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DRIVE DEVELOPING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CAPACITIES IN ALBANIA AND KOSOVO

RISS REGULATION, JOB DESCRIPTION, STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN UNIVERSUM COLLEGE





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About the Universum College

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Universum College was established in March 2005, in Prishtina (the capital city) and Ferizaj (the second largest and one of the most economically developed city in Kosovo). The college is a higher education provider accredited by the Kosovo Agency of Accreditation with the evaluation conducted by international experts. Its' strategic planning, curriculum, and quality assurance system were appreciated by these experts. It is renowned for its academic background, research facilities, and the international opportunities offered to its students and academic staff. It is a center for scholarship, research, and creative activity involving the creation, testing, and dissemination of knowledge, understanding, and techniques.

Mission

Universum College throughout consecutive years has developed and advanced a strategy that aims at increasing its structures. The College strives for excellence in fulfilling its central and primary purposes of teaching, scholarship, and research and places emphasis on the quality of teaching. Its mission is to provide high quality and affordable educational services to Kosovar, regional and international students. Through excellence in teaching, lifelong learning, applied research, and partnership building its aim is to prepare students to be successful, responsible citizens, and to support economic development in Kosovo and the region.

Strategic Research Action Plan 2022 – 2027

Enhance the research potential of the Universum College through the commitment of our staff and partners in research by demonstrating innovation, transforming the society, providing sustainable solutions to the challenges, and impacting the environment, technology, society, politics and culture both locally and internationally.

The College “Universum” 2022-2027 Strategic Research Action Plan outlines strategic directions, strategic objectives, strategic outcomes and activities. The following Strategic Plan has been developed by the 2022-2027 Research Committee and the Research Coordinator at Universum College. Universum College will deliver on the strategic plan by developing aligned measurable targets and ensuring that the College meets its strategic objectives.

A strategic action plan provides a roadmap for guiding institutional initiatives and selectively allocating institutional resources. Figure 1 contains five main directions of the strategic action plan.



Figure 1: The strategic priorities of the Universum College

Strategic Direction 1 – Broadening, Innovation and Impact

Strategic Objective:

Broaden local, regional and international commitment through the provision of public administration, political science, sociology, international relations and diplomacy, justice, language, literature and translation, communication and media, economics, business, health and other areas of the socio-economic field and modern science and technology programs, and conduct research and innovate to promote the improvement of public policies, and social, economic, technological cultural and environmental outcomes.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 1) Internal investments will be made to support various innovative activities, between industry and academia through research projects with both public and private practitioners.
- 2) The research office will be supported by internal committees led by academics who award internal grants for innovative ideas that could have future impact.
- 3) The research office will support the nomination of our researchers for national as well as international research awards.
- 4) The College approach to communications will enable to present our research using multimedia channels to present valuable papers. The impact of researchers' research will be promoted by the presentation of case studies on the College's website, using high-quality publishing and impactful events.
- 5) Researchers will have an understanding of using social media to share their research findings and communicate with the public via new channels. This will include targeting potential collaborators and future post-graduate students.
- 6) The College will enhance the visibility of research achievements on internal communication channels, including the intranet/internet and research news newsletter.
- 7) Donor investment made in our research will be supported by presenting innovative case studies that show how our research contributes positively to society.
- 8) Training on impact and public participation will take place including the impact of public policies, social, economic, technological cultural and environmental results.

