

## **ERASMUS+ Policy Statement of the Technical University of Munich**

### **Erasmus as cornerstone of TUM's internationalization**

TUM aims at continuing the success story of its participation in the Erasmus+ program and its predecessors. With over 30 years of experience in implementing structured individual mobility (consistently ranking among the top institutions in Germany in terms of outgoing numbers), TUM will continue to spread European values and inspire the next generation of learners through increased, diversified and more inclusive exchange opportunities provided and funded by Erasmus. TUM acknowledges the immense transformative impact of the Erasmus+ program and its predecessors on European Higher Education. TUM intends to use it to further its own modernization agenda and contribute to shaping the European Education Area, be it through increased participation in projects for innovation and exchange of good practices, in the flagship European Universities Initiative or at the forefront of digitizing administrative processes (e.g. in piloting Erasmus Without Papers).

### **Program objectives fully aligned with TUM's institutional strategy**

With its overall strategy (which helped TUM secure the title of "University of Excellence" for the third time in 2019), TUM is undertaking the most fundamental transformation in its 150-year history. TUM's modernization agenda for 2030 is centred around the development of talent and competencies on all levels and is fully in line with Erasmus program objectives. For instance, TUM's Agenda 2030 aims at developing international competency for the administration in favour of a more customer-focused, digital and international approach, inspired by the dynamic developments in scientific research at TUM and the university's global networking. Erasmus opportunities for staff will be fully integrated into an overarching concept for internationalizing university administration. Staff mobility will play an important role in conceptualising and benchmarking processes and structures at TUM with international partners. A newly established central unit at TUM aims at streamlining processes and programs with view to sustainability and will support efforts towards more environmentally friendly mobility and cooperation arrangements, fully in line with Erasmus program objectives.

Two decades after the successful development of TUM's Asian network (including TUM.Asia in Singapore, starting in 2002), TUM is focussing its internationalization attention to Europe and Africa, developing and fostering focused partnership initiatives with selected partner universities. TUM recognizes its responsibility in contributing to sustainable development in Africa by combining educational power, a shared vision and responsibility with local partners. This strategy combines a cross-faculty Africa network at TUM with profound project experience based on e.g. 140 collaborations by TUM professors in 20 African countries. The Erasmus actions will help bundle traditionally strong ties and emerging collaboration projects with partners in Africa to create a strong, sustainable strategic effort.

This new initiative complements TUM's general internationalization strategy, which is both shaped by leadership-driven initiatives and informed by the multitude of existing international relations and projects and the continued monitoring of upcoming opportunities. As a result, TUM focuses its strategic efforts on fostering relationships with key strategic regions in the world to bring TUM closer to international opportunities and talents (Liaison Offices in six locations on five continents), on building holistic partnerships with foreign universities, and on supporting bottom-up initiatives to boost international research-oriented and capacity-building activities in key regions. The Erasmus program with its support for individual mobility and cooperation projects has been and going forward will be instrumental in building and developing these relationships.

### **Contribution towards the goal of building a European Education Area**

With its institutional strategy and participation in all Erasmus actions, TUM supports the EU's aim to harness the full potential of education and culture as drivers for job creation, economic growth and

improved social cohesion, as well as a means to experience European identity in all its diversity. Particularly in view to automatic recognition, language learning, key competences for lifelong learning, Digital Education Action Plan and common values, TUM will contribute towards the goal of building a European Education Area.

Pertaining to the EU Council recommendation to take steps to introduce automatic recognition by 2025, TUM adheres to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and is further developing a recognition database, supporting the automatic recognition of qualifications and outcomes of learning periods abroad.

The TUM Language Center plays a pivotal role in training students and staff becoming multilingual and offering them pre-departure and after-mobility courses on intercultural communication and European values.

TUM's central mission aims at enabling the diverse talents for scientific careers, new entrepreneurial ventures, and future labour markets. As a leading technical university, TUM has a social responsibility to support continuing education and lifelong learning opportunities. With its newly created Institute for Life Long Learning, TUM opens up academic education and tailored lifelong learning offers to students and professionals with or without an academic background, giving them the chance to benefit from and contribute to formats that address global competences, European values and transversal skills including entrepreneurial skills, interdisciplinary and intercultural approaches and emerging technologies.

As part of the European Universities Initiative, TUM coordinates the EuroTeQ Engineering University proposal offering a large selection of innovative teaching experiences, through face-to-face and virtual formats, through traditional courses and newly developed credit-bearing activities that form part of individual learning paths. EuroTeQ Engineering University partners are prepared to act as a role model for all actors offering tech education, based on principles ensuring equal opportunity in diversity, enabling access to less favored learners and researchers.

