

#SustainableTurkuUAS

TURKU AMK 

The programme for sustainable development and responsibility of Turku University of Applied Sciences 2024-2030



Sustainable and responsible

Turku UAS

– our updated programme

Background

The Finnish Rectors' Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences (Arene) published a joint program for sustainable development and responsibility for all universities of applied sciences in 2020, to which all universities of applied sciences have committed. The program includes promises and actions related to education, RDI activities, management and staff competence, as well as carbon footprint.

Universities of applied sciences have committed to the same principles and actions of sustainable development and responsibility. These principles are in line with the UN's Agenda 2030 for sustainable development and the European sustainability competence framework GreenComp (2022).

Turku University of Applied Sciences has also committed to following the common program of universities of applied sciences and published its own sustainable development and responsibility program based on it at the beginning of 2021. The progress of the program has been monitored and the goals set have been well advanced. However, circumstances and regulations have changed, and therefore Turku University of Applied Sciences' own sustainable development and responsibility program has been updated in 2024.



The challenges of the carbon neutrality goal

At the beginning of the decade, the goal of carbon neutrality was common for organizations, and after reducing the carbon footprint, compensation promises for the remaining emissions were acceptable. However, the goal of carbon neutrality is now unrealistic, as no organization can be without producing some emissions. The Green Transition Consumer Protection Directive and the Green Claims Directive limit the possibilities to present claims based on emission compensation. The Finnish Government's guide to good practices in voluntary carbon markets no longer recommends the use of the word compensation or credit. Actions used to offset emissions should be outside national accounting, which excludes, for example, the use of forest carbon sinks in presenting offset claims.

What has changed?

The aim of Turku University of Applied Sciences is to be climate and nature positive in its overall impact, despite the changed regulation, i.e., to operate in such a way that despite the negative climate and nature impacts it causes, the operation of Turku University of Applied Sciences can be verified as improving rather than deteriorating the state of the environment, nature, and climate.

The changed regulations required Turku University of Applied Sciences to update its sustainable development and responsibility program and to describe the goals according to the new requirements.

The University of Applied Sciences also included in the program the goals aimed at nature, circular economy, and the protection of the Baltic Sea, which were previously missing from it.

Our programme of sustainable development and responsibility focuses on **increasing** the handprint and **reducing** the footprint



Education

We train experts, who promote sustainable development and are capable of making society and working life more sustainable



RDI actions

We produce solutions to sustainability challenges and promote sustainable development



Handprint

Management and staff competence

We are an economically, ecologically and socially responsible employers and employees

A dark green graphic consisting of two overlapping arrow shapes pointing to the left, with the word "Footprint" written in white text inside the top arrow.

Footprint

A background image of a snowy landscape with a path of footprints leading from the top center towards the bottom center.

