
Approved by the Vice-Chancellor, 27 August 2019
Introduction

The Action Plan for External Collaboration is based on Uppsala University’s Mission and Core Values and Programme for External Collaboration. The Action Plan for External Collaboration should be known throughout Uppsala University so that members of staff and students can participate in its implementation. This document replaces the Action Plan for External Collaboration 2016–2018 (UFV 2015/375).

Together, the Programme for External Collaboration and the Action Plan for External Collaboration are the University-wide strategic goal-oriented documents for structured collaboration with society. The purpose of the Action Plan for External Collaboration is to stimulate, strengthen and develop the University’s collaboration with society and to complement collaboration initiated and conducted at department, faculty and disciplinary domain level. Through the various actions it presents, the Action Plan for External Collaboration gives tangible form to the strategic priorities outlined in the Programme for External Collaboration.

The Action Plan clarifies the division of responsibilities for different actions. The successful implementation of the Action Plan for External Collaboration depends on staff and students pursuing and further developing collaboration activities with the help of professional support in areas such as innovation, communication, contract education, and various forms of contact with society. To this end, the University will develop proactive support structures that facilitate and encourage individual initiatives. The responsibility for collaboration in a broad sense rests with the disciplinary domains and faculties.
Action areas and actions

The Programme for External Collaboration identifies strategic areas for action. This Action Plan is given tangible form by specific actions in four of these areas. For each action, goals are formulated that allow for follow-up and evaluation. When actions are implemented, particular attention must be given to addressing all three disciplinary domains and taking the University’s goals regarding gender equality and equal opportunities into account.

Action area 1. Develop and coordinate support for collaboration

To be effective and active in the long term, collaboration requires well-functioning and coordinated support structures at faculty, disciplinary domain and University-wide level. These will be developed and strengthened through proactive work to identify the needs, challenges and potential of both the core activities of Uppsala University and society.

Within the University, extensive support for collaboration is available from the Faculty Offices and from University-wide functions (for example, UU Innovation, the University Library, the Communications Division, the Development Office, the Division for External Relations, the Research Support Division, the Student Affairs and Academic Registry Division, and Uppsala University Culture and Heritage). Cooperation between the support functions works smoothly in many areas and evolves continuously in the course of day-to-day activities. Following a survey of needs, three areas have been identified for significant development actions. The aim of these actions is to facilitate contacts between external actors and researchers, programme coordinators and students at Uppsala University.

Action 1.1. Clarify contact points for students and programmes

External organisations that want to make contact with students or educational programmes often need guidance to find their way in the University, and sometimes their enquiries require coordination between different programmes. Collaboration support needs to be developed for this within the University. The goal is to give more students from all disciplinary domains an opportunity to become involved in projects with non-academic organisations within the framework of their education.

Goals for follow-up:

1. A pilot study will be carried out concerning Studentkraft.uu.se.
2. A proposal will be presented concerning educational programmes that have the potential and interest to try out Studentkraft.uu.se in the coming year.

Responsibility: University Director (Student Affairs and Academic Registry Division, Faculty Offices). Dialogue with Kårsamverkan (the joint committee of the students’ unions).


Action 1.2. Develop the University’s website for collaboration

The University’s website needs to provide clear access points that meet the interaction needs of external actors. Some important categories and access points relate to schools outreach, student engagement, research collaboration and lifelong learning. The goal is for the University’s website to make it easier for companies, regions, local authorities and other organisations to find relevant information and make contact with the University.

Goal for follow-up: An improved website for collaboration will be in place.

Responsibility: University Director (Communications Division) in cooperation with Advisory Board for External Collaboration and support functions for collaboration. Dialogue with
Kårsamverkan (the joint committee of the students’ unions).

**Timeframe:** Spring 2020.

**Action 1.3. Strengthen dialogue between support functions and students**

For a mutual exchange of knowledge and to enable students to become more involved in the University’s collaboration activities, more information and dialogue is needed between students and the University’s support functions for collaboration. Special attention should be given to conveying information about collaboration to students whose programmes do not include such components.

**Goal for follow-up:** An established structure for continuous dialogue will be in place.

**Responsibility:** University Director (Communications Division), Advisory Board for External Collaboration. Dialogue with Kårsamverkan (the joint committee of the students’ unions).

**Timeframe:** December 2020.

**Action area 2. Ensure that collaboration is included in the planning, development and evaluation of research and education**

The collaboration perspective will be included in the planning and development of all research and education, including strategic initiatives targeting strong research environments and educational programmes. Collaboration will be included in University-wide leadership and management programmes. Collaboration aspects will be included in the follow-up and evaluation of research and education.

**Action 2.1. Promote an awareness of collaboration and the world of work in educational programmes**

To ensure the relevance of the University’s educational offerings, programmes and courses will be developed in dialogue with other actors in society. This could involve engaging external representatives in programme committees or other bodies, or encouraging and facilitating degree projects and other student projects in interaction with the wider society. Another possibility is follow-up and cooperation involving alumni.

Society’s need for knowledge and students’ preparation for the world of work are an integral aspect of the guidelines for the University’s educational evaluations and are followed up by disciplinary domain/faculty boards. To enable external collaboration to be broadly reflected in the University’s programmes, actions are also needed to share experience and best practice between programmes. One forum for this is the annual University-wide conference on educational evaluations at which results are presented and discussed.

**Goal for follow-up:** Each disciplinary domain will receive constructive feedback on collaboration in its educational programmes, based on material presented and discussed during the annual conference on educational evaluations and the quality report.

**Responsibility:** Disciplinary domain/faculty boards in cooperation with the Advisory Board for External Collaboration and the Division for Quality Enhancement.

