

Internationalisation Strategy of Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg

(Last modified: 14 December 2016)

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I The Benefits of Internationalisation

Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg (JMU) has a long history of delivering outstanding research and teaching quality across a wide range of subjects and a strong commitment to excellence. It takes an interdisciplinary approach to research, and its lecturers always bring the latest research findings into their classrooms.

In line with its mission statement, the University works towards building further and stronger research and teaching partnerships with renowned universities across the globe. These partnerships are mutually beneficial. One of their main aims is to give all students the opportunity to have an international mobility experience.

We acknowledge the central part international exchange plays in developing an understanding of different cultures, nationalities, and languages. This is a prerequisite for building the international culture we need in order to be able to deliver excellence in research and teaching, now and in the future. Internationalism - fostered by the mobility and integration into international networks of top researchers - and research success go hand in hand as do the internationalisation of learning and teaching and the mobility of academically excellent students.

It is important that we provide an attractive research and learning environment, promote the integration of international students, researchers, and other members of staff into the campus community, and build a welcoming campus environment.

The internationalisation of the University encourages and requires us to constantly enhance our practices and approaches in research, teaching, and administration, and we must work together across the entire University to achieve our international objectives.

II Our International Objectives

Promoting the internationalisation of our University, we aim to:

- **Maintain and enhance our reputation for research and teaching excellence**

To maintain our competitiveness and our ability to attract leading international researchers and lecturers as well as talented and motivated students from across the globe, we must maintain and enhance our international reputation for excellence and must develop and foster international awareness of what we do and what we offer. To be able to do so, we must, in turn, attract leading international researchers to work with us. Excellence and internationalism go hand in hand.

- **Unlock new opportunities - for the University and for the local community**

Studying and working in an internationalised environment, we have the opportunity to broaden our minds, enhance our language and intercultural skills, and develop new ideas, technologies, and methods. Internationalisation thus has a positive impact on all aspects of the University's activity.

An internationally engaged and respected University, we can help unlock new opportunities for the City of Würzburg and surrounding communities in the Lower Franconia area. Businesses, too, must think and act internationally to maintain their competitiveness. Having a well-trained workforce with both job-specific and language/intercultural skills is essential for the success of the internationalisation efforts of businesses.

III Planning and Monitoring the Quality of the Processes for the Internationalisation of JMU

We consider the internationalisation of JMU an on-going process that requires us to work together across the entire University.

A quality management system that allows us to monitor the progress we have made towards achieving our objectives and identify what actions are needed helps us advance our internationalisation agenda. Responsibility for this lies with the University's Internationalisation Committee, which is chaired by the University's Vice-President for Internationalisation and includes representatives of all groups of University members (Faculties, students, administrative staff), and the University Board. We will:

- use indicators to measure progress towards achieving our international objectives
- define corrective actions
- ensure that our international objectives are in line with the general strategic objectives of the University

IV Key Action Areas

This strategy identifies different key action areas and lists the actions the University will take in each area to promote internationalisation. They have been prioritised according to urgency, effectiveness and efficiency, and availability of resources. Some of the actions are too costly to be implemented in the short term, but they are still important to the success of our internationalisation strategy as a whole. We are guided by our University's ethical values in everything we do.

1 Research

The University of Würzburg delivers outstanding research across a wide range of subjects, as evidenced by different university rankings. Our research centres have earned a reputation for excellent interdisciplinary research covering fields that are relevant for the future. Excellence and internationalism go hand in hand - this is particularly true for research. Distinguished researchers with extensive connections to the international research community help further internationalise our research endeavours. Their visibility encourages early career researchers to join us.

To help our researchers thrive, we have innovative organisational structures in place. The University's Research Advancement Centre helps researchers identify appropriate funding opportunities and assists them in the preparation of project proposals. The Service Centre Research and Technology Transfer (SFT) assists researchers in the identification of EU funding opportunities, the establishment of collaborations with partners from industry and the business community, and the formation of spin-out companies and advises them on all matters involving intellectual property rights. Early career researchers ranging from doctoral candidates through to postdocs and junior research group leaders receive guidance and mentoring from their Faculties and the University's International Graduate Schools. The latter offer structured doctoral training that equips highly-qualified researchers with both discipline-specific and generic skills. Different mentoring programmes provide early career researchers with career development support. Additional support tailored to the individual's particular needs is available from the competent Faculties.

The University's Welcome Centre helps international researchers and lecturers settle into their new jobs and their lives in Würzburg.

