



# Internationalization Strategy:

## ***'Engaging and Influencing the World'***

### Introduction

This strategy document is INN University's overarching, guiding document intended to set the framework, direction, and level of ambition for INN University's ongoing internationalization efforts. INN University already has significant international collaborations and aims to further strengthen them. Increased internationalization is a critical tool to position INN University by enhancing the institution's quality, relevance, and recognition in education, research, and artistic research work – including its ambition to attain university status. This strategy spans five years until 2024.

INN University offers education, research, and developmental work in a wide range of professional education, disciplinary studies, and artistic education. INN University operates in multiple locations within the region, providing a broad outreach and proximity to various stakeholders. These elements make INN University an attractive partner for international educational and research institutions. For instance, INN University has been awarded the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Chair in education for sustainable lifestyles, being the first educational institution in Norway to do so. It leads The International Research School in Applied Ecology (IRSEA) and has significant North-South cooperation, including membership in the Southern African – Nordic Centre (SANORD). INN University's academic communities are already engaged in various international collaborative projects supported by entities like the Norwegian Research Council, the EU, and other funding sources. The international work at INN University can range from informal collaboration among individual researchers to more formalized agreements. With this strategy, INN University aims to further strengthen and advance international efforts, especially focusing on strategic institutional-level partnerships.

Knowledge and expertise are increasingly exchanged across borders, and the sector is characterized by growing competition among educational and research institutions and various other stakeholders. INN University aims to be at the forefront and meet this development with high ambitions. The goal is for INN University to contribute more significantly to international academic development and addressing societal challenges locally, nationally, and internationally. Therefore, "Engaging and Influencing the World" stands as the motto for the internationalization strategy.

The prerequisite for succeeding in heightened international competition is that our teaching and research maintain high quality and that academic communities appear as attractive collaborative partners. Thus, the key to increased international academic impact lies in an even stronger focus on academic quality, effective leadership, a conducive working and learning environment, and further development of research, teaching, dissemination, and innovation closely interconnected with each other.

The intensification of international collaboration shall be particularly directed towards long-term collaborative relationships that drive quality, stimulate academic development, and enhance the interaction between research, education, and innovation. Internationalization should be an integrated part of all aspects of INN University's operations. International cooperation should be actively used to enhance the quality of its own education and research activities, and extensive student and staff mobility should be facilitated. For this internationalization strategy to have an impact and generate further progress and increased targeted activity, it must be relevant to each employee and student.

The goals INN University has set cannot be achieved without the strategy effecting changes in the daily conduct of research and teaching. Therefore, this document contains specific objectives. Some are concrete actions, while others are goals for cultural change. As part of the follow-up to the strategic plan, an action plan and a set of indicators will be linked to the strategy to specify the level of ambition and guide further work. Additionally, it is expected that faculties and other units incorporate this overarching strategy into their own strategies and action plans, highlighting internationalization in research, teaching, and personnel policies.

For INN University to achieve the goal of maintaining high international academic quality, funding from contributions and assignments needs to be strengthened. Revenues from the Norwegian Research Council and the EU are particularly crucial. Internationalization is a significant tool to enhance INN University's success in securing external funds and bolstering academic quality.

## Development Goals for Internationalization

The internationalization efforts at INN University are set to intensify across several axes: Long-term strategic institutional collaboration, active participation in relevant international organizations, student and staff mobility, educational collaboration, research collaboration, and labour market and societal development. We have chosen to divide these areas into four development goals, each with associated objectives and measures. The development goals are strategic collaboration, research, education, and international competence.

### 1. Strategic Collaboration

*INN University aims to have a portfolio of agreements that contribute to strategic, long-term, and active international collaboration.*

Strong partnerships, alliances, and networks are increasingly crucial resources for academic cooperation, competitive advantage in recruitment and funding, and strategic influence. Strategic and stable partnerships and robust, international networks will strengthen INN University's participation in international collaborative projects, proving vital in securing funding for research and educational partnerships while further enhancing the quality of our research and education. During this period, INN University aims to become a member of a strategic university alliance with prominent research universities.

