when she saw Google's Digital News Innovation Fund's call for proposals for digital journalism development projects. VISN received funding and was the only recipient of major funding in Finland in the first funding round. The project was active between 2016 and 2019.



Image 1. 'The aim of Visual Sign News is to promote the inclusion of the project target group and strengthen equality. With this unique service, Humak and its partners are enriching the European news landscape,' said Päivi Rainò at the VISN project kick-off event in 2017. Photographer: Mikko Äärynen.

The VISN news service was created by combining expertise

Without the experts in different fields and the imaginative combination of different skills, Visual Sign News could never have happened. Cross-disciplinary development work has been at the centre of every stage of the project, from project planning to the completion of the news service product. Humak was the project coordinator, and the project partners were the South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences (Xamk), the interpreter agency Viparo Oy, and the Albanian National Association of the Deaf (ANAD).

Depending on the situation, the multilingual and multicultural VISN project team included 10 to 20 people in various tasks. The team languages were Albanian and Finnish Sign Language, and spoken and written Finnish, Albanian and English. International Sign was also used as a form of communication. The project involved individuals with limited literacy, so matters discussed at the team meetings and in connection with the activities were visualised with images, symbols, videos and sometimes even by drawing. This ensured that everyone working in the project had a shared understanding of the content of the tasks and activities. Other team members benefitted from the visualisation, too.



Image 2. Instead of the project website, the main channel for the VISN news was a Facebook page. The proposal to broadcast the news on Facebook came from a member of the target group: ‘We’re already here. Join us!’ Image: VISN archive.

Broadcast-ready news was produced in cooperation in several stages. The news topics were selected from a variety of news sources in Finland. The piece of news was rewritten, and the content was produced in International Sign. In the next stage, the three-person Albanian news team took over, shaping the piece of news into a visual version that was clearer and more understandable in the local context (Äärnyen 2017, 14–15).

The news anchors were themselves almost illiterate, so many concepts used in the news were alien to them. The project therefore engaged a Finnish sign language user working in Albania as a conceptual and cultural interpreter, who explained the meaning of the concepts for the news anchors using local examples. After the news had been signed in their final form, they were illustrated and edited. The icons and illustrations were made in Finland, but towards the end of the project, this expertise was transferred to Albania, and the news anchors became responsible for the illustrations and final production themselves. The key to the transfer of expertise was the Finnish company MediaPalo, whose personnel were able to communicate directly with the Albanian news anchors in International Sign.

One of the aims of the project was to transfer news expertise from Finland to Albania so that the news activities could be undertaken independently in Albania. This objective was otherwise achieved, despite challenges, especially in the initial production of the news, such as checking the copyright of photographs and trademarks used in the news. News production made use of pre-existing written sources and proved impossible for the Albanian news anchors, whose literacy was limited and insufficient. Likewise, the copyright is often indicated in written language, and the news anchors had trouble determining whether a certain photograph could be used in the news. During the project, the news anchors studied Albanian once or twice a week, but their literacy did not improve sufficiently in that time. If the news were to be produced in Albania in the future, the news team should include someone familiar with Albanian and English in addition to Albanian Sign Language.

VISN is a halfway house

Access to information is a fundamental human right, and for deaf people, it can be achieved through the exercise of their linguistic rights. The provision of sign language communication by public authorities in the UN Member States and the national news



Image 3. News anchor Suad Muça enjoyed his work in front of and behind the camera. Image: VISN archive.

coverage for deaf people varies widely from country to country. The situation is particularly challenging for illiterate deaf people and for deaf people who do not have sufficient command of their sign language. In the Balkans and in several Eastern European countries, for instance, sign language news coverage and communication by public authorities is currently completely inadequate.

'All members of the Deaf Community – those who sign, those who can read and write, and those who cannot – have the right to information.'

Florjan Rojba, Executive Director of ANAD

According to a study carried out in connection with the VISN project, all deaf people should ideally have the opportunity to follow news and official communications in their mother tongue (Äärynen 2019, 48); the news anchors should be members of the Deaf Community. This is customary in Finland and other Western countries. However, many deaf people worldwide do not achieve this ideal.

VISN is a halfway house. Coined by Inkeri Lahtinen, a specialist in the VISN project, this phrase expresses two ideas. Firstly, there is still a long way to go before all countries have news reporting in local sign language; it may take several years or even decades. The VISN news service already provides access to information sources, and although Visual Sign News is not available in anyone's mother tongue, the signs used are sufficiently clear and understandable to provide information about society and the surrounding world. The second idea is that the news service format developed in the VISN project can be adopted by other countries to launch their own news broadcasting activities.

The news service is not currently running, but we are actively exploring new funding and development opportunities. The news service has been fully developed down to the visual appearance, and the complete package can be mobilised in launching new news activities.

During the VISN project, several contacts were made with potential future partners, information was collected regarding the access to information by the deaf in the example countries, and a news service was created that can be further developed in future projects to promote linguistic accessibility. The VISN news service is also an extraordinary feat for the Finnish universities of applied sciences and their partners; it represents a concrete example of effective research, development and innovation activities when applying for project funding and attracting new partners. We are happy to discuss VISN and the possibilities of multimodal communication further. Contact us about cooperation opportunities!

VISN news can be viewed on the Facebook page www.facebook.com/visualsignnews. The 'How to produce Visual Sign News' manual will be published during the autumn of 2020.

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Towards equal participation with the KUVAKO project

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ASYLUM, MIGRATION
AND INTEGRATION FUND

Supported by the European Union

Being able to express oneself and to be understood are basic human rights. Linguistic accessibility enables individuals to understand and be understood, and thus empowers them to manage their own affairs. Among other things, this requires multimodal information, guidance and counselling, and the accessibility of interpretation services and electronic services. The KUVAKO project, which sought to develop a system of picture-based communication in reception centres, was founded on the principles of accessibility and the promotion of equal participation. Reception centres must be able to provide services and support based on the needs of individuals, as required by the principles of non-discrimination and equal treatment. In practice, having no common language brings challenges to the everyday communication required in the work of reception centres. The KUVAKO project aimed to solve this problem.

Humak as the developer

The idea for the KUVAKO project was born in 2016, when Humak project workers and lecturers were brainstorming solutions for situations where participants had no common language and where interpretation services were unavailable. At that time, reception centres were being quickly established in Finland, and language barriers created problems in everyday communication.

Humak played an active role in refining the idea by searching for the leading communication experts, software developers, graphic designers and immigration experts in Finland to join the project. KUVAKO was granted three years' funding (2017–2020) by the EU Home Affairs Funds. The goal of KUVAKO was to develop image-based methods to support everyday communication in situations where reception centre employees and asylum seekers had no common language.

Humak was the project administrator, and its key partners included the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri), the Finnish Red Cross, reception centres, the Finnish Association

on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (via its Papunet web service), the Finnish Centre for Easy Language, Tikoteekki and Xamk University of Applied Sciences. After the KUVAKO project ended, Papunet took over the responsibility for maintaining and developing the project's outputs. The project targeted asylum seekers who were particularly vulnerable: women, minors entering Finland alone, people unable to read and write and those with disabilities. KUVAKO combined the multimodal interactional, community, technological and international competence of Humak and its partners.

Extensive development as the basis of KUVAKO's results

During the project, image-based communication and its application were surveyed, researched, experimented with and developed in five reception centres taking part in the pilot, as well as with students of the Folk High School for the Deaf who had arrived in Finland as deaf asylum seekers. In cooperation with Migri, the results of the development work were disseminated and training was organised in reception centres throughout Finland.

One of the primary objectives of the project was to develop and create 1,000 new images corresponding to the partly specialised terminology used in reception centres. According to the internationally recognised researcher Von Tetzchnerin (2019), an image functions as a graphic symbol. A symbol is a unit that is used to build expressions that convey meaning in social interaction. As a graphic symbol, images are a means of implementing linguistic accessibility.

The purpose of the images is to support everyday interaction in situations where interpreters or other speakers of the clients' languages are unavailable. These situations include interaction occurring during a daily schedule or lunchbreak where the participants cannot understand each other. In the project, the images were developed and tested in reception centres together with staff and asylum seekers. The images were made clear and representative to ensure they could be widely understood, despite cultural and linguistic barriers.