The University as a whole benefits from the increasing internationalisation of our research endeavours. Internationally renowned researchers enhance our attractiveness to promising early career researchers who will advance research at the University and will thus help develop and foster international awareness of what we do and what we offer. In addition, international researchers help internationalise teaching and learning at our University and, ultimately, enhance our attractiveness to academically excellent international students by delivering courses in languages other than German. It has been a central tenet of our efforts in this action area to promote the integration of top researchers into international academic networks.

1.1 Objectives

We will seek to achieve the following key objectives:

- i. **to attract and retain excellent international researchers at all career levels**
- ii. **to build further and stronger international research partnerships to strengthen our links with the international research community**

1.2 Actions

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- advertise all academic vacancies globally to reach an international audience of professionals
- develop and strengthen links with outstanding alumni, such as Humboldt Research Award winners, so that they can help build and broaden networks of excellence in research
- acknowledge the fact that interaction with leading international researchers is a sign of quality and, consequently, encourage and support early career researchers in the pursuit of international opportunities
- encourage the international mobility of early career researchers to promote their integration into professional networks and develop and foster international awareness of our research activities
- offer Target of Excellence appointments to attract and retain both leading international researchers and promising early career researchers

Other actions that are important to the success of our internationalisation strategy - although they are too costly to be implemented in the short term or their effects will only be felt in the medium term - include:

- offering a greater number of structured doctoral training programmes to ensure that our doctoral researchers are trained to the highest of standards and to enhance our attractiveness to highly qualified doctoral researchers from across the globe
- offering fellowships and tenure track appointments to enhance our attractiveness to outstanding early career researchers
- launching new international interdisciplinary research centres at Faculty and discipline levels and developing existing ones

2 Teaching and Learning

Bringing the latest research findings into their classrooms and measuring their teaching practice against international standards, our lecturers deliver courses that broaden their students' minds and equip them with skills they will find useful in the workplace. We incorporate international content into our degree programmes, internationalise our curricula, and encourage interactions between domestic and international students - either in Würzburg or at universities abroad - that help them develop an understanding of different cultures, nationalities, and languages. The University participates in exchange programmes with renowned universities across the globe that promote the mobility of both incoming and outgoing students, lecturers, and other members of staff. These programmes not only give participants the opportunity to enhance their intercultural skills, they also support their personal and professional development as well as the development of creative skills by providing opportunities to share ideas and methods and build new networks.

The organisational structures we have in place help our incoming and outgoing students thrive. The Service Centre International Affairs provides a wide range of assistance and advisory services to exchange students. International tutors help incoming students settle into a campus routine and into their lives in Würzburg. A dedicated group of students helps promote the integration of international students into the University's student body. The University's Language Centre provides language courses. The teaching project 'Global Systems and Intercultural Competence' (GSiK) gives both domestic and international students from all Faculties the opportunity to enhance their intercultural skills.

The University of Würzburg strives to steadily grow its international student population. Motivated international students contribute cultural richness to our campus. Lecturers with excellent reputations in their fields and an outward-looking attitude enhance our attractiveness to talented students from across the globe. The University's International Students Office provides assistance and advice to international students. A programme tailored to their needs helps international degree seeking students unlock their full academic potential. Additional support is available from the University's Faculties and Institutes.

2.1 Objectives

We will seek to achieve the following key objectives:

- i. **to attract motivated and academically excellent international students**
- ii. **to promote the participation of students, lecturers, and other members of staff in exchange programmes**

2.2 Actions

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- offer more courses and programmes that are taught in languages other than German to allow academically excellent international students with limited German proficiency to study at the University of Würzburg
- offer more joint certificates and degrees with other institutions in an effort to enhance our attractiveness to international students

- ensure that the level of German language proficiency that is required for entry to a programme matches the linguistic competence required by that programme
- set up intercultural study groups (including online courses and communication platforms) in an effort to enhance the intercultural skills of students and increase international student mobility
- offer more summer and winter school opportunities to attract international students that can help foster international awareness of what we do and what we offer
- increase our marketing efforts (exhibit at higher education fairs; translate website content and tailor it to our target audiences)
- offer increased opportunities to students, lecturers, and other members of staff to enhance their intercultural skills
- offer a wide range of language courses for prospective students from Germany and abroad
- offer increased opportunities to international students to study for teaching degrees

The following actions are solely intended to increase exchange mobility:

- define course contents and recognise course and examination achievements to enhance our attractiveness to international exchange students
- adapt programme structures (mobility windows) to enable students to participate in international mobility programmes
- launch a platform to make available information on the resources that are available to support individuals wishing to participate in international exchange programmes
- encourage alumni resident abroad to participate in our activities to promote student exchange

3 Assistance and Advice (Administration)

The University of Würzburg is a strong and respected institution in the German and European higher education landscape. Our administrative staff is committed to providing an environment in which our students, researchers, and lecturers can thrive. We strive to build a welcoming campus community that provides international students, (visiting) researchers, and other members of staff with the support they need. We already engage with partners from across the University that help us provide a welcoming environment for the international members of our University, and we aim to make our campus even more welcoming. Launched in 2015, the Service Centre International Affairs is the central unit that is responsible for drawing together information about the internationalisation-related activities of the various organisational units of the University.

