



# STRATEGY OF SEAMK 2015–2020

SeAMK 

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# SEINÄJOKI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK) is a multidisciplinary university of applied sciences which started its operations as a temporary one in 1992. It was granted the status of permanent university of applied sciences in 1995. The Council of State granted SeAMK an operating licence as of 1 January 2014. From the beginning of 2014, SeAMK has been run by Seinäjoen Ammattikorkeakoulu Oy (Ltd.).

SeAMK has some 4 500 students, of whom 1 100 are adults attending multimodal programmes. Annually, about 300 people complete studies of Open University of Applied Sciences. SeAMK also provides specialisation studies and training, as well as fee-based further training. Some 800 students graduate from SeAMK annually. SeAMK has about 350 staff.

The RDI (research, development and innovation) activities of SeAMK are focused on multidisciplinary core expertise areas, which are congruent with the strategic focal areas of the University Consortium of South Ostrobothnia. The aim of the RDI activities is to support business operations requiring high-level expertise. The volume of annual outside research financing is about 4 million euros. Every year, more than 90 people contribute to the RDI activities of SeAMK.

In 2009 and 2015, SeAMK passed the international audit of the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC). The European Commission granted SeAMK the Diploma Supplement Label in 2010 and 2013.



# PREMISES OF THE STRATEGY

The Council of State granted operating licences to the Finnish universities of applied sciences as of the beginning of year 2014. At the moment, the Act and Statute on Universities of Applied Science is under reform. The Ministry of Education and culture demands all the Finnish universities of applied sciences reform or update their strategies by 2015. Nowadays, the universities of applied sciences are mainly limited companies.

The Board of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences decided on the reform of its strategy in January 2014 and appointed a preparatory steering group. The strategy has been prepared by a steering group of nine people, consisting of representatives of the staff, students and external partners in cooperation of SeAMK. Also the Management Board of

SeAMK has discussed the strategy. A strategy workshop, attended by some 70 people, was arranged for listening to the opinions of the staff and students. In addition, a web survey was arranged among the staff and students at the final stage of the preparation of the strategy. The key interest groups have participated in the strategy work.

The key documents in the preparation of the content of the regional educational strategy are the Development Programme for Education and Research 2016 of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the operational licence application of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, as well as the Development Strategy of the European Union for 2020. The preparation work has been matched with the preparation of the Regional Strategy, the Higher Education Strategy for South Ostrobothnia 2020, and the strategy of the City of Seinäjoki.



# OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

During the strategy reform process of the Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, several different changes with an influence on the operations of SeAMK have been recognised in the university's operational environment. The ongoing reform of universities of applied sciences is aimed at improving their ability to react faster to regional changes in educational needs. Universities of applied sciences also play an important role as regional links with the international networks of higher education and RDI activities.

The sphere of influence of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences is Western Finland. SeAMK is known as a regional institute of higher education, but its sphere of influence is increasing both in education and in RDI activities.

When devising the present Strategy, attention was paid especially to the following pressures for change:

**Internationalisation:** International student mobility will increase and competition on the educational market will grow significantly. At the same time, competition for international R & D funding will become more intense and put demands of the quality of operations also at institutes of higher education. The importance of cooperation with the chosen international networks will increase. Also communities and, in particular, companies wish to get support to their internationalisation.

