

BOKU University's Strategy for Internationalisation 2010 - 2020

Foreword by Rector

University development today has to take into account the international context. We face a global competition for the best scientists and the best students. BOKU aims to be a globally active university, with a clear focus on its strengths and core competences. International recruiting of faculty members and of students is a basis for the future development of BOKU. Strong international partners guarantee further options in developing joint curricula, exchange of students and faculty and development of co-operative research programs. To bolster further the internationalization process, fostering quality management and development of international university networks are important core activities for the future.

From the BOKU Mission Statement :

“The BOKU professes to being an international performer in research and teaching, cooperating across national and international borders, and initiating open-mindedness towards new developments.”

BOKU is the most important Austrian resource for research for development (experts, teaching and research); it is also to become the first point of reference for relevant international and Austrian organisations in this field by 2020. A key aspect of the identity of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna is its own development cooperation strategy.

The activities of BOKU in non-OECD countries and in the primary focus regions with regard to the strategy for the internationalisation of BOKU are to be continued at the current level and intensified, if possible; first, to underpin the importance of BOKU's collaborations in the area of Research for Development and second, as a support measure.

An interdisciplinary approach is contemplated as a priority and realised more strongly within BOKU. Quality standards for co-operation networks are to be developed. An interdisciplinary international Alumni-Network has to be developed and also to be used in the long run for fundraising purposes.

BOKU is committed to international university benchmarking in teaching and research, to collaborations across boundaries and to a proactive openness towards new developments.

University's international ambition

To be, within its area of expertise, the first point of reference in Austria for international education, research, innovation and development, and to be ranked within the top 50 leading international Life Science universities within Europe.

University Mission Statement for internationalisation

BOKU is committed to engagement in education, research, innovation and development beyond its national boundaries, in its region and globally

BOKU will fulfil this Mission by focusing on the following goals

- Increase in both incoming and outgoing student mobility in order to accelerate the internationalisation of the university.
- The most important goal in the next few years can be characterised by the key-words "Internationalisation at Home" meaning increased teaching staff mobility, the offering of international and interdisciplinary study programs as well as the establishment or development of an "international classroom". (This should reflect the fact that not every student is interested in or able to study abroad.)
- In order to take better advantage of synergies in the areas of both teaching and continuing education, as well as research, the development of international cooperative networks with both European and non-European states (especially in the field of development assistance) should be strengthened. Attention should be paid primarily to interdisciplinary approaches, and also be implemented to a greater extent within BOKU itself. BOKU's involvement in cross-disciplinary networks (EUA, AUCEN, ELLS; ICA, IROICA, AGRINATURA) should be continued and taken forward. BOKU has established a Central Europe network in 2010 as a regional sub-group of the ICA.
- BOKU cooperates with international organisations with offices in Vienna (e.g. IIASA, UN) in terms of teaching (guest teachers at BOKU, student visits and practicals) and research (topics of theses and dissertations, joint projects). In principle, this should begin with research cooperation and be followed by teaching activities.
- International alumni and alumni in international organisations are key individuals for BOKU's internationalisation strategy and contact points in these international networks. International, cross-disciplinary alumni networks are given a central role within BOKU. An international, cross-disciplinary alumni network will be developed.
- In the interest of a better use of synergy effects, both in general teaching and in continuing education, as well as in research, the development of INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION NETWORKS should be considerably strengthened.

Core Objectives

Learning and Teaching

Foreword by Vice-Rector for Teaching and International Affairs

Our vision is to be a leading, attractive international university, as international recognized partner for students and researchers as teachers from all over the world. International mobility among researchers and students is a driving force in higher education for information exchange, critical thinking interaction and dialogue between lecturers and students, necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century. BOKU wishes to strengthen its position by strongly supporting "internationalisation at home" and "cross-border" to bring forward international talent development and knowledge exchange. Increased efforts to implement international curricula and Joint-study programs set up with partner Universities underpin the internationalisation strategy of BOKU

As teaching is contextually close to research, the international aspects of the strategic plans for teaching and learning should be more oriented towards the key areas of research.

Statement of where the university is in terms of the internationalisation of learning and teaching

The high level of international cooperation of BOKU academics is also reflected in the curricula offered: eight international master's programmes, including seven double degree programmes, which are offered partially or entirely in English, a high proportion of foreign students in degree programmes (including over a third from non-EU states) and a high level of student mobility provide evidence of this.

