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*University of Applied Sciences*

# UNICAC PROJECT Best Practices Manual for Internationalisation

2020-2021





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## Introduction

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In today's world of higher education, the importance of self-evaluation and self-improvement is constantly increasing. One of the key concepts related to such process is benchmarking. In higher education, benchmarking approaches vary by their aims, objectives, structure of the groups, their methods, and the kind of data used. When practice and performance are systematically and collaboratively compared within similar organizations, it is possible to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to learn how to adapt and improve organizational processes. (Benchmarking in European Higher Education).

Even if benchmarking in higher education is still a relatively new phenomenon, it is gaining importance and becoming a commonly known and frequently used tool in higher education management. An increasingly competitive higher education environment requires reforms both at system and institutional level, and university performance has become of paramount importance to demonstrate accountability for the use of public funding, quality of education and research, and contribution to economic growth. (Benchmarking in European Higher Education).



**“Effective decision-making is evidence-based. Benchmarking enables the structured sharing of ideas and good practices on institutional strengths and weaknesses. Information on institutional current performance and the quality of the internationalisation process is turned into new opportunities for strategic institutional developments.”**



***-EAIE, European Association for International Education***

Benchmarking can be of great help when we want to reach more efficiently to different internal and external stakeholders. By raising awareness and increasing visibility, benchmarking supports the creation of institutional profile and it advances development work and reputation as well as works for a strong competitive advantage by making better decisions easier for different institutions. (EIAE).

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Benchmarking “helps to make more informed strategic decisions and improve your institutional performance in the field of international higher education. It needs to be a rigorous ongoing process to improve performance.”

It helps “to self-assess your institution, to understand the processes of strategy formulation and implementation, to gain information and data about your own and other institutions to support decision-making, and to identify areas for improvement and set targets for institutional developments.”



*-EAIE, European Association for International Education*

Benchmarking can help higher education institutions in their self-assessment processes and in understanding strategy formulation and implementation procedures. When gaining information and data about your own and other institutions to support decision-making, it is possible to identify areas for improvement and set different and relevant development targets. (EAIE).



*The EAIE is the European centre for expertise, networking and resources in the internationalisation of higher education. It is a non-profit, member-led organization, serving individuals actively involved in the internationalisation of their institutions.*

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For example, the following aspects can be benchmarked within internationalisation:

- The number of international students and teachers registered
- Volume of mobility among students, teachers and staff
- International staff and human resource management
- Citations of publications with international co-authors
- The opportunities available for personal development for students (home or international), teachers and staff in a culturally diverse university community
- Quality of international support services
- Internationalization of the curriculum
- Multicultural study units
- Joint study programs, dual degrees etc.
- International research programs
- Financial management and funding opportunities
- International projects

-EAIE, European Association for International Education

Within the project framework of **UNICAC** ([University Cooperation Framework for Knowledge Transfer in Central Asia and China](#)), this **Best Practices Manual** is part of WP 3 activities. The objective of this WP is to foster internationalisation in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R) and to highlight the benefits of opening HEIs to cross-regional cooperation and knowledge transfer in these essential aspects of the lives of HEIs. WP 3.1. includes:

- 1. The creation of working groups (WG), also including interested non-beneficiary HEIs in PC and taking into account the geographical coverage.**

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2. The realization of virtual WG's meetings that will take place online to save costs.
3. In-depth analysis and identification of best practices in T/L/R. Benchmarking will be carried out on different approaches to international co-operation in T/L/R. Different experiences will be presented and discussed.

According to the project description, the best approach to show how to do this is through benchmarking and a set of progressive seminars in which EU partners will share their experience on the positive impact that international cooperation has had in their institutions. This then can lead to the identification of best practices, and later on to the drafting of national recommendations.

In this WP, two seminars take place in each country: one on raising standards in T/L through internationalisation and another devoted to boost research through international cooperation. EU experts will rotate between PC HEIs for the training foreseen. Students and local student representatives from PC HEIs and third party HEIs from PC interested in the project will also be involved.

Final outputs will be **the drafting of a Best Practices Manual** (knowledge base of what is possible) and the preparation of National Recommendations (a roadmap of what is needed in each country) and Regional Recommendations.

Drafting of National Recommendations will be done with the aim of introducing the necessary changes in HEIs systems in PC. Finally, the WP also foresees a pilot collaboration, in which EU HEIs will jointly coach PhD students (virtual mobilities) and HEI students and professors will complete 1-2 weeks in another HEI.

WP3	Development of Potentials for Internationalisation in Teaching/Learning/Research (T/L/R)
3.1.1.	Working groups creation
3.1.2.	Virtual working group meetings
3.1.3.	In-depth analysis and benchmarking of internationalisation and cooperation potentials in T/L/R
3.2.1.	Preparation of the seminar "Raising Standards in T/L through international cooperation"
3.2.2.	Implementation of seminars in PC HEIs
3.3.1.	Preparation of the seminar "Boosting Research Capacities through International Cooperation"
3.3.2.	Implementation of seminars in PC HEIs
3.4.	Development, publishing and distribution of the best practices book "International Cooperation in T/L/R"
3.5.	National and Cross-regional Recommendations for International Cooperation in T/L/R
3.6.	Design of Cooperation framework
3.7.1.	Coaching and PhD supervision
3.7.2.	PILOT TESTING: Mobility actions of students and professors
3.7.3.	Identification of joint collaborative projects



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This **Best Practices Manual of Internationalisation** is a result of intense collaboration with the UNICAC partners in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, China, Spain, Italy and Finland. The above-mentioned project partners include the following 11 higher education institutions and operators/NGOs:

