

An internationalisation strategy to gather our strengths and set priorities

Introduction

LiU's internationalisation strategy is based on LiU's overall strategy and vision. It is intended to strengthen the university's development and quality in research, education, collaboration, and administrative support.

The Swedish government has expressed a clear expectation that higher education and research should actively participate in international initiatives to reinforce Sweden as an attractive knowledge-based nation and as an obvious part of global knowledge development. This also means that institutions of higher education must continuously develop in order to keep up with changes in society, and that the study programmes and courses offered must match the demands of an increasingly global labour market. Proactive work with internationalisation goes hand-in-hand with work to improve successful core activities and ensure high quality.

The global challenges cannot be solved within national borders. On the contrary, extensive international collaboration is needed. Higher education and research play a particularly important role in the implementation of Agenda 2030 in an international context, and in the utilisation of knowledge assets in collaboration with other players.

In addition, internationalisation of university operations has an important task in promoting the spread of fact-based knowledge in a world where such knowledge is increasingly questioned. Thus, internationalisation has an important role to play in promoting the development towards a knowledge-based society founded on sustainable democracy.

The quality in education and research, as well as the global challenges, the sustainable democratic knowledge-based society and LiU's part in the global knowledge development mobilise LiU to work with internationalisation actively and in an integrated manner that permeates all its activities.

Thus, the internationalisation strategy adopted by LiU is a strategy for the university in its entirety. However, neither the internationalisation work, nor the needs within LiU's various organisational parts are homogeneous. In order to ensure that the implementation of the strategy is carried out in the best possible

manner and to achieve the best possible results, the faculties, university services and departments are to describe, in their plans of action, how they intend to work towards reaching the objectives of the strategy. Where university-wide needs within internationalisation can be identified, university-wide assignments are to be included in the LiU plan of operations. In addition, the internationalisation strategy is to be included as background information during the annual operational dialogues conducted by the management.

LiU's strategy and vision for internationalisation

By ensuring that the entire university contributes, LiU can establish a presence, have an impact, and achieve results nearly all over the globe, through a wide variety of collaborations, projects and activities. However, on occasion it will be necessary to gather our strengths and set priorities among these international collaborations and activities. The purpose of LiU's internationalisation strategy is to give direction and support to the processes of gathering strength and setting priorities.

The strategy is divided into five areas:

1. LiU's international standing
2. Internationalisation at home
3. International collaboration
4. Support for internationalisation
5. Prioritised geographical regions

All five strategy areas concern education, research, collaboration and administrative support. Future work with the strategy is based on united and continuous execution of internationalisation, the sharing of experiences within this work, and evaluation and an adaptation of focus based on what is necessary in order to develop and strengthen the international profile of Linköping University.

The aim of the strategy is that the following long-term vision will be achieved:

“LiU is a university of international standing – where people and ideas converge and develop. Through high quality and relevance of its education and research, LiU contributes to making Sweden one of the most attractive international centres of knowledge. International understanding and intercultural competence are natural and integral components of LiU's collected operations. In its work with internationalisation, LiU collaborates with the surrounding society to solve contemporary regional, national and global challenges.”

1. LiU's international standing

Research is and has long been internationalised, in that researchers seek out other researchers and attractive research environments based on research interests rather than nationality. Neither can education, in the rapidly changing and global world of today, be seen as an activity that can be restricted within national borders. LiU is an institution of higher education at which the research and education maintain high quality and relevance. However, just like other Swedish institutions of higher education, it is active in a reality in which competition for attractive researchers and students extends far outside of Sweden's borders. To maintain the high quality and relevance of its operations, the world around us must be aware of LiU and LiU's strengths.

Goal: *The world around us is aware of LiU as an institution of higher education with research and education of high quality and relevance. LiU is perceived to be an innovator, and as an institution of higher education that contributes to enabling people to take on contemporary challenges.*

This is to be achieved by: *promoting and making visible the strengths of LiU's research and educational environments, and creating the conditions required for LiU to become a stronger international player.*

Indicators of development in the right direction:

- LiU's research has a substantial international impact due to both its creativity and for its transfer of research results.
- The research and educational environments at LiU are attractive for international teachers, researchers, students and collaborators.
- With the aid of external collaborators and through setting its own priorities, LiU has a high visibility in selected geographical regions¹.
- LiU achieves high placings in international ranking lists.
- All fields of study at LiU offer courses and programmes in English, designed to be compatible with the LiU objective to offer education that enables people to take on contemporary challenges.
- LiU's programmes given in English attract not only Swedish students, but also those from within and beyond Europe.

¹ Further information is given at Strategy Area5.

2. Internationalisation at home

The labour market of today and society in general place increased demands on students who graduate from higher education: they must possess intercultural understanding and be able to act in international contexts. The need for enhanced internationalisation of research and education increases the demands that teachers, researchers, and personnel within administrative support at the university possess corresponding skills.

The concept of “internationalisation at home” normally includes the integration of international and intercultural dimensions into formal and informal education for students in their educational environments. Even if the focus of this area is mainly within education and on the student, LiU has chosen to include also activities with the purpose to increase the international and intercultural understanding of LiU’s staff. LiU has also chosen to see the objective of enhanced international and intercultural understanding from the perspective that international students and staff are to be given the opportunity to understand and act in a Swedish context.

