



University of Vaasa
VAASAN YLIOPISTO

UNIVERSITY OF VAASA STRATEGY 2035

Energising sustainable futures



University of Vaasa

Mission

The University of Vaasa creates impact through internationally high-quality research and education, contributing to solutions for global challenges related to sustainable business, the energy transition, and a resilient society.

Vision

The University of Vaasa is the nordic academic leader with focus and impact.

Values

Our values – courage, community, and responsibility – guide our daily operations, creating the foundation for our success.



Strategic focus:

Creating new energy and solutions with global impact

The University of Vaasa is an international, business- and society-integrated, multidisciplinary research university. Through its research and education, the university focuses on developing future solutions for sustainable business, the energy transition, and a resilient society.

To advance multidisciplinary knowledge and science, the university actively monitors international developments in research and responds to emerging competence and knowledge needs by establishing strategic project portfolios, research platforms, and degree programmes. Through these activities, we address complex societal challenges in close collaboration with stakeholders, innovation ecosystems, and social partners by combining expertise in business, technology, and governance.

We ensure the achievement of results through strategic growth planning, anticipating funding growth, funding adequacy, and cost structures through the development of results.

At the core of this planning model is a balanced relationship between student numbers and faculty resources, while taking into account high-quality research expertise in the university's strategic focus areas.

In developing the competences of both staff and students, we continuously monitor evolving international skills requirements. The university's success is built on the expertise and continuous development of its personnel and students, both as individuals and as members of teams. At the same time, the balanced development of each individual is taken into account.

We are a valued partner within Europe's largest energy and environmental technology cluster, working towards affordable and clean energy, economic growth, industry innovation, and responsible consumption and production.



Location of the university in a clean and stable Nordic environment reflects its strategic objectives for advancing global societal development. Our beautiful, modern, and international seaside campus is working towards carbon neutrality, to which the university's significant international research contributes.

The university's ecosystem- and society-integrated research and innovation activities, as well as its economic impact, are recognised nationally and internationally. This creates excellent opportunities for our researchers, teachers, and students to contribute to the development of science, knowledge, and society.

Participative strategy and strategic development priorities of the University of Vaasa

The University of Vaasa’s strategy work aims to create a common understanding, narrative and action around our vision through a participative process carried out throughout the university and with external stakeholders. The university’s strategy was crafted as a joint effort built on the inputs of the University Board, Management Group, academic units, subject areas, administrative and affiliated units, students, and our key ecosystem partners.

The strategy work is conducted by using five core strategy tools: strategic capabilities, customer value promise, strategy map, the path, and programme planning.

This strategy document presents the strategic development priorities, strategic capabilities, and strategic development programmes of the University of Vaasa.

Strategic development priorities

The following figure illustrates the University of Vaasa’s vision, its most important strategic development priorities, and its strategic capabilities.

Our goal is that by 2035, we will achieve 4,000 JUFO points, 9,000 students, 1,400 Master’s graduates and 75 doctoral graduates, as well as €38 million in competitive funding and a total of €47 million in external funding.