**Timeframe:** Spring 2020.

**Action 2.2. Facilitate increased understanding of knowledge assets**

The University’s researchers will be offered opportunities to increase their understanding of knowledge assets, including intellectual property law, and how these can be used in collaboration with the wider society, as well as how the company Uppsala University Research Intellectual
Property AB (RIPAB) can be a support in this. Along with 15 other higher education institutions, Uppsala University is participating in a national project financed by Vinnova (IMP). Courses will be conducted for researchers, based on this project. These courses will target researchers from all three disciplinary domains. Consultation should be sought with the Institute of Intellectual Property, Marketing and Competition Law (IMC) at the Faculty of Law and with other entities at the University with expertise in the field of intellectual property law.

Goal for follow-up: at least 100 researchers will have participated in courses on knowledge assets.

**Responsibility:** UU Innovation.

**Timeframe:** December 2020.

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**Action area 3. Develop incentives for collaboration**

Develop incentives that reward and value collaboration efforts that lead to the mutual exchange of knowledge. Skill in collaboration and the exchange of expertise between the University and society will be stimulated and rewarded in appointments, promotions and salaries.

**Action 3.1. Ensure that collaboration features as a criterion in recruitment and promotions**

Collaboration is an integral part of the responsibilities of teachers and researchers at Uppsala University and, where appropriate, will be given space in a teacher’s schedule of duties, for instance. Expertise in collaboration should serve as a criterion in recruitment and promotion, primarily by being taken into consideration as an integral part of research and teaching expertise.

The University is currently participating in a national development project, one of the objectives of which is to establish common principles for evaluating expertise in collaboration as a qualification (the MerSam project). Based on this project, the University should ensure, when the University-wide Appointment Regulations are next revised, that successful collaboration is taken into account in recruitment and promotions. This should be formulated so as to harmonise as far as possible with an emerging national standard, while allowing local adaptation to the specific conditions prevailing in the University’s various faculties and disciplinary domains and in different types of positions.

Goal for follow-up: A University-wide model for assessing collaboration as a qualification will be established and introduced in connection with the next revision of the Appointment Regulations.

**Responsibility:** Chairs of the disciplinary domain boards/faculty boards in consultation with the Advisory Board for External Collaboration.

**Timeframe:** Autumn 2020.

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**Action area 4. Develop work on strategic partnerships and large-scale platforms for collaboration**

Strategic partnerships with external organisations will be characterised by long-term perspectives and reciprocity, and include both research and education. Strategic partnerships widen and deepen relationships with organisations that not only have the potential to enrich the University’s research and education, but are also potential employers for students and members of staff. Strategic partnerships will be established and developed in accordance with structured and planned procedures, subject to regular follow-up and evaluation. There will be a designated responsible person in each of the organisations involved.

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1 Subsidiary to the University’s holding company, Uppsala University Holding Company.
In addition to strategic partnerships, Uppsala University is involved in various strategically important platforms for collaboration, such as Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) and European research initiatives.

**Action 4.1. Clarify principles and procedures for evaluating elements of collaboration when prioritising among large-scale initiatives**

The University will take a proactive approach to its strategic partners and maximise the added value. Achieving this requires broad academic engagement and that the University is able to focus and allocate resources in the area. The University must therefore seek to coordinate its priorities, both before any decision to enter into cooperation and after cooperation has commenced. Principles and procedures for these decisions need further development to increase the capacity for strategic renewal.

**Goals for follow-up:**

1. Lines will be drawn up to define which “large-scale platforms for collaboration and large-scale initiatives” will be jointly coordinated within the University.
2. Procedures will be developed for the University’s common priorities concerning large-scale initiatives involving collaboration.

**Responsibility:** University Director (Research Support Division) in consultation with Faculty Offices and support functions for collaboration.

**Timeframe:** December 2020.

**Action 4.2. Develop collaboration support for researchers leading major research programmes and research infrastructures**

Resources are needed for the major research programmes and research infrastructures in which Uppsala University chooses to participate, including resources in the form of support for collaboration. Priorities need to be developed in this area, particularly in cases where support is needed from several functions within the University.

**Goal for follow-up:** In connection with major applications concerning programmes and centres of excellence that involve collaboration, it will be standard practice to offer the researcher responsible a liaison person in the combined research support services, during both the application and the implementation phase.

**Responsibility:** University Director (Research Support Division) in consultation with Faculty Offices and UU Innovation.

**Timeframe:** December 2020.
Appendix. The University’s governance documents

Uppsala University’s governance documents are drawn up for various purposes and provide varying degrees of governance and detail. The governance documents adopted by the Vice-Chancellor and/or the University Board are divided into statements of goals and strategies and regulatory documents.

The statements of goals and strategies are always based upon *Uppsala University: Mission and Core Values*, and consist of programmes and action plans.

Programmes are adopted by the University Board and apply throughout the University until further notice. Programmes set the direction and structure of the University’s systematic work within a particular area. Uppsala University has programmes for internationalisation, quality management, sustainable development, equal opportunities and external collaboration, among other areas.

Action plans are based upon these programmes, and are effective for a limited period, often 2–3 years. They are approved by the Vice-Chancellor, and go into considerably more detail than programmes. Their purpose is to achieve specific goals and they specify the individuals and organisational units responsible for the measures they set out.

In addition, a number of other statements of goals and strategies are used in the broader planning of the University’s activities, and play an important role in the long-term development of the University. Some of the most important are the annual budget documentation submitted to the government and internal operational plans at various levels, as well as the University’s more forward-looking research strategies.

The regulatory documents are usually based on external provisions (laws, ordinances and so on) adopted by the Swedish government, the Riksdag (parliament) and other government authorities. They include the Appointment Regulations and the Rules of Procedure for Uppsala University, as well as regulations governing admission to study programmes at all levels of the University.