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Programme for Sustainable Development

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Introduction

CLIMATE CHANGE, overconsumption of natural resources, biodiversity loss and the recognition of social inequalities have put sustainable development in the limelight of societal and economic discussions more than ever before. Europe and Finland rely on the circular economy as their new economic foundation. Lack of expertise is seen as a bottleneck in goal achievement, both nationally and internationally. Sustainable development has increased its significance in education and research and emerged as an important area in stakeholder cooperation. Laurea and other higher education institutions play an important role in promoting and activating sustainable development – not only by producing knowledge and shaping students’ attitudes but also as regional partners.

IN OUR STRATEGY, we have selected sustainable development as one of the themes that guides Laurea’s choices.

WE VIEW EFFECTIVENESS, responsibility and openness which are our values, through the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and take into account the ecological, social and economic impacts of our activities in all our activities. Our best possibility of promoting the achievement of the SDGs lies in our core activities, or education, research, development

and innovation (RDI) as well as regional development. Ensuring that our students and alumni are able to identify the impacts of their actions from the perspective of the SDGs, both in working life and as citizens, is one of the cornerstones of our objectives related to sustainable development. Through our research, development and innovation activities, we create new research evidence and operating models to enable efficient SDG achievement. Regional cooperation with local companies and organisations as well as with our partners is of paramount importance.

WE ALSO PROMOTE SDG achievement as an organisation in all our activities. We use resources responsibly to promote the students’ learning and progress in their studies as well as to carry out effective RDI and regional development work. In addition, we promote equality and non-discrimination in the higher education community. Our strategic commitment to the SDGs is also reflected in the target and performance agreement between the Ministry of Education and Culture and Laurea for the period 2021–2024.

IN NOVEMBER 2020, the Rectors’ Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (Arene) adopted a Programme for the sustainable development and responsibility

of universities of applied sciences. It states that the UASs will strive to reduce their carbon footprint so that they will be carbon neutral by 2030. Key factors in reducing higher education institutions’ carbon footprint include more efficient space use and improved energy efficiency of buildings as well as minimising emissions from travel. The best way to achieve this is through the everyday actions and choices of all higher education community members.

IN LAUREA’S ACTIONS aiming to promote the attainment of the SDGs, special attention is also paid to procurements: in addition to having economic objectives, they must also be ecologically and socially responsible. The sustainable development goals described in this programme and their effectiveness are evaluated regularly as part of Laurea’s (strategic) management and quality management. Laurea reports on its actions and their effectiveness as part of the annual societal impact report, in addition to which open communication on our website enables up-to-date monitoring of the efforts to promote SDG achievement. The Programme for Sustainable Development is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, making it possible to systematically account for any changes

in the operating environment and agilely integrate them into Laurea’s activities.



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TO DETERMINE OUR GOALS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, WE EXAMINED THE CURRENT STATE OF ITS MANIFESTATION IN THE DAILY LIFE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY IN 2020:

THE INTEGRATION OF sustainable development themes into degree programmes has begun, and this work will be continued systematically and extended to all education activities at Laurea. A decision has been made to include circular economy themes in all degree programmes, and this work has already started in the Business Management programme. We also take into account the social dimension of circular economy (social circular economy). The core studies in our Master's Degree Programme in Sustainable Growth Management strengthen the students' management skills related to sustainable development, with business development as a particular focus. In addition, circular economy themes have been promoted in education through a study path launched in 3UAS cooperation. The inclusion of voluntary work in studies has been made possible for students. We encourage our staff to participate in voluntary work every year.

UNDER THE SERVICE Business and Circular Economy research programme, research

related to the SDGs is conducted in about 20 projects, some of which are EU-funded. The themes of these projects include circular economy business models, sustainable urban development, tourism and nutrition. In the calls for proposals of the Sustainable and versatile social and health care research programme, the impact of a planned project on the UN's SDGs is assessed. In our 3UAS RDI cooperation, we participate in sustainable urban development projects. We engage in versatile cooperation with our partners in projects with different sustainable development themes. This has enabled us to identify our partners' needs to set sustainable development goals and develop circular economy business. We participate in the activities of regional networks that promote sustainable development and the circular economy (Espoo Cleantech Garden, the circular economy networks of Vantaa and western Uusimaa), and we also look for partners and opportunities for cooperation in international networks with a view to promoting sustainable development, especially in Uusimaa region.

WE ARE AWARE of the disparities related to space use and energy efficiency between our campuses, which are due to different reasons.

WE KEEP TRACK of issues related to campus maintenance and take sustainable

development into account in the monitoring of water and energy consumption, among other things. Three of our campuses have solar panels on their roofs (Tikkurila, Porvoo and Lohja). Our shared multi-purpose office models enable more flexible and efficient space use. Adaptability has been one of the goals as we renovate our learning facilities.