Mobile app Kuvacom available for all

The project aimed to take the EU's Web Accessibility Directive into account in all its operations, although the directive entered into force after the KUVAKO project was already underway. The directive states that mobile applications must be accessible for persons with disabilities by 23 June 2021. The Kuvacom application developed in the project is one of the first applications to meet the requirements of the directive.

The Kuvacom app has been available to download for free from application stores since October 2019. As I write this, the application has been downloaded 4,071 times. In addition to Finland, Kuvacom also has users in other countries. Currently, most Kuvacom users speak Finnish (88%), but there are also English-, Swedish-, Russian- and Arabic-speaking users of the app.

The application is intended as a support for multimodal communication, where images, facial expressions, gestures and visual aids are used to support communication. In the KUVAKO project, the Kuvacom app was especially designed to meet the needs of reception centres. Although the images and mobile app were originally designed to support interaction between asylum seekers and reception centre staff, they are also suited to much broader application; this reflects our commitment to accessibility. Soon after we released the Kuvacom app, we discovered from feedback that the application had been installed on the work phones of paramedics and professionals working with people with memory disorders or speech impairments, among others. The images produced in the project are used, for instance, by people working with immigrants and children.

These resources – the images produced and developed, the visual materials and the application – can also be used to support interpretation. The Kuvacom app is available to all as a free download from application stores. The more than 1,000 images produced in the project can be found in Papunet’s image bank, using the keyword ‘kuvako’.

On using the Kuvacom app

The vocabulary included in the Kuvacom app was collected from reception centre employees, volunteers, the authorities and asylum seekers. In the application, users can view one or multiple images simultaneously. Users can also easily import their own images. The image can be taken with the application’s camera function, or it can be imported from the device’s gallery. Kuvacom also allows users to send images to others by email, by WhatsApp message or by SMS. In addition to the attached picture, text can be added to the messages.

Users can search for images using Finnish search terms, but the app also includes a drawing function to which images can be transferred without the related text. This means users can transfer images to the drawing function and then add text in their own language. The more than 1,000 images produced in the project are currently grouped under 14 themes (main categories), and some have been further classified into subcategories. The main categories are: ‘turvapaikka’ (asylum), ‘VOK’ (vastaanottokeskus, i.e. reception centre), health, feelings, money, activities, Finland, traffic and travel, countries and languages, food, religion, people, and time. The category for questions and quick messages includes images for asking questions (when, to where, from where, how much and with whom).

Everyday tools from the project

The starting point of the project was to produce results that supported equal participation, the right to be heard and mutual understanding. KUVAKO’s outputs include images and material that are easy to use and available for everyone for free. The Kuvacom mobile application can be downloaded from application stores. The project’s concrete results include the material created for use in reception centres, the more than 1,000 KUVAKO images and the Kuvacom application.

The project ended in January 2020, but the project outputs are still freely available. In addition, image-based communication, multimodality and accessibility are taught in basic studies at Humak. Humak also provides shorter open access online courses that can be enrolled in remotely. The methods and images developed during the project have been adopted and applied in domains such as social welfare and healthcare services.

Innovation in youth work – Future Labs solves the challenges of the future

Kari Keuru

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This article tells the story of Future Labs. The project consortium was established as a continuation of a friendship and interaction that had been going on for a few years. We wanted to come up with new methods for developing youth work in Europe and respond to the needs of modern times. Our social and digital lab had locations around Europe. We experimented, developed, and shared our innovations. The development did not end when the project ended. Indeed, it is ongoing.

Teamwork makes the dream work

The greatest power of international activities is related to the meeting of cultures and the resulting ability to look at things in a new way. The change of perspective gives rise to new solutions, which – in the best-case scenario – develop into innovations. This means internationality can be a source for innovation. With this in mind, we started planning the Future Labs project in the spring of 2016. Our consortium comprised eight partners from six European countries: Finland, Czechia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Italy and Portugal. The operators comprised one microenterprise, five associations, one youth centre and Humak as the higher education institution. The different backgrounds of the partners guaranteed a versatile network and diverse stakeholders that were located all around Europe. The project's partners were:

FINLAND: Humak University of Applied Science

FINLAND: Hyvärilä Youth and Holiday Centre

PORTUGAL: Ha Moment cooperative

PORTUGAL: Team Mais company

ITALY: Agrado association

SLOVENIA: Pina association

SLOVAKIA: YouthWatch organisation

CZECHIA: Anev association

Start of the cooperation

The project's application process took almost two years, and our application was accepted on the second attempt. We applied for and were granted funding for Future Labs from the Erasmus+ programme, under Key Action 2 (KA2): Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices. It was unusual to be granted funding from a programme aimed at youth work with Humak as the primary applicant. Humak is the first higher education institution in Finland to successfully apply for funding for a KA2 project.

Future Labs – New Digital and Social Innovative Tools for Youth Work kicked off in September 2017. In line with our mission statement, our international cooperation led to new innovations for youth work. We also gained new knowledge by learning the hard way, and a deeper understanding of online cooperation, different work cultures and the challenges of communication.

In the spring of 2012, we participated in an international intensive programme in Craiova, Romania. There were some 100 participants from five countries: Romania, Portugal, Belgium, France and Finland. Funded by the Erasmus+ programme, this intensive programme united Europe for two weeks in discussing intercultural communication and interaction. The programme was an unforgettable experience for all the participants, and it changed how we think. It was a lesson in respecting our differences and the diversity of our working methods and communication styles. When I, as a Finn, thought something was completely clear and resolved, my colleagues from other cultures felt that the discussion had only just begun. The Finnish way of working is to take care of things in the order they appear on the agenda, and once that order is decided, it cannot be changed. Yet our colleagues from other cultures moved from one topic to the next completely naturally without the slightest intention of reaching mutually agreed decisions.

During the two weeks, we befriended a trainer from the Portuguese Salto-Youth Network. Our friendship lasted for several years. We were in touch with each other regularly and discussed the possibility of working on a new project together. We wanted to develop youth work methods that could be implemented as innovations on a larger scale as well. We believed in the power of social interaction and saw the opportunities provided by our digital era.

Forming the consortium

Finally, in early 2016, we were ready to put words into practice, so we invited some of our partners involved in youth work to a project planning meeting. Over the following weeks and after a few online meetings, our consortium formed a network, comprising members from six countries. Our joint online brainstorming sessions were full of enthusiasm, and creative sparks were flying as we drew our plans on the online white board (realtimeboard.com, today miro.com). Figuratively speaking, we all brought our own (old) best practices to the table and decided to use these as a basis to cook up something new for youth work.

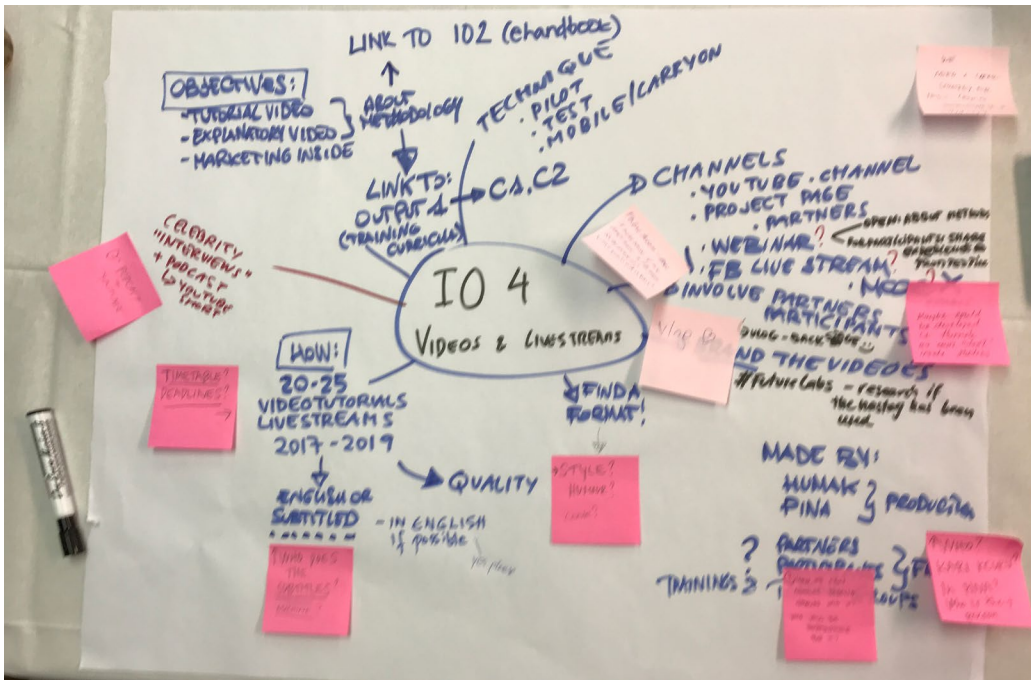


Image 1. Working with a flip board. Brainstorming ideas. Photographer: Kari Keuru.