## List of UNICAC partner organisations:

**UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA SEVILLA Spain**

**UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO TORINO Italy**

**LAUREA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES VANTAA Finland**

**TOSHKENT AXBOROT TEXNOLOGIYALARI UNIVERSITETI TASHKENT Uzbekistan**

**MIRZO ULUG'BEK NOMIDAGI O'ZBEKISTONMILLIY UNIVERSITETI TASHKENT Uzbekistan**

**KHOROG STATE UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER MYONSHO NAZARSHOEV KHOROG Tajikistan**

**Institute of Economy and Trade of Tajik State University of Co Khujand Tajikistan**

**Xinjiang university Urumqi China (People's Republic of)**

**NORTHWESTERN POLYTECHNICAL UNIVERSITY XI AN China (People's Republic of)**

**NORTHWEST A&F UNIVERSITY YANGLING China (People's Republic of)**

**INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING AND MOBILITY AGENCY SOCIEDAD DE RESPO SEVILLA Spain**



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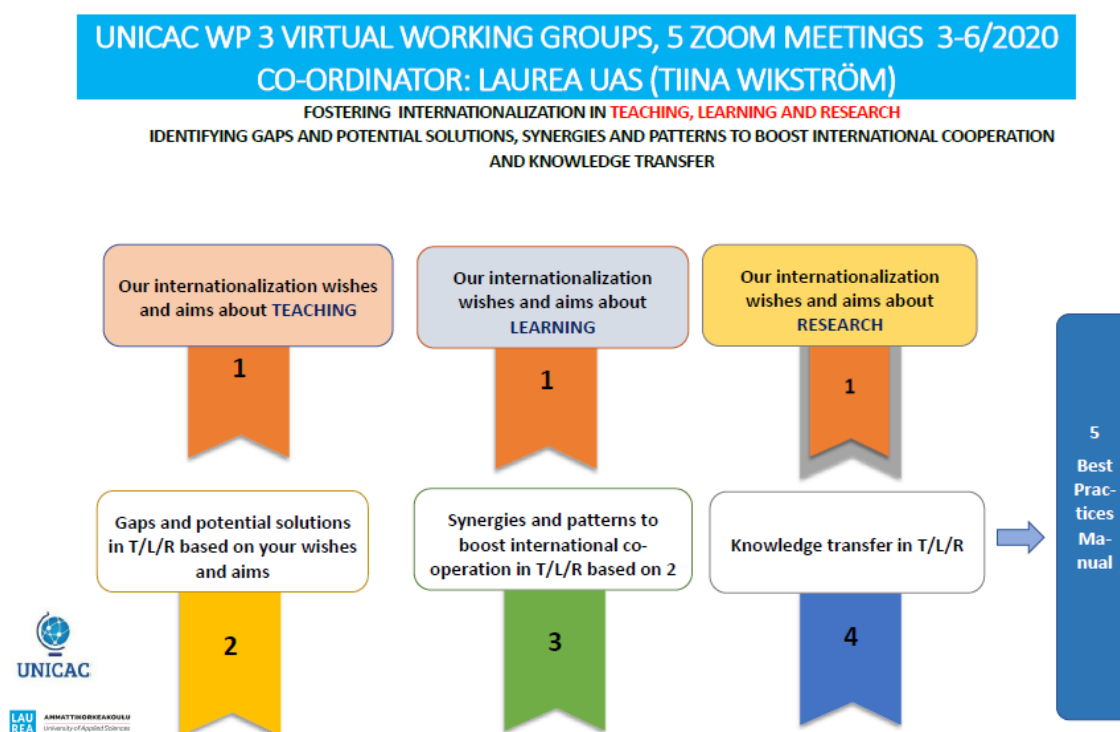
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DEGLI STUDI  
DI TORINO

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The co-creation process for this Manual (chapters 1-4) took place online, using different tools for interaction, such as Incoma's Teamwork workspace, Zoom meetings and Padlet sharing. This process belongs under the UNICAC project work package WP3.1, as mentioned before.

The five online meetings and collaboration phases that took place in spring and summer 2020 were built around specific themes, as shown below, at all times focusing on the internationalisation process of Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R):



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The four online meetings between March and June 2020 focused on material production and progressive sharing and the last meeting, in autumn 2020, was reserved for the preliminary feedback on the Manual draft. The themes for the first four meetings included:

- 1) Wishes and aims of internationalisation in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R)
- 2) Gaps and potential solutions in T/L/R
- 3) Synergies and patterns to boost international co-operation in T/L/R and
- 4) Knowledge transfer in T/L/R

Hence, this Manual is structured in six main chapters, each focusing on the results of the WP 3 activities. Hence, **the first chapter** looks at the topic of UNICAC Central-Asian and Chinese partners' wishes and aims of internationalisation in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R), **the second chapter** focuses on gaps and potential solutions in T/L/R, **the third chapter** is dedicated to synergies and patterns to boost international co-operation in T/L/R and **the fourth chapter** has its focus on knowledge transfer in T/L/R. These four chapters are compiled by Senior Lecturer Tiina Wikström from Laurea UAS. However, it is worth noticing that all these chapters are interlinked and any kind of categorizations are partly artificial and limiting – all the themes discussed resonate with one another and over any categories. Additionally, there is a final **summary** where T. Wikström draws a conclusion on the creation process of this Manual and its usage possibilities.

Hopefully, this Manual will serve the interests of all Central Asian and Chinese UNICAC partners and also their local and international partners, by giving insights and ideas on how to further use this co-created knowledge and how to apply it in a suitable manner for each partner institution.

This is just the beginning for the new Silk Road educational co-operation.





## Chapter One: Wishes and Aims of Internationalisation in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R)

**What:** Wishes and aims of internationalisation in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R)

**When:** 5.3.2020

**Where:** 1st zoom meeting with Central Asian and Chinese partners, hosted by LAUREA UAS, Tiina Wikström and Minttu Rätty

In this first chapter, those teaching, learning and research related **wishes and aims of internationalisation** that were expressed by UNICAC partners from Central Asia and China are analysed.

First, as in all the chapters 1-4, the background materials are shortly listed below, such as the shortened template used as support material for working groups at the Universities as well as additional questions for discussions amongst the partners.

### WORKING GROUP TEMPLATE AND ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PROVIDED FOR PROPARATORY WORK for 1<sup>st</sup> ZOOM MEETING:

Our internationalization wishes and aims about TEACHING	Our internationalization wishes and aims about LEARNING	Our internationalization wishes and aims about RESEARCH



Some examples of relevant points to consider:

- List your 5 key wishes and aims about internationalization of teaching
- List your 5 key wishes and aims about internationalization of learning
- List your 5 key wishes and aims about internationalization of research
- Motivate your choices, why these?
- How to attain these?
- List these 5 in terms of time – what can be reached soon, what later
- List these 5 in terms of difficulty – what is harder to achieve and what can be reached relatively easily
- List these 5 in terms of help and support – what type of help and support is needed in terms of these 5
- With a scale of 1-10, where are you now in terms of internationalization of T/L/R?
- What is your personal vision for the next five years of development in T/L/R?
- With a scale of 1-10, where will you be in 5 years in terms of internationalization of T/L/R?

