

Rīga Stradiņš University

Rīga Stradiņš University Development Strategy for the
Period of 2022-2027

Contract No. RSU 2021/16/AK

Description of RSU

RSU is a state-founded higher education and science institution supervised by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia. Since 1950, RSU has been closely integrated into the national healthcare system and is the most important higher education institution in the health sector in Latvia, ensuring the development of necessary competences and making a significant contribution to the economy of Latvia, such as training healthcare professionals, forming a significant part of higher education exports, training employees who are most frequently employed in highly qualified professions and have higher incomes than the national average. Since 1998, RSU has also been an important player in the development of social sciences in Latvia.

The number of RSU students has increased over the last five years from 8 238 students in the academic year 2016/2017 to 9 102 students in the academic year 2020/2021 (an increase of 10%). Compared to other higher education institutions in Latvia, RSU is a leader in attracting international students. Their proportion of the total number of RSU students increased from 5.2% in 2010/2011 to 26% in the academic year 2020/2021. According to the latest information, 2,523 international students from 65 countries of the world study at RSU in the academic year 2021/2022: the majority of international students are from Germany and Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway and Finland) - 33% and 44% respectively, while the proportion of students from other countries is less than 5%.

The results of the graduate monitoring from the Ministry of Education and Science show that RSU has the highest graduate employment rate (92% for medical doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, etc.). A relatively higher proportion of RSU graduates work in highly qualified professions (in 2019, 91% from RSU, 80% in the country respectively) and their average income and median income are higher than in the country on average and in other major universities (in 2019, EUR 1 678 and EUR 1 489 in RSU; EUR 1 398 and EUR 1 238 in the country respectively)¹. In 2020, the total contribution of RSU to the economy of Latvia was EUR 96.2 million, but the expected contribution for the period 2021-2024 - EUR 79.6 million. RSU international students provide 1 040 jobs in Riga and contribute at least EUR 15 million in taxes directly to the state budget².

RSU academic and research staff have high-level research and professional qualification; the teaching staff are often acknowledged professionals and practitioners in their field, whereas researchers are well-known and recognised experts in the sector (e.g. health, foreign policy, communication and other fields). In recent years, the research capacity of RSU has been growing and research results have been improving, which is also reflected in international ratings, e.g. RSU ranks 501st -600th in the *Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2022*, which is the highest ranking among Latvian universities.

¹Careers of graduates of higher education institutions in 2019, available at: <https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/media/11040/download>

² RSU and higher education exports, Certus think tank, available at: https://www.rsu.lv/sites/default/files/imce/Zinas/Zinu%20pielikumi/Certus_2020_RSU_AI_2020_10_02_LV.pdf

RSU mission, vision, values and key development goals

RSU Strategy 2022-2027 mission, vision and key development goals are based on key principles such as science, education and the development of human capital (including the development of students, teaching staff, staff and the wider society). The priority role of science and education is reflected in two main development goals, while human capital development is a transversal theme, with a high unanimity regarding its importance in each activity that involved stakeholders in drafting RSU 2027, e.g. in interviews, surveys, thematic working groups and in the strategic session. Six action lines are defined for each of the two main development goals.

RSU mission			
<i>The mission of the University is to ensure creation, accumulation and transfer of knowledge valued in the international science community, and to offer excellent, inclusive and sustainable educational opportunities and to contribute to the development of society in the field of health, life and social sciences, fulfilling the lifelong potential of every student and employee.</i>			
RSU vision			
<i>The vision of the University is to be a modern science university in Europe that is the centre for talented people and the place to receive outstanding research and practice-based education and experience.</i>			
RSU values			
<i>Person</i>	<i>Team</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Loyalty</i>
RSU key development goals by 2027			
<i>M1 Creation of locally and internationally significant research results</i>		<i>M2 Implementation of education corresponding to the needs of the society and individual to enhance overall capacity of human capital</i>	
RSU development sub-goals by 2027			
<i>RV1: Science. Increase in internationally high-quality research results</i>		<i>RV1: Science. Involvement of students at all levels in science</i>	
<i>RV2: Education. Integration of research into the study process</i>		<i>RV2: Education. Ensuring sustainable education provision</i>	
<i>RV3: Cooperation. Organisation of a science process based on synergistic cooperation</i>		<i>RV3: Cooperation. Development of comprehensive cooperation to improve the quality of education</i>	
<i>RV4: Digital transformation. Digitisation of science processes</i>		<i>RV4: Digital transformation. Technology-enriched implementation of the study process</i>	
<i>RV5: Governance. Closer integration of science and study departments</i>		<i>RV5: Governance. Effective involvement of stakeholders in the pursuit of strategic goals</i>	
<i>RV6: Ensuring a balanced development of internationality</i>		<i>RV6: Ensuring a balanced development of internationality</i>	

To assess the implementation of the vision, key impact indicators have been defined, with reference values (2020 or latest available) and target values to be achieved in 2024 and 2027.

