

Third Mission at the University of Hamburg (UHH):

Strategic principles, strategy & measures

Preamble

The establishment of the third mission – “knowledge exchange” – along with its initiatives in the fields of digitization, internationalization, sustainability in and through science, gender equality, open science, and the promotion of democratic attitudes in its governance, present challenges for UHH. More than ever before, multiple and sometimes incompatible values and expectations are at play.

The UHH is therefore committed to fostering a responsible university governance, which, with strong and efficient management structures, also enables broad and open deliberation both within the UHH and with its stakeholders. This approach is based on a coordinated (1) strategic principle, a clearly formulated (2) strategy, and the resulting (3) measures for its implementation.

Researchers, teachers, and students from faculties and central units develop their activities in knowledge exchange based on their research and teaching priorities under their own responsibility and within the framework of performance agreements with the university management and the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. They align themselves with the mission, profile, and strategy of the UHH with their own emphases and participate in the governance and further development of knowledge exchange as third performance area at UHH. They take institutional measures to effectively promote knowledge exchange at their institutions (in some cases through knowledge exchange units, staff, performance based funding) and, where necessary, receive additional support from the Knowledge Exchange Agency and its departments.

1. Strategic principle

Excellence Meets Relevance: As a flagship university, the University of Hamburg is committed to conducting research and teaching that is both excellent and socially relevant. This includes contributing to solving complex challenges and strengthening democratization and trust in science. The University of Hamburg sees itself not only as an excellent institution for research and teaching, but also as a *corporate citizen*; its members see themselves not only as committed researchers and teachers, but also as *academic citizens*. Furthermore, UHH recognizes that its role extends beyond the generation and exchange of knowledge—it also involves the co-creative production of *public goods*.

The profile of the third performance dimension at the University of Hamburg is the “Triple-E Model of Knowledge Exchange”: The diversity of activities in knowledge exchange at UHH as a comprehensive university is based on a triangle of expertise, engagement, and entrepreneurship.

- *Expertise:* This is demonstrated in scientific policy advice, cooperation with companies, and dialogue events with civil society actors.
- *Engagement:* Researchers and students at the University of Hamburg work together with stakeholders from civil society, politics, industry, and culture to tackle social challenges.
- *Entrepreneurship:* The University of Hamburg cultivates a wide range of innovative activities—technological as well as social and ecological.

2. Strategy

Our mission

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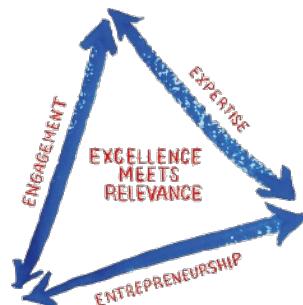
“Transfer” is explicitly conceived as interactive in the sense of “knowledge exchange”: exchange activities in all their diverse forms at a comprehensive university are carried out cooperatively with external partners from business, politics, education, culture, and civil society. Through its activities, UHH is committed to expanding the innovation ecosystem in the metropolitan region as well as (trans-)national knowledge exchange communities.

The main drivers of the third performance dimension are the faculties and central units of UHH. The UHH Knowledge Exchange Agency supports the development and infrastructure of the knowledge exchange. At the heart of all activities is the UHH mission statement: *Innovating and Cooperating for a Sustainable Future in a Digital Age*, as well as the strategic goals of Twin Transformation, Internationalization, and the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Our profile

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Our strategy

Transfer activities at the University of Hamburg should be a vibrant part of its academic culture in research, teaching, and innovation. They thrive on the diversity of academic cultures, establishes transdisciplinary networks, and is practiced and institutionally promoted in all faculties in different ways. In addition, the UHH Knowledge Exchange Agency, as a central institution, supports activities in knowledge exchange through awareness-raising, visibility, and services. To this

end, it develops infrastructures for collaborative processes, supports communication, promotes inter- and trans-faculty exchange, and is conceptually and strategically committed to establishing knowledge exchange in its three dimensions across the university: *Expertise – Engagement – Entrepreneurship* („Triple E“).