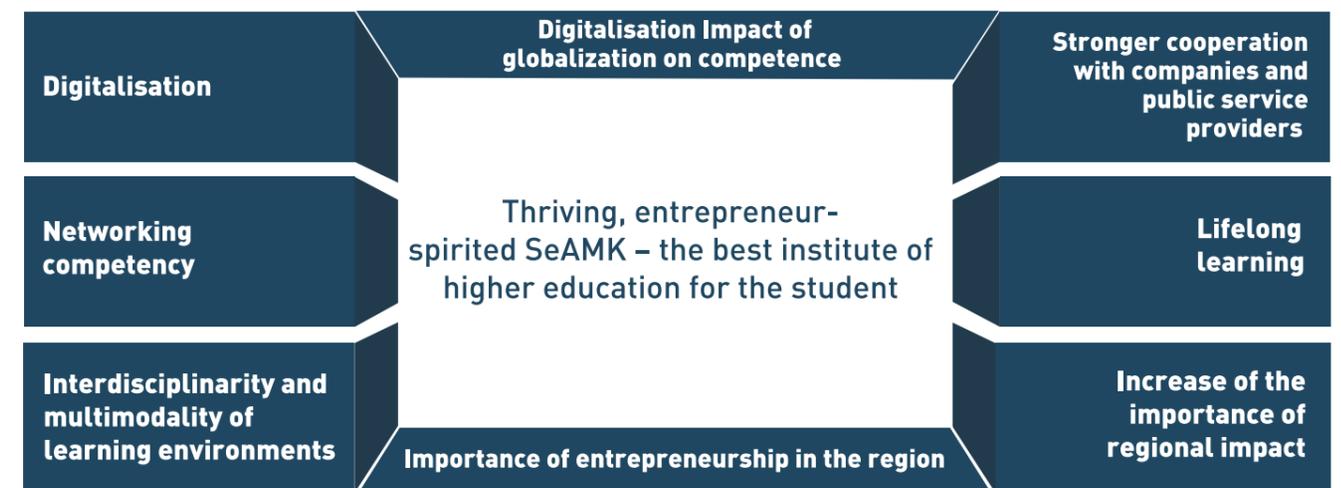
**Socio-political expectations:** The limits of public funding forces actors to further diversify their sources of funding and to plan for a new economy with new intensiveness. Education

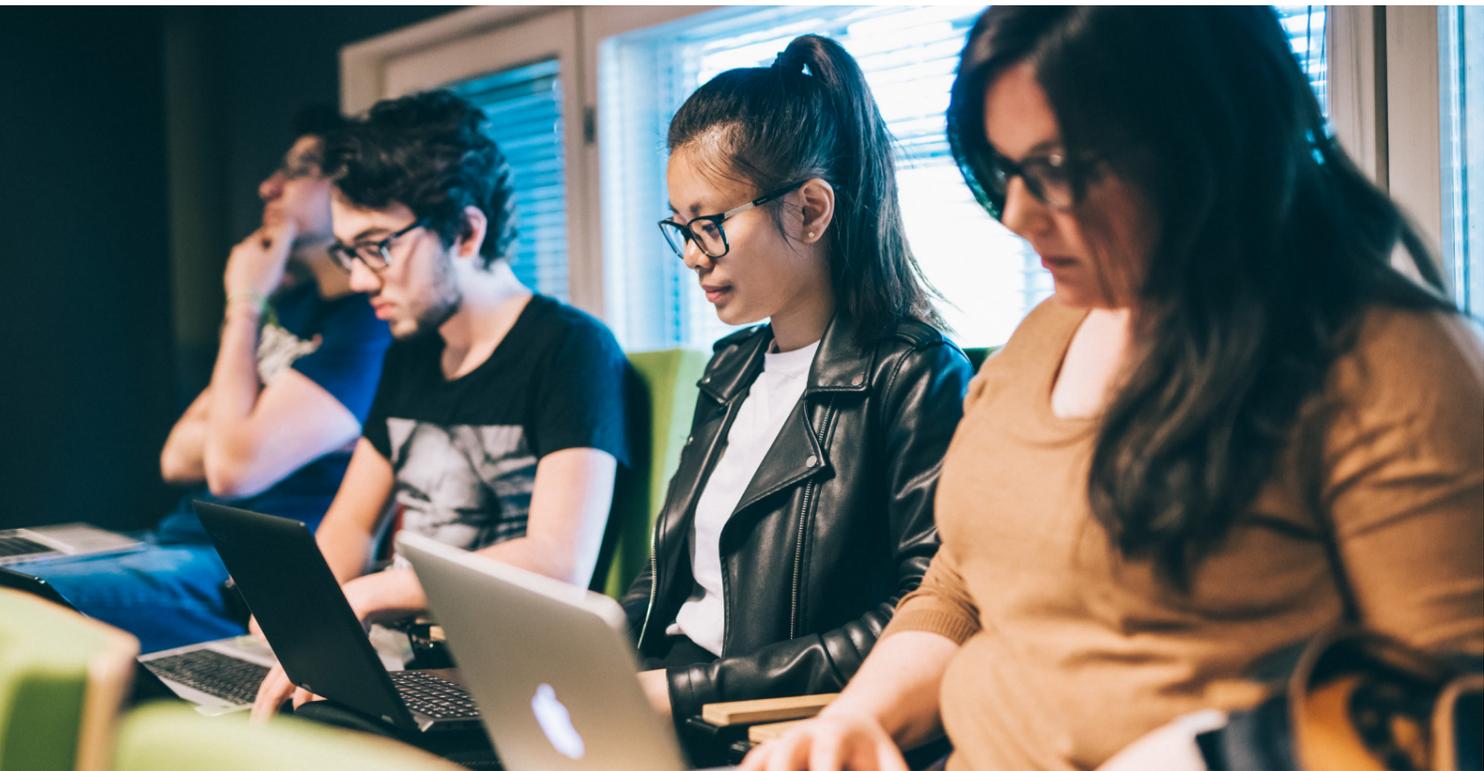
is expected to respond to the needs of working life within an increasingly short time span. Institutes of higher education should contribute to the prolongation of careers and actively promote lifelong learning.

