



## **SOUTH-EASTERN FINLAND UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES - XAMK**

### **ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS) for the Erasmus+ programme period 2021-2027.**

#### **1 Erasmus activities included in your EPS**

##### **Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:**

The mobility of higher education students and staff

##### **Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:**

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices

Partnerships for Innovation

#### **2 Erasmus Policy statement: your strategy**

*What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?*

South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences (later Xamk) organises higher education aiming to meet the demand for professionals in local communities and, more generally, in society. In our mission, the fields of education, research, development and innovation that will renew local working life and economic structures. Xamk focuses on wellbeing, technology and creative industries. In all our activities, we promote social, economic, cultural and ecological sustainability. We increase local vitality and wellbeing, promote innovation, create new business and solve problems.

We are prepared for the future: we constantly revise our modes of operation and contents of curricula, and we are not afraid of discarding old ways of doing things. We are guided by the concept of education and research independent of time and place. We facilitate the identification of future professions and prepare our students for it. We recognise the potential in our students. We develop digital learning environments and new technological means of teaching that are independent of time and place. We provide our students with individual

learning paths. We encourage new ideas and aim to inspire curiosity, learning and research.

Xamk leads the way in the field of digitalisation. We comprehensively integrate digital structures, robotisation and artificial intelligence into our operation and degree programmes in order to promote local development and competitive edge. We prepare our students for entrepreneurship and business-oriented thinking. Xamk achieves success as a university of applied sciences. Among other universities of applied sciences, we particularly distinguish ourselves in the quality and relevance of education, as well as with our RDI and international activity. We are capable of identifying internationally perspective activities in our operation.

The international aspect is a natural part of our education with the whole world as a campus. Our education is not limited to the place and time of study: online studies are available to all students. Studies abroad are a natural part of the curriculum in every degree programme. International partnerships provide a vast network for education and RDI cooperation, as well as for student and teacher exchanges. Genuinely multinational student groups complete the degree studies instructed in English. Within the degree programmes run in Finnish, we increase the number of courses instructed in English. We improve the international competence of all our staff. We ensure that our international operations correspond to the needs of local communities and invest in strong strategic partnerships.

The main target areas of Xamk's international activities are the neighbouring areas, Russia and Europe. We aim at strengthening mutual partnerships with the European partners. We also have a strong collaboration with China. The most important area for mobility and RDI activities is Europe. Xamk will put its expertise to good use of Erasmus+ programme's actions.

*Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.*

The main objective of the mobility activities is excellent employability of our graduates. Mobility is one of the main tools to develop personal skills to reach this objective. Students are the primary target group. In addition to external financing, such as Erasmus+ funding, Xamk allocates its own budget funds to boost exchanges. Both outgoing and incoming students (partners) are informed regularly about the exchange study and training possibilities.

All over two-month exchange, study and training periods are individually tailored to fit the student's study plan. The outgoing students are offered sufficient funding to carry out their exchange and training periods abroad. Finnish and foreign degree students of Xamk have equal possibilities. Each student is monitored before, during and after his/her mobility period. All discrimination (racial, cultural, gender, etc.) is prohibited.

The main aim of the teacher and staff exchanges is to strengthen the cooperation with the partners and to promote and strengthen student mobility. Xamk improves the international competence of its entire staff. In the future, every staff member will have an individual internationalisation plan to meet his/her internationalisation needs. The management sets the targets for teacher, staff and RDI mobility annually. Heads of the units take teacher and staff exchanges systematically up during annual career development discussions with their personnel. The incoming teacher, staff and RDI mobility is strengthened through international theme weeks within departments. To these weeks, Xamk invites larger groups of partner teachers and staff.

Xamk is an international institute of higher education with the whole world as its campus. We are a significant research and development unit and aim at helping Finland to prosper in international competition by being a strong, student-oriented international expert of applied research. Xamk is a strong implementer of RDI activities and it is currently Finland's largest UAS in the field of RDI, based on external financing alone. There are over 200 ongoing projects annually, in which our experts find, test and develop new products and services, or conduct research for future needs.

Research cooperation is carried out with industries, NGOs, public bodies, companies, universities, universities of applied sciences and research institutes. At the international level, our RDI activities mainly focus on Europe, the Baltic Sea Region and Russia.

The main funding sources for the RDI activities include, for instance, the EU Structural Funds, Erasmus+ programme actions, other EU and international research programmes, Academy of Finland, Business Finland, foundations, companies and other organisations. Xamk ensures that we promote social, economic, cultural and ecological sustainability in all our activities. The

cooperation activities contribute to the fulfilment of Xamk's institutional strategy. The opportunities offered by the cooperation projects are provided equally to staff and students interested.

*What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?*

The main objective of the mobility activities is excellent employability of the graduates. Mobility is one of the tools to develop personal skills to reach this objective. Xamk sets annual targets for both student and staff mobility. The board monitors and regularly evaluates the achievement of the targets. The target has been set at 15 per cent of the students studying abroad for one or two semesters or completing over two months' practical training abroad during their studies. This target is set to year 2027.

Students are the primary target group. In addition to external financing, such as Erasmus+ funding, Xamk allocates its own budget funds to boost mobility. Both outgoing and incoming students (partners) are informed regularly about the exchange study and training possibilities.

Every educational curriculum provides a possibility to an exchange period abroad. The outgoing students are offered sufficient funding to carry out their exchange and training periods abroad. Finnish and foreign degree students of Xamk are offered the same possibilities. Each student is monitored before, during and after his/her mobility period. All discrimination (racial, cultural, gender, etc.) is prohibited.

The management sets the targets for teacher, staff and RDI mobility annually. The main aim of the teacher and staff exchanges is to strengthen the cooperation with the partners and to promote and strengthen student mobility. In addition, one aim is to strengthen all staff's professional skills and promote sharing of good pedagogical and professional practices.