Below are the results, concerning **wishes and aims in teaching, learning and research**, presented as 4-field analyses.

## WISHES AND AIMS IN TEACHING

<p><b>INTERNATIONALISATION OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING POLICIES</b></p> <p>Internationalization of teaching policy and planning</p> <p>curriculums across countries</p> <p>Professional development</p> <p>International internships/fellowships, courses and trainings for teaching staff</p>	<p><b>MOBILITY</b></p> <p>Staff mobility across countries</p> <p>Professional development</p> <p>Intercultural interaction</p> <p>International internships/fellowships, courses and trainings for teaching staff</p> <p>Recruit teaching staff from abroad to teach (long term and short term)</p> <p>Networking for teaching</p>
<p><b>DEVELOPING LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONALISATION RELATED SKILLS</b></p> <p>Conducting more academic English language courses</p> <p>International programs in English</p>	<p><b>MODERNIZATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION OF TECHNOLOGIES AND METHODS</b></p> <p>Introduction of modern technologies in teaching</p> <p>Worldwide/border-crossing knowledge transfer (books, other media)</p>

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**Intercultural interaction**  
**Creating training centers for teachers**

**Implementation of new methodologies at HEIs by  
acquiring experience from European universities**  
**Innovative ways of teaching (e.g. project- and  
research-based teaching, case-based teaching, flipped  
classrooms)**  
**International internships/fellowships, courses and  
trainings for teaching staff**  
**Teaching based on labour market needs**

## **WISHES AND AIMS IN LEARNING**

### **INTERNATIONALISATION OF CURRICULUM AND LEARNING POLICIES**

**Inviting foreign teachers and international guest  
lecturers**

**Mobility assessment**

**Attracting and retaining international talent**

**Internationalization of learning policy and planning**

**International accreditation of degree programmes**

**Developing joint programs, dual degree programs  
on Master- and Bachelor-level**

**Adopting best international practices for designing  
syllabus**

**Organising summer schools**

**Strengthening collaboration with partners for  
learning**

### **MOBILITY**

**Exchange programs, student mobility programs  
(Erasmus and bilateral agreements)**

**Inviting foreign teachers and international guest  
lecturers**

**Mobility assessment**

**Attracting and retaining international talent**

**Organising summer schools**

**Strengthen collaboration with partners for  
learning**

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## **DEVELOPING LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONALISATION RELATED SKILLS**

**Intercultural competence**

**Attracting and retaining international talent**

**Creating modern learning center for students**

**Organising summer schools**

**Strengthening collaboration with partners for  
learning**

## **MODERNIZATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION OF TECHNOLOGIES AND METHODS**

**New trends in learning in developed countries**

**(e.g. lifelong learning, e-learning, blended  
learning, project-based learning),**

**access to modern real-life textbook sources**

**Organising summer schools**

**Improving and developing the capacity of  
university library**

**Factory visits and practical learning**

## **WISHES AND AIMS IN RESEARCH**

### **INTERNATIONALISATION OF CURRICULUM AND RESEARCH POLICIES**

**Create joint research**

**Find foreign scientific advisors for undeveloped  
areas (e.g. gender areas)**

**Sharing research findings and best practices**

**internationalisation of research policy and planning,  
internationalisation of internal research**

**International conferences and joint publishing**

**International joint research projects in Economics,  
Business, Linguistics and Social Sciences, joint  
programs for joint research**

**Creating research center**

**Joint research work with leading universities in  
Europe and the world**

**Dissemination of research papers**

### **MOBILITY**

**Internship for researchers**

**Invite foreign researchers to our country**

**International conferences**

**Joint research work with leading universities in  
Europe and world**

**Networking for research**

**Document the experienced staff's knowledge  
and skills**

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### Networking for research

#### DEVELOPING LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONALISATION RELATED SKILLS

Find foreign scientific advisors for undeveloped  
areas (gender areas)

Sharing research findings and best practices

International conferences and joint publishing

Creating research center

Dissemination of research papers

Inclusion of research in well-known world  
publishing magazines

Networking for research

Document the experienced staff's knowledge and  
skills

#### MODERNIZATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION OF TECHNOLOGIES AND METHODS

Find foreign scientific advisors for undeveloped  
areas (gender areas)

Sharing research findings and best practices

International joint research projects in

Economics, Business, Linguistics and Social

Sciences, joint programs for joint research

How to get access to online research databases

Research commercialization, Academia - Business  
partnership (e.g. IT parks, technoparks,  
laboratories etc.)

Creating research center

Introducing teaching research methodology and  
practice

Networking for research

Integrating e-literature resources across the  
regions

## Chapter Two: Gaps and Potential Solutions in T/L/R

**What: Gaps and Potential Solutions in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R)**

**When: 8.4.2020**

**Where: 2nd zoom meeting with Central Asian and Chinese partners, hosted by LAUREA UAS, Tiina Wikström and Minttu Rätty**

After expressing the main aims and wishes in terms of teaching, learning and research, the second zoom meeting focused on **gaps and possible solutions that might already exist in these fields of teaching, learning and research**. Below are first again a short version of the template and additional questions that were provided for the partners for their group work.

### PREPARATION FOR VIRTUAL MEETING 2 / Based on VM 1

Aims and wishes by UNICAC partners of TEACHING / LEARNING / RESEARCH	Gaps	Solutions
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#### GAPS

What types of gaps or grey areas are there in  
T/L/R that need to be addressed from the  
viewpoint of internationalization?



#### SOLUTIONS

- What type of knowledge is available?
- Where can the potential answers to possible problems be found?
- Who else or what else could provide new solutions?
- What could be the first steps in finding relevant solutions?
- What has been done before to solve such or similar issues?
- Do we have some previous success stories? Describe them.
- How our wishes and aims can support finding potential solutions?
- What other projects or programs can offer potential solutions that can be adapted for internationalization purposes?