**Regional and industrial policy expectations:** Change in the economy and economic structure has an effect on the demand for knowledge as well as on the economic resources available. At the international level, the new EU programmes implementing the intelligent, sustainable and participatory strategy for growth started in 2014 and will extend to the year 2020.

**Digitalisation:** Digital technology and information networks rapidly change the ways of searching information. Information networks are part of our everyday life and allow increasingly multi-modal learning. The new IT environment has effects on the work of researchers, teachers and students. The age of free information networks highlights the learning coach's perspective in the role of the teacher.

**Cooperation with companies and producers of public services:** Institutes of higher education are expected to have an increasingly distinct regional and social impact as well as an active role and investment in interaction. Especially companies and entrepreneurs themselves are more and more often also producers and providers of knowledge. Institutes of higher education must think of their own role as producers of new knowledge, articulators of existing knowledge, and developers of new, practical





## VALUES

### ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Our attitude and ways of action in our own work and work community are entrepreneurial. Our activities feature everyday courage, creativity, innovativeness, success, and curiosity. We act responsibly in cooperation with companies and the business life through education and RDI projects.

### INTERNATIONALISATION

SeAMK is an international institute of higher education, which acts as a precursor in its region. Internationalisation is a natural part of the activities of SeAMK. We strive for internationalisation in varied ways both in teaching and RDI activities. We promote in varied ways international programmes and education provided in languages other than Finnish. Our Degrees are internationally comparable and competitive.

### KNOWLEDGE

We are experts and appliers. We have professional, innovative ways of doing things, and our knowledge is developed systematically. We create and strengthen an atmosphere in which expertise is shared and new things are tested. We encourage our experts to engage in RDI in the chosen profile areas and exploit the results of this work in our teaching. Graduating students respond to the needs of working life with their knowledge.

### SeAMK SPIRIT

We appreciate, encourage and respect each other in our student and work community. We take care of our staff's welfare. Our ways of doing things are uniform and our interaction is open. We take charge of the tasks assigned to us, the environment, and the development of our operations.

