



Terms of reference of Aarhus University's Business Committee

Background

The goal of Aarhus University (AU) is to become a preferred partner for both the public and the private sector. AU's external collaboration will be strengthened: private companies and public sector organisations will collaborate more with researchers and students. This will give researchers the opportunity to apply their research in cooperation with their surrounding communities, while at the same time giving the public and private sectors access to the high-quality research, expertise and academic breadth that characterise AU. Together with researchers, companies and public sector organisations will have access to the university's advanced laboratories and instruments. Strengthened external collaborations, such as specialised and concrete projects, Master's theses and case competitions will help ensure that students develop a closer connection to the labour market before graduation, allowing them to build networks and improve career and job opportunities. This cooperation will translate into increased innovation and competitiveness for society.

Tasks

The tasks of the Business Committee are:

- To ensure that research is 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 can be extended with sub-agreements at relevant levels (faculty, department/school, research group)
- To follow 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)

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- To strengthen entrepreneurship for both researchers and students by creating optimal conditions for the establishment of startup and spinout companies
- To strengthen the commercialisation of research through collaboration with business and industry on licensing and sale of technologies
- To ensure that the university's research infrastructure and facilities are included in collaborations with external partners to a greater extent than currently
- Strengthen AU's alumni network.

Working method

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

The committee will set targets for its work and draw up an annual work plan, which will 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 to the Business Committee and other stakeholders.

- The coordination group to the Business Committee is comprised of a representative from each of the five faculties, from AU Research Support and External Relations, and from AU Student Administration and Services, in addition 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 will meet once a month at a minimum.
- The Committee for Research and External Cooperation and the Education Committee will contribute presentations and briefs as commissioned by the Business Committee through the Office of Business Collaboration.

The Business Committee allocates tasks (at a general level) between a.o. Enterprise and Innovation, the coordination group to the Business Committee, the Education Committee and the Committee for Research and External Cooperation.

The rector, pro-rector and university director (and as from 1 February 2020 the director of Enterprise and Innovation) are responsible for implementing the initiatives that are decided on by the committee university wide. Support for this work will be provided by Enterprise and Innovation, as well as by the Committee for Research and External Cooperation, the Education Committee, the administration's management team and by other stakeholders. The deans – with support from their respective faculties – are responsible for implementation at the faculties. In this connection, the deans may draw upon the coordination group to the Business Committee, which assists with cross-faculty coordination. Together with the administration's management team, the university director is responsible for implementation into the administration.

The director of Enterprise and Innovation can contribute to meetings in the senior management team, the Education Committee and the Committee for Research and External Cooperation and other meeting forums, when subjects to the meetings correlates with the business area.



Members

The committee is comprised of the rector, the pro-rector, the university director and the five deans (and as from 1 February 2020 the director of Enterprise and Innovation).

Meeting frequency

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

Amendment and revision

The Business Committee will update the terms of reference annually.

Decided on 25 January 2017. Updated version approved on 8 January 2020. To be reviewed again on 2 December 2020.