Objectives

- With regard to outgoing student mobility we strive to meet and exceed the goal that at least 50 % of all BOKU graduates will have spent some time abroad as part of the studies by 2020.
- Increase in the proportion of international students to 20% of the total student number. In particular students from the primary focus regions as set out in the strategy for the internationalisation of BOKU as well as from non-OECD countries are to be attracted to study at BOKU
- Implementation of measures to increase student mobility with Bachelor Curricula designed to facilitate mobility and to ensure recognition by BOKU. It is planned to enter corresponding agreements with relevant organisations (e.g. arrangement of internships through IAAS, IAESTE, IFSA)
- Successful implementation of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System)..Once the change to BOKU Online has been completed, the technical requirements for the collection of data will have been established as required for the award of the Diploma Supplement (DS); we will therefore endeavour to receive certification through the EU.
- Increase in and structured expansion of the classes taught in English in the master's programmes
- Expansion of classes taught in English within the framework of doctoral programmes, particularly for "Doktoratskollegs"
- In non-OECD countries and in the focus regions, BOKU is to be more actively involved in teaching, or win BOKU students from non-OECD countries/focus regions
- Increase in the number of international guest teachers (= guest lecturers and guest professors) - in the middle run on the level of Bachelor degree programs 3 semester hours in each subject area by the guest teacher are intended to be held and on the level of Master degree programs it should be 6 semester hours in each subject area.
- Development of foreign language, international and interdisciplinary study programs (e.g. Joint- or (only in cases where the national law does not allow to issue Joint Degrees:) Double/Multiple-Degree programs, such as NARMEE, Horticultural Sciences). In the middle run the goal is to develop foreign-language specification possibilities (in accordance with the target group) in cooperation with several universities for every Master degree subject area. In the long run these specification possibilities should be extended after respective evaluations have been carried out and taking the degrees for international Master degree programs into consideration.
- Development of international continuing education courses which are geared to the competence fields such as Summer Universities specific short courses on-site (for example organised via the Centre for Development Research), but also specific additional offers for university alumni. These have to be held on a regular basis and need to be marketed internationally. Quality standards for continuing education have to be developed together with incentives for the providers of advanced vocational training and

used as a basis in determining guidelines for the number of continuing education programs that have to be developed.

Targets and performance standards with defined dates for achievement (Testable)

No.	Goal(s)	Indicator	Value2009	Target value		
				2010	2011	2012
6.3	Partner universities	Number of non-Austrian partner universities in joint study programmes	20	20	20	20
6.4.	Student mobility	Increase in the proportion of BOKU students who stayed abroad as part of their studies	3%	3%	3%	3%

No.	Goal(s)	– Indicator	To be achieved by
2	Outgoing Student mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At least 50 % of all BOKU graduates will have spent some time abroad as part of the studies</i> • <i>internships for BSc students via IAAS, IAESTE, IFSA:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Agreements with relevant organisations</i> - <i>Offering internships to students</i> 	<p>2020</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2011/12</p>
3	Incoming Student Mobility	<i>Increase in the proportion of international students to 20% of the total student number. In particular students from the primary focus regions as set out in the strategy for the internationalisation of BOKU as well as from non-OECD countries are to be attracted to study at BOKU</i>	2020
4	DS Label	<i>Provision of technical requirements for DS label</i>	2012
5	<i>Supporting the increase in the number of courses conducted in English and the development of doctoral programmes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increase of course conducted in English</i> • <i>Development of English doctoral programmes</i> 	<p>2010 to 2012</p> <p>2012</p>
6	<i>Advancement of double degree and joint study programmes, e.g. within EUROLEAGUE</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Further agreements with partner universities</i> • <i>Advancement of current studies</i> 	<p>2010 to 2012</p> <p>2010 to 2012</p>
10	<i>Cooperation with the Vienna offices of international</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Excursions</i> • <i>Invitation of visiting lecturers</i> 	<p>2010</p> <p>2010 - 2012</p>

	organisations (UN, IIASA...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship offers for students • Further co-operation in teaching (e.g. visiting lecturers, excursions, internships) and research (e.g., by means of dissertation or master's thesis topics and joint research projects). 	<p>2010</p> <p>2020</p>
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Implementation plan (see separate document)

Research, Innovation and Development

Foreword by Vice-rector Research and International Research Collaboration

Our vision is to be recognized as one of the leading European Life Sciences University performing cutting-edge research in order to address globally as well as regionally significant research problems within its fields of competencies. Our core objectives will focus on:

- Stimulating international cooperative research projects and programs by networking with European and international partners
- Attracting and recruiting international top scientists, excellent doctoral candidates and encouraging academic exchange to further develop a high-quality research profile
- Further development and implementation of internationally oriented doctoral study programs
- Recognition of our social responsibility by conducting development research and education for developing countries in areas related to sustainable natural resource management
- Contributing to capacity-building in research, innovation and education with special emphasis on the Danube Region
- Active participation of BOKU researchers in international conferences and hosting an increasing number of international conferences at BOKU to further increase the international visibility and scientific profile of BOKU
- Encouraging the involvement of BOKU scientists in activities of the international scientific community

A strengthened **internationalisation of research** is closely linked with an increase in the quality of research (performance).