Table 1: Strategic Direction 1 – Broadening, Innovation, and Impact

Strategic Direction: Broadening, Innovation, and Impact	
Strategic Objectives: Broaden local, regional and international commitment through the provision of public administration, political science, sociology, international relations and diplomacy, justice, language, literature and translation, communication and media, economics, business, health and other areas of the socio-economic field and modern science and technology programs, and conduct research and innovate to promote the improvement of public policies, and social, economic, technological cultural and environmental outcomes	
Strategic Outcomes	Activities
Internal investments - Research projects with both public and private practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual budget allocation - Identification of potential collaborators - Initiation of project proposals
Support the research office by internal committees who award internal grants for innovative ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selection of Committee Members - Provide the guidelines and criteria for awarding grants and innovative ideas
Support the nomination of our researchers for national as well as international research awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide the guidelines and nomination criteria for national and international research awards - Provide support during the application process
Dissemination of quality research outputs at institutional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present research (valuable papers) using multimedia channels such as the College's website, high quality publishing, impactful event
Researchers by using social media will share their research findings and communicate with the public via new channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support faculty in identifying new channels for promotion
Enhance the visibility of research achievements on internal communication channels, including the intranet/internet and research news newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly announcements on research achievements at the departmental level - Internal promotional events
Presentation of innovative case studies with donor support and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selection of case studies - Identification of potential donors - Organization of promotional activities
Training on impact and public participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selection of training topics - Identification of target group - Preparation of agenda and speakers

Strategic Direction 2 – Research and Funding

Strategic Objective:

In order to promote research activities and enhance research resources, Universum College needs to manage and support programs such as for financial and administrative resources, and physical resources in an innovative manner that delivers the best service and access to staff and students, and the best value to the public and partners.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 1) **Physical resources** - the research department will invest in the most current digital technologies. The facilities dedicated to the Research and Innovation Hub include personal computers and laptops, simulations, data gathering and analysis software, interactive and smart boards, support systems for hybrid classrooms and so forth.
- 2) **Financial resources** - the College provides funding either internally or through external stakeholders in cooperation with industry. The College has established mechanisms in place to provide grants, travel grants, and publication grants to researchers and plans to increase indirect cost coverage. The budget for scientific research activities covers the costs of publishing a scientific publication indexed to the platforms of the full time academic staff, in accordance with the course program and other texts that considered significant by Universum College. Publications in international scientific journals will be funded by Universum College (see Scientific Research and Publications Regulations at Universum College). Moreover, the College will support expenditures, research tools and research infrastructure.
- 3) **Administrative resources** - the College will provide support through overseeing the administration and supervision of local and international research projects. The Research Department will address regulatory developments and requirements, provide information to researchers, and adapt policies and address them according to new developments. It is a plan to create a system for academic staff members to record their research publications, and the success of each research will be reviewed during the periodic College staff evaluation process. This system will result in enhanced workflow productivity, as well as

communication within and between the Research Office and the researchers. The system also incorporates monitoring and reporting capabilities for accountability and compliance in a highly regulated condition.

Table 2: Strategic Direction 2 – Research and Funding

Strategic Direction: Research and Funding	
Strategic Objectives: To promote research activities and enhance research resources, Universum College needs to manage and support programs such as for financial and administrative resources, and physical resources in an innovative manner that delivers the best service and access to staff and students, and the best value to the public and partners	
Strategic Outcomes	Activities
The research department invest in the most current digital technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of RISS center - Purchase computers and laptops, simulations, data gathering and analysis software, interactive and smart boards, support systems for hybrid classrooms and so forth
Established mechanisms in place to provide grants, travel grants, and publication grants to researchers and plans to increase indirect cost coverage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual budget allocation - Establishment of the research office - Recruitment of research coordinator - Establishment of the research committee - Budget allocation for scientific research activities which covers the costs of publishing a scientific publication indexed on the platforms of the full-time academic staff
College will support expenditures, research tools and research infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual budget allocation - Identification of the list of research tools and infrastructure needed
Support through overseeing the administration and supervision of local and international research projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of the research office
Address regulatory developments and requirements, provide information to researchers, and adapt policies and address them according to new developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of the research committee
Develop a Research Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a system for academic staff members to record their research publications, and the success of each research will be reviewed during the periodic College staff evaluation process

Strategic Direction 3 – Inclusive Excellence

Strategic Objective:

