Terms of reference for Aarhus University’s Business Committee

Background
Aarhus University’s goal is to become a preferred partner for both the private and the public sector. To a greater extent, the university must invite businesses and public institutions inside to collaborate on specific projects, Master’s theses and case competitions involving researchers and students. This will bring students in closer contact with the labour market before graduation. These companies and public institutions must have access to the entire palette of the university’s research and teaching activities, and must be able to make use of the university’s advanced laboratories and instruments. Increased innovation and competitiveness must result from this collaboration.

Tasks
The tasks of the Business Committee are:
- To ensure that research and science advice are strengthened through business collaboration
- To enter into strategic framework agreements with major enterprises, public institutions, municipalities, regions and business regions. Framework agreements may include both educational and research collaboration, and may include all relevant subject areas. The framework agreements must be extended with sub-agreements at relevant levels (faculty, department/school, research group)
- Following up on strategic framework agreements and action plans at least once a year
- To exchange knowledge with the faculties’ business committees regarding collaboration with external partners, and to ensure cross-faculty coordination and knowledge exchange
- To strengthen the university’s profile as an attractive partner.
- To strengthen cooperation with SMEs
- To contribute to strengthening the career-oriented dimension of AU’s degree programmes (including case competitions)
- To create optimal conditions for the commercialisation of research results, the establishment of spinout companies and student entrepreneurship
- To ensure that the university’s research infrastructure and facilities are included in
collaborations with external partners to a greater extent than currently.

**Operating procedures**

The committee must take the wishes and needs of students, employees and external partners as its point of departure.

The committee must set targets for its work, and must draw up an annual work plan which must be followed up on at regular intervals. Administrative support for the committee is provided by the Office of Business Collaboration through the involvement of the coordination group and other stakeholders.

- The coordination group is comprised of a representative from each of the four faculties, from AU Research Support and External Relations, and from AU Student Administration and Services, in addition to the head of the Office of Business Collaboration, who serves as chair. The group’s function is coordination and execution on behalf of the Business Committee through administrative support, and must meet once a month at a minimum.
- The Committee for Research and External Cooperation and the Education Committee must contribute presentations and briefs as commissioned by the Business Committee through the Office of Business Collaboration.

The Business Committee or the Office of Business Collaboration allocates tasks (at a general level) between the coordination group, the Education Committee and the Committee for Research and External Cooperation.

The rector, pro-rector and university director are responsible for implementing the initiatives decided across the university.

Support for this work is provided by the Office of Business Collaboration as well as the Committee for Research and External Cooperation, the Education Committee, the administration’s management team and other stakeholders. The deans – with support from their respective faculties – are responsible for implementation at the faculties. In this connection, the deans may draw on the coordination group, which assists with cross-faculty coordination. Together with the administration’s management team, the university director is responsible for implementation in the administration.

**Membership**

The committee is comprised of the rector, the pro-rector, the university director and the four deans.

**Meeting frequency**

The committee meets at least once a month and as needed.


The Business Committee must update the terms of reference annually. The next occasion will be at the Business Committee meeting on 5 December 2018.