Aligned with the Government's clear goal to increase the internationalization of Norwegian higher education and research, INN University's engagement and involvement in the European and Nordic research and educational spheres are growing. There will be systematic efforts during this period to establish and develop bilateral partnerships with selected Nordic, European, and to a lesser extent, institutions outside Europe. Alongside new ventures, systematic work will also be undertaken to further develop existing strategic partnerships. Collaboration within the European education,

research, and innovation domain is a top priority for INN University. The Nordic region presents opportunities for joint initiatives, particularly towards the EU, which can and should be better utilized than before. Outside Europe, cooperation will focus on selected countries with strong potential for increased collaboration, also noting the prioritized collaboration countries in the Government's Panorama Strategy (2016-2020) at this point.

From a regional perspective, INN University plays a significant role as a knowledge entity, and we aim to further strengthen our position in this regard by actively leveraging our international orientation, including forming international knowledge alliances with regional actors.

**Goals:**

- Increase international engagement and develop a portfolio of agreements with selected, reputable institutions contributing to strategic, long-term, and active international collaboration to enhance the relevance and quality of our research and education.
- Through collaboration with strategic partners, increase INN University's participation in EU programs and other international programs/tools for research, innovation, and education.
- Attain membership in an international strategic university alliance.
- Further strengthen INN University's role as a regional knowledge actor by actively utilizing the institution's international orientation.

**Actions:**

- Establish and enhance strategic partnerships with a limited number of selected, reputable educational institutions in the Nordic region, Europe, and globally. Through active participation in such selective partnerships and collaborative projects, contribute to enhancing the quality of our teaching and research.
- Prioritize the development of partnerships with Nordic institutions and actively leverage joint Nordic initiatives, particularly concerning the EU.
- Seek membership in international strategic university alliances by the end of the period.
- Actively work on forming international knowledge alliances with relevant regional actors.

## 2. Research

INN University aims to actively engage in the international forefront of research. A fundamental part of this strategy is facilitating and supporting researchers' international collaborations. This involves strengthening strategic, long-term collaborations with selected international institutions and further enhancing and professionalizing internal support functions. International collaboration is intended to enhance the quality of our research. Emphasis is placed on strategic and stable partnerships and robust, international networks. Individual researchers' professional networks often serve as the foundation for specific collaborations.

International research collaboration is significantly increasing, and the international research landscape is rapidly evolving. Research increasingly occurs through cross-border cooperation, with a growing portion of research resources allocated in international competitive arenas. The European Union's ambitions and visions for the development of the European Research Area (ERA), promoting free movement of researchers, knowledge, and ideas across borders, imply a substantial expansion of European collaboration. European programs facilitate collaboration with leading academic communities in Europe and globally, alongside significant research funding. Outside Europe, the United States maintains its position as the world's leading research nation, while new countries and regions have gained increasing significance and influence, particularly China and India.

High-quality research and effective frameworks and systems for research are fundamental prerequisites for success, both domestically and internationally. Internationalizing research embodies elements of both collaboration and competition, regarding top researchers and international research funding. Both competition and collaboration drive quality, and quality, in turn, results in increased international attention and impact. Participation in international collaboration increases both the quality and capacity of research, benefiting from the efforts of collaborative partners.

Faculties are expected to promote internationalization by incorporating goals and initiatives into their own plans.

**Goals:**

- Strengthen research collaboration with internationally recognized institutions and research networks, especially with selected strategic partners, to enhance the quality of our research.
- Strengthen research funding from international funding sources through international research collaboration.
- Further develop and future-proof research education, making it internationally attractive, and integrating candidates early into internationally active research environments.

**Actions:**

- Facilitate increased participation in international research collaboration and international project applications, especially concerning the EU, including active collaboration with strategic partners, and enhancing research administrative professionalism and support functions overall.
- Explore internal incentive and support systems to mobilize research communities for participation in international research collaboration, especially EU programs.
- Actively utilize national and international funding sources to support international researcher mobility.
- Facilitate opportunities for Ph.D. candidates to spend time at strategically selected partners. Establish an international mobility plan for Ph.D. candidates upon admission to the doctoral program. Also, facilitate active participation of Ph.D. candidates in initiatives such as the Maria Skłodowska-Curie Actions and international research schools.
- Strengthen the frontline service for reception and information for foreign Ph.D. candidates and researchers.