As the old Finnish saying goes, old methods that work are better than a bag full of new ones. In the Future Labs project, our approach to innovation was based on this sentiment. According to one definition, innovation is an invention that has been proven to work and that is reproducible for use on a larger scale. This means innovation is not always a new invention – applying an old invention in a new way or to a new field also counts. In relation to creativity, the same idea is known as divergent thinking, i.e. coming up with new ways to use an existing product. So, in practice, we had a figurative bag full of old methods, around which we built our innovation process.

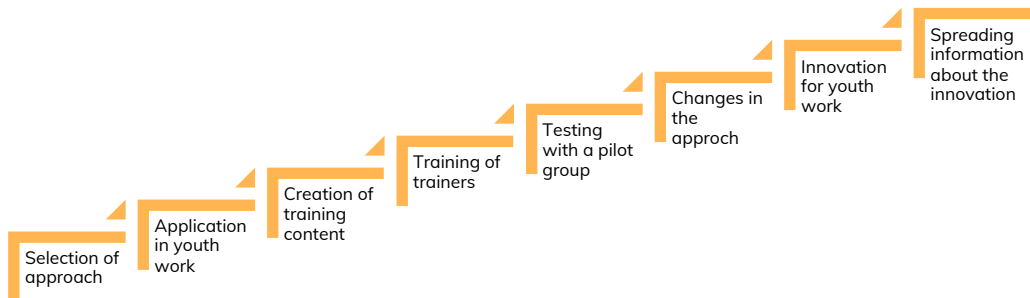


Figure 1. Innovation ladder for youth work.



Image 2. Future Labs partner meeting in Vinci, Italy. Photographer: Kari Keuru.

Project implementation

Three partner meetings were organised during the two years of Future Labs; we met once in Nurmes at the Hyvärilä Youth and Holiday Centre, once in Vinci in Italy, and once in Vila De Marmeleira in Portugal. International coaching was held in Slovakia (Social Innovative Tools) and Czechia (Digital Innovative Tools). In addition, the project outputs included the eHandbook – Developing Youth Work Innovation, training curricula, 15 youth work themed podcast episodes (*Talking Youth Work*) and video tutorials on different subjects.

The methods were tested with target groups, and the experience we gained from the testing was included in the innovation process. The results from the test groups were used to edit the methods into the final form in which they were published. As part of disseminating the outputs and methods of the project, we organised ‘multiplier events’ in each partner country. The Future Labs project also took part in many other events focusing on youth work. All in all, the project reached more than 50,000 youth work professionals around Europe during its lifecycle.

Challenges of cooperation

The partner network, comprising members from six countries, really highlighted Europe’s geographical scale, different time zones and diversity of cultures. The online meetings had to be scheduled very flexibly, because there was a two-hour time difference

between the easternmost partner country, Finland, and the westernmost partner country, Portugal. Meetings could not be scheduled for 8 am Finnish time, as is usual in Finland, because our Portuguese colleagues were still fast asleep at that time. On the other hand, our Portuguese colleagues had to accommodate our Finnish habit of having lunch at 11 am, a coffee break at 2 pm and ending our work day at 4 pm, by which time they were only halfway through their work day. To avoid confusion, we agreed right at the start of the project that we would always discuss times using Central European Time (CET).

Country-specific holidays and celebrations also added to our understanding of other cultures. The Finnish summer holidays and particularly the summer holidays of Finnish teachers were a source of frustration to the non-Finnish partners. Openness and flexibility were required from all partners to ensure peaceful cooperation. Smooth cooperation also required active participation in meetings and to ensure this, the meetings had to be scheduled considerately, taking into account the views of all participants. Humak was the primary coordinator, so we could not close our doors or switch off our communication devices for the entire duration of the European summer holidays from June to August, nor could we expect the rest of Europe to forgo their August holidays.

Future Labs methods

The method portfolio developed in Future Labs has two training themes: socially innovative methods and digitally innovative methods. The first training theme includes the following methods:

- Humour Techniques such as improv theatre – Using the methods of improvisational theatre to process everyday issues
- Clowning – Using clowning methods to process issues and express them in words
- Design Thinking – an ideology and operating model based on continuous innovation.
- Art of Hosting – A method of shared leadership where a self-organised network makes use of dialogue-based participatory methods in their work.
- Learning Experience Design – a method that uses the environment and different methods to enable learning in a user-oriented manner.

The methods of the second theme are:

- Digital Story Telling (One-Minute-Movie) – Telling a story with images, video and audio. The works created were based on the One-Minute Movie structure.
- Animation (Stop Motion animation, PPT-animation) – Expressing things in words with animation.

- Visualisation – Expressing things and text visually.
- Photo Voice – Using ethical photography to effect social change.
- Gamification – Integrating game-like features with learning processes.

When we started planning the project, we sought inspiration from the changes happening in Europe. We considered the challenges young people would face as they grew up. Then we discussed the skills and tools youth workers need in their guidance work. How could we interact with young people growing up in a multicultural environment? How could we combat negative behavioural models? How could we encourage young people? What sort of tools could we provide the young to help them make better sense of their own lives? We wanted to open the doors for creativity, new forms of interaction and learning. In the planning, training and testing phases, we made different traditions, cultures and attitudes collide.

Future of the project

After the Future Labs project ended, we published a physical copy of the eHandbook. Disseminating electronic material quickly and globally is easy. The traditional printed handbook became the newest innovation of the finished project. The Talking Youth Work podcast has continued after the project, and it still gets daily downloads from around the world. In February 2020, we agreed on a new series with the editors of the podcast and brought in a new partner, Youth@Work. The discussions on innovations in youth work continue to reach new audiences. According to the latest statistics, the podcast's largest audiences are in the UK, Portugal, the USA and Australia.

Future Labs succeeded in creating something permanent. The project is over, but its outputs and methods continue to bring positive development. We have been contacted by people from a variety of countries: in Turkey, a local operator was interested in our method for using animation as a tool for youth work and wanted to cooperate with us on an animation project targeting children with dyslexia; a Slovakian operator contacted us to discuss translating our material into Slovak. We have also been asked to hold a workshop in a care institution for child victims of the war between Russia and Ukraine.

International cooperation often results in positive change. It makes the wheels of innovation go around. Cooperation, at its finest, is the exchange and sharing of experiences, and combining things in new ways that spark innovation. Internationality requires courage from individuals to interact and accept diversity. This requires us to be open to hearing and seeing, and demands flexibility. However, the result is a circle of innovation: a wave of results that extends beyond the individual and reaches the community, society and even Europe as a whole.

Conducting demographic research among Albanian deaf people

Päivi Rainò

PhD (General Linguistics), Docent (Finnish Sign Language), Senior Researcher, Humak

Florjan Rojba

Executive Director, ANAD; Expert by experience. Board Member, World Federation of the Deaf

Eduard Ajas

Financial Manager, ANAD; Expert by experience

Klisman Ibrahim

Sign Language Researcher and trainer; ANAD, Expert by experience



Päivi Rainò:

I am sitting on a plane in September 2015 on my way to Tirana. I open my computer. I finally have time to watch the videos from the Albanian National Association of the Deaf (ANAD) about the fieldwork related to my demographic research. I start crying profusely. It is as if I had travelled back in time to my childhood in a sign language-speaking family in the mid-twentieth century. I saw again what it meant when people were deprived of the opportunities to learn, when schools did not use a language that deaf pupils understood. I saw in concrete terms what life was like for the 437 people who were part of the statistics in my research, both through their own testimony and through the accounts of fieldworkers working with deaf people.