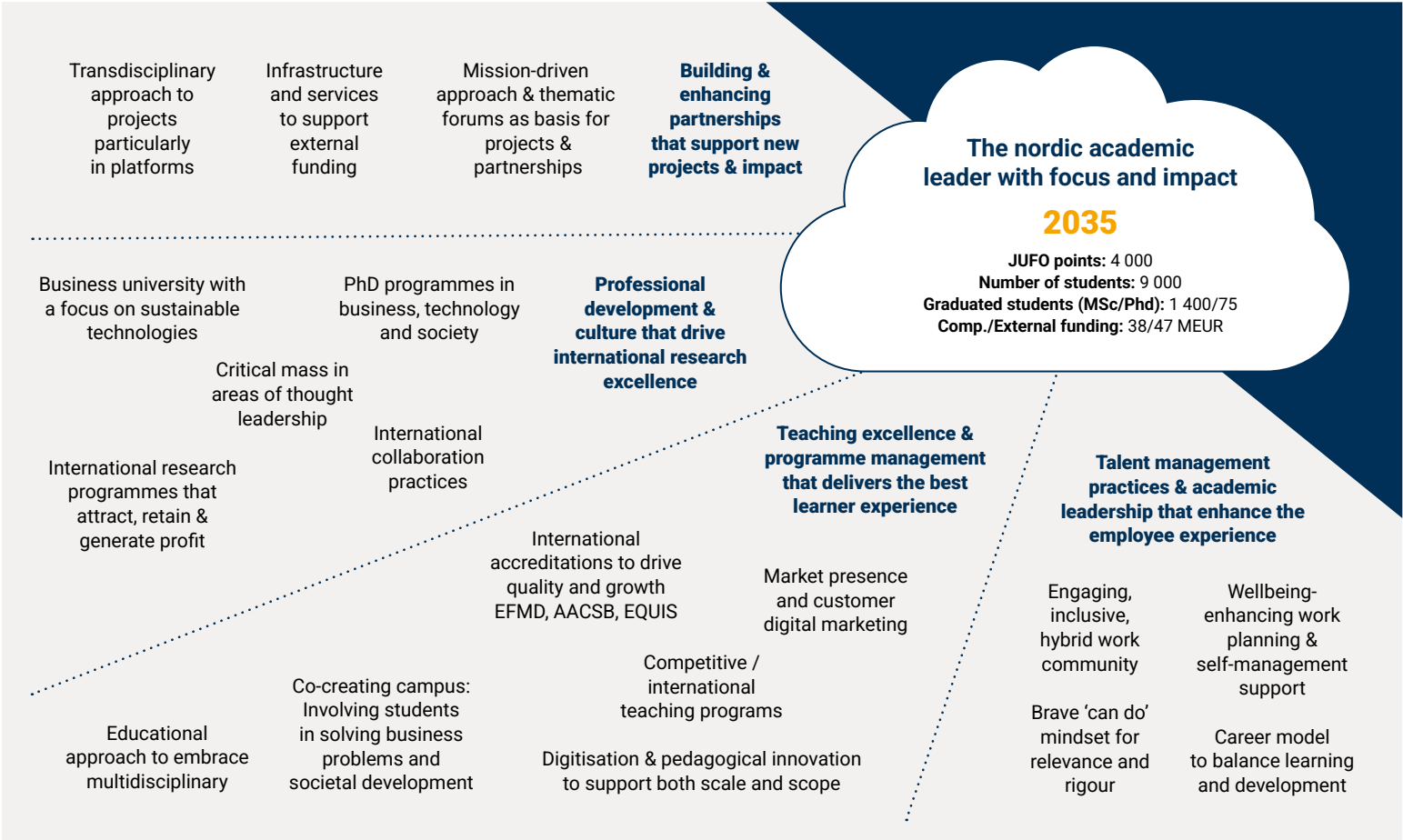
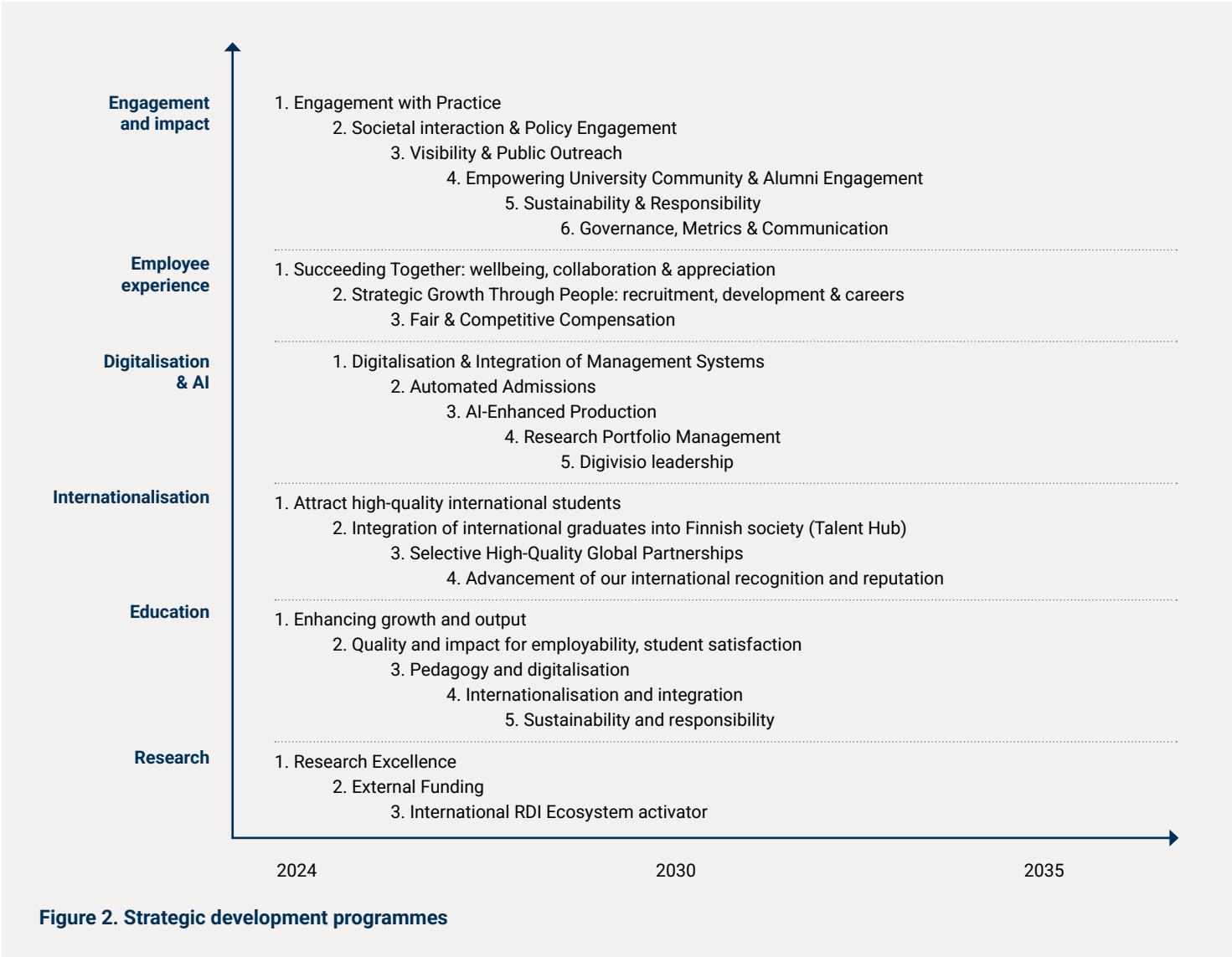