### The following potential solutions in T/L/R were found:

#### INTERNATIONALISATION OF CURRICULUM AND RESEARCH POLICIES

Including internationalization of teaching policy and planning in the Strategic planning of Internationalization and Strategic Development Plan of the Institute  
Increasing funding opportunities within international programs, learning best practices on international curriculum development  
Implementation of new methodologies at HEIs by acquiring experience from European universities  
Minimizing workload of teaching staff by maintaining salary, the discounted time to be used for self-development of teaching staff, giving more flexibility and autonomy for HEIs

#### MOBILITY (also online mobility)

English courses for academic staff, attending classes in best EU universities, using online resources, support from embassies and international organizations  
Attracting teaching staff from businesses and organizations, offering special educational support for best students, attracting graduates with good level of English, promoting more the international mobility of students  
Training professionals in EU universities in creating and leading TRAINING CENTERS FOR TEACHERS  
Participating in international events, conferences, seminars and trainings. To train how to create a network, benefit from the network and how to maintain a network

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	<p>Cooperation with companies, short-term frequent internships by teaching staff in companies (preferably in EU companies), attending classes of EU universities</p> <p>Summer schools</p>
<p><b>DEVELOPING LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONALISATION RELATED SKILLS</b></p> <p>Adding courses on cultures and nations (In English), promoting international programs abroad, recruiting international students</p> <p>Competitive teacher selection, comparative courses, teachers attending colleagues' classes, external auditing and evaluation of teaching</p> <p>English courses for academic staff</p> <p>Increasing the number of internationally granted projects</p> <p>Attracting teaching staff from businesses and organizations, offering special educational support for best students, attracting graduates with good level of English, promoting more International mobility of students</p> <p>Organizing a common course about the intercultural communication through Zoom for students as part of the UNICAC project</p> <p>Meeting online our students and sharing some ideas and some common tasks</p>	<p><b>MODERNIZATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION OF TECHNOLOGIES AND METHODS</b></p> <p>Modernization of institute infrastructure, courses on digitalization of education for academic staff Attending classes in best EU universities,</p> <p>finding partners with mutual needs, offering knowledge transfer opportunities</p> <p>Using online resources</p> <p>Attracting teaching staff from businesses and organizations, offering special educational support for best students, attracting graduates with good level of English, promoting more international mobility of students, training professionals in EU universities in creating and leading TRAINING CENTERS FOR TEACHERS</p> <p>Cooperation with companies, short-term frequent internships by teaching staff in companies (preferably in EU companies), attending classes of EU universities</p> <p>Sharing different distance learning tools</p>

## SUCCESS STORIES



**We at IET TSUC offer 40% additional salary for those who teach in English, to train own potential staff, with the passion for teaching, sharing and learning.**



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**In NUUZ, we have 4 joint degree programs, 2 joint faculties, IET TSUC is also interested in to collaborate.**



**In my university, currently, we have one joint degree programme with the US, students study in my university for 3 years and 1 year in the US (Northwest).**



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## Chapter Three: Synergies and Patterns to Boost International Co-operation in T/L/R

**What: Synergies and Patterns to Boost Internationalisation in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R)**

**When: 4.5.2020**

**Where: 3rd zoom meeting with Central Asian and Chinese partners, hosted by LAUREA UAS, Tiina Wikström and Minttu Rätty**

The third zoom meeting focused on **synergies and patterns** that can boost internationalisation in teaching, learning and research, and as before, here a short version of the template is presented as well as some additional questions for the partners to support their group work.

### PREPARATION FOR VIRTUAL MEETING 3 / Based on VM 2

Hopes and wishes and potential solutions by UNICAC partners	Synergies and patterns to boost international co-operation in Teaching based on potential solutions in Teaching	Synergies and patterns to boost international co-operation in Learning based on potential solutions in Learning	Synergies and patterns to boost international co-operation in research based on potential solutions in Research

- What is already working?
- What type of successful internationalization patterns and good practices are there already in your T/L/R?
- What type of developments or cases etc. have been successful?
- How T/L/R can support each other in international co-operation, what synergies and good practices can be developed?
- What are the next, most important steps for you in boosting international co-operation?
- What is needed for you to success in international co-operation?

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- Where do you see your international co-operation in Teaching / Learning / Research in 5 years? What has happened?

## THE FOLLOWING SYNERGIES AND PATTERNS TO BOOST INTERNATIONALISATION IN T/L/R WERE FOUND:

### INTERNATIONALISATION OF CURRICULUM AND T/L/R POLICIES

- Introducing a new curriculum in the learning process that is based on the labour market needs; International accreditation of degree programmes; development of curricula within EU projects; Exchange programs for teaching; Distance/blended learning
- Joint programs / Double Degrees / Joint research programs / summer schools/Doctoral programs /2+2 program for Bachelor degree, 1+1 program for Master degree
- Creating single platform between project and non-project partners for sharing and conducting and other activities
- Creation of a centre at the university to analyse the needs of the labour market and the employment of graduates, arrangement with companies in conducting conferences based on labour market needs, creating (re)training centres (EU project partners and local partners)
- Development of Strategic Plan of Internationalization Strategies at each Partner HEIs
- Opening more borders, in close co-operation with Canada, US, EU, East Asia and Oceania
- Development of recommendations for introduction of effective teaching techniques in educational processes, based on the observation of European practices in HEIs; development of recommendations for optimization of teaching workload (less teaching hours, more salary)
- Establishing courses with overseas universities whose credits can be recognised by both universities
- Training staff to design new curriculums

### MOBILITY (also online mobility)

- Inviting foreign professors; short-term internship for teachers engaged in research
- Retraining teachers at the universities with the best practices in teaching, organizing virtual teachers' webinars designed for innovative ways of teaching, training staff to design new curriculums
- Exchange programs for teaching
- International Credit Mobility by Erasmus+
- Publishing co-papers with partners
- Opening more borders, in close co-operation with Canada, US, EU, East Asia and Oceania

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- Teachers are encouraged to participate in international conferences and speak as keynote speakers