I am a sign language researcher and sociolinguist, and I work at Humak as a senior researcher. One of the owners of Humak, the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD), had commissioned a report from me for Albanian ministries on how the rights referred to in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), ratified by the country, were realised from the perspective of the deaf themselves. In what kind of language environment did they live? Were the skills acquired at school sufficient for employment and an independent, self-sustaining life? How did they access information about the surrounding world? We also received support for our survey from the Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT). The survey was conducted and published within a larger long-term cooperation programme between FAD and ANAD, funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and FAD in the framework of Disability Partnership Finland.

I wept then, and I weep now as I remember that journey and the love that I felt for my team members, because the research would not have been completed without the incredibly skilful team of Albanian deaf people. Below, Florjan Rojba, the Executive Director of ANAD, who led the fieldwork for the two-month period, and the organisation's long-term employees Eduard Ajas and Klisman Ibrahimimi will tell you how it all happened. The texts have been translated into English from Albanian Sign Language.

I am proud that these people – who are sign language speakers and cannot read or write in Albanian – are able to continue their work with the support of the development cooperation funding of the Finnish government. All credit for this study is due to them, not forgetting the support provided by FAD.

Florjan Rojba: **Multilingual questionnaires and multimodal fieldwork**

The most challenging part of our task was translating the survey questions into sign language from a questionnaire written in a language that is not known by the interviewers. But having the questionnaire on the computer (connected to a web survey platform), in a written language and in a signed language, made it possible for us to overcome this challenge.

The survey questionnaire, with its 48 questions, was first translated from English (in which it was originally written) to Albanian, and from Albanian to Albanian Sign Language, and then back into Albanian and English again. The final translation stage included several back translations between Albanian–English–Albanian Sign Language. This was done in close collaboration with Päivi Rainò, the researcher, the two interpreters working at ANAD and staff, who are deaf sign language users. The work was also supported by a Finnish deaf adviser of the FAD who acted as a cultural interpreter. The translations for each question were videotaped so that any question could be checked on the laptop that each interviewer took to the field.

During the training period, we had lengthy discussions about how to show respect to the enormous degree of variation in signing skills and the diversity of communication modes in our deaf community; how to take into account the educational background, age and socio-cultural contexts that the interviewers were to encounter in geographically diverse locations; and how to respect laws concerning privacy. We practiced producing signed field diaries and documenting our fieldwork – the latter would, naturally, take place only if the interviewees consented either to photographing or videotaping.

In my role as ANAD's coordinator, I prepared a 5-minute presentation explaining in sign language the purpose of the survey, to be shown on the fieldworker's laptop to all participants before the actual interview took place. After seeing this signed message, the interviewee was to decide whether to take part in the survey or not. A group of nine people (five men and four women) representing different age groups took part in the training process, which prepared them for fieldwork. The requirements of Albanian culture were taken into consideration: e.g. a female fieldworker was used when women were being interviewed.

Conducting the survey

Teams travelled by bus or minibus to all provinces and stayed overnight at hotels where necessary. On arriving, they contacted “the local leader”, informed him/her about the survey, and planned the interviews for the following morning. All teams were in mutual contact using WhatsApp, and able to discuss in sign language any issues or concerns with me and with each other. Together we were able to find immediate solutions for any problems that emerged.

The following morning, the two interviewers met with the local leader, and travelled to the villages to meet the deaf people who were to be interviewed. Some villages were situated near the base location, but others were very far away. In general, the teams started in the villages that were furthest away, where they managed to conduct three to four interviews per day. In closer villages, the teams were able to interview between 10 and 25 people over three or four days. In remote places where no buses or minibuses were available, the teams used a taxi to reach deaf interviewees. But there were some places too remote even for travel by taxi; to reach these places the leader escorted the survey team on foot for up to three hours in order to reach deaf individuals.

In the evening, the interviewers came back to the hotel, and videotaped an entry for the field diary (of which two translated excerpts are reproduced below). If any issues arose from the interviews which required clarification, this was resolved via WhatsApp. I was also able to receive questions via WhatsApp, and pass on the answers from Päivi or from INSTAT to our team members in the field. This was an excellent and efficient way of using visual communication, as it is transparent and was understood by all members of our working group.

Two excerpts from signed field reports

Klisman Ibrahim:

February 19th 2015. Erkid and I conducted interviews in Pogradec and villages in the vicinity. We interviewed eight people in total, four men and four women. (- -)

On the second day the person who was assisting us told us that there was another deaf person called M. We went to meet him. M. was illiterate and lived in a bad economic situation. (- -) Before, M. had worked in Greece and now he was back in Albania. He told us about the history of his family. Erkid and I listened to him very carefully. M. was illiterate and communicated with gestures. While conducting the interview, M’s mother got excited and started to cry. We stopped the interview for a moment and went to comfort her. She told us that they had economic problems, and did not have money to buy food. Erkid and I went to a shop and bought some food. She became calmer and thanked us. We then continued the interview. They had big problems because they had to pay the rent, and the energy bill, and in the end, there was not enough money to buy food. All these things had to be covered with only one pension.

Eduard Ajas:

This report regards the interview process in the district of Fier on 7-8 February 2015. Denis and I went to Patos and Libofsha, along with a deaf person who was helping us to find the addresses of the deaf people. We interviewed 10 people, five men and five women. During the interviews we encountered some problems:

An interview with two deaf-blind brothers. Our coordinator Florjan insisted that we try to conduct this interview despite their condition. I asked for the permission of the family to interview the brothers, as well as the wife of one of them, who was deaf but not blind. The couple had an adult daughter who was able to hear. At first, the family did not approve of the interview, stating that they did not want it to be publicised in the media. We explained that we were ANAD representatives, and that the interviews were made in collaboration with INSTAT and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, and that all the information would be confidential. After they agreed, we conducted the interview. Communication was difficult because they were blind but I, with my long experience, managed to communicate with them using fingerspelling on the palm, and tactile signing. Then the deaf wife told us about their difficult situation. She was looking for a job, and had asked for help from the state for her husband and her brother-in-law. They stayed at home as it was impossible for them to work. The situation was very difficult. Their house was old and its roof was leaking. They had not received any assistance from the state for their living condition.

We conducted the other interview in a remote area of Libofsha, where we interviewed a married couple. They had three boys and the youngest (eight years old) was blind. They had asked for assistance from the state due to their situation. In Fier and Patos, the deaf people did not have any serious problems. We kept records of everything they told us.



Image 2. Eduard Ajas (on the right) and Klisman Ibrahim conducting interviews in Librazhd. On the computer screen, Florjan Rojba is explaining in sign the purpose of the survey. Photo: Edi Rrapi.

Florjan Rojba: Challenges and lessons learned

Unfortunately, deaf Albanians do still have problems, especially in remote villages. The deaf people who live there, when they have finished school, live their lives enclosed in their homes. There are deaf people who are 40 years and older who only use fingerspelling, with some gestures. Their families sometimes hide them, which prevents them from having contact with the wider deaf community. Over time, they forget the sign language and fingerspelling that they may have learned at school. There are many such cases, due to a lack of information.

Finding an adequate communication mode when interviewing respondents proved to be a real challenge. The interviewers had to test and apply a variety of modes to facilitate communication, including Albanian Sign Language, fingerspelling, gesticulation, pointing and different combinations of all of these modes. Many members of the survey team encountered deaf-blind people for the first time in their lives.

The interviewers met deaf people in a variety of living conditions; some were totally isolated, some faced extreme poverty, some – especially deaf women and girls – clearly faced discrimination from their family, and had no access to information or education. This had an emotional impact on the interviewers, who witnessed the hardships that deaf people deal with and have to overcome in their everyday lives in the provinces. This experience was an eye-opener for the interviewers, and it put the barriers and problems of their own lives into perspective. They now have a better understanding of the diversity of situations and living conditions that the deaf population faces around Albania. But as a whole, the results of the survey study conducted in 2015 showed, unfortunately, that Albania's deaf population does not enjoy the same opportunities as their hearing peers with regard to independent living, the right to education and further studies, access to employment according to potential, and access to information.

