

## ERASMUS+ POLICY STATEMENT

### FTPO's international and modernisation strategy and the policy objectives

The Faculty of Polymer Technology (FTPO) is an internationally recognised, state of the art academic institution and research centre, tightly linked with the economic sector. It is highly responsive and actively contributes to the regional development. It provides bachelor and master study programs in one of the most prosperous industry fields in the world, namely polymer technology. As the only academic institution focusing on polymer technology in Slovenia, FTPO bases its activities on three pillars: Education, Research, and Industry cooperation. It provides the students with the necessary knowledge and skills to become innovative and competent engineers that are fit for responsible tasks in their future assignments. It supports the society and industry in Slovenia and beyond to cope with the increasingly competitive and rapidly changing technological environment by creating knowledge through innovative application-oriented research on polymer materials and technologies, Know-How transfer and opportunities for lifelong learning. To achieve these goals, it lives by the following values: Responsiveness, Continuous improvement, Practical Attitude and Personal Approach.

Since its foundation in 2006, it has continuously strived to increase the scope of its international activities (mobility and cooperation) in all its three pillars. In the last decade, it has been very successful in widening the international network of research and industry partners, increasing the number of outgoing students and staff mobility, as well as obtaining funds from abroad. In 2020 FTPO also applied as a lead partner a K2 Strategic partnership project in the area of innovative study methods. FTPO specific focus is on a very prosperous industry field, namely polymer technology. This is a strength and a challenge when it comes to internationalisation, because of its competitive position and great need in industry, and secondly because there are only a few European Universities who offer study programs in this area.

In-line, with its development strategy 2018-2024, the main focus of internationalisation is to support the development and modernisation of all three pillars and the achievement of all strategic goals, namely: 1. Attracting motivated and talented students, 2. Educating graduates to be fit for the challenges of the future in a rapidly changing world, 3. Conducting applied research that delivers outstanding results, 4. Becoming a valued and recognized partner for the Slovene plastics industry and beyond, 5. To guarantee an effective and efficient internal organisation, 6. To ensure sustainable financing of all the Faculty's activities, 7. To safeguard an appropriate infrastructure for further development of the Faculty, 8. Adding value to the local community.

In-line with the strategic goals, national and EU strategies, programme goals and industry needs, we will implement Erasmus to:

- Form new and build on existing strategic partnership networks with the selected HEIs focused on Polymer technology and related fields, as well as expand partners with HEIs in other areas to gain and share knowledge in innovative study, research and management practices.

- Increase the number of outgoing and incoming mobility of students, staff and researchers.
- Increase the recognition and attractiveness of FTPO for domestic and international students (full and part-time students ) and researchers, with mobility activities and organisation of international summer schools and other education/training activities.
- Connect with other HEIs to explore and implement innovative study methods and pedagogical tools, including digitalisation opportunities and share good practices of FTPO.
- Connect with new research groups and intensify cooperation with existing partner research groups and institutions to conduct applied innovative research, publish results and transfer them to industry.
- Learn about good management practices of other HEIs and implement them at FTPO.
- Find new partners and programs to apply for EU and other funds for joint research and education activities.
- Raise the quality of our study activities by inviting experts from HEIs, institutes and industry to lecture at FTPO.
- To organise events, conferences, training at FTPO and with this not only raise the recognition of FTPO, but add value and recognition to the region and the town of Slovenj Gradec.

Mobility, cooperation and participation in strategic partnerships, projects are the essential tools for the implementation of the above set goals. By participating in the Erasmus+ program, FTPO has and will establish important partnerships and gain new knowledge and experience, which improves the quality of education, research and industry services.

FTPO will adhere to and respect in full all the principles of the non-discrimination, transparency, inclusion recognition set out in the Programme. In this program period, special emphasis will also be put on quality dissemination and promotion activities, implementation of digital mobility management systems and promotion of active citizenship.

## **FTPO's strategy for implementation of Erasmus actions and achieving the objectives institutional strategy.**

In the following years, FTPO will continue with student mobility with the focus on studying and practical training, as well as the mobility of teachers and administrative staff. It will strive to raise the number of all mobility activities. Special emphasis will be made on actively attracting incoming students, mostly for practical training and thesis work. FTPO has significantly upgraded its research infrastructure in the last 5 years and can thus provide high-quality, practical training and thesis work on more than 45 pieces of state of the art processing and characterisation equipment, as well as mentors with excellent references in research and industry. With more full-time staff, it will also strive to increase the number and quality of staff mobility of pedagogical and administrative staff. It will also explore possibilities in providing courses in English. In line with the goal to renovate the Master program and develop a Ph.D. program, it will explore opportunities for joint degree

programs and opportunities for joint course development in both bachelor and master study programs and joint extracurricular activities, such as summer schools and training.

In the next period, particular emphasis will be put on expanding the partnership to the Balkan region and non-EU countries. It will also focus not only on institutions in similar fields but explore partnership opportunities in other areas as well, with the emphasis on raising the quality of all its services. It will look for new partners and develop joint project proposals for strategic partnership, partnerships for excellence and innovation, especially in the areas of digitalisation, innovative pedagogical tools and methods as well as management practices.

It will also continue with upgrading and optimising the processes and services of the Career center and international office, with the goal of raising the quality and efficiency of the implementation of Erasmus activities, support for participants and dissemination/promotion activities.

## **The expected impact of FTPO's participation in the Programme with qualitative and quantitative targets/indicators**

FTPO set the following targets/indicators of the goals and activities described in the previous chapters, namely:

- Number of new Erasmus partners per year: 2
- Average number of implemented outgoing student mobilities per year: 5
- Average number of implemented incoming student mobilities per year: 2
- Average number of implemented staff mobilities per year: 4
- Average number of foreign experts cooperating in the study programme per year: 2
- Average number of cooperation in project application under KA2 action per year: 2
- Average number of ERASMUS promotion/dissemination events per year: 3
- Average number of articles/posts regarding ERASMUS per year: 15
- Average grade of satisfaction with Erasmus coordinator: above 3
- Implementation of digital mobility management system, including European student identity card by 2023.
- Implementation of project in joint course or program development: 1