## DEVELOPING LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONALISATION RELATED SKILLS

- Creating special platforms for sharing knowledge: by articles books and other tools of information transfer
- Opening English courses for staff with specific direction of study
- More courses taught with English language, creating courses taught in English in every discipline
- Short term (English) courses for staff from best experts (EU projects), Online courses, Master and PhD courses and research courses abroad; International Online courses on teaching methodologies (Coursera)
- Creating a free zone for teachers to conduct activities in English
- Creation of a centre at the university to analyse the needs of the labour market and the employment of graduates, arrangement with companies conduct conferences based on labour market needs, creating (re)training centres with EU project partners and local partners
- Adding courses on intercultural communication and country-studies as well as regional studies, preparing and publishing guidebooks for foreigners about culture, cuisine, customs
- Development of self-study education for students and increase of learners' autonomy,
- Independent education for students, team working on the project tasks
- Preparing specialists for enterprises, companies, schools and HEIs, make a project within IC "Preparing HEIs teaching staff and researchers in the EU"
- Publishing co-papers with partners
- Teachers attending colleagues' classes
- Example: about 35 courses (either taught in English or Chinese with English subtitles) have been developed and offered on courses (international) in order to reach out to more students

## MODERNIZATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION OF TECHNOLOGIES AND METHODS

- Retraining teachers at the universities with the best practices in teaching, organized virtual teachers' webinars designed innovative ways of teaching, training staff to design new curriculum
- Creating training centres for teachers with the modern technologies, creating research centres for teachers and students with the modern technologies
- Creating special platforms for sharing knowledge: by articles, books and other tools of information transfer

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- Introduction of the newest methodology in teaching process with the support of different projects and partners
- Organization of trainings for teachers for the development of their digital skills in teaching
- Distance/blended learning
- Creating single platform between project and non-project partners for sharing and conducting and other activities
- Introduction of new methodologies and disciplines needed for labour market
- Conducting research on labour market needs
- Creating library network, co-operation for publishing books, exchange video courses between universities; Mutual books and manuals are good to be published by partners
- Knowledge transfer in the field of modern teaching technology; cross-cultural communication and development of internationalization strategies of the participating HEIs.
- Development of recommendations for introduction of effective teaching techniques in educational process basing on the observation of European practices in HEIs
- Developing flipped classrooms for students to be able to improve their self-study skills
- Feedback for students' microteaching
- Preparing specialists for enterprises, companies, schools and HEIs
- Creating branches of faculties in research institutions, enterprises and companies for internship of students
- Branch laboratories in industry and companies
- Women's association
- Independent education for students, team working on the project tasks
- Implementation of the multimedia technologies in education



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## **Success story of Tashkent University of Information Technologies**

Tashkent University of Information Technologies has partnership with more than 70 universities and research institutions in 26 countries.

Every year 15 foreign professors are involved in educational process of TUIT and 50 professors and teachers of the university visit abroad to exchange experience. And also, there is a student mobility program, every year 30 students of TUIT travel abroad according to exchange programs.

JICA donated TUIT's project in the amount of 1.6 million US dollars to create "Educational Media-Center" in Central Asia which will be designed to set up laboratory to conduct research and practice for students in the field of television technologies.

KOICA donated to the project in the amount of 3 million US dollars for "Establishment and Dissemination of Integrated Educational Information System for Tashkent University of Information Technologies" during 2018-2021 years.

At the moment, TUIT is implementing 12 Erasmus+ CBHE projects funded by the European Commission. First time in Uzbekistan, TUIT is grant holder of Erasmus+ CBHE project in 2019, project title is SPACECOM.

TUIT and Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio Electronics signed an agreement on establishment of a joint faculty and joint training of specialists with higher education. In accordance with this agreement, starting from the 2019-2020 academic year, students enrolled at TUIT to the joint faculty of TUIT-BSUIR for training in the following areas: Information Technology Software; Programmable mobile systems; Artificial Intelligence.





### **Our international success story in NPU, China**

Our laboratory is an union laboratory in Northwestern Polytechnical University. The lab is based on three countries: China, Australia and New Zealand. We do research in the field of cyber-physical interaction. We try to figure out some new methods using virtual reality and augment reality to solve some problems because of the information which we can't see in the real operating zone.

The laboratory chief Professor Weiping has a strong connection with Professor Mark Billingham in New Zealand. We sign documents in tutor PhD students together and have some corporation in projects. We have got together to publish tens of academic papers and finished some projects. Until now, three students have visited their lab in New Zealand and Australia. One PhD student is tutored by three labs in corporation.

Teams from Australia and New Zealand come to visit our lab every year. They give some speeches and have communication with students. In the meantime, Professor Shuxia Wang and Professor Weiping He go to their lab to exchange some new ideas about the research. The picture is the day our union was established.

All teachers and students were in this photo.







### Internationalisation restarts at the IET TSUC

My name is Saidqosim Mukhtorov, and I am a 29 years old alumna of the Institute of Economy and Trade of Tajik State University of Commerce. Past 12 years, I have worked closely with this university. This is a short story about rebuilding International relations of a relatively young HEI (established 2001) in the North of Tajikistan, the IET TSUC.

In 2008-2009, as an enthusiastic student I wanted to experience international education. That time no opportunities were available at my university for studying abroad, and competitive international contests were difficult to pass. Later on, in 2011, the IET TSUC finally got its first ERASMUS MUNDUS project TARGET and TARGET II. I was one of the lucky students who got an opportunity for mobility within TARGET (in 2011-2012 ) at Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain. Over 10-12 teaching staff but only 2 students have benefited from TARGET and TARGET II in about 3 years. From 2013 to 2015 there were no more such opportunities, and I remember how my colleagues wanted to share my experience due to my inspiring stories. In 2015, there was one more project for teaching staff mostly within TEMPUS Programme but no other opportunities till 2018.

Today, I am the head of International Relations Office at IET TSUC, and I was appointed to this position in 2017. The first analysis and conclusion I came up with was this: in 2011-2017, in 6 years, 2 Erasmus Mundus projects and 1 TEMPUS with approximately 15-20 staff beneficiaries and only 2 students. In comparison with the other regional universities, our internationalisation and international relations development were slower. However, we had adequate resources, including teaching staff and students who were able to put efforts in internationalisation. It is due to the very smart decision and initiative of the director and current deputy-director of International affairs, professor Inomjon Aminov, that we decided to develop an undergraduate program fully delivered in English.

