

# **KNOWLEDGE FOR THE WORLD - INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY**

Part of the Aalborg University Strategy 2016 - 2021



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK



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# Preface

Aalborg University (AAU) regards internationalisation as an essential means to reach its full potential and thus achieve the targets set out in the AAU Strategy Knowledge for the World 2016-2021.

## VISION

AAU is committed to contributing to solving the grand challenges faced by society. This is done through excellent problem- and solution-oriented learning environments and cutting-edge mono- and cross-disciplinary research environments operating across traditional boundaries. Knowledge is often created in collaboration with private companies and public authorities and the problem based learning pedagogical model of the university is internationally acknowledged as an advanced and efficient learning model.

By striving for excellence and by collaborating with the strongest international universities and environments AAU will continue its high quality scientific activities to address global societal challenges. Through the focus on internationalisation, we will improve our ranking positions as well as increase our agility in terms of the strategic decisions on new research endeavours. Furthermore, AAU will continue its effort to bring cutting-edge knowledge to local communities and industry.

The internationalisation strategy supports AAU's vision 2021 and strengthens our international position as a world-leading PBL university that is:

- internationally recognised for excellence in research with a cross-disciplinary and problem- and solution-oriented perspective

- internationally acclaimed for the documented results of our problem- and project-based learning method as we educate students for the society of the future
- an attractive partner for private companies and public authorities, regionally, nationally and internationally

As we collaborate with a number of internationally recognised partners, AAU strengthens its international capabilities and provides AAU staff and students with the most attractive international experiences and learning environments, at home and abroad. The internationalisation of PBL as a method of teaching will ensure that AAU graduates continue to meet the challenges of the labour market – in Denmark and internationally.

## **ACTIONS**

In order to ensure the sustainability of the internationalisation strategy the actions launched will be embedded in the expertise and priorities of departments and scientific environments.

The actions are categorised under three headlines:

1. Research and Knowledge Collaboration
2. Education
3. AAU Internationalisation @ home

The first actions launched as part of this strategy will be evaluated in mid-2020. The evaluation will serve as an indicator of which activities will be further developed in future AAU strategies.

The actions will be subject to strategic prioritisation by the Executive Management.

### **The Executive Management**

*Aalborg University*

October 2018

# Research and Knowledge Collaboration

AAU's world-class research environments are already making their mark outside Denmark and AAU is internationally acclaimed for its problem- and solution-oriented research.

With the present internationalisation strategy AAU seeks to strengthen and expand the AAU problem-based approach into the international arena and thereby increase AAU researchers' opportunities of delivering outstanding research and provide border-crossing solutions to local, national and international societal challenges.

AAU is committed to strengthening the international dimension in AAU research environments as well as enabling AAU researchers to expand and strengthen international networks. This will increase the impact of AAU research, develop new positions of strength and enable existing research areas to deliver excellent results.

Through collaboration with preferred international partners, AAU will continue its effort to offer excellent research results and bring cutting-edge knowledge to local communities and industry.

## **13.1 AAU COOPERATES WITH PREFERRED INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS**

**Through international research partnerships with a limited number of preferred partners, AAU strengthens its position as a university that offers excellent research results and research infrastructure.**

Collaboration with the best international minds will serve as an essential tool to break new ground, make new discoveries and increase AAU's visibility and impact internationally.

International partnerships will be formed with leading international universities that share the AAU research

approach. The focus of the collaboration shall be on research, education and knowledge collaboration.

As a natural part of selecting which universities to cooperate with AAU will evaluate and determine which international research networks to participate in.

### **13.2 AAU IS PART OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH EXCELLENCE**

**AAU increases its participation in excellent European research and innovation cooperation with a specific focus on AAU-coordinated EU projects and prestigious research grants (ERC).**

Researchers will be encouraged and supported to become coordinators of international research projects and AAU will harvest the full benefits of European funding opportunities in order to increase international impact and strengthen career development and mobility.

AAU will play a proactive role in the European research and innovation area in order to further define its role and increase the impact of the university in the European, national and regional ecosystems.

### **13.3 AAU FOCUSES ON INTER- NATIONAL MOBILITY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

**AAU facilitates international mobility and encourages researchers to go abroad as a means to support research career development.**

AAU will motivate and enable AAU researchers' outgoing mobility in order to strengthen individual career development as well as researcher-to-researcher networks with leading international research environments.