## MISSION

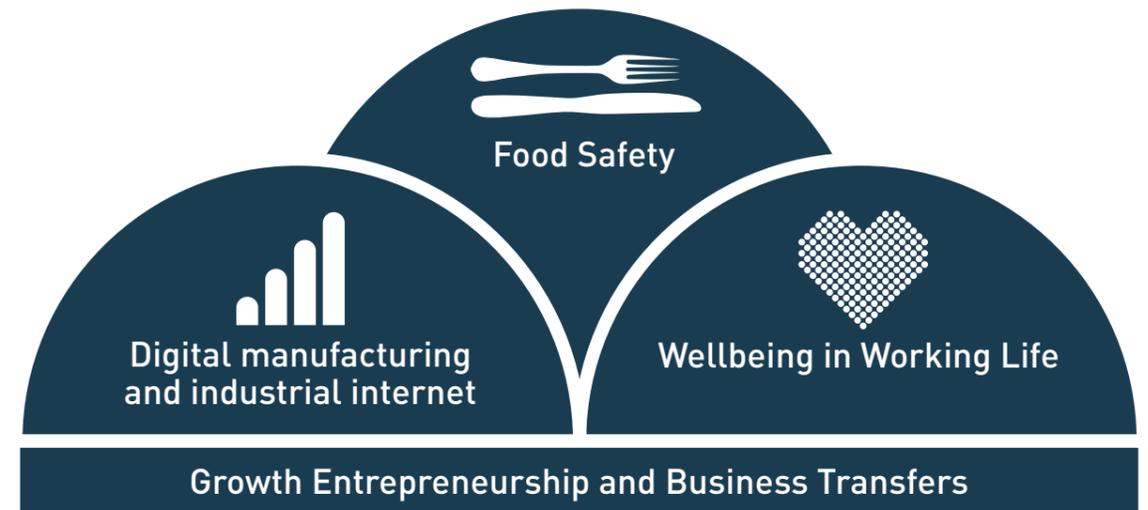
**Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences prepares professionals of the future and produces high-level applied research to promote welfare and innovations.**

## VISION 2020

**International, entrepreneur-spirited SeAMK – the best institute of higher education for the student**

## PROFILE AREAS

The focal areas of SeAMK are Food solutions, Intelligent and energy-efficient systems, Welfare and creativity and Entrepreneurship and Growth. These focus areas are congruent with those of the Higher Education Strategy of South Ostrobothnia and the Regional Strategy. Inside these focal areas the profile areas of SeAMK are the following:



## PARTNERSHIPS

The strategic partners of SeAMK include the universities belonging to the University Consortium of Seinäjoki (HY, TaY, TTY, TuY, Siba, VY). The aim of the Higher Education Strategy for South Ostrobothnia 2020, prepared together, is to improve the regional impact of institutes of higher education through systematic interaction with partners in cooperation. Cooperation is done especially in RDI activities, but also in bringing knowledge and higher education to the region according to its needs.

A strategic partnership has been established with Vaasa University of Applied Sciences. The aim of this cooperation is to together create comprehensive educational supply for the region, to enhance mutual distribution of work, as well as to increase cooperation in support services.

The key working life partnerships, related to the focal areas of SeAMK, include the South Ostrobothnian food industries, technology industries, event production and units of social work and health care. Cooperation is done in all the task areas of SeAMK:

- Design, creation, implementation and evaluation of the different modes of education
- Research and development projects as well as innovation activities
- Regional development, production of competent labour force to meet the needs of the region

The key partners also include the City of Seinäjoki, with whom SeAMK cooperates in the development of strategic regional policy definitions and functions. Also the Seinäjoki Joint Municipal Authority for Education is an important regional partner for SeAMK.

SeAMK has strategic, international university partners. The cooperation with them is diverse, multidisciplinary and persevering: permanent double degree cooperation, long-time RDI cooperation in the focal areas of SeAMK and the region, student and teacher mobility, and development of international degree programmes. The key strategic partners are Aschaffenburg UAS and Rosenheim UAS in Germany and Chiba University in Japan.

# STRATEGIC CHOICES

Our operations must be profitable and sustainable. Our key strategic choices are:

## INCREASING UNITY

SeAMK revises and standardizes its courses of action with an open mind. Multimodal and interdisciplinary teaching and RDI activities are developed systematically. At the same time, the course supply on the Frami campus will be diversified and student services will be strengthened as part of the hub of higher education in Seinäjoki.

