

Erasmus+ Policy Statement Lbhí

The Agricultural University of Iceland (Landbúnaðarháskóli Íslands - Lbhí) follows an international strategy approach. In its Strategic Plan (2019-2024) that aims to enable the University to reinforce and expand the international reputation in all its activities, i.e. learning, teaching and research.

Key aims of the international approach are:

- To increase international collaboration and achieve impact through international partnerships
- To achieve impact through a diverse international student and staff body
- To maximize impact through international research activities
- To enhance Internationalization in learning and teaching
- To ensure the international impact of Lbhí is widely recognized

These objectives are all facilitated and delivered through a range of approaches, including:

- The development of partnerships with comparable universities in and outside Europe.
- Student and staff mobility within Europe, using Erasmus+ where possible, and outside of Europe using inter-institutional agreements and Memoranda of Understanding.

The Erasmus+ program plays a key role for the internationalization of Lbhí. Staff mobility is encouraged and promoted actively through the International Office of Lbhí. Most teaching and learning mobility activities carried out at Lbhí are with support of the Erasmus+ program.

The international office of Lbhí understands the Erasmus+ program as an essential cornerstone for the future increase of the internationalization and modernization of Higher Education in Iceland. The potentials of Strategic Partnerships will strengthen the cooperation between partner universities.

These partnerships play even a more important role for a comparable small university in size like Lbhí and help to increase the capacity building of networks for teaching and research.

By building up more international structures, Lbhí offers since 2020 as well a joint degree program in the Nordic Master Program in collaboration with Lund University and Helsinki University. This is to be seen as a first contribution towards the aim of a European Education Area.

Erasmus+ Key Action 1:

The mobility program of higher education students and staff is of high importance for Lbhí. During the course of the past academic years the participation in the KA1 program has steadily risen. Mobilities for students and staff contribute to strengthen the ongoing international capacity building of Lbhí.

The KA 1 will be implemented by actively involving staff and students in info session, web site and intranet information and by actively using social media to present the opportunities of the program.

Interested students and staff can as well use the open office hours at the International office at Lbhí. The International coordinator who is in ,

charge of implementing the Erasmus+ program at Lbhí has a full position and is all days of the week available for students and staff. Furthermore, the International coordinator works constantly on building up and maintaining international relations with existing and potentially new partner institutions. This includes an active exchange with the international offices at the partner universities and as well with international offices of the other Icelandic universities and the National Agency Rannís.

Erasmus+ Key Action 2:

Lbhí encourages and supports its academic environments to engage in international cooperation projects, strategic alliances, partnerships and joint degree programs and has implemented an international office that offers the necessary administrative support to implement and carry out the project activities and to disseminate project results. The international office is responsible for maintaining international partnerships and provide a wide range of services for international students, PhD students and visiting scholars.

The continuing participation in the Erasmus+ program will have a deep impact on the internationalization of Lbhí. The clear objective is to increase further student and staff mobilities and to participate in more cooperation projects. In the past years, we saw a steady increase in student and staff mobilities, both for outgoing and incoming participants. The target is to further increase those numbers and have it always above the two-digit number line per academic year.

In order to encourage more outgoing students the international office has extended its promoting activities, both online and with info meetings for students and staff. The web site offers information and an interactive geographical

map displays the locations of partner institutions and their connected websites.

In order to attract more incoming students LbhÍ designed especially courses for exchange students. These courses include an introductory overview to environmental and ecological aspects at the Arctic edge and Icelandic nature and includes a transdisciplinary selection of the most experienced lecturers at LbhÍ. These courses include as well field trips to selected sites of environmental Importance in Iceland. Furthermore offers LbhÍ as well an especially for exchange students designed Icelandic language and culture course that helps incoming students to understand the context of Icelandic society and culture.

The increase of staff mobilities through the Erasmus+ program will support the ongoing internationalization at LbhÍ, training and teaching mobilities across the European area will help to support the capacity buildings amongst staff Members, including improved language, teaching, pedagogical and curriculum related skills.

LbhÍ is as well hosting teaching activities for incoming staff from partner universities and as well for incoming staff from enterprises who contribute with their experiences to up-to-date professional teaching contents at LbhÍ.