Promote an environment where every member of the Universum College community is valued, enabling members to perform to the best of their potential to reach their individual and professional aims by building capacities and mobilizing knowledge.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 1) “Universum” College recognizes the fact that women are still underrepresented in leadership and decision making and, based on this fact, it has identified gender mainstreaming as a key approach for addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women in all decision-making processes, as well as in education, research, and innovation activities, in order to enable women to reach their full potential. Moreover, the efforts are commendable, and more efforts will be taken to empower women in decision-making and research to fully achieve and implement the objectives of our institution.
- 2) The College will recruit postdoctoral fellows and visiting researchers, to create an inclusive environment.
- 3) Training undergraduate, postgraduate and post-doctoral fellows to support the growth of the knowledge-based society is a core mission of the College.
- 4) Students Success - At all levels will be prompted to share and publish their research findings in the Universum Scientific Research Journal to ensure they develop skills for knowledge transfer.
- 5) A major mandate of Universum College is to promote dissemination methods, and in the long term, to build a digital institutional repository to improve access to our research products and increase the possibilities to promote our researchers and student’s research.
- 6) Have a work-life balance as a state of equilibrium, where all members equally prioritize the demands of their careers and the demands of the personal life.

Table 3: Strategic Direction 3 – Inclusive Excellence

Strategic Direction: Inclusive Excellence	
Strategic Objectives: Promote an environment where every member of the Universum College community is valued, enabling members to perform to the best of their potential to reach their individual and professional aims by building capacities and mobilizing knowledge	
Strategic Outcomes	Activities
Empower women in decision-making and research to fully achieve and implement the objectives of our institution	- Ensure women employment and gender balance
Recruit postdoctoral fellows and visiting researchers, in order to create an inclusive environment	- Identification of fellows and visiting researchers within our ICM agreements
Train undergraduate, postgraduate and post-doctoral fellows to support the growth of the knowledge-based society as a core mission of the College	- Identification of training themes and trainees - Periodic implementation of the workshops and digital training
Students Success - at all levels will be prompted to share and publish their research findings in the Universum Scientific Research Journal to ensure they develop skills for knowledge transfer	- Selection of potential students to participate in the Scientific Research Journal - Assignment of mentors for each student - Organization of training and research workshops in supporting students' research output - Selection of an appropriate publisher
Promote dissemination methods, and build a digital institutional repository to improve access to our research products and increase the possibilities to promote our researchers and students research	- Create a database with all the research faculty outputs
Promote a work-life balance as a state of equilibrium, where all members equally prioritize the demands of their careers and the demands of the personal life	- Achieve work-life balance in HR policies - Organization of team building activities that promote work life balance - Promote activities on work-life balance initiatives with the aim to impact the lifestyle of students

Strategic Direction 4 – Partnership and Collaboration

Strategic Objective:

The College's goal is to collaborate for the benefit of the Universum College and society in general.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 1) Partnership and collaboration with business, industry, institutions, and researchers from other higher education higher education providers (HEIs) on a range of projects and research. Build existing national and international partnerships and forging new partnerships with businesses for innovative research. This partnership will result in collaborative research and publications.
- 2) Understand the needs, challenges and objectives of industry and business, and to find the necessary transformative solutions to business, educational and social problems through research.
- 3) Enhance access to information, funding opportunities and facilities for Universum College researchers by joining or becoming a members of certain professional institutions.
- 4) An interdisciplinary research carried out at the institution in which all professors and students play a vital role in the success of the research at Universum College and initiatives aimed at becoming a national leader with an impact on the environment, technology, society, politics and culture.

Table 4: Strategic Direction 4 – Partnership and Collaboration

Strategic Direction: Partnership and Collaboration	
Strategic Objectives: The College's goal is to enhance collaboration for the benefit of the College and society as a whole	
Strategic Outcomes	Activities
Build partnerships and collaboration with business, industry, institutions, and researchers from other higher education providers (HEIs) on a range of projects and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of businesses and institutions - Initiations of projects/research proposals - Define the industry advisory board members - Establishment of the research office - Enhance existing national and international partnerships and forge new partnerships with businesses for innovative research.
Understand the needs, challenges, and objectives of industry and businesses, and find the necessary transformative solutions to business, educational and social problems through research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct analysis of industry trends and needs - Identification of relevant topics of research interest - Identification of partners for collaboration
Enhance access to information, funding opportunities and facilities for Universum College researchers by joining or becoming a members of certain professional institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Join the European Cooperation in Science and technology - Join the ERASMUS initiative - Join the Horizon 2020
Carry out an interdisciplinary research at the institution in which all professors and students play a vital role in the success of the research at Universum College and initiatives aimed at becoming a national leader with an impact on the environment, technology, society, politics, and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of interdisciplinary collaborative groups - Initiation of research topics - Promotion of the outputs of these joint research initiatives