3. Our measures for implementing the strategy

A knowledge exchange agency with three teams

In cooperation with the faculties and central units of UHH, the Knowledge Exchange Agency promotes knowledge exchange activities, particularly in the areas of “Innovation & Entrepreneurship”, “Career & Qualification” and “Co-Creation & Engagement”, targeting researchers, doctoral candidates, students, alumni, and those outside the university who are interested in cooperation. The services offered include structured, individualized consulting and sustainable project support – both digitally and in direct contact – and range from transdisciplinary research, innovation and start-up activities to career paths in relevant professional fields, project consulting, and public dialogue.

Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Start-ups: The University of Hamburg's start-up service “*Startup Port@UHH*” supports students, researchers, and graduates with individual advice and start-up support services (training, networking, etc.) on their journey from the initial idea to a successful start-up. Our focus is on knowledge-based and innovative start-ups.

Intellectual property protection: IP Management advises scientists on the early protection of intellectual property (IP) – inventions, patents, copyrights, trademarks, software, etc. – and its exploitation. Under the vision of “IP in the service of society”, the transfer of IP to society contributes to the innovative strength of UHH.

Cooperation: Cooperation management advises and supports the (legal) initiation of cooperation with non-university partners, such as companies, foundations, and associations. This includes, in particular, cooperation that enables the further development, application, and exploitation of intellectual property.

Career & Qualification

Advising, qualification, and job placement: In cooperation with faculties, other providers at UHH (Center for Continuing (ZfW), Department for Personnel, and Hamburg Research Academy), and external partners (companies, public administration, alumni), the focus here is on supporting students in entering the job market and shaping their careers in light of their role in the twin or triple transformation.

Employability and knowledge exchange on two feets: In addition to subject-specific knowledge, employability increasingly includes *transferable skills* that enable graduates to succeed in their individual career paths – and to contribute to the responsible transformation of our society. One focus is on teaching transferable skills in the field of sustainable development, which also includes the ability to engage in dialogue with various cooperation partners.

Diversity and internationality: Since students with very different backgrounds and challenges need tailored support when entering the job market, the programs offered are EDI-sensitive. In cooperation with cross-university initiatives such as the “Center for Gender and Diversity” and

“Pro Exzellenzia lead”, the *Female Leadership Days* series is a prime example of this. In cooperation with the International Office, international students who want to gain a foothold in the German job market are supported in the spirit of social sustainability, as are students who see their professional future abroad in connection with sustainable development. Of particular importance are offers for students within the framework of the EU-funded University Alliance for *Global Health*, hybrid event formats such as *ERASMUS Blended Intensive Programs*, and the DAAD-initiated “promotion of international talents for integration into studies and the labour market”.

Co-Creation & Engagement

Campus Community Partnerships: The focus here is on establishing and maintaining sustainable networks in civil society, foundations, cultural institutions, public administration, and other educational and research institutions that strengthen the UHH's role as an active contributor to its neighborhoods in terms of sustainable development (e.g., AKTIVOLI Hamburg network, Hamburg Master Plan BNE 2030) and concretize the vision of open and transdisciplinary campus locations (e.g., Grindel Dialogue Forums, Science City Bahrenfeld neighborhood development). Locally relevant topics are explored, connections to faculties and departments are established, platforms for knowledge exchange, transdisciplinary cooperation, and non-formal learning are created, and social engagement in and through research and teaching is promoted.

Research Practice Partnerships: Together with researchers specializing in relevant areas, potential fields, or profile initiatives, we identify relevant stakeholders, subject-specific requirements, and tailored transdisciplinary methods to strengthen social relevance and multidirectional knowledge exchange in areas of research excellence. This includes, for example, the initiation, conceptual support, and accompaniment of living labs for sustainability transformation.

