



Faculty of Arts

# Strategy 2020-2025



AARHUS UNIVERSITET



# Faculty of Arts · Danish School of Education and Culture · School of Culture and



# ation (DPU) • School of Communication Society

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## FACULTY OF ARTS


The Faculty of Arts is one of Northern Europe's largest and wide-ranging faculties for research and higher education within the humanities, theology and education. The faculty ranges from IT expertise to the classical humanistic, theological and social scientific disciplines to didactics and education. The faculty is characterised by a wide range of academic fields and includes a large and diverse portfolio of degree programmes. The faculty's activities reflect this breadth and diversity, which, in addition to creating synergies between the faculty's own academic fields, is the source of extensive collaboration with, among others, cultural and knowledge institutions, organisations and businesses in Denmark and abroad. While the faculty's expertise is deeply rooted in the disciplines within the faculty's field of activity, it is also characterised by a strong dedication among staff and students to explore original ideas as well as new collaborations with a wide range of societal actors. It is in this disciplinary pluralism – in the 36 Bachelor's degree programmes and 56 Master's degree programmes, in the extensive PhD activity, in the many postdocs and research projects, and in the association between the classic, interdisciplinary and ground-breaking research – that the faculty seeks its future.

With a point of departure in excellent research, research integrity and the freedom of research, it is the faculty's ambition to promote research-based knowledge and contribute to solutions to major societal challenges. The faculty educates Bachelor's, Master's and PhD students, and is committed to communicating its research widely, providing research-based consultancy, as well as opening its knowledge base for the benefit of continuing and further education. It is the faculty's ambition that graduates at all levels are characterised by academic excellence, a solid general education, an interdisciplinary outlook and a capacity for critical thinking.

Arts has campus areas in Aarhus and a campus in Copenhagen. The faculty has more than 1,000 full-time employees, 9,500 Bachelor's and Master's degree students, and 300 PhD students. The faculty values its strong international collaborations and partnerships, which inspire and strengthen both its research and education. Aarhus University has always had an international outlook, and Arts is determined to maintain and strengthen these collaborative ties.

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## STRATEGY 2020-2025

During the strategy period 2013-2020, the Faculty of Arts underwent significant developments. The 2020-2025 strategy builds on this solid foundation. The faculty's strategy is aligned with Aarhus University's strategy for the same period and complements the three school strategies in selected areas that span the faculty's activities. The faculty wishes to continue to develop an organisation that offers researchers, students and staff the best opportunities possible to fulfil their potential. In a period characterised by many targeted initiatives in research, the faculty desire to preserve the best possible conditions for independent, original, and ground-breaking research, the continued development of research-based degree programmes, and opportunities to collaborate with external partners, both nationally and internationally.

The faculty will continue to develop its research, education and collaboration during the new strategy period. It will support the academic departments in exploiting the possibilities offered by new digital technologies within research, education and collaboration. This will be done while empowering staff and students with competencies assisting them in seizing new opportunities in ways that benefit the individual disciplines. The aim is to do this with a clear view of the strengths, weaknesses and societal consequences of digital technologies.

During the preparatory work for the university's and the faculty's strategies, staff and students expressed a strong desire that the faculty – in its organisation as well as and in its research and teaching activities – engage in solving current challenges associated with sustainability and the societal consequences of climate change. The faculty is, in accordance with the Aarhus University's strategy committed to this major societal task and strive to do all it can to contribute to developing a sustainable society for the future.

The strategy is divided into four main areas: research, education, societal engagement and collaboration and organisation and campus. Strategic actions under the individual headings may be of relevance for more areas than where it is presented below.

## VISION

With its strategy for 2020-2025, the faculty supports Aarhus University's vision of being a research-intensive university that strives for the highest international quality and excels in creating value through knowledge, new insights and collaboration. Diversity, equality and sustainability are significant areas of action.