WE COMPLY WITH public procurement legislation and prefer framework agreements with pre-set criteria, also those related to the SDGs. We strive to make centralised procurements of products and services and follow our procurement guidelines in all purchases. We only work with responsible partners and prepare invitations to tender carefully to meet the statutory requirements of fairness, non-discrimination, transparency and proportionality.

OUR RESTAURANT AND learning environment BarLaurea has been recognized multiple times for its goal-oriented work as a more sustainable catering services provider. The restaurant services on the other campuses, which have been subjected to a tendering process, are committed to jointly defined sustainable development goals which we



are constantly developing together. We have identified predicting the number of customers at our campus restaurants as a challenge for minimizing food losses

OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT mainly consists of travel between home and the campus and between the campuses as well as air travel. Our travel guidelines recommend the use of public transport. In our investments, we comply with the UN's principles of responsible investment. We have identified a need to communicate about and make visible the concrete measures we take to promote SDG attainment, and we encourage every member of our community to commit to the objectives set in our strategy.

Laurea's resolve and goals related to sustainable development

WE HAVE DEFINED thematic goals for our activities which promote sustainable development as we make progress towards a UAS of sustainable development in 2030 as set out in our strategy. Our goals during strategy period 2021–2024 are:

SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

LAUREA'S STUDENTS AND alumni are known as solution-oriented experts in sustainable development and circular economy and reformers of working life.

- Learning outcomes with a particular focus on sustainable development are included in all of our degree programmes
- Competence related to responsibility, which has been defined as a general working life skill common to all degree programmes, is developed systematically across all degree programmes
- We support student entrepreneurship focusing on sustainable development solutions
- In all our education activities, we ensure that equality and accessibility are realised in higher education

- RDI projects with sustainable development themes are integrated into teaching using the pedagogical method of Learning by Developing (LbD)
- 3UAS cooperation related to the themes of sustainable development and circular economy associated with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals brings added value to Laurea's educational offering
- Individual study units and broader competence modules related to sustainable development themes are offered in different implementation forms of continuous learning
- Our students' theses extensively promote the attainment of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals
- The Circular Economy Living Lab serves as a collaborative platform, a learning and development environment and a showcase of Laurea's activities and results on the campuses and online

SUSTAINABLE RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION (RDI)

THROUGH ITS RDI activities, Laurea produces knowledge and creates operating models which support SDG achievement in keeping with the research programmes and cross-cutting themes. Laurea also shares this competence more widely in society through its business activities, including continuing education.

- Sustainable development policies and objectives in keeping with our fields of expertise, on the basis of which our project portfolio is evaluated, have been set for our research programmes and cross-cutting themes
- We are committed to the Declaration for open science and research, which promotes open and free access to publications and research data. This way, Laurea's applied research also benefits other actors extensively
- RDI actors communicate actively on the Sustainable Laurea web page and produce diverse publications describing their sustainable development activities as part of research and development

- Through the integration of RDI and teaching, we ensure that the latest research evidence is incorporated in the education activities, and we produce sustainable development solutions and innovations for the needs of the region and our partners
- Our personnel's sustainable development expertise supports our RDI work
- Persons serving as project managers complete Certified Project Manager training, which covers the dimensions of sustainable development and circular economy
- We implement a culture of experimentation and test sustainable development innovations through the Living Labs
- The continuing education we offer transfers expertise and sustainable development capabilities to customer organisations.

SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNER ACTIVITIES

LAUREA IS A RECOGNISED supporter of sustainable development in organisations and a developer of solutions in the region of Uusimaa.

- Our networks support the integration of sustainable development into education and RDI
- We work actively in international networks to strengthen the sustainable development expertise of Laurea, our partners and our region
- Methodical data collection enables systematic mapping of our key partners' sustainable development needs
- We actively exert influence in Uusimaa region by promoting the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals
- Our higher education community and stakeholders participate in education and RDI activities related to sustainable development through our Circular Economy Living Lab. We organise topical information sessions, visits and workshops

SUSTAINABLE CAMPUSES

LAUREA'S FACILITIES SERVE the activities effectively, are used efficiently and load their environment as little as possible.

- The facilities on our campuses promote well-being, can be used efficiently and are accessible. Our multi-purpose facilities serve all users flexibly

- Our campuses are energy-efficient, and we utilise renewable energy sources
- Proper maintenance and regular services as well as sustainable procurements ensure that our campuses have a long life cycle
- Sustainable development goals and measures have been specified for property maintenance services, and we monitor their achievement together with our service partners
- Rather than procuring new items, we primarily use repair and renovation services when furniture and equipment reach the end of their life cycle. As far as possible, we recycle responsibly any furniture and equipment that Laurea can no longer use
- We improve the at-source sorting of wastes by means of enabling and guidance, set requirements for further treatment, and take various measures to prevent the generation of waste
- We will introduce a campus user feedback system based on QR codes

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT, EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

LAUREA ADDRESSES THE ecological, social and economic impacts of all procurements.

- We make sustainable procurements in keeping with the set objectives
- Our procurements are cost-effective, resource efficient and socially fair, and they reduce emissions
- Our procurements support SMEs and the vitality of the region and local markets.