Objectives

- Strengthened international co-operation and exchange of scientists
- improved mobility of scientists
- better use of sabbaticals
- easier access to BOKU travel funds.

In this context, it is essential to establish mobility in the framework of the EU programs, the FFG, FWF (Lise Meitner, Erwin Schrödinger) and the ÖAW (APART etc.) as well as similar national and international programs serving internationalisation. International contacts have to be facilitated for post-doc exchange (incoming and outgoing Marie-Curie-Fellows). In this area, no exact figures should be stated, but the goal is to raise

awareness of these possibilities and to increase the mobility (compared to the level obtained in 2001/2002).

- Improved support at project initiation and application in the area of international research programmes (EU Framework Programmes)
- Strengthened integration of foreign doctoral and post-doc students in current research projects. (mainly Marie-Curie scholars as those bring in financial funds)

Targets and performance standards with defined dates for achievement (Testable)

No.	Goal(s)	Indicator	Value2009	Target value		
				2010	2011	2012
6.1	Networks	Number of networks in which BOKU is participating	8	8	8	8
6.2	Collaborations	Number of collaborations with international organisations	0	1	2	2

No.	Goal(s)	Indicator	To be achieved by
1	Activities of BOKU in non-OECD countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentation of Research for Development in the primary focus regions – Information about current BOKU activities in the regions – Information services in the primary focus regions (Cooperation with the Austrian Exchange Service) 	2010 2010 2012
7	BOKU's commitment in interdisciplinary networks (EUA, AUCEN, ELLS, ICA; IROICA, AGRINATURA; ASEA-Uninet, EURASIA PACIFIC UNINET, EPSO, BIOTECHUNTE etc.) will be continue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual attendance of meetings and conferences • Implementation of joint initiatives 	2010 to 2012 2012
8	Network of European Life science universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study • Establishment of such a network as a standing committee within ICA 	2012 2020
9	Develop BOKU partnership networks with non-European countries (in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional partnership networks 	2020

	<i>particular in the area of development cooperation).</i>		
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Implementation plan (see separate document)

People

Foreword by the Vice-Rector for Strategic Development

Our vision is to be an attractive place to study and to work – BOKU professes to being an open-minded, interculturally sensitive university that provides the best study and working conditions for its students and employers, irrespective of their nationality.

Objectives we shall:

- Introduce English as the second internal BOKU working language: this means that documents and applications are accepted, processed and answered in English. English skills are a precondition for appointment to an academic post at BOKU.
- When appointing administrative personnel, priority should be given to those with knowledge of English; corresponding continuing education courses should be expanded. BOKU graduates should be able to work in at least two languages and when possible also have knowledge of a third language.
- Targets in relation to academic and administrative personnel: experience abroad for academic personnel in their specialist field should be supported. For this, leaves of absence should be encouraged and the sabbaticals envisaged in the collective contract (Kollektivvertrag) should also be made use of. Administrative personnel should also be enabled to spend work-related time abroad.

Finance

Foreword by the Vice-Rector for Finances

Our vision is to provide the infrastructure and possibilities to enable all our students and staff to co-operate with international partner institutions – either by “Internationalisation at home” (which means fostering incoming teaching staff mobility or virtual mobility) or by student or staff mobility.

Objectives we shall:

In view of the current financial situation of Austrian universities, it has to be seen already as a success if BOKU manages to maintain the actual level of activities. However, of course it is BOKU’s objective, in the framework of the financial possibilities given, to fulfil all the objectives stated in this strategy document.

Although there is an “international budget” for financing study abroad scholarships and teaching staff mobility with overseas partner universities (incoming and outgoing), the full implementation of the goals of the internationalisation strategy can’t be financed exclusively by university-internal funds. Fundraising for scholarships, language courses and

similar “international” activities is thus essential for maintaining and expanding BOKU’s international activities.

APPENDIX

Environmental Analysis

Our perspective – BOKU as an international university

The geo-political situation of BOKU as well as its strong subject specialisation, require the definition and focusing of its external interests. BOKU has taken this into account through the formulation of an internationalisation strategy.

BOKU is the most important Austrian resource for research for development (experts, teaching and research); it is also to become the first point of reference for relevant international and Austrian organisations in this field by 2020. A key aspect of the identity of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna is its own development cooperation strategy.

The classic international mechanisms comprised communication and co-operation of individuals, work groups and institutes. They retain their worth, although co-operation on an institutional basis has increased and the development of networks in research, teaching and continuing education is gradually replacing and removing them. Mental and physical mobility of students, university lecturers, exchanges and multilateral recognition of studies or parts of them are becoming more important.