Actions to reduce emissions

Actions to prevent biodiversity loss

Calculation and evaluation of footprint

Other actions to reduce the footprint

Monitoring and indicators

Implementation at Turku UAS

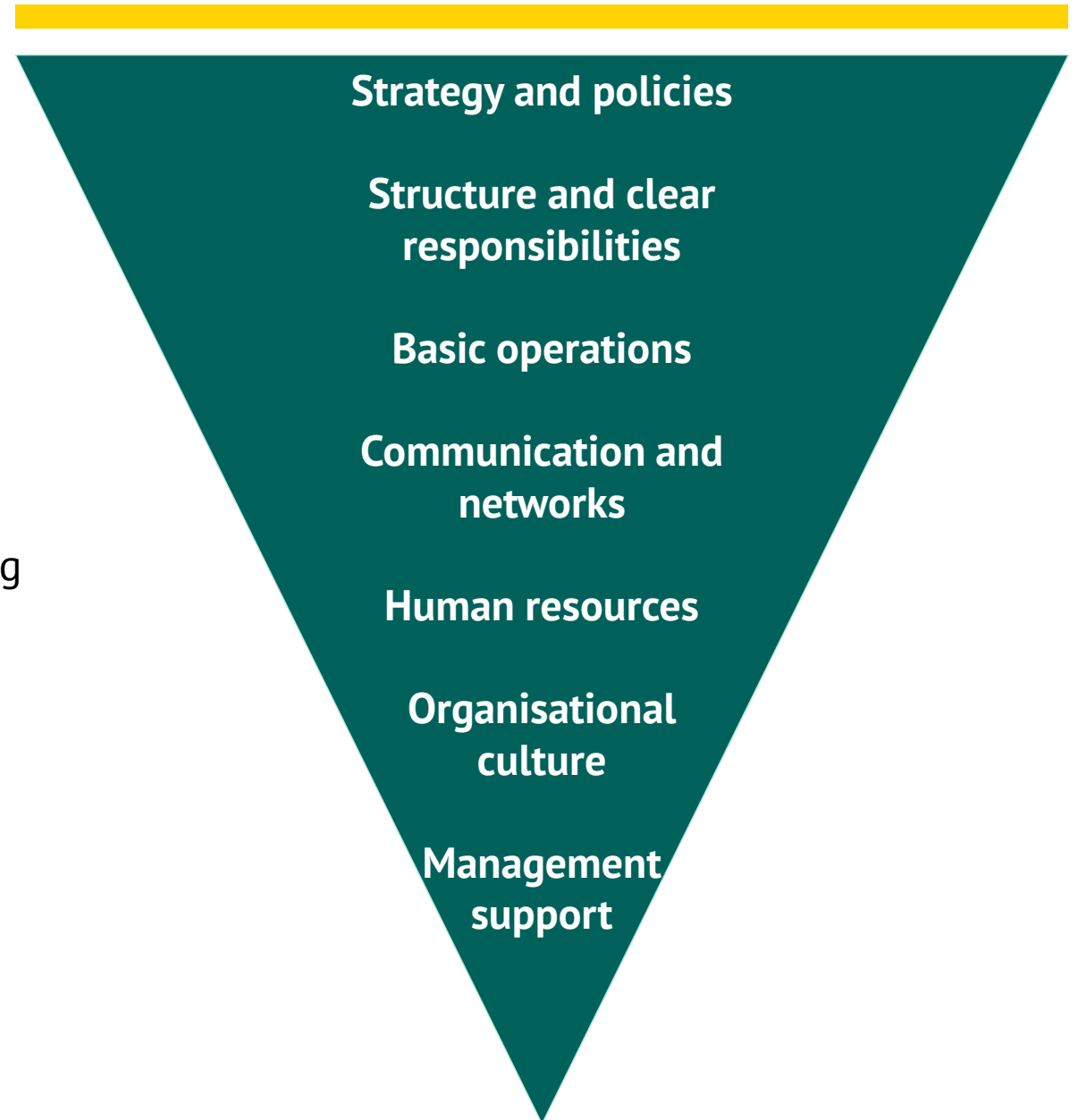
Sustainable Development and Responsibility are at the core of our Green Economy strategy.

The work is clearly organized into expert teams, led by those responsible for Education, R&D activities, Management and staff competence, as well as Monitoring and metrics. The work is coordinated by a sustainable development coordinator, who reports biannually to the management team.

The activities are integrated into all basic operations and communications of the university.

We are actively involved in the joint sustainability work and networks of universities and the city of Turku.

Management methods to promote sustainability



Education

– sustainable development competence for everyone

Our commitment

- Our education produces experts, who have knowledge, skills and motivation to promote sustainable development in working life and society. In addition to the expertise related to their respective fields, all our graduates have at least basic knowledge of sustainable development and responsibility.
- We ensure that sustainable development and responsibility are integrated in all our degree programmes. We also provide education for lifelong learning to promote sustainable development.
- We promote the accessibility of higher education so that everyone can strive for education and expertise regardless of their family background, gender, language, ethnic background, nationality, disability, place of residence or other factor beyond the individual.