Strategic Direction 5 – Efficiency, Effectiveness and Evaluation

Strategic Objective:

Measure progress and success using research performance indicators and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness against the above objectives and monitor them over time.

Strategic Outcomes

There is mechanism to gather information about some of these indicators such as:

- # of publications, [targeting at least on average one peer-reviewed journal per Universum College faculty member published on the Web of Science, Scopus, Ebsco, worldCat, and Doaj indexes annually]
- # of publications with undergraduate students as co-authors [e.g. or published in Universum Scientific Research Journal]
- # of publications with graduate students as co-authors [e.g. or published in Universum Scientific Research Journal]
- # of graduate students completed
- # of undergraduate and graduates receiving national or international recognition for their academic activities
- # of faculty members receiving recognition awards (national or international awards, honors, citations)
- # of research conferences and workshops organized by Universum College researchers
- # of journals edited by Universum College researchers
- # of collaborative research projects with partners
- Patents in process and registered
- # of faculty and student owned research based companies initiated
- # of research related community outreach events
- # of policy briefings, # of media reports that showcase the research expertise of Universum College

- # of Universum College researchers that serve on advisory committees for communities, service agencies, small business, industry, and various levels of government
- # of philanthropic research projects

Table 5: Strategic Direction 5 – Efficiency, Effectiveness and Evaluation

Strategic Direction: Efficiency, Effectiveness and Evaluation	
Strategic Objectives: Measure progress and success using research performance indicators, and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness against the above objectives and monitor them over time	
Strategic Outcomes	Activities
# of publications, [targeting at least on average one peer-reviewed journal per Universum College faculty member published on the Web of Science, Scopus, Ebsco, worldCat, and Doaj indexes annually]	Applying mechanism to gather information
# or publications with undergraduate students as co-authors [e.g. or published in Universum Scientific Research Journal]	
# or publications with graduate students as co-authors [e.g. or published in Universum Scientific Research Journal]	
# of graduate students completed	
# of undergraduate and graduates receiving national or international recognition for their academic activities	
# of faculty members receiving recognition awards (national or international awards, honors, citations)	
# of research conferences and workshops organized by Universum College researchers	
# of journals edited by Universum College researchers	
# of collaborative research projects with partners	
Patents in process and registered	
# of faculty and student owned research based companies initiated	
# of research related community outreach events	
# of policy briefings, # of media reports that showcase the research expertise of Universum College	
# of Universum College researchers that serve on advisory committees for communities, service agencies, small business, industry, and various levels of government	
# of philanthropic research projects	

Actions and Timelines

In this part are given outcomes, activities and timelines for all five actions to be undertaken: Strategic Broadening, Innovation, and Impact; Research and Funding; Inclusive Excellence; Partnership and Collaboration and Efficiency, Effectiveness and Evaluation.

Strategic Direction 1: Broadening, Innovation, and Impact		
Outcomes	Activities	Timeline
Internal investments - Research projects with both public and private practitioners	Annual budget allocation Identification of potential collaborators Initiation of project proposals	December 31, 2022 Ongoing process Ongoing process
Support the research office by internal committees who award internal grants for innovative ideas	Selection of Committee Members Provide the guidelines and criteria for awarding grants and innovative ideas	Implemented on June , 2022 Proposal is Done; an internal decision of the academic council is needed
Support the nomination of our researchers for national as well as international research awards	Provide the guidelines and nomination criteria for national and international research awards Provide support during the application process	Proposal is Done; an internal decision of the academic council is needed Ongoing process
Dissemination of quality research outputs at institutional level	Present research (valuable papers) using multimedia channels such as the College's website, high quality publishing, impactful event	Ongoing process
Researchers by using social media will share their research findings and communicate with the public via new channels	Support faculty in identifying new channels for promotion	Ongoing process
Enhance the visibility of research achievements on internal communication channels, including the intranet/internet and research news newsletter	Monthly announcements on research achievements at the departmental level Internal promotional events	Scheduled monthly basis meeting Ongoing process
Presentation of innovative case studies with donor support and investment	Selection of case studies Identification of potential donors Organization of promotional activities	Ongoing process Ongoing process Ongoing process
Training on impact and public participation	Selection of training topics Identification of target group Preparation of agenda and speakers	December 31, 2022 Annually