Key impact indicators

No.	Indicator	2020 (or latest)	2024	2027
1.	Reputation index in Latvia	82	Constant or increasing	Constant or increasing
2.	Contribution of higher education services exports to the economy of Latvia	EUR 96.8 million	EUR 122.1 million	EUR 135.8 million
3.	Rank in THE, QS	TOP 600 (THE, 2022); TOP1000 (QS, 2022)	TOP 600 (THE); TOP1000 (QS)	TOP 600 (THE); TOP800 (QS)
4.	Proportion of scientific publications Q1 (top 25%) in scientific journals	51% (107/211; scientific research articles listed)	55%	60%
5.	International assessment of the performance of scientific institutions in the areas of strategic specialisation	Medicine - 4, Public Health - 3, Social Sciences - 3	All – 4	All – 4

Corresponding to RSU mission and vision, as well as to the set key development goals (GAM), a development plan consisting of six action lines (RV) - Science, Education, Cooperation, Digital Transformation, Governance, Internationality, was drawn up. Each RV has its own sub-goal (linked to the corresponding GAM), which includes one of the proposals made in the thematic working groups and the strategic session. Each RV has its main objectives, which are further specified by the corresponding activities to be taken. Similarly, at the level of the main development goals, performance indicators are specified, providing evidence of the achievement of a defined goal.

GAM1: Creation of locally and internationally significant research results

Linking action lines, sub-goals, objectives and activities

Action line: Sub-goal	Objective	Activity
Science. Increase internationally high-quality research results in	U1.1.Attract and retain talents by providing them with the necessary support and opportunities to develop their competences	P1.1.1.Attracting talents
		P1.1.2.Provision of support for staff and promotion of motivation
		P1.1.3.Provision of personalised development opportunities
		P1.1.4.Improvement of doctoral processes

Action line: Sub-goal	Objective	Activity
		P1.1.5.Expansion of the research grant programme
	U1.2.Provide an environment conducive to quality research and study	P1.2.1.Maintenance of an inclusive, motivating, collaborative research environment and sharing infrastructure according to the principles of the “core facility”
		P1.2.2.Development of research and innovation in research centres of excellence and innovation
		P1.2.3.Introduction of the principles of open science
		P1.2.4.Development of research infrastructure and facilities
	U1.3.Organise purposeful science communication	P1.3.1.Development of the science communication contact point
		P1.3.2.Development and implementation of a strategic communication plan for science
Education: Integration of research into the study process	U2.1.Organise the academic and scientific responsibilities and workload of staff in accordance with strategic priorities	P2.1.1.Increase in the proportion of research in total workload of staff
	U2.2.Provide opportunities for purposeful involvement in science	P2.2.1.Increase in opportunities for involvement in research
Cooperation. Organisation of a science process based on synergistic cooperation	U3.1.Improve cooperation for the promotion of local and international competitiveness	P3.1.1.Establishment and development of new partnerships
		P3.1.2.Strategic development and full use of existing partnerships
		P3.1.3.Development of closer cooperation with clinical university hospitals and regional hospitals
		P3.1.4.Development of affiliates in cooperation with clinics abroad
	U3.2.Diversification of funding sources	P3.2.1.Development of research services portfolio
		P3.2.2.Strengthening and expanding RSU fund
P3.2.3.Establishment of an innovation fund		
Digital transformation.		P4.1.1.Improvement and implementation of a policy on digitisation of studies and research