TUM plays a prominent role in the digitalization strategy of the Free State of Bavaria e.g. as part of the Bavarian Research Institute for Digital Transformation (BIDT), which combines the efforts of several Bavarian universities in a holistic research approach that comprises all the technical, social, economic, and legal aspects of digitalization, with a focus on educating young talents. With regard to the European Student Card Initiative, TUM is not only committed to supporting the digitization of credit mobility e.g. through active engagement in the Erasmus without Papers Initiative (EWP), but also to creating the digital infrastructure for a seamless lifecycle of all international degree seeking mobility and credit mobility, e.g. as part of a broader national consortium (Platform for International Student Mobility).

Based on a strong track record and ambitious objectives for a targeted participation in all Erasmus actions, which complements and reinforces its institutional strategy and modernization agenda, TUM is well positioned and keen to contribute to building the European Education Area.

To unleash its full transformative potential, TUM intends to participate in all Erasmus+ actions.

### **Boosting Individual Learning Mobility**

Within 10 years (2005/06-2015/16), TUM was able to increase the number of its outgoing students per year from approximately 250 to more than 1,200. With additional 160 staff mobilities per year, TUM has been the most active German university in this EU exchange program over the past years.

The TUM Global & Alumni Office acts as central unit and point of contact in terms of administration and organisation of the Erasmus program, including reporting. It ensures that the program's principles of non-discrimination, transparency and inclusion are carefully respected and is undertaking the necessary steps to implement digital mobility management, promoting environmentally friendly practices and encouraging civic engagement and active European citizenship of its staff and students.

On a decentral level, a network of International Affairs Delegates of the respective TUM departments are responsible for subject-related issues of student and/or staff mobilities. International Affairs Delegates select Erasmus+ partner universities, negotiate the number of mobilities and nominate potential outgoing students based on a well-defined application and selection process. In order to ensure efficient program administration, the TUM Global & Alumni Office streamlines all processes of issuing program contracts and assigns experienced Program Managers to a set of specific program countries. The application and selection of student mobility internships and staff mobilities is administered centrally by the TUM Global & Alumni Office.

TUM's mission is to invest in talents, boost Intellectual and emotional creativity, cultural sensitivity and social skills as well as professional confidence and entrepreneurial courage. At TUM, we view internationality as a mindset connecting our home with the world. We welcome talent from all over the globe. Based on a liberal set of values grounded in an enlightened society, our open-minded network promotes respect for the cultural identity of people in other regions and cultures of the world. With our international presence in science and technology, we want to foster better understanding between nations.

Participating in the Erasmus+ KA 1 supports TUM's aim of equipping its graduates with the necessary skills and competences, which are relevant for shaping a sustainable future that offers high quality of living, equal opportunities, and economic growths. We feel that Europe has to strive to reconfirm and defend its values, and we as universities have to take our responsibility by preparing the future generation with transdisciplinary perspectives and holistic approaches of problem solving and outreach to society. As part of the Erasmus+ exchange, students from multiple national, cultural, and social-economic backgrounds meet and share an educational experience that will in more than one way increase their competence base.

Striving to become a global marketplace of knowledge, TUM develops the international competency of its staff. Therefore Erasmus+ opportunities for staff play a pivotal role in modernizing the university administration.

### **Strengthening cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices**

The unified Erasmus+ program provides expanded opportunities for cooperation for innovation and structured exchange of best practice. With its introduction, TUM has established a central point of contact for projects in KA2 and KA3. Moving forward, TUM promotes an increased participation in cooperative projects in the next Erasmus generation.

Ideas and proposals for collaborative projects emerge and are encouraged to be developed across all departments, among faculty and central administration. A central point of contact actively promotes the opportunities, provides initial information and support to guide interested staff through the application and implementation phase and ensures project ideas are aligned with institutional strategy, contribute towards its fulfilment and are supported by university leadership. A central point of contact helps to ensure that cooperation activities lead to sustainable outcomes and that their impact benefits all stakeholders involved. TUM facilitates regular exchange among staff involved in Erasmus cooperation projects and interested participants to support peer-learning and help to exploit the results of the projects in a way that will maximise their impact on individuals, other participating institutions and the wider academic community.