As a means to support international mobility and career development, international experience and networking will be assessed positively when recruiting permanent staff. Incentives like tenure tracks and sabbaticals shall be implemented as means to support mobility and all PhD study plans shall include a plan for internationalisation.

AAU will recruit excellent international researchers to bring new ideas and networks to the university and develop new positions of strength within existing research areas.

#### 13.4

### **AAU IS AN ACTIVE INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE COLLABORATOR**

**AAU strengthens systematic collaboration with international industry and organisations to bring welfare and cutting-edge knowledge to communities and industry as well as deliver the global innovators of tomorrow.**

AAU will strengthen its international commitment to support knowledge translation and impact. Today, successful entrepreneurs emanate directly from AAU. The ambition is to inspire and motivate more students and staff to make use of their problem based learning competences to initiate innovative, value-creating projects in a flexible international environment.

AAU has defined a range of research strongholds and AAU is actively involved in cluster organisations that support these. AAU will strengthen cluster collaboration internationally, as this creates opportunities for interacting with international companies based on known innovation mechanisms, thereby facilitating international business opportunities locally, nationally and internationally.





# Education

The AAU student body has a strong international profile and is educated for the society of the future. International experience, intercultural understanding and the ability to analyse and solve complex problems are in-demand competences in a global world. Students graduating from AAU will be ready to contribute to solving the grand challenges faced by society today and they are able to work in new and collaborative ways in increasingly connected and digital environments.

## **13.5 AAU EDUCATES STUDENTS WITH STRONG INTERNA- TIONAL PROFILES**

**AAU candidates have a strong international profile and are attractive and ready for the regional, national and international job markets.**

AAU will prepare its students to thrive in and contribute to an interconnected world by offering an attractive portfolio of degree programmes with a visible international dimension and by offering attractive internationally oriented learning environments.

Based on the PBL learning model, AAU will develop a variety of models through which all students get a truly international learning experience. A portfolio of attractive degree programmes with a strong and visible international dimension will be developed.

Utilizing our international position as a world-leading PBL university AAU will enter into preferred partnerships with leading universities that share our educational values and vision. With these partners, AAU will establish close educational alliances, including but not limited to, double and joint degrees, student exchange and development of new ways of using PBL to underpin the internationalisation of study programmes.

**13.6  
AAU ENCOURAGES  
STUDENT MOBILITY**

**Mobility for AAU students is easy, attractive, meriting and appreciated. AAU graduates are familiar with international collaboration through learning in an international environment inside or outside AAU.**

AAU will promote mobility and encourage students to go abroad to gain experience by study exchange, internships and international collaboration.

AAU is committed to internationalisation-at-home and further developing the global and intercultural competencies of its students. Through its reputation as a top university, AAU will recruit a limited number of highly qualified full degree international students to stimulate internationalisation-at-home and provide attractive graduates for the national, regional and international job market.

# AAU internationalisation @ home

AAU's campuses are strong research and learning environments that provide excellent degree programmes and world-class research to meet the needs of the world around us. In order to maintain this position Aalborg University must be an attractive university with attractive campuses for international partners, researchers and students.

## **13.7 AAU HAS INTERNATIONAL- LY ORIENTED CAMPUSES**

**AAU campuses are attractive research and learning communities for national as well as international staff and students.**

AAU is open to the world and invites international partners to its campuses for long and short visits and stays. AAU will ensure and make visible that campuses are attractive research and learning communities for national as well as international staff and students.

In order to accommodate ambitions for internationalisation and AAU will ensure that non-Danish students and staff are able to operate and perform on campus on equal terms with native speakers.

## **13.8 AAU HAS A PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNA- TIONAL STAFF AND STU- DENTS**

**AAU provides professional guidance and support for international students and staff, PhD students, guest researchers as well as accompanying families.**

International collaboration comes in many shapes and forms, and the support structures at AAU will be ready to cater for a plethora of activities such as research symposiums, summer schools, conferences and research visits.

AAUs International Staff Unit and International Office are drivers of support structures as they provide professional guidance and support for international students and staff, departments and study boards. To strengthen the professional support structure for the most talented international students as well as international staff and spouses, collaboration with local and national stakeholders and authorities will be further developed.



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