

## ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT - EPS

ERASMUS 2021-27

### ESNE internationalization strategy

ESNE started in higher education in cooperation with international institutions such as NYU; therefore, the promotion of activities and initiatives, for students and professors, with partners around the world is inherent. For the next years we will work on a new deeper international strategy that will continue to be aligned with the institutional scopes and specific strategic plan, which stresses particularly the relevance of internationalization in the future, for which as a European country the Erasmus program remains a main asset. ESNE aims to keep its sustainable growth and at the same time to improve the quality of education by adding value to the existing programs and defining cutting-edge degrees, training activities / opportunities in the field of design and technology.

We understand that internationalization at our HEI has a twofold mission towards **modernization and improvement**:

- One is to work on an institutional level by assuring that ESNE is present in the most important international forums and debates about the future of design education, while we aim to keep educating with rigor and commitment. Progressively ESNE has been gaining more attention from HE institutions, which lead the advancement and performance of design education, and it is a scope for us to continue to show our engagement and commitment with them as partners, and join forces in this enterprise of training the designers of the future. Also, as a HE institution we seek for excellence, and good compliance with local and international administrative and accreditation regulations, as well as our own QA system that helps us to evaluate measures, decisions and actions.

- The second mission is to provide the necessary means and resources to be actually **global**. We believe this is the main goal in our **modernization** process, to develop and practice internalization in a more natural way, so we will continue to provide the best possible **opportunities** for our students, professors and staff, to participate in international academic activities and events, and in so doing, to continue to transmit and help to build a **global mindset** within our community. Actions include: students and professors mobilities (KA1), strategic alliances' projects (KA2), Erasmus+ project management and its implementation, inter-institutional and cooperation agreements, academic experiences abroad but also internationalization at home (master classes, visiting professors or intercultural projects among others that allow everyone to engage with this mission), as well as international degrees or academic training programs (Study abroad, custom programs, joint programs, workshops etc.) and/or in cooperation with our partner institutions in EU and beyond. **Digitalization** and **efficiency** in our procedures will be the main scopes, including the full automatic credit recognition for exchange students when applicable, and other actions that may be more automatic, after a previous definition of standards. We will implement all possible digitalization and paperless possibilities provided by the EU and local partners so that our department can contribute to be a more sustainable and efficient institution. We will continue to waive tuition or registration fees for exchange students at ESNE.

All the Erasmus principles are and will remain present in our institutional strategic plan and accordingly they will be applicable to all our international actions and processes. Both training and intertwined activities as well as core values are essential. ESNE procedures in general, and Erasmus specific ones, are carried out under a principle of **transparency**, as almost all the information can be found either in the website or the virtual campus. We aim to provide the **same opportunities** to individuals of any social class, family income, origin, believe, gender or context who wish to be part of ESNE, and to participate in any of our training activities and events, including Erasmus or non-EU mobilities. ESNE staff members promote and ensure a creative and lively, but also healthy and solidary environment for local and international students and professors. Similarly, we constantly **communicate** with partners to make sure the same principles are preserved for our students when they are abroad. We seek to foster internationalization, which brings us **diversity and intercultural inspiration**, hence the same principles are even more imperative in any international enterprise and Erasmus projects in particular. Additionally, the institution promotes volunteering initiatives, as well events that foster integration among degrees, including local and international students. Incoming students are always guided upon their arrival and supported by the representative of the Buddy program and the exchange coordinator, plus the members of the academic team, in particular. We consider international students as a source of **new cultural insights**; likewise, we consider our outgoing students and professors as our ambassadors abroad, thus they are essential for the strengthening of our relationships and cooperation activities with partners.

