

Internationalisation strategy



**Karolinska
Institutet**

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As a research-intensive university, it is vital that Karolinska Institutet (KI) is a part of the international arena. International contacts have been highly significant throughout our 200-year history. Over the past 50 years they have been decisive to our success.

As we enter our third century, we will benefit further from international contacts and collaborations. To increase the quality of our operations and help strengthen our position as one of the world's leading medical universities, our goal is to attract the most prominent faculty members, students and collaborative partners.

Medicine is inherently an international discipline. Diseases do not respect national borders, and global health has become an increasingly important issue which we want to contribute towards and take responsibility for. This is why we will continue our work to recruit students and staff internationally. We will also intensify our research collaboration with universities throughout the world and create more opportunities for our research and education staff and students to participate in global exchanges.

This enriches us and offers a broader perspective. We learn more about ourselves and the world in which we live. Above all, an international perspective helps us to achieve our mission to improve human health throughout the world through research and education. Karolinska Institutet will be a university that plays an active role in the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Harriet Wallberg-Henriksson', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Professor Harriet Wallberg-Henriksson
President of Karolinska Institutet

Mission

The mission of Karolinska Institutet is to improve people's health through research and education.

Vision

Karolinska Institutet shall be one of the world's leading medical universities.

Fundamental values

KI operates in an area in which fundamental values have a profound effect. An ethical and humanist conviction is therefore an ever-present consideration for all staff. Society has a right to place extremely strict requirements on the work carried out at Karolinska Institutet.

The work carried out at Karolinska Institutet shall be characterised by a high degree of quality and an ethical approach.

Karolinska Institutet shall defend the independence of research.

Education and research at Karolinska Institutet shall interact in a mutual exchange of knowledge and experience.

Education and research at Karolinska Institutet shall be characterised by a sincere responsibility for society, and shall thus contribute to sustainable development both within and beyond Sweden's borders.

The work carried out at Karolinska Institutet shall be characterised by confidence in the initiative, creativity, independence and expertise of its staff and students. Karolinska Institutet shall support staff and students in developing these qualities.

Karolinska Institutet shall provide an environment for work and study that is characterised by sound leadership, participation, involvement, transparency, equality and diversity, and by a concern for both the internal and the external environment.



Introduction

Our internationalisation work aims to improve the quality and diversity of research, education and administration, and therefore strengthen our competitiveness. The concept of internationalisation includes international relationships and mobility, as well as all activities that add to the international dimensions of the university.

The International Strategy Committee was established by the President of KI in 2008, with the purpose of coordinating internationalisation work and setting priorities for our international collaboration. The committee was also given a mandate to develop an overriding internationalisation strategy for the university.

Today, our global commitment consists largely of work performed by individual employees and students. Therefore, an internationalisation strategy that provides a common foundation for our goals and principles, and which clarifies the mandate and focus of our work, is necessary in order to facilitate priorities and strategic investments.

This document contains goals and strategies for the way in which our internationalisation work will contribute to the fulfilment of our vision and meet the challenges that have been identified in Strategy 2012. This strategy consists of five strategic goals and three strategies. The strategic goals describe what is to be achieved, while the strategies indicate how this is to be achieved. The goals and strategies will then be broken down into action plans on the basis of needs within each field.

This internationalisation strategy brings us a step closer to achieving our vision of being one of the world's leading medical universities.



Current situation

Karolinska Institutet enjoys a strong position among the world's medical universities and a high international ranking. In order to maintain our leading international position and meet the needs of the next generation of employees and students, we need to integrate a global perspective into all areas of the university's development. Globalisation brings access to new research and education arenas. These in turn bring both opportunities and challenges, in terms of increased competition, both for the university as a whole and for individual employees and students.



Internationalisation – an integral element of the entire university

Students and employees will be given opportunities to work abroad, as well as the tools needed in order to thrive in an increasingly global environment in Sweden and at Karolinska Institutet. The different parts of the university are equipped to provide this to varying degrees. Research is exposed to, and generally characterised by, international perspectives. Many – but not all – educational programmes have come a long way in terms of integrating international perspectives, e.g. through faculty and student exchanges. Other educational programmes, as well as certain areas of administrative support, need to broaden their international perspective.

Several hundred exchange students study at our university each year, and a third of our PhD candidates come from countries other than Sweden. These students offer new perspectives and help to create an international work climate and study environment. All academic and administrative processes must be further strengthened in order to function effectively in this context.

Our current global commitment

An important characteristic of our global commitment is strategic, long-term and fruitful collaborations in research and education. Through their involvement around the world, employees, students and alumni are our most important ambassadors, spreading an awareness of Karolinska Institutet and its activities.

We collaborate with partners in many countries around the world, from the Nordic region and the rest of Europe to nations such as the USA, China, Japan and Uganda. Collaborations with these and other countries embrace many different fields of medicine.