Our measures

- We ensure the common learning outcomes for sustainable development and responsibility at Turku University of Applied Sciences and support the integration of the topic into field-specific studies.
- We reinforce the role of sustainable development and responsibility in all curricula and in the course supply for lifelong learning.
- We promote and enable the development of sustainability expertise by integrating RDI in learning and teaching.
- We monitor regularly the achievement and impact of competences in sustainable development and responsibility.
- We work openly in extensive cooperation with higher education institutions, other educational institutions, working life and other stakeholders to promote sustainable development.



RDI

– solutions to the challenges of sustainability

Our commitment

- Through our RDI activities and student involvement, we produce solutions to sustainability challenges and promote sustainable development in cooperation with the higher education community, business life and the public sector.
- We use and develop the evaluation criteria jointly developed with our partners to promote and increase the sustainability and responsibility of RDI actions.
- We develop our operations so that one of the reasons we are a sought-after partner and employer is our RDI that is ecologically, socially, culturally and economically sustainable and responsible.



Our measures

- We use and develop a set of criteria for planning, developing, evaluating and implementing the contents and results of RDI activities in an ecologically, socially, culturally and economically sustainable and responsible manner.
- We increase openness and transparency so that our RDI activities fulfil national sustainability targets and programmes at a regional level.
- We produce the necessary information to support increasing the impact of our RDI activities at the local, regional, national and international level.
- We highlight actively and comprehensibly the results of our RDI activities and good practices for the benefit of society, especially by promoting societal discussion and the transparency of information.



Management and staff competence

– we practice what we teach

Our commitment

- We act as economically, ecologically and socially responsible employers and employees. Our actions are responsible and transparent.
- Our staff is familiar with and guided by the important sustainable development policies related to their work. We monitor the state of sustainable development and responsibility competence of our staff annually.
- We support the expertise in sustainable development and responsibility of the entire higher education community through education related to the theme. We include sustainable development in the orientation of our employees.
- We develop our activities openly with staff, students and other stakeholders.



Our measures

- We monitor regularly the development of our staff's expertise in sustainable development and responsibility. Based on this assessment, we create joint measures or recommendations for the development of sustainable development and responsibility at our UAS.
- We encourage our staff to develop their expertise in sustainable development e.g., by offering the opportunity to complete courses in sustainable development.
- We include a course in sustainable development in all employees' orientation.



Footprint

– Principles to reduce and offset the footprint



Our commitment

- We implement efficient measures in order to reduce our carbon footprint and emissions.
- We carry out a carbon footprint calculation annually and monitor its development.
- We increase carbon sinks.
- We set nature goals to promote biodiversity and prevent nature loss