**A research-intensive university that aspires to the highest international quality and excels in creating value through knowledge, new insights and collaboration**



**Connecting  
Denmark and the world**

## MISSION

The faculty will work to achieve this vision by ensuring four core components:

- 1) research of the highest international quality;
- 2) research-based degree programmes of the highest international quality
- 3) societal engagement and continued collaboration with external partners
- 4) maintenance and strengthening of an effective and adaptable organisation with equal opportunities for all.

The faculty's action points are in line with the university's mission.





## 1. RESEARCH

The faculty's research activities developed considerably in the previous strategy period. Research production is high. The mobility and exchange between academic staff in Denmark and abroad has increased. The faculty has an extensive portfolio of external research grants, including a sizable share of grants from the EU.

The faculty will build on this foundation by continuing to ensure that the entire faculty offers excellent research environments, which, in addition to ensuring a high level of external research funding and attractive external – and international – partnerships, will also ensure a solid research foundation for the faculty's degree programmes. The high academic standard in the faculty's local research environments is vital for conducting research of the highest quality and developing original, creative ideas – preferably within interdisciplinary collaborations. This applies to both the classic, established research areas and newly formed research fields. The faculty is committed to safeguarding freedom of research, responsible conduct of research and open debate.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

#### 1. Create frameworks that enable ground-breaking research. To achieve this, Arts will:

- further develop research environments which, through their depth, dedication, responsibility, originality, creativity and inter-disciplinarity, work to develop and test new knowledge
- strengthen and continue to develop a well-functioning research organisation that ensures the best possible basis for in-depth and inspiring research activities that can benefit society
- ensure the most up-to-date knowledge and development of digital research methods within the faculty's academic fields

#### 2. Focus on talent development. To achieve this, Arts will:

- maintain and develop our substantial PhD-educational efforts, as well as research and teaching environments that attract competent researchers and research talents
- assist PhD students in accessing close partnerships and collaborative opportunities with external partners

#### 3. Support international collaborations and partnerships. To achieve this, Arts will:

- further increase incoming and outgoing mobility of researchers
- strengthen collaboration with the faculty's international collaboration partners and support research environments in developing international collaborative activities
- establish global partnerships addressing sustainability and societal challenges





## 2. EDUCATION

Arts offers attractive degree programmes of high academic quality across a wide range of subjects. One of the faculty's most important contributions to society in general is educating graduates with core academic expertise combined with interdisciplinary skills. Based on research-based knowledge and academic expertise, it is the faculty's objective to maintain and further develop degree programmes of high quality. This will be achieved by focusing on core academic competencies and forms of teaching that inspire students' capacity for critical thinking and acquirement of digital competences and action-oriented knowledge related to major societal challenges. The aim is to prepare students to contribute constructively, innovatively and critically to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

**1. Develop attractive, research-based degree programmes. To achieve this, Arts will:**

- offer research-based degree programmes which include student-centred activities
- create a modern, flexible and inspiring study environment that, encourages the students to participate and engage in teaching and student life from the very first day
- provide the students with the opportunity to acquire international experience by developing flexible options for educational collaborative activities across borders

**2. Focus on core academic expertise and the development of general qualifications all of relevance to the labour market. To achieve this, Arts will:**

- develop the faculty's degree programmes and, in connection with the individual degree programme's academic area, ensure that the students acquire digital qualifications
- support the students' overall ability to identify and understand academic issues and challenges with a focus on value creation, problem solving and acquiring social responsibility
- supplement general core academic qualifications by including high-quality practice-oriented and entrepreneurial elements in the degree programmes

**3. Develop interdisciplinary elements in the degree programmes. To achieve this, Arts will:**

- provide opportunities for students to study topics addressing major societal and global challenges, including sustainability and democracy in the broadest sense
- develop degree programmes with clear and relevant interdisciplinary elements in order to strengthen the students' core academic and interdisciplinary qualifications





### 3. COLLABORATION AND SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

In recent years, the faculty has taken steps to strengthen its societal engagement through close collaborations and partnerships with stakeholders. A number of major research grants are obtained in collaboration with companies, ministries, municipalities, university colleges, upper-secondary schools, foundations, associations, NGOs and cultural institutions, such as libraries, museums and galleries/art halls. These collaborations enrich both employees and students, and are a solid knowledge- and practice-based foundation beneficial to the whole university. Arts is taking several initiatives to encourage knowledge exchange, and thereby, on the basis of the faculty's academic strengths and values, promote our research-based contribution to society at large.