Figure 1. Vision, strategic development priorities and strategic capabilities.

Strategic development programmes

By 2035, our goal is to achieve an internationally impactful position in research and education related to sustainable business, the energy transition, and society. This requires a respected position within national and international innovation networks.

Figure 2 presents the strategic development programmes through to the end of 2035: research, education, internationalisation, digitalisation and AI, employee experience, and engagement and impact.



Development programmes

Research

Achieving the university's vision for 2035 necessitates establishing ourselves as an esteemed participant within local and global research and innovation networks, as well as collaborating with internationally recognised academic research partners. We create value as part of the ecosystem.



To achieve international recognition and promote impactful research, our key priorities are:

- Highly cited, internationally co-authored research based on our strong disciplines in a multidisciplinary school structure.
- Challenge- and phenomenon-driven, interdisciplinary research that makes a difference in the real world, addressing global societal challenges, conducted through research platforms.
- Use AI responsibly to enhance research processes, identify new research and funding opportunities, and increase research impact.
- Leverage our multidisciplinary expertise and engage collaborators from industry and society.
- External funding and the engagement of external stakeholders are at the core of our research activities. The aim is to access the funding channels with the highest impact: the Academy of Finland, Business Finland, and EU funding.
- Increase competitive research funding by shifting from the management of individual applications to the strategic management of research portfolios. Our objective is to maintain a continuous and predictable pipeline of funding applications, strengthen collaboration between research units and research services, and utilise data-driven decision-making to identify funding opportunities. At the same time, we will

develop research, development and innovation career paths as well as research management tools to support long-term growth and productivity.

- Publish our research in high-quality and impactful research channels and actively promote the practical utilisation of research results through co-creation, patents, trademarks, new business ventures, and start-up companies.
- Strengthen the university's position in European and global research and innovation networks. We will build our capability to acquire and implement research funding by investing in high-quality proposal preparation, international partnerships, networking within EU and Business Finland programmes, and active engagement and influence in key research and innovation ecosystems. Our objective is to increase the university's visibility, attractiveness, and impact as an international research and innovation partner.

To achieve the goals there are three separate development program paths established with tangible targets. The development programs are Research excellence, External funding, and International RDI ecosystem activator. Each of development programs have sub streams to create manageable set of projects taking onboard activities in the form of project.

Education

The University of Vaasa provides internationally high-quality, research-based education that prepares graduates for sustainable careers, lifelong learning, and responsible citizenship.