### 3. Internationally Oriented Education Programs

INN University's educational programs should be tailored to an international job market and reflect global challenges. Internationalizing education is crucial for increased quality. Globally oriented programs ensure diversity and provide increased quality, international experience, and insights into global issues. All of INN University's programs should place knowledge, experience, and values within an international context, fostering an international learning environment across all faculties and campuses.

The faculties are expected to promote internationalization by incorporating goals and initiatives into their individual plans. During this period, the faculties are expected to further develop the international profile of educational programs. This includes facilitating increased student mobility and ensuring the proper integration of international students into the learning environment. There's also a need for a more targeted recruitment of international students, especially for full-degree programs at the master's level. Faculties are also expected to identify areas of study and partnership collaborations best suited for establishing joint programs/degrees at the master's level.

**Goals:**

- All study programs should acquire an international profile, increasing collaboration with recognized foreign institutions.
- Strengthen student exchange programs, particularly increasing the percentage of degree-seeking students spending at least one semester abroad. Strive for a reasonable balance between incoming and outgoing students.
- Aim to increase the recruitment of international degree-seeking students, especially at the master's level, where appropriate.
- Establish administrative services that support the international profile of study programs.

**Actions:**

- Faculties should conduct an analysis of current study programs based on the level of ambition for international profiling at the bachelor's and master's levels in the short and long term. This includes assessing the establishment of joint programs/degrees at the master's level and implementing relevant measures to meet these ambitions.
- All study programs should incorporate English-language syllabi and address issues reflecting global challenges in their respective fields. English-language courses/programs should be offered in all fields of study.
- All study programs should facilitate student mobility to recognized foreign institutions, preferably through academically rooted partnership agreements for mutual student and staff exchanges.
- Review and revise the portfolio of exchange programs for students, intensify efforts to establish partnerships and favourable exchange agreements with leading institutions, particularly concentrating collaboration with strategic partners and increasing the number of agreements based on research collaborations.
- Actively work to increase the recruitment of international degree-seeking students, especially at the master's level, where appropriate.
- Systematically utilize Professor II positions and other faculty exchanges with reputable foreign institutions to enhance academic quality and international relevance in education.

#### 4. International Competence

INN University aims to create an international workplace and study environment. Employees with strong international skills and experience are essential for enhancing INN University's educational and research activities. This will be achieved through international competence development, staff mobility, and international recruitment efforts. INN University seeks to establish itself as an attractive workplace for an increasing number of international staff, supporting the institution in international academic collaborations and, consequently, in securing international funding. Staff mobility should align with international research and educational collaboration. Strengthening internationalization in education, research, and innovation at INN University is challenging without the institution's staff gaining experience from reputable environments outside Norway.

**Goals:**

- INN University will have a personnel and recruitment policy that emphasizes international skills and experience, striving for increased international recruitment when beneficial for ensuring high quality and relevance for INN University, both for academic and administrative staff.

- INN University's personnel policy will cater to all employee groups and offer excellent opportunities for professional and academic development, including international mobility, competence, and growth.

**Actions:**

- Emphasize relevant international skills and experience in permanent job appointments.
- Develop an internationalization plan for both academic and administrative staff, establishing robust offerings for relevant skill development.
- Facilitate regular stays abroad for INN University's permanent staff, both academic and administrative.
- Implement an active policy and effective routines for recruiting foreign administrative and academic staff in permanent positions, adjunct positions, guest researcher, and lecturer roles, when appropriate. INN University aims to achieve the European Commission's "HR Excellence in Research" certification by 2019, which will be advantageous in attracting international talent to the college through EU's recruitment tool, Euraxess. All units at INN University should devise plans for international recruitment and relevant methods for recruiting and supporting foreign staff, including language training in Norwegian.
- Improve support for foreign staff through internal communication in English and campus facilities tailored for English speakers.