## UTILISATION OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY BY INCREASING COOPERATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT FIELDS

By multi-field competence, we mean at SeAMK taking another employee's professional skills into account and appreciating them as well as willingness and ability to engage in genuine cooperation and development. Students have an opportunity to more extensively choose and include studies in other educational fields in their degrees. Multi-field service products allow responding to the unexpected needs of working life in a flexible way.

## DIGITAL CAMPUS

SeAMK will create a Digital Campus, aimed at achieving agility in teaching and RDI. The Digital Campus is an approach in which students and staff exploit the multimodal pedagogical and supervisory opportunities of the increasingly digitized world. The technological solutions used represent the most suitable technology at each time, such as digital learning environments, e-learning centre, mobile applications, cloud services, etc.

The Digital Campus will bring the business life and other interest groups near you fast and ecologically. Digital competence will open new, significant business opportunities for graduating students and business life.

## STRATEGIC NETWORKING

The key partners in cooperation in the region, in Finland and abroad have been defined. Modes of interaction with the partners are developed systematically and the fulfilment of interaction is monitored. In R & D and educational cooperation, models for cooperation are developed for activities serving SMEs.

Based on the tasks of SeAMK, the choices complementing the key choices are:

## DEVELOPMENT OF WORKING LIFE-ORIENTED TEACHING

The focus of our teaching is on the preparation of professional experts for working life. Learning takes place in different learning environments and at workplaces. The studies are of high quality and multi-field-oriented. Working-life orientation is aimed at matching work and studies in a flexible way. Graduation is preceded by good career guidance, and we want to keep our graduates as our customers in the future, too.

## DEVELOPMENT OF RDI ACTIVITIES

The development of RDI activities strengthens the teaching of SeAMK. The impact of the RDI activities is strengthened by setting out the results of our activities for use by companies and other organisations. The volume of outside funding for RDI activities is increasing. Cooperation between researchers both within the focal areas and in new openings in interfaces is strengthened. SeAMK is cooperating more and more closely with universities' research groups and business life.

## DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

All the students of SeAMK are prepared for working in a global environment. The volume of student, teacher and researcher exchange with the international partners is increased. The export of knowledge related to the focal areas is productized on an economically profitable basis. In RDI projects, the aim is to triple the share of international funding by 2020.

## STRENGTHENING OF REGIONAL IMPACT

The competence level of regions is improved through the diverse supply of higher education-level studies in accordance with the existing regional knowledge strategies. The Regional University of Applied Sciences operates especially as part of regions' knowledge and innovation clusters in South Ostrobothnia. The Seinäjoki Region is developed as an attractive city of higher education.



# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

The Strategy of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences is composed of eight choices and related action plans. The action plans detail the key actions, their target levels, and indicators. People in charge (members of the Board), promoting the actions simultaneously at all the educational levels, have been assigned for the action plans.

Resource allocation for the measures included in the Strategy takes place at the target contract negotiations between the Ministry of Education and Culture and SeAMK for a contract period at a time. At SeAMK, resource allocation is connected to annual budgeting and annually approved targets. The realization

of the Strategy is monitored with the evaluation of the action plans related to the choices. The evaluation is done by the Management Group and the Board of SeAMK Oy (Ltd).

The external evaluator of the realization of the Strategy is the Ministry of Education and Culture, which gives SeAMK feedback on the achievement of the goals of the Strategy during the contract period. The realization of the Strategy is the responsibility of the Managing Director, who reports on it to the Board of SeAMK Oy (Ltd). A prerequisite for the successful realization of the Strategy is that the staff, students and key interest groups commit themselves to the Strategy and its goals in their everyday work.

## Strategy of SeAMK 2015–2020

The Management Group and the Board of SeAMK Oy (Ltd) assess the progress in the achievement of the goals every half a year.

## Action plans in relation to the choices

SeAMK 

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