

# **Policy for strategic partnerships with international higher education institutions, companies, and organisations**

Ref. no. 1-1005/2022

Valid from 2023-02-21

NOTE: This is a translation of the Swedish version (Policy för strategiska partnerskap med internationella lärosäten, företag och organisationer). In the event of any discrepancy between the versions, the Swedish version constitutes the official decision, and the Swedish wording will prevail.



**Karolinska  
Institutet**



# Policy for strategic partnerships with international higher education institutions, companies, and organisations

## Contents

Introduction.....	3
Objective.....	3
Collaborations covered by the policy.....	3
Definition of a strategic partnership.....	4
Added value through strategic partnerships.....	4
Diversity of perspectives and interdisciplinarity.....	4
Sharing of resources.....	5
Internationalisation.....	5
Increased visibility and strengthened brand.....	5
Selection criteria for strategic partnerships.....	5
Risk assessment.....	6
Resourcing.....	6
Establishment and decisions.....	6
Organisation.....	7
Evaluation and monitoring.....	7

---

Document number	Ref. previous version:	Decision date:	Period of validity:
Dnr 1-1005/2022	-	2023-02-21	Until further notice
Decision: President		Document type: Policy	
Handled by department/unit: Faculty Office and International Relations/International Office.		Preparation with: Faculty Board, Committees, Internationalisation Board, Legal Office, External Engagement Office.	

Revision with regard to

–

---

## Introduction

Internationalisation is of great and increasing importance for Karolinska Institutet's (KI) research and education, both strategically, operationally, and financially. In *Strategy 2030*, one of three strategic choices is that KI should be a global university, and according to the strategy, KI needs to strive for deep and long-term strategic partnerships with foreign higher education institutions and organisations. *Strategy 2030* also states that the choice of strategic partnerships should be made through a proactive and transparent process.

This policy has been developed within the framework of an assignment regarding strategic partnerships (dnr 1-87/2021). The assignment was part of the KI-wide business plan for *Strategy 2030*.

A policy expresses the overall intention of the management and is not formally binding but establishes the framework for certain conduct.

## Objective

The purpose of the policy is to clarify KI's processes and working methods regarding strategic partnerships with international higher education institutions, companies and organisations. The policy shall provide support for decisions regarding strategic partnerships.

## Collaborations covered by the policy

At KI, collaborations are conducted at different levels within the university, and strategic partnerships is one of several different ways to collaborate internationally. This policy covers partnerships entered at university-wide level covered by the definition below.

## Definition of a strategic partnership

Strategic partnerships can be established with local, national and international partners. Partners can be higher education institutions, companies, public authorities, and other types of organisations.

A strategic partnership is characterised by the following:

- University-wide, formalised collaboration with one or more partner organisations
- Management commitment and involvement of all stakeholders
- Long-term commitments, common goals, and challenges
- Mutual benefits and values are generated that no individual party can achieve alone
- Are often comprehensive in both formats and subject matter, i.e. include different areas of cooperation such as research, education and utilisation

During the start-up phase of a strategic partnership, all elements of the partnership are rarely in place; instead, the assessment of whether a partnership should be defined as strategic is made on the basis of the intentions jointly expressed by the parties.

## Added value through strategic partnerships

Strategic partnerships create added value for KI and its partners by giving access to knowledge and other resources that they would not otherwise have.

## Diversity of perspectives and interdisciplinarity

Strategic partnerships provide opportunities for increased knowledge and richness of perspective, for example through collaboration with scientific fields that do not exist at KI and through collaboration with partners outside academia.

Interdisciplinary collaborations can be of great importance in contributing to solutions for complex challenges and societal needs. Hereby it increases KI's

Karolinska Institutet – Policy for strategic partnerships with international higher education institutions, companies, and organisations

ability to develop relevant education and research of high quality and thereby contribute to societal benefit and impact.

## **Sharing of resources**

Strategic partnerships create the conditions for co-utilisation of the partners' infrastructure, research platforms and core facilities for more efficient use of resources. Partnerships can also enable access to new pedagogical methods and resources for education.

## **Internationalisation**

Strategic partnerships with international partner organisations promote internationalisation of KI by offering international networks that create conditions for collaboration, mobility, and global career paths for both students and staff. The partnerships strengthen internationalisation at home in both education and research.

## **Increased visibility and strengthened brand**

Strategic partnerships can serve as reinforcing nodes for KI's visibility and presence in society in health-related issues and helps KI to attract resources in the form of staff and funding required for a world leader and to achieve the vision of contributing to better health for all. Partnerships with partners that have strong brands can also strengthen KI's reputation.

## **Selection criteria for strategic partnerships**

The capacity of an individual higher education institution to run strategic partnerships is limited for resource constraints and a selection has to be made among possible partnerships.

At KI, the following selection criteria will be taken into account when considering a new strategic partnership:

- The strategic partnerships should support the realisation of the overall objectives of the KIC strategy and are clearly linked to the relevant action areas of the strategy.
- Partnerships that contribute to complementary approaches, skills and resources should be prioritised. KI needs to seek collaborations in areas such as technology, humanities or social sciences. KI also needs

to seek new categories of partners outside academia, such as civil society or the public sector.

- The new partnership will complement established strategic partnerships in terms of focus and profile.
- A strategic partnership must be able to be operated with an ethical approach, safeguarding academic freedom, democratic values, critical reflection, and high quality.

## Risk assessment

As with all external cooperation, risk assessment must be part of the preparation of proposals for strategic partnerships. Risk assessments also need to be carried out continuously within the partnership, in co-operation with the partner as well as by KI alone. Identified risks should be weighed against the potential benefits of the partnership. External support for risk assessments can be obtained.

## Resourcing

To create conditions for long-term strategic partnerships, KI should be able to offer funding for joint activities in a spirit of reciprocity with the partner. This can be done already during the establishment phase by being committed to providing some funding over a period of several years. The level of funding may vary from case-to-case and is often determined in consultation with the partner. Utilisation of external funds may also be considered.

## Establishment and decisions

Strategic partnerships can be established through initiatives at university management level or through a request from an external party. Proposals to enter strategic partnerships can also be raised by individual staff members.

Decisions to enter strategic partnerships are taken in accordance with the applicable decision-making and delegation rules.

## Organisation

Decisions on strategic issues within the partnership are taken by a steering group or equivalent, which includes management representatives from each partner.

As strategic partnerships are long-term ventures, it is important to build an organisation around the partnership that can bridge changes in leadership or other key personnel. Contact points/forums for interaction therefore need to be created at different levels within the partnership.

Strategic partnerships receive administrative support from the university administration for coordination/project management, communication support and other administrative efforts needed for joint co-operation activities.

## Evaluation and monitoring

Strategic partnerships are intended to be managed with a long-term perspective, but this should not prevent the partnership from being continuously monitored, evaluated, and reconsidered. The strategic partnerships are monitored annually, and an evaluation is carried out prior to a decision on any renewal of the collaboration agreement. Partnerships that do not develop in accordance with the expectations are terminated or continue in another format if there is value in continuing certain collaborative activities.