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Huom! Tämä on rinnakkaistallenne.

To cite this Article / Käytä viittauksessa alkuperäistä lähdettä:

Popova, K. & Helsky, U. (2022) Talent Boost programme integrates international students – Study and Stay. TAMK International. 6.9.2022.

URL: <https://blogs.tuni.fi/tamk-international/project/talent-boost-programme-integrates-international-students-study-and-stay/>

Talent Boost programme integrates international students – Study and Stay

6.9.2022



On a trip to Niihama in May 2022

TAMK participates in the national Talent Boost programme, which aims at making Finland an internationally attractive place to work, study, research and pursue private entrepreneurship. TAMK's Talent Boost programme is based on the agreement between the Ministry of Education and Culture and Tampere University of Applied Sciences for 2021-2024. The programme consists of four interrelated parts: attraction of international students to Tampere Region, support of international students' studies and integration, strengthening of multilingualism and multiculturalism in the higher education institution as well as promotion of international students' employment.

The Talent Boost work started at full throttle under the management of Project Manager **Päivi Vartiainen** in autumn 2021. Plenty of good results were already achieved during the first year. The operation was active for example in the Study and Stay subprogramme, which develops different forms of support to promote international students' academic progress and integration into Finland.

Language club and friend programme proved to be popular

The most visible Study and Stay activities were the language club on Wednesdays and the re-instated friend programme. In the language club, international students met other fellow students, both foreigners and native Finns. Club visitors discussed for example mental

health issues, voluntary work, networking and job search in Finland. Cooperation was made with the City of Tampere and the third sector. The language club convened at Parvi, but Study and Stay coordinators **Ursula Helsky** and **Laura Sairanen** also organised forest trips, art excursions and football and mölkky tournaments in the parks. These meetings enabled students to learn Finnish language and culture together in a safe but inspiring and relaxed environment. Lack of Finnish language skills did not stop the participants – English or gesture language was used when needed.

The Friend Programme was also revived. A total of 38 international students were brought together with a Finnish person or family. The activity had a promising start. It was a pleasure to notice that people genuinely want to help and support foreign students. The Friend Programme is often the only or first contact to Finnish family life.



In the photo, Kenyan students with Ursula Helsky.

Study and Stay Adventure and staff training in autumn

The Study and Stay activities will continue in the autumn once we return to the campuses. We at TAMK are planning a Study and Stay Adventure based on the Amazing Race TV series to familiarise international students with TAMK's most important services. When heading from one service to another, students will meet one another and staff members and learn to know TAMK as a whole.

In the autumn, Tampere Universities will introduce staff training on the subject of international and multicultural teaching. The training suits both teaching staff and other staff. Registration is open in intranet (the link can only be opened in TAMK intranet).

This gives us great basis to develop TAMK's international and multicultural work further.

Authors: Kirsi Popova, Senior Adviser in Learning and Wellbeing Services and Ursula Helsky, Project Manager in Education Development Services

The authors have years of experience in international and multicultural working life, living abroad, two-culture families and studying in a foreign language.