Action line: Sub-goal	Objective	Activity
Digitisation of science processes	U4.1. Integrate digital solutions in science and study	P4.1.2. Digitisation of the research environment and access to up-to-date digital tools
	U4.2. Ensure capacity for digital data and management competences	P4.2.1. Establishment and management of research data infrastructure
		P4.2.2. Provision of digital competence assessment and personalised development activities
Governance. Closer integration of science and study departments	U5.1. Provide appropriate staff support mechanisms	P4.2.3. Establishment of a research data management unit
		P5.1.1. Ensuring the competitiveness of the motivation system
		P5.1.2. Developing an inclusive working environment focused on results and staff well-being (including physical and mental health)
	U5.2. Strengthen the management and mutual cooperation of departments	P5.1.3. Establishment and development of a system for the professional development of staff
		P5.2.1. Improvement and implementation of the organisational structure in practice
		P5.2.2. Provision of appropriate administrative and management capacity
	U5.3. Develop effective internal cooperation for achievement of strategic goals	P5.2.3. Provision of effective management of infrastructure
		P5.3.1. Promoting the use of established management systems
		P5.3.2. Developing solutions for results data analytics
		P5.3.3. Defining and developing priority areas of research within the science platforms
P5.3.4. Regular promotion of stakeholder involvement in management processes		
Internationality. Ensuring a balanced development of internationality	U6.1. Development of international science and study environment	P5.3.5. Improvement of the unified annual development planning process
		P6.1.1. Attraction of talents
		P6.1.2. Full integration of international students and staff
		P6.1.3. Organisation and development of targeted international networking activities

Action line: Sub-goal	Objective	Activity
	U6.2.Implementation of a comprehensive internationalisation strategy	P6.2.1.Development of a unified strategy for developing the international dimension

Performance indicators and their values

No.	Indicator	2020 (or latest)	2024	2027
1.	Proportion of PhDs in academic staff (elected lecturers and researchers)	69% (09.2021)	70%	73%
2.	Indexed scientific publications in "WoS" and "Scopus" databases	325 (including conference proceedings, etc. included in Scopus database)	300	300
3.	Proportion of academic staff (including acting staff) in the age group 30-49	52.8%	Constant or increasing	Constant or increasing
4.	Average age of academic staff (including acting staff)	45.5	Constant or decreasing	Constant or decreasing
5.	Increase in revenues from research activity	EUR 9.4 million	EUR 10.3 million	EUR 16.3 million
6.	RSU investment in research: Total (Including self-earned funds)	4,25 milj. EUR 1,86 milj. EUR	7,4 milj. EUR 3,7 mij. EUR	7,19 milj. EUR 3,2 milj. EUR
6.	Number of projects as a managing partner Horizon Europe (including ERA NET programme and JPI)	One project on the Medicine platform	Two projects on the Medicine platform, one in each of the other platforms	Three projects on the Medicine platform, one in each of the other platforms
8.	Number of full-time (0.8-1 workload) lead researchers at the University	35	39	43
9.	Number of Doctoral thesis defended	20	25	30
10.	Revenues from research activities from the private sector	457,607	0.9 million	1.2 million
11.	Research data designed according to FAIR principles and uploaded to RSU DataVerse repository	15 data sets (in 2021)	50 data sets	80 data sets

No.	Indicator	2020 (or latest)	2024	2027
12.	Gender ratio in elected academic and department management positions ³	In management positions: 64.7% women; 35.3% men. Elected to academic posts: 67.8% women; 32.2% men	In management positions: 63% women; 37% men. Elected to academic posts: 65% women; 35% men	In management positions: 63% women; 37% men. Elected to academic posts: 65% women; 35% men
13.	Proportion of co-publications with international partners in the total number of scientific publications indexed in the "WoS" and "Scopus" databases	53%	at least 60%	at least 70%
14.	Proportion of academic staff engaged in mobility activities (incoming, at least 1 month, based on a signed contract)	It is planned to introduce record keeping in 2022	Increase by 25% of the value of 2022	Increase by 50% of the value of 2024
15.	Proportion of academic staff engaged in mobility activities (outgoing, at least 1 month, based on a signed contract)	0.8%	Increase by 25% of the value of 2021	Increase by 50% of the value of 2024

GAM2: Implementation of education corresponding to the needs of the society and individual to enhance overall capacity of human capital

Linking action lines, sub-goals, objectives and activities

Action line: Sub-goal	Objective	Activity
Science. Involvement of students at all levels in science	U1.4. Provide opportunities for purposeful involvement in science	P1.4.1. Increase in opportunities for involvement in research
Education: Ensuring sustainable education provision	U2.3. Develop study and education programmes in line with changes in society and the education system	P2.3.1. Development of micro-qualification programmes
		P2.3.2. Establishment and development of collaborative study programmes, including the implementation of doctoral study programmes corresponding to Salzburg principles
		P2.3.3. Increase in the supply of continuing education, professional development programmes and non-formal education