Albanian Sign Language is now included as a subject in the curriculum of the public deaf school, the professional education of sign language instructors is about to start, and an act concerning the provision of interpreting services for deaf people is currently pending consideration by the Parliament. The recommendations that were made in the report of this study are about to be implemented. There is a clear change for the better in the lives of Albanian Deaf people.

Lights on!

– Highlighting castle ruins and student innovation

Nina Luostarinen

Master of Culture and Arts, Cultural Manager, Senior Lecturer, Humak



Funded under the Interreg Central Baltic programme, the Finnish-Estonian Lights on! project took place between 2015 and 2018. Eight historical travel destinations were at the heart of the project, the fascinating histories of which were not yet conveyed to those visiting the sites. Instead, the sites seemed forgotten and boring. In the project, actions to bring more visitors to the heritage sites were planned, piloted and implemented in Finland and in Estonia.

Dull as a rock?

The Lights on! project took place between September 2015 and December 2018. Its aim was to increase awareness of the history and stories of eight heritage sites. Four sites were selected from each country. All sites were ancient centres of power. Each housed the ultimate political, religious or military power in the country at some point in history. Currently, the sites are in ruins – some have practically nothing left of the historical structures. They were also largely forgotten by tourists, and many had never even heard of the sites. At the start of the project, the visitor experience of many of the sites was poor, and their mesmerising histories as centres of power remained a mystery to visitors.

As the project progressed, the current administrators of the sites, Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland in Finland and the State Forest Management Centre (RMK) in Estonia, made improvements to the infrastructure of the sites. Humak's actions in the project centred on piloting various operational models that could enable making the history and stories of the sites accessible through experiences and participation. When the project started, a culture of experimentation was in high demand and even encouraged by the Finnish Government. In the spirit of open-minded experimentation, Humak's actions in the project therefore included experimenting with new participatory, gamified, and community-based methods for turning history into personal experiences.



Image 1. Painting with light at Varbola. Historical figures were introduced with light paintings, among other activities. Light painting: Jani Lainio & Eki Tanskanen. Photographer: Kirsi MacKenzie.

Towards new solutions with experimentation

At the start of the project, the idea of strongly integrating project-based activities in teaching as an overarching operational model was being heavily discussed at Humak. With these two trends in mind, we started experimenting to see what our project – large and international, and demanding in terms of content – would be like if we gave students a central role in it. Overall, 255 Humak students participated in the implementation of the project, and they received a total of 2,865 ECTS for their work.

During the little more than three years the project was active, a plethora of experiments was implemented. They were brainstormed, for example, at an international innovation camp, and implemented as part of the cultural management degree programme's innovation studies, and in the study modules for marketing and arts. The most rewarding results included the variety of ideas born from crowdsourcing and utilising the students' hivemind, which the project team would never have come up with themselves. On the other hand, Humak's activities in the project aimed to implement more impressive pilots and experiments in a larger volume than was stated in the project plan, because we had more people and thus more work hours to use. This meant we could implement some rather ambitious ideas compared to the work hours allocated to our share of the project. As often happens, the result was not the vision of one individual project manager, but a mosaic of collective inputs. In terms of great successes, we were able to witness some fantastic ideas and true gems we could not have achieved alone, but the project's lifecycle also included compromises in quality and content that we had to adjust to without

gritting our teeth too much. But of course, when you are creating something new, it is almost always the case that everything in the idea stage seems fantastic and perfect, but the realities of life then force the ideas to be adjusted to something more realistic. The challenges specific to our project were sometimes big and related to the restrictions on the use of heritage sites.

With a lot of work, we also implemented a game with augmented reality in which historical figures give tasks for the players to solve. This game is the result of the cooperation between three educational institutions. Making the game was laborious and it was ultimately published unfinished. However, to our surprise, it was awarded a prize for being the best serious game of 2018. The game has since been presented at several different forums, some of them international. Although it is clumsy in terms of technology, the idea behind it has received praise. So, in the end, our team work produced something highly appealing, even if the process seemed very chaotic at times.

Art nourishing imagination

Although we invested the largest share of our time and funds in the project's technological implementation, it seems that the most successful, meaningful and significant experiences for the visitors to the sites were the activities based on art and culture. Technological solutions are often outdated by the time they are finished, but artistic methods are timeless. Art-based activities were best suited to creating a sense of space and enabling the visitors to experience and understand the sites' stories. In many of the experiments



Image 2. Flash Vallisaari. Excited participants making light art on the platform on top of the Alexander Battery in Vallisaari. Photographer: Ilkka Nissilä.

we came up with together – for example, the LARP sheets we made for the sites – there was also an element of improvisation and involvement. Other interesting and successful activities include the windows in time opened by the Kuusisto Paradox event, the ‘art war’ game held in Vallisaari, the communal light painting workshops organised at all the sites, the video installation introducing the site’s history projected onto the wall of Raasepori Castle, and the Flash Vallisaari light art festival.

The events organised at the sites always had more visitors than we anticipated. We estimate the events had a total of 23,300 visitors. Posts on the project’s activities were viewed more than 1.3 million times across different social media channels. This means we achieved what we set out to do – the project increased awareness of the sites, and there were interesting activities for visitors to the sites.

The ruins can be a lot more than a quick stop on a bus tour. In addition to being able to participate in interesting art-based activities and playing an AR game, the sites can serve as a gateway to ancient stories and a deeper understanding of the sites, and the power they hold. This power and the art-based activities can also spark personal insight and a new understanding of personal strengths. Looking at things from the perspective of history can help with organising one’s own life, and narrative functions can be used to examine one’s own history and feelings. In the midst of all today’s uncertainty, history provides an opportunity to take a break, look back and understand how certain events are constantly repeated in the history of humankind in surprisingly similar ways. The popularity of the project’s activities shows that planning and implementing it collectively with students allowed the project to achieve something that is above the mundane. According to the feedback received, the opportunity to participate in the project also provided cultural management students with unique experiences. Together we made something that – in addition to project indicators and study credits – produced unforgettable memories and mesmerising local experiences.

Advice in one's own language and recruitment events arranged with companies

- The three-year Baana project succeeded in employing more than 300 immigrants.

Anna Pikala

MA (Media Studies), Senior Lecturer, Humak

BAANA
Työtä, koulutusta ja tukea yrittäjyyteen



HUMANISTINEN
AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU



Vinuvoimaa
EU:lta
2014–2020



Funded by the ERDF, the Baana project promoted the employment and entrepreneurship of immigrants. We removed obstacles to employment, providing immigrants with concrete paths to working life and entrepreneurship in Varsinais-Suomi. During the three years of operation (2016–2019), we succeeded in employing more than 300 immigrants, and attracted more than 2,500 visitors to the project's two employment advice points. Furthermore, we arranged more than 70 courses covering CV-, job seeker- and hygiene proficiency certificate training, as well as 42 business counselling sessions. We achieved these results with five special operating methods.

Building an extensive partner network already at the application stage

Already during the project application stage, we amassed an extensive partner network who worked with us to plan, accomplish, evaluate, and implement the project activities. In addition to Humak, one of our partners was Citywork Turku Oy, the staffing service company that originally suggested the project. When employing job applicants with an immigrant background for their customer companies, Citywork noticed that they lacked an important additional tool to support both employers in hiring immigrants and immigrants in finding a job. They asked Humak to create a project which would first study whether other companies needed a similar tool and then explore the available means with a variety of companies.

There was also close cooperation with other organisations employing immigrants, such as the City of Turku, other projects and almost seventy companies that wanted to join the project. A permanent network called *Töissä täällä* (Working Here) was created as the result of the cooperation (see <https://www.toissataalla.fi/inenglish>). As an institute of higher education, we were also able to involve a large number of students in the project. In addition to fresh perspectives, they provided important additional input for the project when arranging events, for example.

Boldly and extensively advertising the project

We boldly advertised our work and our results from day one. In advertising, we mainly used the immigrants' own networks and the networks of various parties working with immigrants, but we also utilised press releases and social media. During the three years, we chalked up almost a dozen articles, one TV news segment and several online news reports about Baana. The project produced six role model videos, and shared the links with various educational institutions. We also produced an animated film called *Baanan tarina* (The Story of Baana) which, as the name suggests, tells the story of Baana's success. In this way, we obtained customers and credibility for the project from the very beginning. One of our best marketing ploys was our purple Baana T-shirts: we wore them at all the events we attended and people in Turku quickly learned to identify us.