ESNE is particularly concerned with **environmental matters** that affect the planet and the society at large; therefore, many measures towards a responsible and efficient use of resources and the facilities are in place. We expect that the whole community, including local and international students, contribute to this objective. This goal transcends towards internationalization procedures and actions, so we are moving progressively to a paperless policy, and to a responsible travel policy where we will travel just when necessary. The recent obligation to continue teaching online has opened a lot of possibilities and we are already collaborating with our partner institutions in the definition of new forms of distance cooperation and exchanging information. We will develop virtual portfolios and digital application processes, but also promote distance joint workshops, and blended degrees, among other formats.

The Erasmus+ programme is a key instrument to support our scope to be a better international HEI. It provides not only opportunities but also a proper framework where core values are defined to assure equity and transparency, which eases our work towards the definition of a global and culturally diverse learning environment.

## Erasmus actions implementation and contribution to the institution

### KA1. Learning mobility Outgoing participants:

**Previously:** all information about agreements in place (only the eligible ones for exchange), future recognition of activities/credits, requirements or possible modifications in the Erasmus+ program are collected and synthesized in a **manual** for students for consultation. We elaborate up to date **schedules with key dates** every year, which remain available for the academic teams. The information about the call for participation is published in our website and, also, we send information to the students. Professors are contacted and informed about the premises of the *call for participation* every year. During the fall term we celebrate one information session open to anyone interested and eligible. After that students submit their applications to the international office and we start the selection process where candidates for nomination are decided, in cooperation with the academic teams. When they communicate their acceptance to be nominated we move to the next stage:

**Before:** information session for the next stage, support to our students and professors in their application process to the universities they have been nominated to, support with administrative procedures at ESNE (registration, Learning agreement, study plan-proposal, etc.) and steps related to their international stay (visa, housing advice, indications for the provision of health insurance etc.). We keep constant communication with the candidates and the partner HEI and remind participants of the necessary paperwork at this stage.

**During:** confirmation of LA, support in the registration of courses, assure exemption of fees for exchange candidates, help professors to re-schedule their teaching hours when they return ESNE, and general follow up during this period. At the end of the period we remind students and professors of the survey and the paperwork they need to collect at the host institution before they return ESNE, including the final LA if it changed, prior approval.

**After:** reception of the latest signed LA if there are any changes, certificate of completed activities, and transcript of records for recognition of credits. As for outgoing students, we elaborate also a document based on the approved LA that summarizes general information, the subjects and records, so that our administrative department can register them in the system. As for professors, we ask them to share their impressions and potential best practices.

**Finally:** we continue to work on dissemination activities after the official stages of mobilities. Therefore, we remain in contact with participants for eventual collaboration and share their experience with future candidates, or internally.

### Incoming participants:

Many actions are similar to the outgoing participants' process, although we have a different role during the previous stages. First, we send our partners the latest information about course schedules or eventual modifications. When we receive the nominations, all candidates are sent information for application, which they need to submit before the deadline. At that moment we celebrate a selection session with a committee where final candidates are confirmed, and notified afterwards. Once they accept we start with all the Before-During-After stages by taking care of our responsibilities (definition of LA from our end, helping with course schedule, connecting candidates with our course leaders, supporting with accommodation and travel concerns, providing the HEIS any information they may need), and in permanent contact with our counterpart in each partner institution.

### KA2. Cooperation among organizations and institutions:

The main scope of the international office is to promote KA2 projects, and encourage the academic teams to participate in cooperation with partner institutions. We organize information sessions, and show results of previous collaborations or potential partners eligible for cooperation. These initiatives require a big collective effort so we focus our attention in the support they may need to make everything work. In the previous stages, we contribute in the search of partners, and also, we discuss options for KA2 projects with other academics in our regular international meetings at partner institutions. If they express their interest in cooperation we transmit that information to the academic teams at ESNE for their evaluation. If they agree, then we start the process.

**Proposal:** the first step is the detailed definition of the subject and the overall scope of the cooperation. We help the participants to outline the schedule, milestones and the expected results (outputs, research-project expectations and strategy for communication). We pay special attention to guarantee a fluent communication with partners for a mutual understanding during the submission process, and the years of duration of the project, if it results approved.

