

Programme of the session International Student Journey

- Welcome words
- Case 1 University of Oulu
- Case 2 University of Helsinki
- Discussion 20 minutes
- Case 3 South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences (Xamk)
- Case 4 Turku University Applied sciences
- Discussions in groups 20 minutes
- Closure 10

TALENT BOOST PACKAGES OF MEASURES

1

Attracting talent

2

Developing
immigrant
legislation and
permit procedures

3

**Strengthening the
conditions for
growth and
retention**

International Student experience - Journey

- Talent boost service promise
- Four ways to look at the situation Integration and Retention
 - Attraction and Arrival
 - Integration and employability



University of Oulu

Attraction and Arrival

Ulla Alanko & Hanna Saarela



Attraction and Recruitment Realities

- Massive number of applicants to international degree programmes
- Students apply to several universities in Finland and globally
- **How to ensure that the ideal applicants choose us over other options?**
- Ideal applicant = A talented student who is likely to start studies and complete them in target time, and ultimately decides to stay in Finland (Oulu region) pursuing a productive career
- Delays in arriving to Oulu in the autumn causes challenges to study progress and integration



Pilot 1 - Offer Holder Hub (OHH)

- Online platform for admitted students
- Invitation to join OHH sent in admission letters, optional participation
- Networking features and exclusive content
- Faculty and degree programme presence – both staff and current students
- Support and co-creation of crucial contact points and content for engaging the students (student-focused approach, pampering)
- **Goals:** Engagement and choosing Oulu, early integration





Pilot 2 - Kickstart to Finnish Language and Life

- Getting started efficiently at the beginning of the first semester
- Finnish language studies are crucial for integration and employability, especially in Oulu statistics show
- **Goals:** Efficient start for studies and life in Oulu, fast progress in Finnish language studies and aligning with the Finnish learner's path, sense of belonging

UniOulu Kickstart to Finnish Language and Life

Coming to the University of Oulu to study for your degree? You now have the possibility to kickstart your studies with an intensive Finnish course organised in August 2023. While learning the language, you will get to enjoy the Finnish summer, network and learn about your new home town and its surroundings. By studying the Kickstart course in August, you can enrol directly on upper-level Finnish courses when the semester starts.



What is the Kickstart?

Organised 7.8.-19.2023, the UniOulu Kickstart offers you the opportunity to begin your studies in Oulu as early as August and start learning the Finnish language intensively before starting your other courses. In this intensive program, the courses Survival Finnish and Beginners' Finnish 1 are condensed into a one-month intensive study, which would typically last an entire autumn semester. We will get to know the University of Oulu and the city of Oulu together, with many cultural events and activities taking place in August.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISORS

Larissa Vanamo / University of Helsinki



BACKGROUND



- Before: no service point or service address for international degree students
- International degree students' service path project
 - Workshops in autumn 2022 for students and staff
 - Strong feedback: need for face to face service & live encounters
- Lack of work options for international students, especially part-time jobs that do not require Finnish knowledge
- Talent Boost funding



Pilot project: Hiring international UH degree students to work as part-time Student Advisors for fellow foreign degree students



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISORS (1/2)



- Offering part-time on campus work for foreign students, excellent English required
- Also required that student advisors have themselves moved to Helsinki from abroad and are UH students
- Talent Boost funding until end 2024
- One person-workyear:
 - One student to work full-time mid-May to July, four students part-time (25%) August-May 2024
- Internationalisation of staff
- 138 applicants



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISORS (2/2)



- Service specifically for international degree students
- Customer service at service desk & by email, own service address
- Welcome point for newly arrived students
- Guiding students to right service within and outside the University & advising on matters such as:
 - Registering with the authorities
 - Healthcare
 - Tuitionfees & scholarships (incl. administration)
 - Housing
- Publishing instructions for students and staff



FUTURE?



- Pilot project -> service developed by the International Student Advisors themselves
- Continuation after 2024?
- Hopefully an inspiration for offering more student jobs & jobs where perfect Finnish is not required at UH



FLINGA



- Please feel free to add the organization and contact person in case you are interested in future benchmarking regarding best practices.
- <https://edu.flinga.fi/s/E74PCJ2>, access code E74PCJ2