In 2015 I again received a scholarship within ERASMUS MUNDUS, Silkroute projects, to study Master's degree at University of Cantabria, Spain. Indeed, having international experience and a broad vision is helping both individuals and Universities to achieve success.

In a very short time with the management of prof. Inomjon Aminov we prioritized our Internationalisation strategy, at first based on annual action plans. Just in one academic year by the 2018, we could restart Internationalization and had 3 International credit mobility projects and one capacity building project of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan. At the moment we are running 4 International Credit Mobility projects, 4 capacity building projects (1 in the framework of ERASMUS, 3 Higher Education Project in Tajikistan for the approximate 640.000USD), involving more than hundreds of direct beneficiaries. What we are





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## SUCCESS STORY OF NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF UZBEKISTAN

National University of Uzbekistan has signed more than 30 agreements with foreign universities and research centers in academic year 2019-2020 only. As of now, the total amount of active memorandums and agreements is 200.

In 2019, NUUz has been ranked at 374<sup>th</sup> place in UI GreenMetric World University Ranking and in 2020 has gotten on 601<sup>th</sup> place of Times Higher Education Impact Ranking (+ other ranks in 5 other indicators, such as Climate Change, No Poverty etc).

74 foreign specialists were involved in the educational process at NUUz this year, among them 7 are working at the university on full-time basis. 15 professors of NUUz conducted training (lectures, classes, seminars) in the top 100 universities of world.

In the 2019-2020 academic year, 33 foreign students were admitted to study at the university, the total number of students is 73. We have students from Russia, China, Korea, Turkey and others. In the international student exchange, 30 foreign students studied at the university, and 16 students of the National University of Uzbekistan were sent to study and practice abroad.

In 2019, 10 international scientific-practical conferences, training courses and events were held. Also, within the framework of international symposiums and conferences, about 180 high-ranking international experts from the United States, Japan, Great Britain, South Korea, Germany, Poland, Turkey, Mongolia, Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan took part in the symposium. master classes and seminars were organized.

In December 2019, 200 professors, teachers, staff, 26 doctoral students, 21 masters and 24 bachelors participated in conferences and seminars at foreign universities. Within the framework of the "El-Yurt Umid" Fund under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 26 professors, teachers, staff, doctoral and master students and have won a scholarship and were sent for internships at foreign universities. The number of foreign experts is 16 and 6 of them were obtained in 2019. Within the framework



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## Chapter Four: Knowledge Transfer in T/L/R

**What:** Knowledge Transfer in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R)

**When:** 8.6.2020

**Where:** 4th zoom meeting with Central Asian and Chinese partners, hosted by LAUREA UAS,  
Tiina Wikström and Minttu Räty

### PREPARATION FOR VIRTUAL MEETING 4

#### KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN TEACHING & LEARNING & RESEARCH

##### Based on VM 3

Synergies and patterns by	Knowledge transfer in Teaching (based on synergies and patterns in Teaching)	Knowledge transfer in Learning (based on synergies and patterns in Learning)	Knowledge transfer in Research (based on synergies and patterns in Research)
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## UNICAC partners

Some examples of relevant points to consider:

- What does knowledge transfer mean in teaching, learning and research?
- Why such knowledge transfer might be important?
- How to accomplish such knowledge transfer?
- When should knowledge transfer happen?
- Who would benefit from such knowledge transfer?
- What type of knowledge transfer system would need to be developed?
- How to store the key knowledge for the future?
- Who is responsible for knowledge transfer?
- How to guarantee knowledge transfer from older experts to younger colleagues, when retiring etc.?
- How to guarantee knowledge transfer when team members change and employees exit?
- How to guarantee knowledge transfer between teams, faculties, departments, Universities, working life partners, countries?

## Knowledge Transfer, Key Ideas

- **Sharing experiences in using English resources and the experiences of (Central) Asian countries in offering courses in English**
  - **Sharing data and report analysis of labour market needs**
- **Sharing research papers, joint research projects, learning and teaching materials, staff co-operation**
  - **High ranking and smaller Universities both benefitting and complementing each other, between older and younger colleagues**
    - **Shared research centers with shared online libraries, new IT tools and E-resources**
      - **Creating special journals with partners**

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- Using accessible methods such as social media, social networks and Internet sites
- Creating a local shared online platform for knowledge transfer and a repository as well
  - Knowledge transfer in new research methodologies and curriculums
- Creating special offices inside the university for international knowledge transfer, such as accreditation
  - Creating a state-level special platform with local companies and universities

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN TEACHING & LEARNING & RESEARCH IN YOUR OWN WORDS

- **What does knowledge transfer mean in teaching, learning and research?**

It means that partners with different cultures, knowledge, methodologies and different level of success are sharing their experiences. Knowledge transfer in teaching, learning and research can promote development and growth of science, technology and the whole economy, building a strong knowledge for the HEIs from partner countries. At a micro level, knowledge transfer is reflecting sustainability and impact. It is the key for the strengthening international cooperation between HEIs.

- **Why such knowledge transfer might be important?**

Access to relevant and updated knowledge is very important for the equality and promoting equal rights. Transferring knowledge between countries supports stable development and reduces the gap between science and technology in developing countries. It is important for HEIs to use both knowledge and best practices for maintaining and widening partnership activities. This process satisfies not only universities with the least success in training, but also universities with extensive experience and high rank because all the partners complement each other and at the same time each university finds what it needs

- **How to accomplish such knowledge transfer?**

The English language has become the medium for knowledge transfer. It might be accomplished through different activities or resources such as mobility, joint projects, joint research and common library, databases etc. It is important to join projects and create special platform where universities can transfer their knowledge.

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- **When should knowledge transfer happen?**

Knowledge transfer could happen in a conclusion or closure of the project or an activity to sustain results and increase an impact. But also, when a project begins, before it ends and after the project.

- **Who would benefit from such knowledge transfer?**

Students, teachers, businesses and society will benefit from knowledge transfer.  
It benefits all partners.

- **What type of knowledge transfer system would need to be developed?**

Well-known informative database or portal to knowledge transfer. Creating online platform for transferring knowledge.