The faculty's researchers are encouraged to collaborate with society and contribute to solutions of national and international societal challenges. With its many areas of academic expertise, the faculty is committed to contributing to strengthening society's – including the educational sector's – knowledge base within cultural, human and historical contexts in the broadest sense. With this point of departure, the faculty aims to promote research dissemination, engagement in social debates, contribute to open science, and research-based development.

The faculty will continue its close dialogue with the students and external partners, employers, etc., in order to ensure the correct composition of the students' core academic and interdisciplinary qualifications aimed at meeting current and future societal needs.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### 1. Contribute to society's development through research-based partnerships. To achieve this, Arts will:

- develop frameworks and initiatives that promote co-creation and academic engagement in external collaborations for a larger societal benefit and gain
- strengthen the faculty's support for and focus on researchers who collaborate with, for example, private and public companies, creative industries, artists and entrepreneurs
- develop and explore opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation for the benefit of employees, private companies, public institutions and society as a whole

### 2. Ensure strong connections and dialogue with the rest of society. To achieve this, Arts will:

- collaborate closely with the Danish education sector aiming to contribute to a research-based knowledge foundation and coherence in the national education system
- enhance the communication of academic knowledge and the faculty's contribution to the public debate and society's knowledge base, and ensure a presence in broad public-educational and dialogue-based contexts.

### 3. Strengthen collaborative relationships and build specific partnerships with the labour market for the benefit of students. To achieve this, Arts will:

- engage with key current issues that play a role in society, e.g. ethical, intercultural and digital challenges
- strengthen the dialogue with employers regarding graduates' current and future qualifications, ensuring that the students, among other things, achieve organisational and business understanding, and thereby prepare them for the labour market
- develop new formats and frameworks for teaching, to provide students with the opportunity to work innovatively and include relevant extra-curricular activities in their degree programme



## 4. ORGANISATION AND CAMPUS

A flexible organisational structure and a solid financial foundation are important prerequisites for the faculty's activities. The Faculty of Arts is a large and complex organisation characterised by a wide range of disciplines, decentralised and central functions, and several supporting specialised functions. The continued development of the faculty's strong position within research and education depends on all staff groups and functions across the faculty's units being combined in a professional, close and trust-based collaboration that fully realises the faculty's development opportunities. The faculty will therefore continue to develop close, interdisciplinary collaboration ties. It will also offer an attractive work environment characterised by transparent career paths, diversity and equal opportunities for all.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

#### 1. Work to create an inspiring work environment based on sustainability and democracy.

##### To achieve this, Arts will

- create an attractive physical and psychological work environment for everyone
- further develop effective and flexible collaboration between the academic departments and the technical/administrative staff
- emphasise the importance of sustainable organisational, digital and physical solutions
- strengthen a dialogue-based, transparent and appreciative management structure via communication and collaboration across the organisation

#### 2. Increase the focus on diversity. To achieve this, Arts will:

- intensify efforts to create equal opportunities for all in recruitment processes, career development and other relevant areas
- ensure diversity and equality in all of the faculty's activities
- underline the importance of mobility at all levels, and attract talented national and international employees

#### 3. Create a venue for career development. To achieve this, Arts will:

- ensure the faculty's academic and administrative staff have the opportunity to continuously develop their competencies
- develop clear and attractive career paths at all levels
- offer career advice and guidance for early career researchers









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