Image 1. Baana employees and trainees presenting the project at a trade fair event. Photo by Emilia Reponen.

Hiring advisors who spoke the customers’ language and had a similar cultural background for our employment advice points

From the very beginning, the project had two easy-to-access employment advice points with advisors with an immigrant background, who spoke the customers’ language and understood their cultural background. We received plenty of positive feedback on the advice points, both from our customers and our partner network. Questions about job hunting often tend to be culturally biased, and helping clients navigate the bureaucracy involved in job seeking requires a good understanding of the language being spoken. Baana’s customers were pleased with the opportunity to seek clarification in their native language or a foreign language in which they were fluent. The advice sessions usually began in Finnish. There were no actual interpreters at the Baana advice points; instead, the advisors worked in several languages.

In addition to the advisors who spoke the customers’ language and understood their culture, other cornerstones of successful advice included the opportunity to focus on listening to the customers to understand their current situation. Furthermore, we kept in contact with the customers and went wherever advice was needed. We also worked in cooperation with companies recruiting immigrants and a varied, close-knit partner network.

“For two years, I sat at home, feeling hopeless and not knowing what to do. Baana gave my life a new direction.” Feedback on Baana’s advice service from a customer.

Arranging recruitment events in cooperation with companies

Recruitment events arranged with companies proved a very important communications channel. Our customers included several people with an immigrant background who had applied for dozens of jobs but had not even been invited for an interview – probably because of their non-Finnish names. We therefore arranged more than fifteen recruitment events in cooperation with companies to offer employers and employees a chance to genuinely meet each other. We succeeded in employing many of our customers in this way. The second-best employment means we discovered was arranging short training courses based on a specific need. For example, we arranged a course on the Finnish language required at work on-site in the time between two work shifts. We also organised several hygiene proficiency certificate training courses for people who already had a job waiting for them but lacked the required certificate.

Using action-based and visual methods during training and in providing advice

Despite the fact that people from several linguistic and cultural backgrounds worked at our employment advice points, the Finnish work and entrepreneurship culture sometimes proved difficult to explain to customers from different cultures. For example, identifying one's own competencies and being able to describe them is an extremely important skill when applying for a job in Finland, but this was a completely foreign concept to many of our customers. Many of them were used to a culture where you are not supposed to highlight your own strengths and where you obtain jobs mostly through your networks rather than via job applications.

To solve this problem, we developed “competence cards” that describe nine skills and characteristics that are often identified and sought after in Finnish working life. We compiled these skills and characteristics into competence cards in cooperation with customers of Baana and representatives of the partner companies. Baana also created occupation cards to assist the advisors in explaining occupations and related duties, because there are many occupations and job titles in Finland that do not exist in the native countries of our customers.



Many of our business counselling customers would have been interested in attending an entrepreneurship course in Finland but were unable to do so because of their insufficient Finnish language skills. Understanding entrepreneurship terminology can prove challenging

Image 2. The occupation and competence cards developed by Baana assist people in job hunting.

for anybody, and may be impossible for people with limited Finnish. We solved this problem by arranging an action-based entrepreneurship course simultaneously in Finnish and English. Instead of watching PowerPoint presentations, the participants learned how to run a business by completing exercises and testing their business ideas with potential customers from the very first session.

“A very useful course. I just wish other training courses were even half as good as the Baana course.” Feedback from a person who attended the Baana entrepreneurship course.

How will the lessons learned from Baana be utilised in future?

During the three years of operation, the Baana project taught us that the successful employment of immigrants requires an extensive network, including everything from job seeking advisors to employers, as well as good and innovative means of promoting employment. Based on the lessons learned from the project, we developed a recruitment network model for the employment of immigrants (see baanalla.fi). The model consists of several publications we submitted to parties working with immigrants throughout Finland; we even attended a couple of seminars in other European countries to report Baana’s results.

Our easy-to-access advice points offering culture-specific advice in the clients’ own language continue under the aegis of the City of Turku’s Centre of Competence (Maahanmuuttajien osaamiskeskus). Furthermore, many of the training concepts, workshops and functional/visual methods we developed are currently used by several organisations. The Töissä täällä network (see <https://www.toissataalla.fi/inenglish>) also continues to support employers in the hiring of employees with an immigrant background.

In addition, we noticed during the project period that very little assistance is available to immigrants who wish to become entrepreneurs, to help them develop a business idea or to establish a business. We therefore created Tempo, a new project on immigrant entrepreneurship funded by the ERDF. We are continuing to utilise and further develop the operating methods developed in Baana in the new project.

Hundred apple trees and increasing participation

Hanna Kiuru

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worked as a project coordinator for the ‘Sata omenapuuta – moninuorinen Suomi’ (‘Hundred apple trees – multicultural Finland’) project for a couple of years. Humak was one of the implementers of the project, which took place between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2018 in Southwest Finland, with the support of the EU’s Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The main objective of the project was to promote the integration and participation of young people between the ages of 12 and 25 with a third-country refugee background, and to support integration as a two-way process. Since the target group of the project represents a vulnerable population, ethical considerations were extremely important in the implementation of the activities. The project also functioned throughout its existence as a significant RDI-based learning environment for the students of universities of applied sciences.

Participatory event work and the ‘Sata omenapuuta

– Kasva Suomessa’ (‘Hundred apple trees – growing up in Finland’) event

During the project, Humak supported the integration of young people with a refugee background by increasing their participation and opportunities to exert influence in society, implementing weekly workshops with the aim of organising a large event that would bring young people together. The weekly event workshops aimed to encourage young refugees to be active in society. Participation in the event’s organisation provided the young people with opportunities to be involved and exert their influence. They were also able to learn about the work of the authorities as they applied for all the necessary permits. In addition to organising the event, the content of the interaction was related to social reinforcement, education for democracy, physical education and positive shared activities. Hearing the young people’s requests and taking them into account was central



Image 1. Apples with meaning. The young participants left messages for each other in the spirit of the project during the ‘Growing up in Finland’ event. Photographer: Emilia Reponen.

to the project. We sought to promote engagement in the activities by ensuring that participants felt they had a say in matters that affected them. The aim was also to learn about Finnish culture together in a relaxed atmosphere.

Event organisation and societal influencing workshops were organised in the VALMO classroom in Turku nearly every week during the 2016–2017 academic year. The sessions were led by teams of Humak students and the make-up of the group varied over the year. Once the participants felt like a team, the focus shifted to organising the main event: ‘Hundred apple trees – growing up in Finland’, which took place in Turku on 19 May 2017. Nearly 250 young people from educational institutions in the Turku region participated in the event with their teachers. The event brought together young refugees and young Finnish people, encouraging joint participation and interaction, and promoting two-way integration with the help of different activity stations.

Method guidebook ‘Sata omenapuuta – hyvät käytännöt nuorten kotoutumiseen’ (Hundred apple trees – best practices for integration of young people’)

Humak was also responsible for producing a method guidebook for the project. The guidebook, *Sata omenapuuta – Hyvät käytännöt nuorten kotoutumiseen* (Kiuru, Kuusisto, Laulajainen & Vuori, 2017), detailed the best practices produced in the project, based on the methods piloted. The guidebook provides ideas for all professionals working with young refugees. The guidebook is centred around the idea that respecting diversity requires new ideas, and that the various operators in the field must develop new forms of cooperation.

The guidebook and its practices were included in the Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration Best Practices under the Early Support Services theme in late 2017. This was a significant recognition of the project’s activities, and the best practices are therefore likely to have achieved wider impact in integration work, thus benefitting the project’s target group. It was also significant recognition for Humak’s strategic focus areas which guide RDI activities at Humak.

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CREVE

– For the creative mind

Benny Majabacka

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Creve is a business hatchery for the creative industries operating under Humak. During its decade of operations, Creve has acquired experience in business advising, networking, business hatchery and accelerator activities, and in developing cooperation between the creative and other industries. Creve's operations aim to serve new creative businesses and those planning to start a creative business, and to remove factors that hinder the growth of the creative industries.