In 1998, BOKU became one of the first Austrian universities to develop an Internationalisation Strategy. Its actual implementation was evaluated through external, international experts in 2001. The results proved that some objectives were successfully achieved, where others have to be reached yet. Thus the original strategy had to be reviewed and re-formulated. The new Austrian university law also made it necessary to adopt a strategy of quantifiable goals and performance indicators. In terms of a continuous evaluation process revision second external audit of BOKU’s internationalisation strategy was carried out in 2009 and led to another revision of the strategy..

BOKU is committed to international performance comparisons for research and teaching, to cooperation across national boundaries and to openness to new developments.

External pressures and Policy issues

In assorted publications, in particular the White Paper of the European Commission "Teaching and Learning", the merits of internationalisation and its elements are emphasised. We are convinced that the relatively small size of our country and our geo-political situation are exceptional reasons to be more active beyond our national borders.

Governance and management

International affairs at BOKU are the responsibility, at the management level, of the Rectorate, supported by the Committee for Internationalisation. The ZIB (Centre for International Relations) is responsible for the operational implementation and day-to-day administration of international cooperation, as well as the coordination of BOKU’s language courses. The administrative activities of the ZIB are complemented by those of the coordinators within the departments responsible for each partnership or ERASMUS

agreement (who will provide subject-specific support for the cooperation), the members of the Scholarship Nomination Council [Auslandsbeirat] who allocate BOKU's scholarships, and the international contact persons of each department.

Attention has to be paid to the fact that the university structure serves the process of internationalisation and that this has positive effects on future evaluation regulations. The acknowledgement of the international administrative function is essential. This holds especially true for the mid-level faculty that amongst other things has been and is essential for the carrying out of exchange programs in the form of departmental coordinators. This should be evaluated positively in the individual-related evaluation and also needs to be implemented in the objectives of the departments.

Decisive for the successful implementation of this strategy for internationalization is the involvement of all university units in the internationalization process. If internationalization is not to be confined purely to external activities such as increasing student mobility, a general change of outlook in the university's focus on international exchange of knowledge and experience must be appropriately managed in order to upgrade the quality of the university's own spheres of activity. This in turn requires corresponding action by management if such internationalization is to succeed university-wide. It must, therefore, be among the targets of the university to implement vocational training in foreign languages and in the sphere of intercultural communication for both scientific and administrative staff. This is essential if the required open-mindedness necessary for establishing internationally-oriented studies and research is to be guaranteed.

The successful realisation of an international strategy calls for basic structural requirements. These comprise :

- A functional organisational unit which is responsible for the co-ordination of international activities at the university
- A committee which decides the detailed measures in connection with the preparation of the implementation and most importantly
- A university administration which carries the ultimate responsibility for the internationalisation of the university, and acts to implement the international strategy.

Timeline and Goals in the area of international orientation and mobility

No.	Goal(s)	Indicator	value 2009	Target value		
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6.2	Collaborations	Number of collaborations with international organisations	0	1	2	2
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2	Outgoing Student mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 50 % of all BOKU graduates will have spent some time abroad as part of the studies • internships for BSc students via IAAS, IAESTE, IFSA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreements with relevant organisations - Offering internships to students 	2020 2011 2011/12
3	Incoming Student Mobility	Increase in the proportion of international students to 20% of the total student number. In particular students from the primary focus regions as set out in the strategy for the internationalisation of BOKU as well as from non-OECD countries are to be attracted to study at BOKU	2020
4	DS Label	Provision of technical requirements for DS label	2012
5	Supporting the increase in the number of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of course conducted in English • Development of English doctoral 	2010 to 2012

	courses conducted in English and the development of doctoral programmes		2012
6	Advancement of double degree and joint study programmes, e.g. within EUROLEAGUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further agreements with partner universities • Advancement of current studies 	2010 to 2012 2010 to 2012
7	BOKU's commitment in interdisciplinary networks (EUA, AUCEN, ELLS, ICA; IROICA, AGRINATURA; ASEA-Uninet, EURASIA PACIFIC UNINET, EPSO, BIOTECHUNTE etc.) will be continue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual attendance of meetings and conferences • Implementation of joint initiatives 	2010 to 2012 2012
8	Network of European Life science universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study • Establishment of such a network as a standing committee within ICA 	2012 2020
9	Develop BOKU partnership networks with non-European countries (in particular in the area of development cooperation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional partnership networks 	2020
10	Cooperation with the Vienna offices of international organisations (UN, IIASA...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excursions • Invitation of visiting lecturers • Internship offers for students • Further co-operation in teaching (e.g. visiting lecturers, excursions, internships) and research (e.g., by means of dissertation or master's 	2010 2010 - 2012 2010 2020

		thesis topics and joint research projects).	
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Implementation plan (will be presented a separate document)