

## Erasmus+ Policy

### Erasmus Policy 2021

AHO's Erasmus Policy is based on Agenda 2020 – 2025, AHO's overall strategy for the coming five years. AHO is a leading academic institution, characterized by first-class research and education in architecture, design, urbanism and landscape architecture. AHO gives shape to the shift of environmental policy toward greener alternatives ("the green shift"), and AHO aims to be the first choice for students, employees, and partners. With the ability to imagine alternative futures, AHO staff and students will help to solve today's major challenges.

During the strategy period, a special effort will be made in three selected areas: Sustainability, collaboration, and AHO's prominent position in the professional fields of architecture, design, urbanism, and landscape architecture. Specifically, the objectives are to

- Actively contribute with knowledge and solutions to deal with the challenges of the present and the future.
- Through increased collaboration across the school, build knowledge and quality in research and teaching. The interaction between the disciplines and the interaction with the outside world should leave clear traces.
- Set the agenda by taking a clear and visible expert role for societal development, for relevant professions and within academia. AHO's knowledge contribution should be characterized by an independent and critical civic engagement.

AHO's participation in the new Erasmus Programme will help AHO achieve its ambitions within these three areas, by facilitating mobility for students and staff and cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practices across borders.

AHO sees the new Erasmus Programme as a cornerstone in its work on internationalization, and a crucial means for the implementation of objectives set in the overall institutional strategy.

AHO will, through participation in the new Erasmus Programme, also contribute towards the goal of building a European Education Area by

- Making mobility the norm, not the exception
- Committing to automatic mutual recognition
- Offering language courses to inbound exchange students
- Ensuring access to high-quality education, including those with fewer opportunities
- Fostering a European identity

AHO will take part in the Erasmus programme through Key Action 1, learning mobility for individuals and Key Action 2, Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices.

The governing principle when choosing partners for international cooperation is that the cooperation must contribute to mutual benefit and increased quality in teaching, mobility opportunities, research, or management. Formalized partnerships are based on strategic networks with academic staff at institutions abroad and rooted in academic rationale.

Incoming requests for partnerships are handled by the relevant governing body at AHO, i.e. the Education Committee, Research Committee, institute leaders or the Board. The administration and communication is handled by the International Office.

Nordic and European partnerships constitute the majority of AHOs inter-institutional agreements. AHO keeps close contact on a broad institutional level with similar institutions in neighboring countries. Erasmus+ exchange agreements within Europe are the cornerstone of the international mobility options provided to students and staff.

Independent bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding with institutions located outside the EU, e.g. China, Japan, Thailand, South- and North America also form a crucial part of the internationalization strategy as they provide the basis for global mobility and cooperation.

At AHO, student mobility takes place in the second cycle (master's level). Due to flexible programme arrangements at this level, external credits are easily accredited as part of the students' degrees based on learning agreements signed prior to the mobility.

AHO receives exchange students from partner institutions to participate in second cycle courses with the local students. Incoming students must meet the academic and linguistic requirements for application procedures, described on our website. AHO strives to create balance between the number of outgoing and incoming exchange students.

Academic and non-academic staff is encouraged to participate in mobility projects for teaching or research, learning and sharing best practices, gaining international experience and language skills, or building strategic professional networks. AHO may likewise receive incoming staff for participation in teaching, research or administrative/support projects. For staff exchange it is crucial that a detailed plan for the proposed mobility is worked out and agreed upon by both parties well ahead of the mobility.

New perspectives and having works measured in an international context against international standards are key to producing high-quality knowledge and solutions, and to tackling the unprecedented challenges we are faced with today. By facilitating student mobility and laying the ground for fruitful international cooperation, the new Erasmus programme will be instrumental to AHO in its quest to achieve the goals set forth in its institutional strategy.

For outbound students, the opportunity of mobility represents an "extended global course catalogue" which provides complementary perspectives and other insights to the subjects taught at AHO. Outbound students also gain skills in foreign languages, cultural understanding and international cooperation, which contribute to enhancing their global employability.

For outbound staff, mobility contributes to strengthening bonds to partner institutions and ensuring long term institutionally rooted partnerships. It is crucial for the quality assurance of all research projects at AHO that the results are measured in an international context. Participation in international research networks and partnerships

is important. Staff mobility also opens for learning and sharing best practices within education, research and management.

The opportunity to include institutions from partner countries in both mobility and cooperation projects may contribute to further strengthening the strategic bonds to partner institutions in other continents.

Student and staff mobility is also regarded as important for the internationalization on campus. Local students who do not participate in mobility also gain international experience by participating in courses with inbound exchange students. Inbound exchange students, and local students who have participated in mobility, contribute to increasing the quality of the learning environment. AHO also values the international experience gained by teachers who participate in mobility as a mark of quality.

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