Creve responds to the challenges of the creative industries

Between 2018 and 2020, Creve has been expanding its operations to the national level. Steps have also been taken to further expand to international activities. Creve's development activities focus on producing virtual and digital services for a multiprofessional network. The aim is to develop services that are location-independent and also partly time-independent. Creve's operations have always been primarily based on sharing expertise. The goal has been to provide opportunities for interaction in which different operators can present their expertise and thus strengthen their operating environments on a wider scale.



Image 1. Entrepreneurs in creative industries. Photographer: Emilia Reponen.

The challenges that Creve's development activities aim to solve on a national level relate, for example, to the equal accessibility of services for businesses. Services aimed at businesses are scattered, which hinders versatile networking. Factors preventing the growth of businesses include a lack of digital competence both in production and distribution, and the inability to identify already acquired competence to the extent that it could be productised. The needs of other industries and the competence of the creative industries often do not meet, and the potential of the creative industries is poorly understood. In addition, creative businesses are often small and lack the capacity to invest in growing their export skills (Ministry of Education and Culture 2017).

We have sought to eliminate the bottlenecks hindering growth in the creative industries by researching new opportunities; we have created virtual services and developed concepts for interaction, thus creating a solid basis for growth. Operational environments change quickly due to digitalisation, and new tools are required. A need also exists for new perspectives and brave thinking to identify existing potential and make full use of it. The following are some examples of Creve's services and development work.

Service structure of creative industries and virtual group advising

One of the most central development targets that Creve has been working with recently is setting up business advising services for creative businesses. Business advising is traditionally conducted face-to-face. The accessibility and versatility of this type of service directly depend on the resources and expertise of the business advisors. The focus of Creve's development work is on creating a nationally operating service structure for the creative industries that extensively cooperates with partners in business and higher education. The most viable solutions are often surprisingly simple. Creve has piloted virtual group advising events for entrepreneurs in the creative industries. The virtual group advising was developed to make use of existing video conferencing software. The service was built to be a weekly discussion forum with changing topics that participants can join remotely with a mobile device or a computer on their own, or with a larger local group, for example. The aim is to create an interactive event where information and experiences can be shared via active participation.

The virtual advising services are based on sharing information and expertise, as well as peer learning and support with a multiprofessional approach. The advising has been transformed from the traditional advisor-led activity into a participatory event and the participants' own active engagement is key to their acquiring and internalising knowledge. The basic priority of the virtual advising is to bring aspects to the user experience that cannot be achieved in face-to-face interaction. User feedback on the virtual group advising piloted by Creve provided positive indications of the benefits of a virtual service. Currently, the possibilities of using altered reality in coaching have been at the centre of international interest. Creve's objective is to be on the frontlines in this matter, researching and piloting new solutions.

To make participation easier and improve the accessibility of services, Creve has created a mobile application for the use of creative businesses and advisors in the creative industry. The application enables its users to enter Creve's virtual platform, which is always open and offers a venue where you can interact with other entrepreneurs, experts and advisors.

Competence development

One important focus area of Creve's operations is the systematic development of competence through different courses, additional training and study modules. The primary goal in the training and coaching is to add specialised expertise in relation to the challenges of the creative industries and entrepreneurship. The target group comprises entrepreneurs in the creative industries and those planning to become creative industry entrepreneurs, as well as business advisors and business coaches. For example, the Creativity and Business online study module has had hundreds of participants. This module, focusing on creativity and business operations, also includes a digital workbook, which is available in English.

The strategic design study programme, 'Osaamiskiihdyttämö – Luovaa Boostia Bisnekseen' (competence accelerator – creative boost to business), provides a novel platform for co-learning and problem solving. In the competence accelerator, the selected case company's operational model is developed in multiprofessional teams. Sharing competence, creating networks, increasing understanding and learning through practice are at the core of the programme. During the programme, the teams create a concrete development and financing plan for the implementation of strategic design in the case company.

Hub events

Although most of Creve's services are in a virtual format, some of the development work is conducted at live hub events organised in several locations in Finland. The aim of the hub events is to create situations in which a variety of fields of expertise collide. The hub events collect information to support Creve's activities, and they are used to test the services and tools under development. Of Creve's hub events, the Creve Camp is particularly noteworthy. It is a 24-hour survival camp concept for entrepreneurs and operators in the creative industries. The event - soon to become international - brings together several dozen entrepreneurs and other operators in the creative industries on an island; here, the participants work together to solve problems related to business operations, personal competence and entrepreneurship.

Creve's service selection includes plenty of other services in addition to the ones presented here. The threshold for participating in Creve's services is low. More information about Creve's versatile operations can be found at www.creve.fi.



Image 2. Hubs. Creve's hub and other events are organised as virtual and live events, as well as combinations of them. Photographer: Henry Paananen.

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Get active with ToiMeen!

Minna Hult

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Humak implemented the ‘ToiMeen! – Activity-based methods as a tool in subject teachers’ everyday life’ project between 2015 and 2018. The project was funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The aim of the project was to provide subject teachers with tools and new methods for activity-based learning (ABL), and to encourage teachers to try new and more active learning environments outside the classroom.

The project reached more than 1,400 Finnish- and Swedish-speaking teachers in more than 50 comprehensive schools around Finland. The project included training workshops that focused on identifying, sharing and developing competence related to activity-based pedagogy with a variety of activity-based working methods and practices.

Inspiration through workshops

The ToiMeen! project began with the development of an interview template that was used in initial interviews held at seven schools. The interviews were used to collect information about the schools’ existing best practices and gain an overall understanding of the use of activity-based teaching in classes 7–9 of Finnish comprehensive schools. The interviews were conducted in Finnish-, Swedish and English-speaking schools.

After the initial interviews and based on their findings, two training workshops (workshops 1 and 2) were developed and offered to schools around Finland. The aim of workshop 1 was to help the participants recognise the benefits of activity-based teaching from the perspectives of increased physical activity, improved learning results and inspiring working methods. In addition, the intention was to spark enthusiasm among the subject teachers to try activity-based methods that were new to them.



Image 1. Teaching can often be moved outside, with no extra planning needed. Drawing: Jarmo Röksä.

At the end of workshop 1, a plan was drafted for how the teachers would commit to trying the methods introduced within the following six months. After this, the second workshop was held. A starter kit was developed for organising workshop 1, which also enabled schools to hold the workshop independently. Workshop 2 was more practice-focused: new activity-based methods were tried, classes were planned with the school's teachers, and the outlines were drafted for a strategy for a larger scale implementation of activity-based teaching in the school.

Humak lecturers as ABL experts

The project was carried out by Humak lecturers, who studied the ABL framework by reading research articles and other literature on the subject, and by participating in training. The teaching staff at Humak have extensive competence in applying activity-based methods to teaching in a higher education institution. This is based on the coaching pedagogy Humak has developed for its own use, which includes activity-based and participatory methods. The project and its activities were actively promoted, and the project was represented in a variety of events, like the Finnish Schools on the Move seminars.

During the project, a publication was produced that aimed at assisting teachers and schools in adopting activity-based teaching in their operations. The training material included activity-based exercises and assignments, and practical methods for applying activity-based teaching and guidance in everyday teaching. Published in Finnish and

Swedish, the training material can be used independently to support one's own work or with the entire teaching staff as part of a school's planning and training events and meetings.

Several articles were also published during the project in both professional and popular magazines about the training provided by the project and the utilisation of activity-based methods in teaching. A project website was also set up, where we blogged the project's activities and results.

Stakeholder cooperation

Stakeholders were represented in the project's steering group. The steering group comprised of a representative from Finnish National Agency of Education, two representatives from Finnish-speaking schools, one from a Swedish-speaking school and a representative of the LIKES Research Centre for Physical Activity and Health. Steering group meetings were held regularly throughout the project's lifecycle. The Finnish Youth Centres Association was also engaged in the project.