**Project:** the international office assures the correct timing, expected development and results, as well as general compliance with the structure of the project, and the guidelines of the contact and the Erasmus+ programme.

We believe that KA2 projects are very good opportunities for participating partner institutions because one to one hands-on collaboration boosts a deeper understanding of the strengths of the others, and it generally means the actual foundations of future fruitful collaboration, where joint degrees and other training activities can come out more easily, and stronger.

## Target and expected impact & monitoring

From an **institutional** point of view, by participating in the Erasmus+ Programme we expect to:

- Contribute to foster a global culture within our community
- Grow as an institution and be part of networks that care about the future of design education. For this we will increase our number of affiliations to associations, starting with Cumulus and ELIA. We will increase also the number of attendees by extending the participation to professors mainly for which Erasmus support is crucial
- Become a leading institution specialized in Art, Design and Technology in Spain, where internationalization is a key strength. To achieve this, we will continue to define and run joint workshops, degrees and initiatives where students and professors can participate. Erasmus facilitates access and communication to/with other institutions
- Increase the number and quality of international cooperation agreements. We aim to achieve 10% increase / year, and to review once a year the relevance and use of the existing agreements.
- Participate in / organize international events. We will continue to organize international conferences (1 every two years) and to participate in international events: 1-2 conferences per year with institutional representation, 1 or 2 institutional international trips, plus other international conferences with the specific participation of professors, which will be promoted or monitored by the academic departments directly.
- Continue to communicate international and Erasmus initiatives, projects and results. The new communication team has started to implement more actions for the dissemination of any international activity so that together we can contribute to create an international mindset at the institution. We will include more content (interviews, testimonies or other formats) within our current media: social network, ESNE journal, prospectus, website. We will continue also to produce audiovisual pieces of our international experiences and activities as we've been doing since 2016 (accessible in our YouTube channel), which we share in public in our YouTube channel. Also, program leaders will progressively create bilingual portfolios.
- Be vigilant and assure full compliance of mandates, regulations and internal and national QA standards. Manuals are revised every year, and corrections are made if necessary, for which we collect first feedback from students, professors and staff members who have participated in any international process.
- Constantly learn to do better

From a specific **practical daily-based** perspective, our participation in Erasmus will help to:

- Support larger institutional plans, for which we will continue to submit proposals for KA107 and KA2 initiatives, in addition to regular KA103 mobilities, as they have proved to be enriching and fruitful. Two KA107 per call, and up to three simultaneous KA2 would be a good rate given our size
- Increase the number of student's mobilities to European (KA103) and non-European countries (KA107). We will also implement solutions to correct the usual unbalanced incoming/outgoing flow. An annual increase of 10% of mobilities would be desirable in the next years.
- Increase the interest for professor's mobilities thanks to the financial support. From our end we will define measures for its compatibility with their responsibilities and schedules at the institution. We aim to increase the number of participants, although with professors we have more interest in the quality of the projects and the potential future collaborations they may facilitate
- Work with current and future partner institutions in specific initiatives. We will invite them to send professors to ESNE as visiting faculty. One or two per year and program is our scope.
- Improve our internal procedures seeking for more efficiency and agility towards a better understanding and monitoring of every step of the different processes. An indicator will be the implementation of more digital procedures and its testing. We aim to follow the timelines outlined by the EU where first we will start with the mobile app, next the digitalization of the IIA and the LA, and after that the rest of the steps in the monitoring of mobilities in particular. As for KA2 and other cooperation projects we will also implement the EU recommendations.
- Work on curriculum development with an eye on internationalization and in collaboration with partners. We expect some programs to include mandatory international experiences.
- Foster innovative proposals such as intensive summer programs in one institution or another, and design and implement other joint programs that may facilitate an actual international education. We recently started a collaboration with Polidesign in Milan, and we aim to launch at least three collaborations in the next period.

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