Action line: Sub-goal	Objective	Activity
		P2.3.4.Setting up a unified competence development offer
	U2.4.Attract and retain talents by providing them with the necessary support and opportunities to develop competences	P2.4.1.Attraction of talents
		P2.4.2.Provision of personalised development opportunities
		P2.4.3.Provision of support for staff and promotion of motivation
		P2.4.4.Establishing think tanks to develop innovation
	U2.5.Provide an environment conducive to quality research and study	P2.5.1.Development of research infrastructure and facilities
		P2.5.2.Expansion of MITC activities
		P2.5.3.Enrichment of work-based learning opportunities
	U2.6.Promote the physical and mental health of students	2.6.1.Provision of psycho-emotional support to students
		P2.6.2.Offering health promotion activities and resources
Cooperation. Development of comprehensive cooperation to improve the quality of education	U3.1.Improve cooperation for the promotion of local and international competitiveness	P3.1.1.Establishment and development of new partnerships
		P3.1.2.Strategic development and full use of existing partnerships
		P3.1.3.Development of closer cooperation with clinical university hospitals and regional hospitals
		P3.1.5.Increase in the involvement of employers and gaining of feedback
Digital transformation. Technology-enriched implementation of the study process	U4.1.Integrate digital solutions in science and study	P4.1.1.Development and implementation of a policy on digitisation of studies and research
		P4.1.3.Development of technology-enriched study and education programmes
	U4.2.Ensure capacity for digital and data management competences	P4.2.2.Provision of digital competence assessment and personalised development activities
Governance.		P5.1.1.Ensuring the competitiveness of the motivation system

Action line: Sub-goal	Objective	Activity	
Effective involvement of stakeholders in the pursuit of strategic goals	U5.1. Provide appropriate staff support mechanisms	P5.1.2. Developing an inclusive working environment focused on results and staff well-being	
		P5.1.3. Establishment and development of a system for the professional development of staff	
	U5.2. Strengthen the management and mutual cooperation of departments	P5.2.2. Provision of adequate administrative and management capacity	
		P5.2.3. Provision of effective management of infrastructure	
	U5.3. Develop effective internal cooperation to achieve strategic goals	P5.3.1. Promoting the use of established management systems	
		P5.3.2. Development of data analytics solutions for the analysis of results	
		P5.3.4. Regular promotion of stakeholder involvement in management processes	
		P5.3.5. Improvement of the unified annual development planning process	
	Internationality. Ensuring a balanced development of internationality	U6.1. Development of international science and study environment	P6.1.1. Attraction of talents
			P6.1.2. Full integration of international students and staff
P6.1.4. Integration into the "European University" initiative for the creation of university networks			
U6.2. Implementation of a comprehensive internationalisation strategy		P6.2.1. Development of a unified strategy for developing the international dimension	
		P6.2.2. Promotion of co-operation between departments for the comprehensive development of internationality	

Performance indicators and their values

No.	Indicator	2020 (or latest)	2024	2027
1.	Number of students	9,102	10,000	10,500
2.	Number of applicants	Average in 2017-2021 2,223	Constant or increasing	Constant or increasing
3.	Number of students studying for tuition fee	5,956	Constant or increasing	Constant or increasing
4.	Number of students supported by private	167	Constant or increasing	Constant or increasing

No.	Indicator	2020 (or latest)	2024	2027
	special purpose scholarships ⁴			
5.	Proportion of students graduating in the intended time	Average in 2017-2019 In Bachelor study programmes: 89.27 In Master study programmes: 83.79 In 2nd level professional study programmes: 89	Constant or increasing	Constant or increasing
6.	Employment of graduates in higher qualification professions	92	Constant or increasing	Constant or increasing
7.	Satisfaction with the quality and outcomes of the study programmes (mean scores on study programme questionnaires)	3.28	3.30	3.32
8.	Number of students per academic staff (PLE)	17.7 (in 2019)	Constant or decreasing	Constant or decreasing
9.	Revenues from the basic budget	54,451,930	60 million	64 million
10.	Percentage of employees who recommend RSU as a place to work	95 (in 2019, of the number of respondents)	95% (of the number of respondents)	95% (of the number of respondents)
11.	Expenditure for professional development per PLE	400	550	650
12.	Proportion of academic staff from abroad	16.1	18	20
13.	Proportion of international students	26	28	30

⁴ Indicator values will be clarified by creating a system for supporting students with private special purpose scholarships