- **How to store the key knowledge for the future?**

Create a special catalogue in e-library to store specific knowledge by different fields.  
Create a special repository for knowledge where it will be stored and used, such as J-store and others, it is unnecessary to hide knowledge, but you can use it respectfully so that when you use it, there must be a link added.

- **Who is responsible for knowledge transfer?**

For example, innovation and science unit of a university. Administration and scientists, professors and vice-rectors for academic affairs and learning.

- **How to guarantee knowledge transfer from older experts to younger colleagues, when retiring etc.?**

All the rights for the materials developed while being a full staff member are given to the university as well. When retiring, older experts could give their developed materials for the general use. All professors and staff responsible for something must have a partner among the teachers or, in extreme cases, from highly trained students, so that is one of form of sharing knowledge.

- **How to guarantee knowledge transfer when team members change and employees exit?**

For example, according to a certificate of honour, all the staff benefiting from university mobility and other internationalisation opportunities that enrich their knowledge are obliged to organize dissemination and knowledge sharing activities. In addition, they need to work at university at

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least one academic year, in case of exiting and working in other HEI within a year they need to reimburse part of the expenses to the university. Since this is a difficult item, therefore, we always work in pairs or in teams.

- **How to guarantee knowledge transfer between teams, faculties, departments, Universities, working life partners, countries?**

Promoting and disseminating informative database or portal for knowledge transfer and appropriate use of the resources can guarantee effective knowledge transfer between teams, faculties, departments, Universities, working life partners, and different countries. Using accessible methods such as social media, social networks and Internet sites, as well as involving more people from outside and non-partner universities.

## Chapter Five: Exchange Experiences

During the UNICAC project, different mobility actions were conducted. In this Best Practices Manual, we describe three different types of mobility: Online tutoring for PhD and Master students, and online and onsite mobility of students and teachers. These mobility activities were organized during the Covid-19 period which complicated and even prevented to fulfil the onsite activities. Thus, half of the mobility actions were decided to organize online.

Laurea University of Applied Sciences was coordinating the activities with the help of all the UNICAC partner organizations.

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## Online Mobility

UNICAC offered an opportunity to PhD and Master students to participate in online tutoring for academic study support. The offer included online lectures, small group workshops, and individual tutoring.

**The online lecture topics were following:**

How to Prepare Research Papers and Articles and How to Get Funding?  
Building Bridges Between Academic and Business World  
Open Data in Regional Development and Internationalisation Promotion  
Benchmarking Best Study Supporting Practices in the EU Region

**The small group tutoring was organized under two topics:**

How to Manage it All - Student Wellbeing, Time Management and Finalizing Your Studies Effectively  
Promoting Academic Writing Skills in English

In addition, the professors of European Universities were providing **individual tutoring** to support PhD theses and articles writing.



Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, an amendment was made in the mobility plans in 2021, and half of the UNICAC mobility was decided to organize online. All the partner organizations provided some courses online. The study offer was published in the Canvas environment, which is a virtual learning environment used in Laurea. The UNICAC project group decided to use Laurea's platform, and an online learning environment was created for the UNICAC project. On this open-access platform, each university could introduce their university in general and also those courses they provide for the UNICAC partners.



**The timeline and the steps for the online mobilities were as follows:**

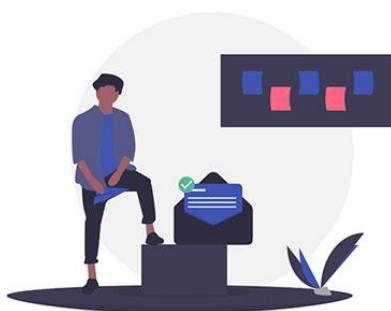
By 30th June 2021: information on the online offers for autumn semester 2021 gathered on the Canvas platform and an excel sheet

All partners informed:

- o what online course/programme they can offer in autumn
- o a short description of the content and the learning outcomes
- o dates when the course starts and ends
- o how many UNICAC students can be enrolled
- o criteria for the participants: for example, is it only for students of a certain study field, are there language requirements or previous knowledge required etc.

Originally, a common eform for applying was also planned but was not eventually used. All the universities organized the enrollment to their courses.

Below there are listed all the Universities and their UNICAC course offer.



University	Course name
Laurea	Global Challenges and Possibilities within Social Services, Community Work and client Counselling
Laurea	Intercultural Leadership

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Laurea	Multicultural and Multidisciplinary Professional Competences
Universidad de Sevilla	International Mobility Programs: outgoing student and staff
Universidad de Sevilla	International Mobility Programs: incoming student and staff
Universidad de Sevilla	Welcome Office and student recruitment
University of Turin	Business Strategy
University of Turin	Management of Tourist Firm
University of Turin	Business organization
University of Turin	Marketing
National University of Uzbekistan NUUZ	Methodology of translation
Northwest A&F University NWAUFU	Soil Science
Northwest A&F University NWAUFU	Poultry Production
Northwest A&F University NWAUFU	Crop Cultivation Science
Northwest A&F University NWAUFU	Inorganic and Analytical Chemistry
Northwest A&F University NWAUFU	Viticulture
Northwest Polytechnical University NPU	Single Variable Calculus
TUIT	The history of the science and education in Central Asia
IET TSUC Tazikistan	Transition Economy (the case of Tajikistan)

## Onsite Mobility

Onsite mobility was planned to be organized during the academic year 2021-2022. For the

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practical reasons, the mobility period was implemented in April – September 2022.

For the students, the mobility lasted 14 days and for staff members, 7 days. First, a guiding document was created to assist project partners in preparing and implementing mobility actions. It included procedures, instructions, and templates for managing the administrative aspects of mobility actions, such as launching a mobility call, selection process, collecting necessary information, reporting, certification, and evaluation.

A Canvas environment was created to give information about all the UNICAC partners as well as different onsite and online mobility options.

The candidates were selected by the sending institution, and the selection criteria was set by the sending university, including topics like good knowledge of languages or willingness to improve one's language skills, professional and academic background, and an academic record. Unfortunately, because the Covid-19 situation, not all the selected candidates could get a passport or a visa, and in general, the candidates from China could not travel. To make the selection procedure as transparent as possible, it was recommended to publish a list of the selected candidates.