Projects help develop and pilot innovative practices and learn from strong European partners, which will be of particular importance in TUM's most significant structural reform moving from 15 departments to 7 schools. Anchored in institutional strategy, supported by the management and facilitated centrally, cooperation projects support TUM's modernization agenda with view to internationalizing and digitizing administration and delivering high quality science and technology education. Previous Erasmus cooperation projects coordinated by TUM have, for example, catalysed institutional strategic efforts in internationalizing entrepreneurship activities (Strategic Partnership European Venture Program, EVP) or supported modernization of curricula through enhanced international collaboration (Strategic Partnership Strengthening Architecture and the Built Environment Research, SABRE) and illustrate the long-term impact of such efforts.

### **Supporting policy reform**

As a leading university of science and technology in Europe, with its unique portfolio combining science, engineering, medicine and management and social sciences, TUM is well positioned to contribute as a role model to policy dialogue and reform. Implementation of specific projects in this Erasmus action is in line with cooperation project processes to ensure full institutional support, strategic alignment and maximum impact. Results from participation in Erasmus cooperation projects provide additional added value to the further development of education systems safeguarding European values based on respecting, promoting and activating individual talents and an international open-mindedness.

### **Exploiting the synergies between the Erasmus actions, contributing to the European Education Area**

Taken together, TUM's participations in the Erasmus actions and initiatives will create synergies and contribute towards achieving the ambitious overall goal of establishing a European Education Area:

- Mobility and language learning mutually reinforce each other: proficiency in foreign languages increases interest in studying and training abroad; studying or training abroad improves language skills;
- Language learning increases the understanding of other cultures and one's own identity;
- Automatic mutual recognition of diplomas and learning periods facilitates further learning abroad and increases the demand for mobility and people's interest in language learning;
- An increased number of mobile participants in the Erasmus+ program can be handled more easily with smart use of digital solutions and simplification, which is one of the aims of the European Student Card;
- The European Universities Initiative takes cross-border cooperation to a new, more ambitious level, boosting mobility for students and teachers and encouraging language learning, while serving as accelerators for automatic recognition of diplomas.

TUM acknowledges the **immense transformative potential of the Erasmus+ program** and its predecessors. For the next program generation, TUM envisages a significant impact on individual, institutional, local and European level, contributing to delivering on the ambitions of the European Education Area.

**On an individual level**, Erasmus at TUM supports participants in acquiring academic and/or professional skills and competences, improving their personal development, their involvement as active and responsible citizens, future leaders or employees and advance their overall career prospects in the global labour market. The Erasmus grants as well as the support participants receive during the projects, reduce barriers allowing access to mobility for a diverse set of participants, including those with fewer opportunities. Program participants become ambassadors further promoting the values of inclusiveness, equal opportunity and diversity. Learning mobility fosters mutual

understanding, reduces cultural stereotypes and promotes overall cultural openness and sensitivity. It further provides the opportunity to build international contacts and networks and to develop a sense of global citizenship.

**On an institutional level**, the Erasmus program boosts TUM's modernization agenda, promoting digitization, sustainability, inclusiveness and nurturing European identity and values. It supports TUM in its continuous strive for delivering high quality education to diversified set of learners (students, staff, professionals). It supports TUM in its effort to deepen and expand the collaboration with international partners and contributes to long-term strategic goals.

**On an international level**, the project contributes to boosting the attractiveness of European Education Area through enhanced quality, openness and policy dialogue.

Taken together, TUM's participation in the program will greatly **contribute to delivering on the ambitions of the European Education Area**, especially with view to multilingualism, transfer of credits and recognition of qualifications, equal access to high quality education, inclusive and environmentally friendly mobility as a norm, and a strong sense of European identity and Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity.

The intended impact will be monitored based on a **set of qualitative and quantitative indicators** such as the following:

- Mobility targets for student/staff mobility: TUM intends to move on average no less than 1,100 students and no less than 150 staff per year and to increase the number of participants in blended-mobility formats.
- Quality of the implementation: Centrally defined standards will be monitored closely through internal quality assurance and evaluation tools, supported by the rigorous reporting routine and monitoring in cooperation with the National Agency.
- Quality of the support participants on mobility: Positive response in participants' after mobility evaluations.
- Involvement in cooperation projects (under Key Action 2 and 3): TUM intends to increase the number of cooperation project proposals under Erasmus+ (gradually by 25%), the level of overall funding attracted in Erasmus+ KA2 and KA3 (gradually increased by 25% compared to predecessor program) and to increase proportion of TUM coordinated project proposals.
- Long-term impact of mobility and cooperation projects will be monitored based on the final reporting, centrally facilitated dissemination and tracking of project impact two years upon completion.