We operate in reliable procurement networks and, through procurement contracts, promote carbon neutrality goals, responsible production chains and energy efficiency

SUSTAINABLE CATERING SERVICES

LAUREA IS A PIONEER of providing and organising sustainable catering services.

- We influence our carbon footprint by choosing sustainable catering services
- We exert influence by sharing information and good practices related to responsible catering services
- The food served at the campus restaurants is mainly locally produced and plant-based
- We reduce food losses by improving our ability to predict the customer numbers at our campus restaurants

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

AT LAUREA, TRAVEL is judicious and appropriate, and its environmental impacts are managed.

- The size of the carbon footprint created by our mobility supports our goal of being a carbon-neutral higher education institution in 2030
- We use digitalisation, virtual environments and telework appropriately in the activities of the higher education community and in our cooperation with regional and international partners

- We favour public transport in our travel practices
- When planning trips abroad, we ensure through reporting that the trip promotes the organisation's strategic goals
- We investigate and collect information on the higher education community members' mobility between home and

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- the campuses, as well as between the different campuses, to support the reduction of the carbon footprint
- We create new solutions for sustainable mobility in cooperation with students and the UAS network in order to reduce climate impacts

A SUSTAINABLE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY

LAUREA'S OPERATIONS ARE managed systematically to achieve the SDGs. Each member of the higher education community is aware of their responsibilities and acts accordingly. Laurea's carbon footprint is calculated annually.

- The members of our higher education community recognise the tools available for them for promoting sustainable development in their work, because the choices of the individual matter. We ensure that everyone is familiar with the policies guiding our work on sustainable development and recognises their role in promoting them.
- We implement, promote and monitor our sustainable development choices as part of our strategic choices and development projects. We define sustainability targets for development projects annually and monitor progress made in them as part of the operational and financial plan.
- We challenge our enthusiastic higher education community to co-creation sustainable development solutions and innovations that support the achievement of our goals.
- Our sustainable development activities are student-centred and conducted in cooperation with the entire higher education community.
- Our teaching personnel's sustainable development expertise is developed systematically, and the continuous development of expertise promotes high-quality delivery of our education activities.

The development of expertise takes place as part of national UAS cooperation on the theme of sustainable development but also locally at Laurea

- *The personnel's sustainable development expertise is included in each employee's personal goals. Laurea participates regularly in a national survey measuring the personnel's sustainable development expertise*
- *We use society's resources responsibly to promote the students' learning and progress in their studies as well as sustainable regional development*
- *Students' sustainable development initiatives are promoted in a dialogue with the student union Laureamko*
- *We centralise our communication related to promoting sustainable development goals and make it transparent with the help of a new website. As information is gathered to a single location, the effectiveness of the activities can be examined openly*
- *We ensure that our resources are used responsibly in investment activities*
- *Our allocation of working time ensures that our activities and results optimally promote the achievement of Laurea's goals*
- *We look after the well-being of the higher education community's members and, as a responsible employer, provide the preconditions for working and studying sustainably*
- *We make choices that uphold a culture of equality and non-discrimination, and we address any infringements in these areas*

Sustainable development is linked as a qualitative indicator to the quantitative indicators already used in connection with the themes described above. The achievement of and progress made with these indicators are examined as part of monitoring the critical change projects defined in the strategy.

You can follow the progress of Laurea's Sustainable Development Programme and concrete measures taken to achieve the goals by theme at **www.laurea.fi/kestavalaurea**

Follow our progress on social media
[@laureauas](https://twitter.com/laureauas)

OUR DEFINITIONS:

In general, sustainable development means a continuous local and global change aiming to secure possibilities for a good life for the current and future generations. **The three aspects of this concept are ecological, social and economic sustainability.** Ecological sustainability refers to adapting all human activities to nature's carrying capacity. It is related to sustainable consumption, production, use of natural resources and, for example, biodiversity issues. Economic sustainability means balanced growth not based on indebtedness or squandering of reserves. A sustainable economy is the foundation of social sustainability. The aim of social sustainability is to ensure that the prerequisites for welfare can be passed on from one generation to another. Among other things, it means equal opportunities for education, social inclusion and a safe life. The areas and objectives of sustainable development are examined in the context of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

The objective of the circular economy is an economy which operates within the ecological boundaries. In a circular economy, products and materials remain in the economic cycle, maintaining their value for as long as possible, and can then be returned to either technological production processes or biological cycles. Systemic approach as well as new modes of production and consumption and business models are at its centre. The circular economy is considered a key means of achieving sustainable development goals in the areas of production and consumption. The European Union and Finland rely on the circular economy as their new economic foundation. It also enables the achievement of social sustainability goals. For the circular economy to become a reality, extensive changes are needed in society and the economy, therefore a just transition and the impact of the changes on society's organisation must be accounted for. This can be referred to as a social circular economy, in which the perspectives of social sustainability are also included in examinations of the circular economy.