3.1 Objectives

We will seek to achieve the following key objectives:

- i. **to provide comprehensive information tailored to the needs of our target audiences**
- ii. **to enhance the intercultural skills of staff members**
- iii. **to promote internationalisation across the University**

3.2 Actions

To achieve these objectives, we will:

- draw together information about internationalisation from a variety of sources across the

University, including information about internal collaborations, initiatives, responsibilities, and indicators of success

- assist international students, researchers, and other members of staff in the completion of administrative formalities
- have relevant forms and information sheets translated into English to allow international students and researchers to complete administrative formalities without unnecessary problems
- have the user interface of our campus management system translated into English
- support lecturers and researchers with their international activities, e.g. help them generate external funding
- offer training courses to give all staff members the opportunity to enhance their language and intercultural skills
- promote staff mobility, encourage staff members to participate in exchange programmes with renowned universities across the globe that give them the opportunity to share best practice and gain valuable international experience, and encourage participation in international staff training courses

4 Cross-Cutting Actions

As detailed earlier, we must work together across the entire University to achieve our international objectives. This is why we will also take a range of cross-cutting and strategic actions:

4.1 Building and Strengthening Strategic Partnerships

The University of Würzburg has developed a range of partnerships with institutions across the globe. We now seek to collaborate more closely with selected partners and with institutions in selected regions and take advantage of the synergies resulting from this collaboration. We aim to enhance existing links, establish collaborative research projects, collaborate on joint activities, and engage in joint efforts to support early career researchers. Our main focus is on collaborations with universities with a track record of research excellence whose research agenda overlaps with that of the University of Würzburg and whose expertise complements our own knowledge.

- One of our primary objectives is to conduct an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of existing collaborations and partnerships that will form the basis for our new strategic plans.

We will seek to:

- grow the depth and number of partnerships in existing priority regions and/or identify new opportunities for strategic collaboration with international partners
- launch a platform to make available information on major international research collaborations in an effort to encourage further collaborations
- broaden and strengthen existing networks
- take advantage of existing synergies within different regions of the world

4.2 Providing a Welcoming Environment for International Students and Members of Staff

As detailed earlier, people from all across the University already help provide a welcoming

environment for international students and staff members. We now aim to bring in additional partners from the University's Faculties and Central Administration to make the international members of the University feel even more welcome. To achieve this objective, we will:

- have the University's Service Centre International Affairs signpost international visitors to sources of information and support
- provide information in multiple languages to allow all international members of the University to independently manage their day-to-day life at JMU
- designate one 'International Agent' per Faculty to serve as first point of contact for internationalisation matters and help us cooperate more efficiently with the University's Faculties
- have arrival and orientation services for international (visiting) researchers provided by the University's Welcome Centre

An issue that makes it difficult for us to recruit visiting researchers and international students is the lack of appropriate housing in Würzburg. We therefore seek to work together with Studentenwerk and other institutions to provide support to international members of the University that are looking for housing.

4.3 Increasing Marketing Efforts to Grow our Visibility

To be able to attract the brightest talent from across the globe, we must develop and foster international awareness of what we do, and to be able to do so, we need effective marketing strategies that target the right audiences. To grow our visibility, we will:

- build a well-designed website that conveys an impression of quality, with content translated into multiple languages and tailored to our target audiences
- tap into our top researchers' extensive international networks to develop and foster awareness of what we do
- increase our PR efforts (including increased use of social media) to make the University well-known on the international stage
- encourage distinguished alumni resident abroad to act as multipliers and ambassadors for the University
- exhibit at international higher education fairs that provide the opportunity to promote the University and build new networks
- implement marketing strategies that are tailored to media that are suitable for targeting audiences in different countries and disciplines

4.4 Global Responsibilities

International exchange plays a central part in developing an understanding of different cultures, nationalities, and languages. An institution that delivers world-class research and teaching, the University takes seriously its responsibility to make a positive contribution to society and uphold ethical values. We are also committed to making a contribution to the capacity building of our lesser developed partner institutions around the world. We expect our partners to share the European values we are committed to.