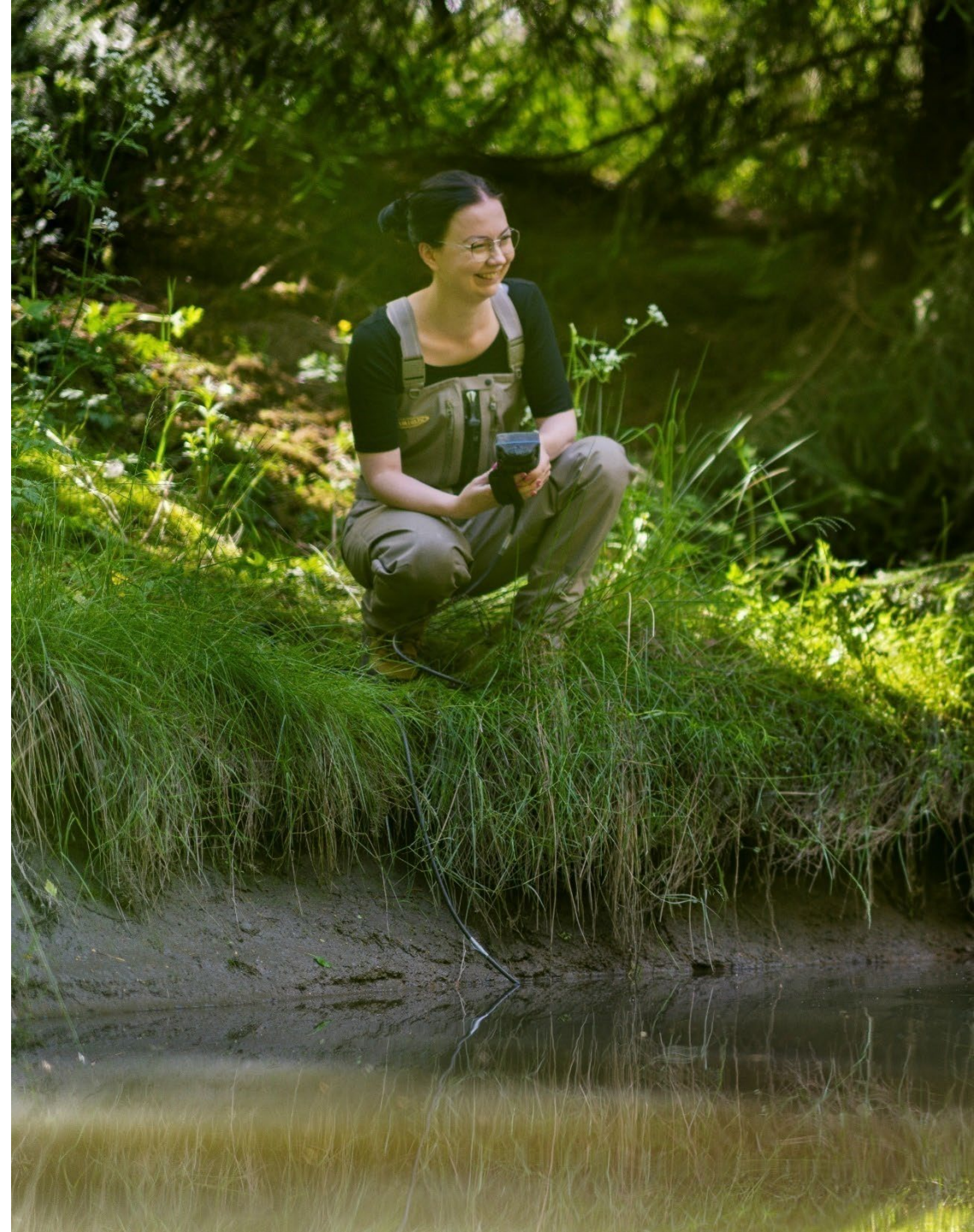
Our measures to reduce the footprint

- We implement efficient measures in order to reduce our carbon footprint and carbon emissions. Since 2020, we carry out a carbon footprint calculation annually and monitor its development.
- We systematically reduce our emissions and promote circular economy activities. The measures taken to reduce emissions are described openly and transparently for each calculation category. The most significant factors increasing our footprint are related to business travelling, procurement, properties, and food services. Reducing emissions from these areas is a priority in our development activities.



Our measures for the remaining footprint

- We increase carbon sinks, for example, by acquiring land areas into our ownership and developing their carbon sink enhancement. The goal is that, with the measures taken, the carbon sequestration of the carbon sinks is at least as large annually as the annual carbon emissions caused by the university of applied sciences by 2029 at the latest.
- We prevent nature loss and increase biodiversity in accordance with the LUMO programme of the city of Turku, especially on our own land areas and through our own project activities. Together with our partners, we promote common nature goals, including the protection of the Baltic Sea.
- We increase our handprint through education and RDI activities and promote circular economy.
- We monitor our progress and verify our actions openly and transparently



By 2030, Turku University of Applied Sciences is a higher education institution that does not harm the environment, nature, and climate, and actively works to promote sustainable development and responsibility at the local, national, and international levels