Communities of Practice: UHH scientists who are committed to research and teaching and wish to make an active contribution to sustainable development are supported in particular through *peer-to-peer learning* and *capacity building* opportunities. This takes place reflexively and in exchange with the national and international professional community, such as the “Gesellschaft für transdisziplinäre und partizipative Forschung” (Society for Transdisciplinary and Participatory Research), the “Hochschulnetzwerk Bildung durch Verantwortung” (University Network for Social Responsibility), the “Netzwerk Reallabore der Nachhaltigkeit” (Network of Real-Life Laboratories for Sustainability), or the International Reading Group “Knowledge Exchange for Social Impact Centers”, in order to strengthen the international appeal of UHH in terms of knowledge exchange.

Knowledge Exchange Fund

With the Knowledge Exchange Fund established in 2020, the UHH enables its members to implement transfer-oriented projects with a specific connection to the Hamburg metropolitan region and beyond. The Knowledge Exchange Fund supports selected projects each year with (start-up) funding of up to EUR 30,000 for twelve months.

With annual calls for proposals, the Knowledge Exchange Fund invites all members of the UHH to submit ideas for research-based projects in knowledge exchange. Project ideas on annually changing topics that focus on innovation and start-ups, social engagement, education and training, and co-creative research and deliver concrete “products” are welcome.

A two-stage review process is carried out by the Knowledge Exchange Agency with experts from outside UHH to ensure the quality of the selection. The Knowledge Exchange Agency's support for the funded projects promotes mutual exchange and provides strategic impetus. A public presentation at a major event in the region at the end of the funding period increases visibility and further discussion of the results.

Sustainable development

All knowledge exchange activities at UHH are aimed at promoting a broad concept of sustainability (ecological, economic, social, and ethical) in line with twin transformation, closely intertwined with the digitalization of research, study, and teaching, and in cooperation with the administration. These activities contribute to the establishment of twin transformation, in particular through cooperation and partnership-based innovations: A co-creative strategy supports coherent approaches and activities as well as shared responsibility.

Responsible governance of knowledge exchange

At the University of Hamburg, we pursue *responsible governance of the third dimension of performance* in order to successfully implement the multitude of values and expectations associated with it (such as sustainability, digitalization, and openness). This includes

- a Vice President for Knowledge Exchange,
- the constituted committees of the university and the faculties,
- expert committees for quality assurance and consulting, such as the Knowledge Exchange Council and the Excellence Council,
- an internal UHH committee that ensures the participatory development of knowledge exchange across all faculties and their profiles and activities in knowledge exchange (sounding board),
- as well as specific networks with external stakeholders who support entrepreneurship and engagement, among other things.

With this calibrated *governance strategy*, the UHH promotes the improvement of institutional, academic, and financial autonomy, transparency, and accountability by linking them with reflexive self-governance through participation. This serves the long-term goal of continuously developing its specific core competencies, teaching and research, with a view to *triple transformation*, but also other values and expectations such as equality and internationalization.

Quality assurance

To ensure quality and promote ongoing reflective development of knowledge exchange, an impact-oriented indicator system was developed in a participatory manner (involving the faculties and other stakeholders). This system annually assesses the *institutional prerequisites*—what structures, processes, and resources do we use to initiate and sustain knowledge exchange at UHH? Additionally, it collects indicators that relate to the process itself, along the profile dimensions of innovation & start-ups, career & qualification, and co-creation & engagement.

The surveyed impact orientation focuses on key elements such as established and active partnerships, cooperative formats (within and outside the university), and support structures for activities and actors in knowledge exchange. These indicators already include impacts in terms of sustainable development: both with regard to the subjects of impact-oriented research and teaching (e.g., social or sustainable innovations) and with regard to the establishment of a sustainable societal impact orientation in research and teaching itself. Both are continuously developed on the basis of the indicators and in cooperation with internal and external committees (e.g., Knowledge Exchange Council, Academic Senate) and networks (e.g., Startup Port, #UHHengagiert), as well as with a view to current discussions in science and higher education policy.