Aurora-EU: Mission Statement

The Aurora European University (Aurora-EU) is a consortium of research-intensive universities deeply committed to the social impact of our activities, and with a history of engagement with the communities in which we operate. Our overall vision is to use our academic excellence to influence societal change through our research and education. Our key priorities are to maximise the societal impact of our research, encourage diversity and inclusion, and to use student engagement to drive innovation in teaching and learning.

The Aurora-EU programme is the shared ambition and endeavour of our students, academics, university leaders and administrators. We are united in our values, but geographically diverse, with members from each of the four regions of Europe. The Aurora Universities Network is already a high-trust platform, where we share our vulnerabilities to learn from and with each other.

Our Aurora-EU programme expresses our shared long term vision, setting goals that may take 10-15 years to achieve in full. It will intensify our collaboration, with a shared commitment to offering students a seamless educational experience in an integrated Europe-wide campus. Our vision is to graduate European students who are willing and able to tackle the most challenging issues that society faces. Focusing on **Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation** will equip our students with the skillsets and mind-sets to help address key challenges, including our four priority challenge domains: ‘Sustainability & Climate Change’, ‘Digital Society & Global Citizenship’, ‘Health & Wellbeing’, and ‘Culture, Diversity & Identity’. We will achieve this by implementing our programme of three integrated work packages:

**Aurora Learning for Societal Impact**
This work package will change our educational practice so that our students will be learning for demonstrable and tangible societal impact. We will develop, test and implement tools to integrate measurable learning outcomes related to social entrepreneurship skills and mind-sets into the curricula of our degree programmes. We will do so in a systematic, structured and institutionalised way, and across all cycles, including bachelors, masters, and doctoral programmes. We will enhance existing models with new ones, to give all students an international experience, allowing them to be mobile during and after their university studies without any recognition problems. Our long term vision is to integrate Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation competencies in all relevant education, and we will use the four key challenge domains as the starting point for this reform.

“Aurora Learning for Societal Impact” summarises what we want to do.

**Aurora Engaging Communities**
Whatever we do, we will not do by ourselves, but together through a diverse range of people and perspectives. Starting locally, we will engage with our students to define and enhance Aurora-EU’s activities. We are all experienced with engaging with our own national and regional cultural, economic and governmental partners, but we will each enhance our singular impact by sharing and replicating our successful collaboration models throughout the Aurora-EU partners. We will extend our engagement through our colleagues in
the member universities of the Aurora-EU programme, with others in the European Higher Education and Research Area, with other EUNs, with other partners of A-EU members, and with universities that risk lagging behind. The Aurora Engaging Communities work package will reshape and leverage our collaborations, contributing to a more cohesive and more globally competitive Europe. “Aurora Engaging Communities” summarises how we want to operate.

**Aurora Sustainability Pioneers**
This work package will transform us into universities that are truly sustainable institutions: for the members of our academic communities, and for the social and economic communities we serve at all levels. Inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals as an integrated system, we will pioneer new sustainability standards: for education, for research, for service to society, for our internal organisation, and for our external collaboration. We will collectively experiment with new ways to be sustainable universities, sharing both our successes and failures between ourselves and with others. We have committed to ambitious targets for all these aspects – both in terms of absolute results and in terms of progress from where our member universities stand now. “Aurora Sustainability Pioneers” summarises who we want to be.

Each of these work packages was designed and will be implemented in close cooperation between all stakeholders in our universities: students, academics, university leaders and administrators. More than 300 individuals were involved in writing the proposal. Through this ambitious programme, we will re-create our education, make multi-stakeholder involvement core to our way of working, become healthy and sustainable institutions ourselves, and contribute to the sustainability and wellbeing of European society. In the next three years, we will embark on that journey, first by launching pilot programmes in selected challenge domains intended to comprehensively test and evaluate this approach. We will follow this with a full implementation across all four of our priority challenge domains at the end of the funding period.

In realising our Aurora-EU vision, we will create an inclusive and diverse open-space inter-university campus – a campus where students of all cycles, academics and support staff, will move freely and form an integrated community.

Through our Aurora-EU programme of what we want to do, how we want to do it, and what we want to be, we will contribute to a Europe that is socially-engaged and cohesive, and to an ambitious Europe that is globally competitive.
This Aurora European University Mission Statement has been formally endorsed by

- Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Lead partner) on …. (date) by ….. gremium
- Universidad Rovira i Virgili on …. (date) by ….. gremium
- Universität Duisburg-Essen on …. (date) by ….. gremium
- University of Iceland on …. (date) by ….. gremium
- University of East Anglia on …. (date) by ….. gremium
- University of Aberdeen on …. (date) by ….. gremium
- University of Innsbruck on …. (date) by ….. gremium
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- Copenhagen Business School on …. (date) by ….. gremium