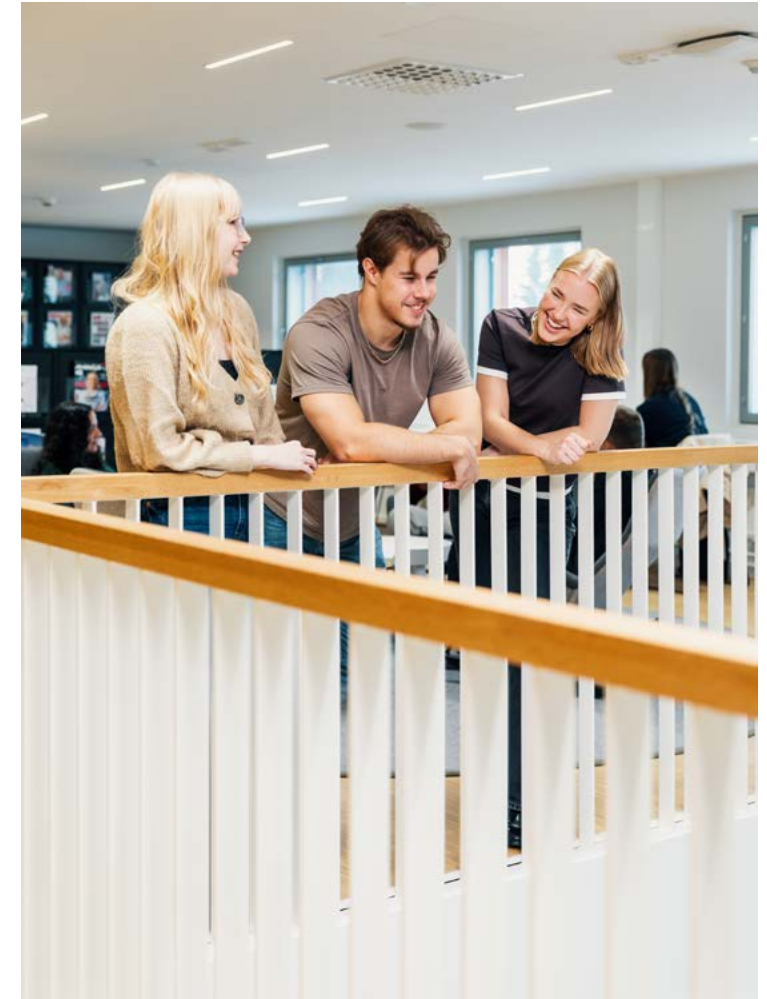
Our goal is to increase the number of students to 9,000, the number of Master's degrees awarded to 1,400, and the number of doctoral degrees awarded to 75 by 2035, while ensuring the high quality and impact of education, student wellbeing, and excellent employment opportunities.

The University of Vaasa develops its education comprehensively by strengthening educational leadership, data-informed management, continuous quality assurance, and the systematic assessment of learning outcomes. The objective is to improve student recruitment, student engagement in studies, and the smooth progression of studies through to degree completion. At the same time, we ensure the high quality of all degree programmes and utilise real-time information to support educational development and decision-making.

In renewing education, we emphasise flexible and individual learning pathways, multidisciplinary, and new ways of combining expertise in technology, business, and other fields. We develop cooperation with higher education partners, strengthen open pathways to degree education, and expand opportunities for studying regardless of time and location. We strengthen the international student community and support the integration of

international students into the university, the region, and Finnish working life.

Key elements in the development of teaching include shared quality management practices, strong guidance and support, digital solutions, team teaching, and the appropriate use of AI in learning. We also ensure that competencies related to AI, ethics, responsibility, and sustainable development are incorporated into all degree programmes to prepare students for the future of work and society.



Internationalisation

Our strength lies in internationally relevant research and strong partnerships across regional and global innovation ecosystems, rooted in our location at the heart of Northern Europe's largest energy and environment cluster. Advancing the energy transition and climate change mitigation guides how we internationalise and whom we partner with. By 2035, a substantially larger share of our students and faculty will come from abroad, making us a truly international academic community recognised for its diversity and inclusivity.

Internationalisation is not a separate activity but a feature of everything we do. The Internationalisation Development Programme strengthens UVA's role as a globally engaged, diverse and recognised university by embedding international cooperation in our education, research, industry collaboration and partnerships.