Feedback collected on the project

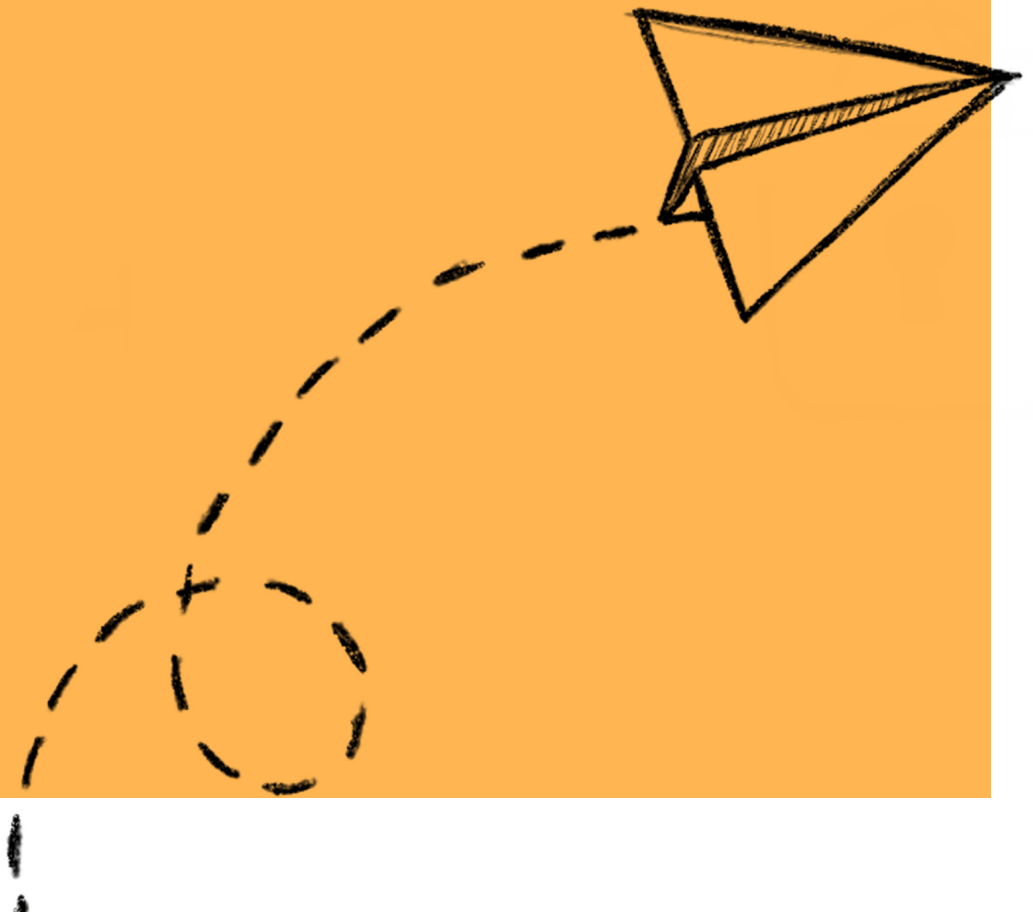
Humak students had the opportunity to work on the ToiMeen! project. It was, in fact, a student of Community Pedagogy who implemented the collection of feedback for the project, collecting feedback about the workshops via an electronic survey and analysing it in her final thesis.

Feedback showed that teachers who took part in the project were generally satisfied with the workshops. The teachers' experiences of the objectives and themes of the workshops were very positive. In addition, teachers felt that the workshop trainers were very successful in their task, i.e. they felt that the training provided was inspirational and participatory. The teachers reported that their skills and knowledge regarding activity-based teaching had increased in the workshops, and they felt they had been provided with useful ideas, plans and material they could apply in their work.

Based on the feedback collected for the final thesis and the verbal feedback provided during the workshops, we established that the workshops were seen as generally useful.

Future

perspectives



Humak's vision

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The new 2030 strategy defines the future goals of Humak university of applied sciences. The implementation of the strategy is supported by multi-annual development programmes. This article describes Humak's vision for the future in light of the new strategy.

Humak 2030

Changes in society affect the operations of universities of applied sciences. Higher education institutions must take responsibility for the generation and development of human capital required in future working life. They must pay attention to current mega-trends such as climate change, sustainability, digitalisation, globalisation and societal polarisation. Humak's strategy is based on these phenomena.

The core of Humak's new strategy is competence development. Humak generates new knowledge and skills to strengthen the civil society that lies between the public and private sectors. This means that Humak's task, as a service provider, is to develop competences related to the important fields that are in line with its profile. According to its vision for the future, Humak will be a significant international player in its focus areas: community education, cultural management, and interpreting and linguistic accessibility. The key competences structure knowledge and skills in each of the four focus areas. Community development includes the key competences of youth work, NGO work, adventure and outdoor education, and workplace development. The key competences of cultural management are production and project competence, and entrepreneurship and the creative economy. Interpreting and linguistic accessibility includes the key competences of sign language interpreting and multimodal communication and AAC interpreting and instruction.

Communities and community competence have gained new importance as traditional communities have changed, and digitalisation has enabled new kinds of communities. Community development competence is also needed to support the changes in workplace communities and to ensure their capacity to operate. NGO and youth work and their needs are changing when social structures and traditional NGO operating methods are transformed. Cultural production and management competence, and creative entrepreneurship skills may create new opportunities and develop expertise in cultural accessibility and wellbeing. The needs of interpreting service users have also changed significantly due to development in technology and the establishment of a new national service system that regulates the labour market. At the same time, there is a growing need for new communication skills as the population ages.



Figure 1. The new strategy.

Humak’s key strategic choices are 1) profiled expertise, 2) value-based operations, 3) national structure and expanding markets, and 4) a network operating model. Through profiling our competence, we can distinguish ourselves from others. Our focus areas and the related key competences create a unique profile for our university of applied sciences. The second choice is value-based operations. Humak’s background is in NGO work and civic activities, and its goal is to build a better world. Humak generates competence that enables the development of a more equal society, and trains experts who have courage to speak out for people, humanity and human rights. It thus contributes to the building of wellbeing and a sustainable world for today’s and future generations. The third strategic choice relates to the extent of Humak’s operating environment. Humak’s playing field comprises Finland as a whole and, to an increasing extent, environments beyond the national borders. The new strategy takes into account sector-specific changes

in both the national and the international operating environment. In this respect, Humak's new strategy is a continuation to the strategy of 2017–2020. The fourth choice, a network operating model, means collaboration with various partners. This is a necessary condition for a small higher education institution with a broad operating environment. Humak seeks partners with which it can collaborate in building new competence to serve their customers better and make an impact on society. At the same time, Humak seeks service networks to support its operations, so that it can focus on its main task as well as possible.

Development programmes

The implementation of the new strategy will be supported through updated development programmes to develop RDI activities, internationality, the personnel's wellbeing and an operating model that meets future requirements. In education, the focus will be on building student-based learning paths and developing individual guidance. The curricula will be reformed between 2021 and 2023. A new operating model will be created for research and development activities. Humak also aims to join competence communities that match and support its core expertise. With regard to internationality, Humak supports education- and employment-based migration. It will increase its provision study possibilities in English, which will also increase opportunities for more active international interaction. In addition, Humak aims for closer collaboration in international networks of education and RDI collaboration. This will develop the expertise of both Humak and its partner organisations. Fourth, Humak will invest in the wellbeing of its personnel. A healthy and competent personnel is the university of applied sciences' most important resource which need to be secured. Fifth, Humak will develop a university of applied sciences operating model which meets future needs. In relation to this, it will assess the structure and locations of its campuses and services. If necessary, the strategic focus areas and choices may be updated during the strategy period to respond to changes in the operating environment and markets.

In future years, Humak is committed to implementing the joint strategic development programmes of Finnish higher education institutions. By training experts who know how to promote sustainability in working life and society, Humak participates in the implementation of sustainability objectives jointly agreed on by universities of applied sciences. The principles of sustainability and responsibility cut across all Humak's degree programmes. Humak also contributes to the promotion of accessible higher education, regardless of people's family background, gender, language, ethnic background, nationality, disabilities, place of residence or other such factors (Arene 2020). Moreover, Humak participates in the implementation of the national digivision (digivisio). The Digivisio 2030 project is a joint project between all Finnish higher education institutions that aims to make national learning data reserves accessible to individuals and society. The aim of the project is that by 2030, Finland will have an open and recognised learning ecosystem that broadly benefits research and innovation, as well as working life. (digivisio2030.fi.)

The future

In future years, Humak will closely follow societal developments to be able to meet and respond to changing competence requirements. This principle will play an important role in the development of lifelong learning in particular. The aim is to serve students' needs at different stages of their lives. Humak aims to develop its education and trainings, and services in all its key competences to meet future competence requirements in both national and international operating environments.

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