Goal: *All students, including doctoral students, who graduate from LiU have developed their international and intercultural understanding. LiU’s employees have the skills required to work in international and intercultural contexts.*

This is to be achieved by: *including international and intercultural perspectives in LiU’s study programmes and all other operations.*

Indicators of development in the right direction:

- After finishing their education, LiU’s students have the ability to place the knowledge gained during their education into a global context and are well equipped for a global labour market.
- The students and employees at LiU display international and cultural diversity.
- The knowledge of the world around us that LiU’s employees and students with international backgrounds bring with them is taken advantage of and contributes to increasing the international and intercultural understanding of students and employees.

3. International collaboration

LiU has a long tradition of collaboration and working with the surrounding society, both within and outside of the higher education sector. This means that LiU has a good basis for achieving its goal of contributing to taking on contemporary challenges. The objective of ensuring that internationalisation permeates all LiU’s operations entails that international collaboration is encouraged at all levels of the

organisation. The Swedish Research Council showed in its Research Barometer from 2019 that the proportion of articles with international co-authorship across all branches of science increased by 20% in the period 2007 to 2017. In this way, the ability of researchers to establish, develop and enjoy international collaboration becomes closely linked to the development of university operations.

Goal: *International collaboration and working with international partners reinforce the quality of LiU's education and research, and contribute to taking on societal challenges.*

This is to be achieved by: *encouraging internationalisation activities across the complete field of LiU's research, education and collaboration, as well as simultaneously gathering strengths around strategically selected international collaborations.*

Indicators of development in the right direction:

- LiU gives priority to educational and research collaboration with foreign partner universities in which several faculties and departments are, or have the potential to become, involved, and where there are excellent opportunities to develop different forms of collaboration.
- The degree of international co-publication of LiU's researchers is at the same level as the development within Sweden in each relevant discipline.
- All study programmes at LiU have been designed to make international mobility possible.
- LiU has a high participation in European educational and research programmes.
- LiU gives priority to supporting the development of educational and research collaborations in LiU's prioritized geographical regions².
- LiU participates in and/or leads educational and research collaborations within the framework of strategic networks.
- LiU participates in and/or leads Swedish initiatives and projects in internationalisation.

² Further information is given at Strategy Area 5.

4. Support for internationalisation

Successful internationalisation requires well-developed support for students, prospective students, employees and guests. This requires also that the university improves the preconditions that are required for internationalisation to become an integral part of LiU's operations and be conducted centrally, by the faculties, and by the departments. An important part of this is a collective responsibility, and that the operations are characterised by "One Way In".

International and intercultural expertise also plays an important role among the technical and administrative personnel. This requires a high awareness and good knowledge of the intercultural composition of students and staff. In addition, service must be available in both Swedish and English for international guests and newly engaged employees to obtain support in their day-to-day life. For this reason, it is important that international expertise is taken into consideration during career and continuing professional development for all LiU employees.

Goal: *LiU has well-developed administrative support that promotes the integration of internationalisation in all parts of the university and that is characterised by the principle of "One Way In".*

This is to be achieved by: *designing support with respect to internationalisation based on the perspective of students and co-workers.*

Indicators of development in the right direction:

- Recruitment and reception of international teachers and researchers take place using well-developed and unified administrative support following the principle of "One Way In".
- HR possesses a collective expertise for international recruitment and longer international exchanges.
- International experience is a merit during recruitment, and international and intercultural skills development is offered to employees.
- International students and employees have similar preconditions to carry out their studies and work as corresponding groups of Swedes.
- LiU offers service and support to international guests and newly engaged staff, and communication to these groups is available in both Swedish and English.
- International students have the opportunity to make their voices heard during their period of study at LiU.

- LiU employees and students enjoy good opportunities to participate in international mobility, and international mobility is encouraged.
- LiU teachers, researchers and doctoral students enjoy good opportunities to participate in international research collaborations and in international networks.
- LiU has a high preparedness to manage the evaluation and qualification assessment of applicants from non-EU countries.

5. Prioritised geographical regions

If the ambitious goal that internationalisation is to permeate all university activities and result in increased quality of education, research and collaboration are to be achieved, a well thought-through and responsible use of LiU resources for internationalisation will be necessary. In order to achieve this and at the same time create international collaboration that is sustainable in the long term, LiU must set priorities on its university-wide initiatives for certain geographical regions where a broad and deep internal commitment is available and/or has the potential to develop this, and where collaboration with external actors, Swedish and international, can be identified.

Goal: *The collaborations that are initiated at LiU should have the potential to become robust, i.e. they should be sustainable and generate a good “return on investment” in the form of high-quality education, research and societal impact.*

This is to be achieved by: *LiU concentrates its efforts for university-wide internationalisation to a few prioritised geographical regions.*

Indicators of development in the right direction:

- The LiU plan of operations describes a few geographical regions that have been given priority for the long-term work of the university.
- Important collaboration partners are involved to increase presence, availability and visibility in the prioritised regions.
- Within the prioritised geographical regions, there are activities such as research and educational collaboration, staff and student mobility, collaboration with external organisations outside of academia, projects to increase capacity, and student recruitment.
- Collaborations in the prioritised geographical regions are coordinated by administrative support and are developed in close collaboration with other operational units, in particular faculties and departments.