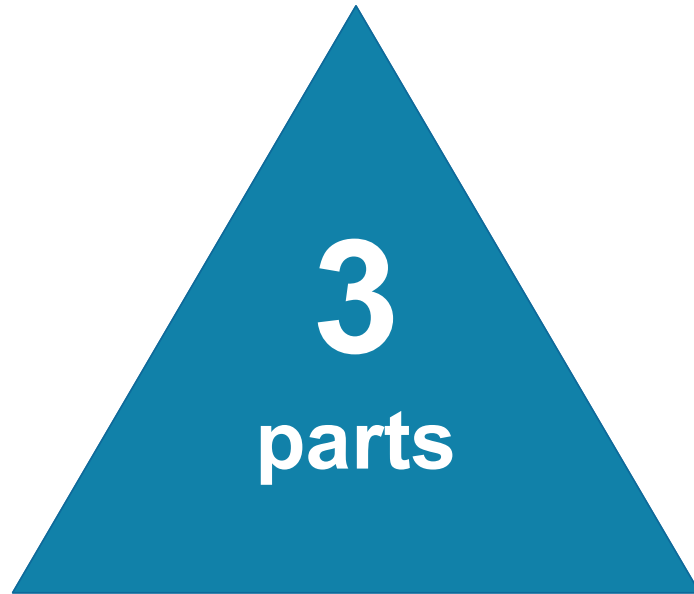


Changing the narrative

Spring Forum 2023 | 3-5 May, Espoo | Valéria Pinto, MBA



Packaging



Services

Opportunities

Part 1: *packaging*

- **Approach** – how do I see/want others to see the international community?
- **Words matter** – how do I present/talk about the international community?
- **Mimicking phenomenon** – people usually mimic other people's behaviors

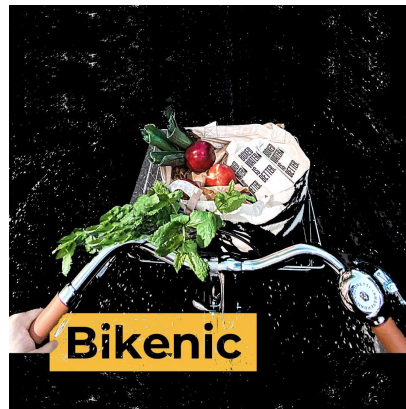


Part 2: Services **we** offer them



Among many...







Part 3: what can *they* offer us?



Englannin kielibuusti 50+ Kotkan kirjastossa

- English language boost
- residents aged 50+ living in the Kotka region
- 60-minute weekly meetings
- Teacher of English → Xamk international students who are fluent in English

Hey, you!
Are you 50+ years old and don't want to be bored at home?



So join our free **ENGLANNIN KIELIBUUSTI** informal meetings on Wednesdays (4pm-5pm).
Kotka main library - Kirkkokatu 24 - Hilda room





Main idea

- Identify skills
- create opportunities
- introduce members of the international community to the local one
- Empower international students → **boost morale**

- Focus on the narrative → **service providers (volunteering)**
→ **solution**

Results (so far)

- Regular attendance (4-5 participants + 2-3 monitors)
- Real interactions (great curiosity from both sides!)
- Exchange of practical information between participants and monitors
- Participation in other projects
- Positive feedback from participants and monitors
- Interest in a 2nd round, longer sessions
- Finns help with Finnish language

Today's goal

How can we:

- scale the project up?
- *copy/paste* the concept to other projects?
- adapt the project to different contexts?

The path continues..

Spring Forum

4.5.2023

Anu Härkönen

Head of International Affairs

Turku University of Applied Sciences



International Student Journey – returning to the path

- Not a new concept but as relevant as ever
- POLKU project in Turku 2015-2018 [Project | POLKU \(abo.fi\)](#)
- National KILKAS project 2016-2018 [KILKAS - Competitiveness and growth in promoting the employment of foreign UAS students – Xamk](#)
- We returned to the path in 2022 when Turku UAS mapping exercise regarding services for international students (inspired by the University of Turku <https://www.utu.fi/en/study-at-utu/journey-of-an-international-student-at-the-university-of-turku>)



Still going strong – old services with a new twist

- Courses at Turku UAS: Finnish Culture Journey, Get Finternational, Introduction to Higher Education Studies
- Study in Turku activities: e.g. Friendship Programme and Study and Stay in Turku events (<https://www.turku.fi/en/study-turku>)
- Turku Business Region collaboration: Career Talks Turku ([Events - Career in Southwest Finland](#))



Some recently developed services and ideas

- MOI Service at Turku UAS
- International House Turku (<https://ihturku.fi/en/>)
- Mentoring and networking guidance as outcomes of MESH and DigiMESH projects: <https://mesh.turkuamk.fi/arkisto/index.html> and [MOOC | DigiMESH \(turkuamk.fi\)](#)
- Under planning: study counsellor specialising in international student affairs and coordinator for practical training places of international students, involvement of local and regional country-specific associations



My suggestion (and hope) for today's session

- So many actors at HEIs, ministries, organizations and associations
- Let's put our thinking caps on and brainstorm how we can avoid re-inventing the wheel year after year and where and when we could share the best practices
- Cf. Talent Boost UAS network, Incoming Exchange Student Coordinators' network