Strategic Direction 2: Research and Funding		
Outcomes	Activities	Timeline
Established mechanisms in place to provide grants, travel grants, and publication grants to researchers and plans to increase indirect cost coverage.	Annual budget allocation Establishment of the research office Recruitment of research coordinator Establishment of the research committee Budget allocation for scientific research activities which covers the costs of publishing a scientific publication indexed on the platforms of the full-time academic staff	December 31, 2022 June 1, 2022 June, 2022 December 31, 2022
College will support expenditures, research tools and research infrastructure	Annual budget allocation Identification of the list of research tools and infrastructure needed	December 31, 2022 June 2022
Support through overseeing the administration and supervision of local and international research projects	Establishment of the research office	
Address regulatory developments and requirements, provide information to researchers, and adapt policies and address them according to new developments	Establishment of the research committee	June 2022
Develop a Research Management System	Create a system for academic staff members to record their research publications, and the success of each research will be reviewed during the periodic College staff evaluation process	Efforts to create RMS will begin late this year November 2022

Strategic Direction 3 : Inclusive Excellence		
Outcomes	Activities	Timeline
Empower women in decision-making and research to fully achieve and implement the objectives of our institution	Ensure women employment and gender balance	Ongoing process
Recruit postdoctoral fellows and visiting researchers, in order to create an inclusive environment	Identification of fellows and visiting researchers within our ICM agreements	Ongoing process by International office through the academic year
Train undergraduate, postgraduate and post-doctoral fellows to support the growth of the	Identification of training themes and trainees Periodic implementation of the workshops and digital training	Three trainings will be held by the Research Office until the end of January 2023 Ongoing process

knowledge-based society as a core mission of the College		
Students Success - at all levels will be prompted to share and publish their research findings in the Universum Scientific Research Journal to ensure they develop skills for knowledge transfer	<p>Selection of potential students to participate in the Scientific Research Journal</p> <p>Assignment of mentors for each student</p> <p>Organization of training and research workshops in supporting students' research output</p> <p>Selection of an appropriate publisher</p>	<p>Annual Basis</p> <p>Ongoing process</p> <p>Ongoing process</p> <p>Ongoing process by research office</p>
Promote dissemination methods, and build a digital institutional repository to improve access to our research products and increase the possibilities to promote our researchers and students research	Create a database with all the research faculty outputs	September, 2022
Promote a work-life balance as a state of equilibrium, where all members equally prioritize the demands of their careers and the demands of the personal life	<p>Achieve work-life balance in HR policies</p> <p>Organization of team building activities that promote work life balance</p> <p>Promote activities on work-life balance initiatives with the aim to impact the lifestyle of students</p>	<p>Ongoing process by HR</p> <p>Ongoing process by HR</p> <p>Ongoing process by HR</p>