To achieve these ambitions, we have identified strategic goals in the following areas:

- **International throughout:** Our management, administration and programmes operate with an international outlook, so that students, staff and partners experience UVA as one coherent, internationally minded university.
- **Built-in double degrees, cotutelles and joint projects:** International cooperation is built into our education, doctoral training and research, with double degrees in all our programmes, cotutelle agreements and joint research projects across all our performance units, all developed with high-quality strategic partners.
- **Talent Hub:** Strong connections with industry run through our programmes, helping international students and graduates build careers in Finland and strengthening the region's access to international talent.
- **Systematic partnerships and international visibility:** We partner with fewer but better institutions, building a portfolio of accredited, ranked and mission-aligned partners and turning our networks into lasting collaboration, including EU consortia. We advance our rankings, accreditations and international visibility, attract impactful international visitors, and draw on our international faculty and visiting professors as ambassadors for Vaasa.





Digitalisation and AI

The aim of the Digitalisation and AI Development Programme is to strengthen the impact of the University of Vaasa's research, education, and services, and to renew ways of working through digital solutions, automation, and AI. Responsibility, information security, data protection, ethics, and impact are key principles in this development.

Strategic development areas

1. Development of education: We utilise AI in the development of pedagogy, digital course production, and continuous learning services. At the same time, we strengthen students' AI competencies.
2. Research enablers and AI in research: We develop computing, data, and AI capabilities for research and support the application of artificial intelligence in research, research projects, and the preparation of research funding applications.
3. Development of educational services and administration: We automate processes, utilise AI in service development, and strengthen data-driven decision-making.
4. Digital infrastructure and AI solutions: We build a secure and efficient digital infrastructure that enables the use of AI in research, teaching, management, and services.
5. Competence development: We strengthen the AI capabilities of staff, students, and university management through training, learning pathways, and collaborative learning.
6. AI management, ethics, and risk management: We establish clear operating models for the management of AI, prioritisation, responsible use, risk management, and impact assessment.
7. Collaboration and ecosystems: We strengthen collaboration with companies, research organisations, and national and international networks to promote new innovations and impact.
8. Strategic management: The development of digitalisation and AI is managed as part of the implementation of the university's strategy. Development priorities, resources, and investments are prioritised in accordance with the university's strategic objectives.

Development is guided at both the strategic and operational levels. The objective is to ensure that AI and digitalisation generate tangible benefits for research, teaching, students, as well as the university's services and management.

Employee Experience

People at the heart of our success

We build a work community that is supportive, inclusive, and inspiring, and that provides people with the best possible opportunities to succeed and develop. Wellbeing, opportunities for career development, and a strong sense of community create the foundation for attracting, developing, and retaining talent.

In the Employee Experience Development Programme, people are at the heart of the University of Vaasa's success. By investing in wellbeing, supervisory work, competence development, and rewarding, the university continues to build an inclusive and collaborative culture. At the same time, it strengthens its position as an attractive employer, creates conditions for the balanced integration of different areas of work, and supports staff success in research, education, and societal impact. The programme advances the University of Vaasa's Vision 2035 by strengthening people-centred excellence and impact.

To achieve the University of Vaasa's ambitions for growth and development, we have identified strategic goals in the following areas:

- Succeeding together: wellbeing, collaboration and appreciation.
- Strategic growth through people: recruitment, development and sustainable career paths.
- Fair and competitive rewarding.





Engagement and Impact

The University of Vaasa strengthens its role as a key centre of expertise and renewal for society and business by co-creating solutions to current societal challenges and promoting sustainable development. The objective is to increase the university's visibility and impact while strengthening the engagement and trust of alumni, partners, and other stakeholders.

The Engagement and Impact Development Programme integrates the University of Vaasa more closely into regional, national, and international ecosystems. By deepening business and partnership networks, increasing the visibility of research, education, innovation, and start-up activities, and actively participating in societal dialogue and decision-making, the University of Vaasa increases its network-based impact and strengthens its position as a frontrunner in sustainable impact and innovation.

The University of Vaasa manages its visibility and impact in a goal-oriented manner. Impact is measured, monitored, and developed systematically to ensure that the outcomes of

research, education, and societal engagement are transformed into recognisable value for society. This supports the university's ability to secure competitive external funding, strengthen national and international recognition, and increase strategically significant funding opportunities.

A key objective is to achieve internationally visible impact that strengthens the university's national position. The impact of the University of Vaasa is demonstrated when companies, partners, alumni, and other independent actors advocate for the university and demonstrate the value created through collaboration within their own networks.

Through transparency, responsibility, and activities aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the University of Vaasa generates measurable benefits for businesses, the public sector, and society, while strengthening its position as an internationally recognised and impactful research university by 2035.





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