

## HKU European Policy Statement

### General information

It is the mission of HKU University of the Arts Utrecht (HKU) to provide innovative learning contexts in which art can be practiced, experienced and researched. With 4000 students, HKU is the largest educational institution for arts, culture and media in the Netherlands, and one of the largest in Europe. Across eight schools, HKU offers preparatory courses, bachelor and master programmes in fine arts, media and design, music, theatre, games, interaction, music and technology, arts education and arts and economics. Foreign students can attend as a bachelor or master student as well as an exchange student within the framework of programmes such as Erasmus+.

The educational philosophy of HKU is future-oriented and grounded in practice-based education and research. HKU seeks to make critical connections between educational, research and industry-based activities. HKU offers a challenging and stimulating educational environment that rewards curiosity and experimentation. Such an environment is essential for the growing creative artist and the budding creative entrepreneur.

The motto of HKU is: *The Art of HKU – new practices, new solutions*. This statement directly points to our connection with the outside world. Regional and international collaboration is a high priority for the creative industry and for HKU. In recent years HKU has entered into alliances with educational and research establishments, companies and governments in various parts of the world. These alliances comprise student exchanges, internships, lecturer exchanges, research collaborations, education and applied research and innovation networks and projects.

### Internationalisation strategy

HKU's internationalisation strategy is an integral part of the overall strategic plan of HKU 2013-2018 and contributes to all the key objectives of the strategic plan: education, research and support services to promote and recognize the international activities for students, staff and researchers.

The comprehensive internationalisation strategy includes accreditation and quality assurance systems that allow recognition of a HKU degree across borders, offering an international study and working environment for students, teachers, researchers and staff. This is then reflected in graduates who have skills and knowledge to learn, create and find employment in an international context.

The main objective of international cooperation activities of HKU - be it within the framework of Erasmus+ or other programmes - is to achieve an international orientation for its students to participate in an increasingly globalised society. This should lead to an increase of their professional, social and intercultural skills and employability. HKU holds the view that direct individual experience in another cultural, linguistic and educational setting is a very powerful and useful element in the development of a person's growth. International student mobility is a direct and important way to achieve this goal, but not the only one. HKU also focuses on an indirect, but more structural approach by increasing the international dimensions of education itself, through international staff mobility, international curriculum development, internationalisation at home and international projects.

HKU has carefully built an active and a reliable global network of strategic partners from different sectors in Europe, Northern America, Latin America, Asia, Australia and Africa. HKU selects its partners based on their added value for institutional educational and research development and innovation. These alliances strengthen the 'knowledge triangle', linking education, research and business or industries in various parts of the world. HKU has also been proactive in capacity building projects in third-world countries. International cooperation activities are usually developed and implemented in bilateral or multilateral (network) agreements.

HKU is an active member of many international networks such as the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), the art, design and media education association Cumulus and the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC).

### **Research and Innovation**

Research within HKU is classified under four [Professorships](#), covering a wide range of fields and under four Centres of Expertise. We deploy applied research to enable us to focus on developing creative and technological solutions, not only for the cultural and creative industries but a variety of other sectors such as healthcare, education, the built environment, mobility and emerging smart territories. The aim of these research and innovation [projects](#) is to contribute to the further development of the sectors for which we are training students. Many of our research projects are on the cutting edge of various disciplines. We encourage future designers, creators and producers to develop research skills to help them see past the borders of their own disciplines and create meaningful crossover initiatives.

HKU has been a successful pioneer in the Netherlands, participating in many international research projects and establishing strategic cooperation and partnerships with pan-European research consortia. This has delivered rich research and educational outcomes as well as providing a strong basis for the further sustainable development of knowledge and innovation clusters, new networks and incubators and policy support at regional and European levels. These initiatives take place within the framework of programmes such as Erasmus+, Horizon2020, Creative Europe and INTERREG.

### **Quadruple Helix Partnerships**

Based on its institutional profile, educational philosophy, knowledge and expertise, HKU is constantly developing new models for collaboration in the - so-called - Quadruple Helix. This helix consists of multidisciplinary cooperation projects between universities, enterprises, government agencies and civil society organisations. They work together on designing solutions for societal themes contributing to innovation, economic development or human well-being. International education and research projects promote the necessary transnational or transregional education, research and design environments.

The Entrepreneurship 2020 action plan identified the need to create a more dynamic culture of entrepreneurship in Europe in order to nurture the new generation of entrepreneurs and a key component lies in enhancing entrepreneurship education. The need to further adapt education and training systems that are closer to the needs of companies is particularly felt in the cultural and creative industry sector and this is understood as a key issue at a regional level within the Smart Specialisation Strategy for Utrecht.

Including the Quadruple Helix in HKU's internationalisation strategy optimizes the possibilities to involve our partner institutions abroad and to attract international students and staff to join the educational and research projects. The binding element in the organisation and implementation of this strategy are the facilitation and moderation by HKU in acquiring and linking preferred partners to such initiatives. This helps to translate issues and challenges into educational and research questions for students and staff, involving partners from the Quadruple Helix both in the Netherlands and abroad.