Research at Karolinska Institutet is largely financed by external grants. In addition to collaboration with partners in research and education in other countries, cooperation with trade and industry both within Sweden and abroad is also important. Approximately seven per cent of our research is funded through collaborative projects, commissioned research and, in some cases, donations. Companies whose headquarters are based outside Sweden are responsible for approximately 33 per cent of this funding. Our innovation system, which was established in the mid-1990s, has received a considerable amount of positive attention from other countries, and in recent years, this work has been extended to include business ideas from all the Nordic countries.

Since 2005, we have carried out important fundraising work. The campaign *Breakthroughs for life (Genombrott för livet)*, which ran from 2005 to 2010, raised more than one billion Swedish kronor and was one of the most successful fundraising campaigns ever at a European university. Fundraising now plays a constant role in our operations, and offers both Swedish and international donors the opportunity to actively support our research. One prerequisite for international collaboration with trade and industry, as well as with donors, is that we have adequate knowledge and experience of the world.

Strategic goals

International knowledge exchange is vital when it comes to maintaining a high level of quality at Karolinska Institutet. To ensure a highly qualified knowledge exchange, the university must attract outstanding employees, students and collaborative partners from all over the world, and this requires an excellent international reputation. These different objectives can be viewed as a cyclical process, whereby one goal leads to the next (see the model below).



Each of our strategic internationalisation goals can be derived from one or more of the steps in the model above.

1. Karolinska Institutet will attract the most outstanding employees, students and collaborative partners from all over the world.

Competitive research and education contribute to our excellent reputation and ensure the right conditions for alliances with world-renowned partners, as well as for recruiting the most outstanding employees and students.

2. Karolinska Institutet's international collaborations will increase the quality of its operations.

By attracting internationally competitive employees, students and collaborative partners, educational exchange is extended and improved. This, in turn, further increases the quality of activities.

3. Work involving international collaborations at Karolinska Institutet will focus on international knowledge exchange.

Contact networks and an exchange of knowledge from international collaborations will bring added value to all parties and operations involved.

4. Karolinska Institutet will provide a good work platform in a global arena.

We have a strong reputation, which can help to open doors in many international contexts. In order to maintain and further strengthen the university's reputation, it is necessary that everyone who works or studies here – researchers, faculty, administrative staff and students – is well prepared for international collaboration.

5. As an internationally reputable university, Karolinska Institutet will actively participate in work on global health issues.

Today, the world faces major challenges regarding human health, and new solutions are needed to solve new problems. In many parts of the world, research and education in this area must be increased. International collaboration offers access to knowledge, problems and environments that do not exist in Sweden, which enables students to learn about these issues and also carry out research in new areas. We are actively involved in dealing with common global health issues through our international presence and exchanges in research and education.

Strategies

In order to achieve our strategic goals, three main areas have been prioritised:

Strategy 1: Integrate an international perspective throughout the university

Karolinska Institutet will be characterised by an international environment. Everyone who works and studies here will be encouraged to seek international experience, which leads to a sense of participation in a truly global university. We will also make use of the experiences of foreign employees and students. In many instances this requires a change in culture, as well as professional administrative support to deal with specific issues relating to international relations.

Fields of activity:

- Further develop academic and administrative processes in order to support international collaboration.
- Encourage international exchanges among employees and students at all levels.
- Develop the platforms for integration between Swedish and foreign employees and students.
- Provide information, both internally and externally, relating to ongoing internationalisation activities and their prerequisites.
- Distribute information regarding funding opportunities for international cooperation.

Strategy 2: Develop strategic alliances

In order to keep abreast of global competition, it is important that we participate in selected strategic alliances. These alliances should be based on existing activities and provide clear added value for everyone involved. As a leading university, we are responsible for ensuring that collaborations with international partners contribute to enhancing the quality of our operations. Collaborations must be based on a mutual respect for one another, as well as focusing on basic scientific principles.

Fields of activity:

- Outline and make international collaboration visible in a lucid way.
- Ensure that the principles and routines for the selection of international collaboration are clear and easy to follow.
- Develop a selection of existing collaborations.
- Follow up and assess existing collaborations and if needed, phase out any unnecessary collaborations.
- Work to actively identify new opportunities for strategic collaboration.
- Develop forms of collaboration and exchange models that we can offer.
- Strengthen commitments with businesses outside Sweden.
- Develop routines for systematic external analysis.

Strategy 3: Strengthen the Karolinska Institutet brand internationally

Karolinska Institutet already has a strong reputation. The name is associated with a wealth of tradition, high status and exclusivity. One of our ambitions is to maintain these traits while ensuring that our name is also associated with a modern and open university. In order to achieve our strategic international goals, it is important to ensure that our work is recognised internationally. It is also important to clarify what we offer in selected markets to prioritised target groups. By making people aware of our strengths, as well as building on our excellent international reputation, we will attract the most outstanding colleagues, collaborative partners and students.

Fields of activity:

- Direct our international work towards strategically chosen groups and geographic regions/markets.
- Develop an international communication strategy in order to clarify what we stand for and offer.
- Outline, develop and make use of international contacts, including alumni, so that they can become good ambassadors for our university. This will help to promote and improve Karolinska Institutet's reputation.
- Offer support to both employees and students who represent Karolinska Institutet.
- Develop instruments to measure and follow up work relating to our international reputation.



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