The financing of the mobility was assured by the UNICAC project, including the travel costs (calculated in accordance with the distance scale of the EC), the visa and the accommodation costs. The host institution was responsible for organizing the reception and welcoming of the participants. It also facilitated the search for adequate accommodation in relation to the profile of the participants and organization and implementation of activities etc.

Before the mobility, the hosting partners carried out an online meeting with the participants, and the participants attended a preparatory session with their mentor/person in charge at the sending institution. All the participants were also awarded with a Certificate of Participation, and each mobility action was evaluated by the participants.



#### **Mobility periods were following:**

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- **TUIT & NUUZ (17.04.2022-01.05.2022)**
- **IET-TSUC (9-20.05.2022)**
- **LAUREA (23-27.05.2022)**
- **UNITO (16-30.05.2022)**
- **US (6-10.06.2022)**
- **LAUREA (19.-30.9.2022)**

Below are also described in more detail the plans and processes and the work in progress phase for online and onsite mobility.

## PLAN FOR ONLINE MOBILITY

### Timeline and the steps for online mobilities

**By 30th June:** information on the online offers for autumn semester 2021 gathered on the Canvas platform and an excel sheet

- By the end of June partners need to inform Laurea
  - o what online course/programme you can offer in autumn
  - o short description of the content and the learning outcomes
  - o dates when the course starts and ends
  - o how many UNICAC students can you enroll in it
  - o Criteria for participants: for example, is it only for students of certain field, are there language requirements or previous knowledge required etc.

**1 July:** A common eform for applying published by Laurea

- On the form, the student first chooses the course/s they want to enroll for
- Name and email address
- Field of studies
- Years of higher education they have completed
- A short statement of motivation

**2 July and onwards:** Call published in all partner institutions, advertising the online possibilities among the student body

- To help promote the online offer, Laurea can prepare a flyer containing:
  - o the courses offered
  - o dates of the application period
  - o a link to the application e-form

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- a link to Canvas where students can read more on UNICAC mobilities

**5 July – 6 September:** Students have time to fill out the e-form

**6 September:** Laurea will process the applicants on the e-form and send a list of students to each institution

**By 10 September** Students have the information which online course they will be taking part in. Receiving institution will provide more information to the participating students regarding practicalities like: When and where will the online lectures take place? Do they need to use a learning platform?

**During (approximately) October- December** Online studies

During and after the online course/programme

- Coordinators should provide information on how many UNICAC participants they had. For this Laurea will send a questionnaire where you are asked to provide the numbers of participants who started and how many participants finished the course
- The receiving institution will provide a certificate of participation to students who finished the course
- Final reporting and documentation to Incoma

## PLAN Timeline and the steps for onsite mobilities, students and staff

**1 October** the offers for onsite mobilities taking place in spring semester 2022

- Contents of the mobility programme
- Criteria for participants
- How many participants you will host

**4 October:** Publishing the call and informing students of mobility possibilities

- Laurea will prepare a flyer with essential information that can be easily circulated in each institution
  - the offered programme in each UNICAC partner
  - application period and the link to the application e-form
  - Canvas link to read more on the mobility possibilities

**4 October** e-form for applying opened

- Similar form as for online mobilities
- Participant will
  - select the preferred destination
  - fill out name, email address, field of studies, years of higher education completed, statement of motivation

**4 October – 1 November** 2021 Participant application period

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**1 - 10 November:** processing the applications on the e-form. If there are more enrollments than places available, the sending institution will choose who to send. The sending institution can refer to the contents of the mobility programme and criteria stated by the receiving institution to decide which applicant is best suited for the mobility.

**10 November** participants and institutions should have information ready who is selected for a mobility period and where

Practical arrangements should start after the participants are selected. Each receiving institution will provide more information for the incoming participants on their stay in the host institution. Visa application, possible COVID-19 requirements.

**During January-February** Actual mobility activities

After the mobility

- host institution provides certificates of participation
- participants fill the participant report
- other necessary final reporting and forms filled and sent to Incoma

## Recommendations and observations of online and onsite exchange activities

The online tutoring model was very fruitful and could be used more.

It was a positive experience to have the UNICAC students participating in the Laurea online courses – maybe in the future the students' home institutions could give the marks?

Cooperative teaching is a nice model when the theme is such as intercultural communication. It needs to be quite easy to access.

Deadlines and timetables are important to be agreed upon with all the partners - there is a need for a flexible timetable, with enough time to plan and execute the activities.

The Canvas environment was maybe a little difficult to access but all in all, a common platform for activities is needed.



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## Short Summary

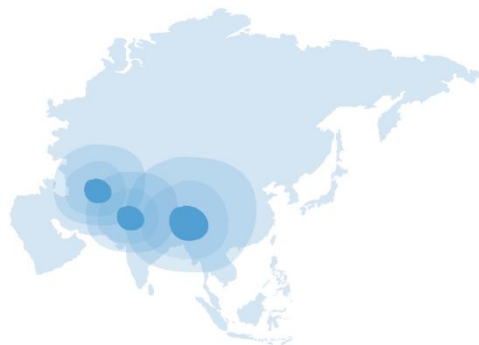
### Tiina Wikström

Senior Lecturer at Laurea Tikkurila RDI Department, Postdoctoral  
Researcher, Laurea UAS

The purpose of this Best Practices Manual was to make visible and more tangible all the ideas, wishes, hopes, possibilities, skills, know-how, plans and collaboration ideas that the UNICAC partners from China, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan already had and to further co-create and co-develop them, by benchmarking, into more systematic and shared international approaches, plans and practical program, policy and collaboration ideas that may benefit teaching, learning and research in these partner countries and their universities.

As this Manual is a very practical collection of different key issues pointed out by the UNICAC partners, I hope it can serve as a starting point for a shared Silk Road internationalisation development process in these countries and universities, and in several ways boost a shared UNICAC vision and make it a reality, by addressing the possible gaps, solutions, and synergies.

As always, this small Manual is but a starting point for further development and only one phase in the overall shared international development process. However, I hope it comes to use in different co-operation events and places of dialogue where internationalisation and its possibilities are planned, shared, discussed, and promoted. I wish to warmly thank all the UNICAC contributors – without you, this Manual could not exist.



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**A warm thank you to all UNICAC contributors!**



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