Strategic Direction 4: Partnership and Collaboration		
Outcomes	Activities	Timeline
Build partnerships and collaboration with business, industry, institutions, and researchers from other higher education providers (HEIs) on a range of projects and research	<p>Identification of businesses and institutions</p> <p>Initiations of projects/research proposals</p> <p>Define the industry advisory board members</p> <p>Establishment of the research office</p> <p>Enhance existing national and international partnerships and forge new partnerships with businesses for innovative research.</p>	<p>Ongoing process (165 already established MOU- monthly review)</p> <p>Ongoing process (monthly review)</p> <p>January, 2022</p> <p>Ongoing process (monthly review)</p>
Understand the needs, challenges, and objectives of industry and businesses, and find the necessary transformative solutions to business, educational and social problems through research	<p>Conduct analysis of industry trends and needs</p> <p>Identification of relevant topics of research interest</p> <p>Identification of partners for collaboration</p>	Meeting on monthly basis
Enhance access to information, funding opportunities and facilities for Universum College researchers by joining or	<p>Join the European Cooperation in Science and technology</p> <p>Join the ERASMUS initiative</p> <p>Join the Horizon 2020</p>	Spring 2023

becoming a members of certain professional institutions		Efforts to join the three programmes will begin on October 2022.
Carry out an interdisciplinary research at the institution in which all professors and students play a vital role in the success of the research at Universum College and initiatives aimed at becoming a national leader with an impact on the environment, technology, society, politics, and culture	Establishment of interdisciplinary collaborative groups Initiation of research topics Promotion of the outputs of these joint research initiatives	On monthly basis On monthly basis On monthly basis

Strategic Direction 5: Efficiency, Effectiveness and Evaluation		
Outcomes	Activities	Timeline
# of publications, [targeting at least on average one peer-reviewed journal per Universum College faculty member published on the Web of Science, Scopus, Ebsco, WorldCat, and Doaj indexes annually]	Applying mechanism to gather information	Annual reporting
# or publications with undergraduate students as co-authors [e.g. or published in Universum Scientific Research Journal]		
# or publications with graduate students as co-authors [e.g. or published in Universum Scientific Research Journal]		
# of graduate students completed		
# of undergraduate and graduates receiving national or international recognition for their academic activities		
# of faculty members receiving recognition awards (national or international awards, honors, citations)		
# of research conferences and workshops organized by Universum College researchers		
# of journals edited by Universum College researchers		
# of collaborative research projects with partners		
Patents in process and registered		
# of faculty and student owned research based companies initiated		



# of research related community outreach events		
# of policy briefings, # of media reports that showcase the research expertise of Universum College		
# of Universum College researchers that serve on advisory committees for communities, service agencies, small business, industry, and various levels of government		
# of philanthropic research projects		

Job Description

Research and Innovation Hub (RISS)

The “Universum” College is committed to creating the right conditions for scientific research and research activities so that academic staff can achieve competitive results at national and international level. Our institution aims to promote and support the ethical and responsible conduct of research in all disciplines: public administration, political science, sociology, international relations and diplomacy, justice, human rights, security studies, informatics, language, literature and translation, communication and media, economics, business, ecology, energy and health, and all the other fields, both socio-economic and scientific and technological ones. The importance of research for our institution is linked to the multifaceted research strategy, if research is deemed to be important for many targets, opportunity of it being relevant and sustainable would be greatly increased.

Head of Research chairs the Research and Staff Committee, whose primary responsibilities are to: 1) establish relationships with key funders, partners and decision-makers, 2) ensure mission alignment, 3) develop and improve the research strategies, 4) develop the research quality criteria for the institution, 5) provide the feedback needed to improve the quality of research, 6) monitor the performance and achievements of current “Universum” College projects, and 7) conduct research seminars/workshops/research meetings at the college level and department level as required.

Job Purpose

To lead the development of a research culture within the College. He/She will bring a wide range of applied research expertise, a background in project management and a good understanding of the policy.

Key responsibilities

The Head of Research is responsible for leading the research and includes:

- supporting and facilitating advanced research, particularly multidisciplinary and collaborative research, in areas related to the academic objectives

- creating an innovative research environment and offering support to improve the College's research capacity
- developing networks at both national and international level
- establishing constructive relationships with industry for partnerships and joint research
- transferring knowledge to others, staff, students by means of joint research, seminars, workshops, conferences, publications, etc.
- building strong relationships with relevant departments across the College
- leading strategic planning for the RISS
- effectively managing the research plan and ensuring adherence to recognized research standards
- encouraging fundraising for research carried out by the RISS