

Erasmus Policy Statement

Ever since its foundation 12 years ago, KEA - *Copenhagen School of Design and Technology* has been following the institutional strategy of creating a modern Higher Education Institution (HEI) with a strong international stand. The students are at our centre of attention and we have a strong focus on their entrepreneurship and employability. In line with this, it is our intention to be visible on the global labour market as an international education institution.

The various Erasmus+ programmes (LLP and Erasmus+) have played an important role in our endeavours to create and implement a well-structured international action plan with an emphasis on long-lasting cooperation, student and staff mobility and international capacity building projects.

The activities offered by the new Erasmus+ programme period will enable KEA to continue to reach these goals through international cooperation. Most importantly, they will provide our students and staff with international mobility opportunities that would not be possible without the financial support and organisational framework manifested in the Erasmus programme.

Cooperation and Mobility

Firstly, by taking part in the Erasmus+ programme, KEA would wish to maintain our strong international cooperation with the many excellent HEIs, Enterprises and Regional Authorities that we have been working with throughout the past decade. Our Partners represent the very foundation on which our Erasmus+ mobilities and activities unfold, and we highly appreciate the hospitality we are met with by our many partners across Europe and Overseas.

The cooperation with our international HEI Partners enables us to share valuable knowledge that impacts the development of our curriculums and learning methods. Similarly, our Partners in Enterprises provide us with real life cases that we integrate in our highly practice-oriented programmes and transform into excellent learning outcomes. This decidedly benefits our students, and upon graduation, they are likely to find employment in the very industries that we cooperate with.

This way, an educational ecosystem is created by KEA's cooperation with the HEIs and Enterprises structured through the Erasmus+ programme. It requires KEA to be persistently agile and up to date with modern business ways and encourages us to always be on the look for new interesting approaches within our educational fields.

Secondly, by taking part in the new Erasmus+ programme period, KEA would be able to continue to provide our students with a safe and well-structured opportunity to do Student Mobility for Studies (SMS) and Student Mobility for Traineeships (SMP).

The SMSs constitute an invaluable possibility for our students to go abroad and experience different ways of teaching and new forms of didactics. It enables them to explore completely different approaches to achieving knowledge and meeting learning goals.

Traineeships are integrated as a mandatory part in all KEA's programmes. Through SMPs, the Erasmus+ programme permits our students to explore international labour markets. By doing their traineeships abroad, our students are exposed to different work cultures and ethics that can provide them with valuable global competencies. Such competencies will not only be beneficial for them as alumni from KEA, but for our institution as such.

When students return from their traineeship or mobility, they are required to spread their newly gained experience to other students and academic staff. This is one of the ways we aim to contribute to building Global Citizenship into our educational system. Students participating in SMS and SMP Erasmus+ activities will strengthen their Cultural Intelligence (CQ) including their language skills, all of which are key competencies for our students and focal points in our institutional modernisation strategy.

In addition to our outbound student mobility, KEA highly appreciates the many inbound students choosing KEA and Copenhagen as their destination for study exchanges. The inbound students contribute to our dynamic and international learning environment and support our ambition to create an inspiring climate of Internationalisation at Home (IaH) for those students who for different reasons are unable to spend time abroad in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme. Throughout the coming Erasmus+ programme period, KEA will keep attracting talented students from our Partner institutions across Europe. We see this as an opportunity to maintain our institution's goal of being an international institution contributing to European common education.

In the context of student mobility, it is of paramount importance to KEA that all students, inbound as well as outbound, are treated equally in profiting from the possibilities offered by the Erasmus+ programme and our educational programmes. It is important for KEA to promote mobility opportunities to as many students as possible, so that also students with limited prospects, for either financial, social, cultural, geographical, or health reasons, and students suffering from disability or learning difficulty may have the chance to study abroad.

Finally, Staff Mobility for Training and Teaching (STA and STT) plays a significant role in the implementation of our institutional strategy. All academic and administrative staff on all levels and in all parts of KEA are highly encouraged to engage in international activities or projects and to take part in training opportunities abroad. It is our experience that STA and STT prompt transversal skills and help spread an international spirit across our institution.

Staff Mobility is also a way for us to ensure that our partnerships are managed effectively through face-to-face encounters. In the same way, it scaffolds capacity building projects, professional training, the development of curricula and teaching performance and not least the personal development of the participating staff.

In addition to joining the cooperation and mobility objectives manifested through Key Action 1 (KA1) activities, KEA is planning to engage in various Capacity Building Projects within the framework of Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) in the coming programme period. The projects will most likely revolve around topics that are already highly prioritised in KEA's modernisation agenda.

Projects currently in the pipeline include: Quality improvement of higher education and its alignment with labour market needs, Employability and Retention, Development of Digital Skills and Blended Learning initiatives.

Concluding remarks

By participating in the Erasmus+ programme and the different activities embedded in the programme, KEA will be able to achieve our ambitions and implement our strategy towards being a truly international HEI, not only in theory but also in practice. By doing so, we aim to support the important goals and targets described in the European Education Area.

We believe that continued strong cooperation across borders, a stronger alignment of curricula and a continued high number of students and staff taking advantage of the mobility opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme are the best and most efficient ways to tie Europe together both academically, culturally, linguistically and financially and to maintain a common strong understanding of European cultural heritage and diversity. For the same reasons KEA would not hesitate to take part in the new era of the Erasmus+ programme.