



Universum College

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To whom it may concern,

This letter serves to introduce Unviersum College and to request the partnership of yours University for the ERASMUS PLUS Program in the fulfillment of our vision and mission.

UNIVERSITY PROFILE

Universum is a center for scholarship, research, and creative activity involving the creation, testing, and dissemination of knowledge, understanding, expressions, and techniques. Universum College aims to provide education and training along with a lifelong learning love of learning to enable individuals to realize their full potential. As a private university, Universum College has a particular responsibility to address societal issues and needs through scholarship, research, and creative activity. The scholarly and social activity of the faculty enhances the teaching function at all levels of the student experience. Our University strives for excellence in fulfilling its central and primary purposes of teaching, scholarship, and research and places particular emphasis on the quality of teaching.

The Mission of Universum College is to provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services to a Kosovar and international student body through teaching excellence, lifelong learning, applied research and partnership building thus preparing students to be thoughtful, responsible and successful citizens and support the economic development of Kosovo and the region.

Means to achieving the mission are:

- To provide sound education to the Kosovar, regional and international student body;
- To maintain and develop the standards of excellence essential to the future of our; students' success
- and to provide the appropriate means to reach these ends;
- To foster applied research;
- To continue to develop innovative and flexible educational approaches which serve the needs of the students;
- To encourage personal and social development of students through activities outside the classroom;
- To develop the College as a life-long learning center;
- To deliver support programs to help students achieve their goals;
- To foster international partnerships and programs;

- To provide students with an understanding and appreciation of world cultures;
- To lead in the creation of partnerships that foster the economic development of the region
- To arrange an incentive structure that fosters research and innovation on issues or interest to the local and regional economy.

ORGANISATIONAL EXPERIENCE

ERASMUS PLUS Project: Connecting science-society collaborations for sustainability innovation (CONSUS): The aim of the project is to establish a regional science-society network for sustainability innovations in Albania and Kosovo in order to strengthen the connection and collaboration of institutions in the field of higher education, research and practice.

Project Partners:

- University of Graz,
- University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences,
- Leuphana University,
- University of Limerick.

Tempus Project: "Encouraging the process of Curriculum Development based on Learning Outcomes and Research Guided Teaching in the Private Higher Education Institution of Kosovo".

The project encourages the process of curriculum development based on learning outcomes and research guided teaching in the private higher education institutions of Kosova.

Project Partners:

- University of Salzburg;
- University College Cork;
- University of Edinburgh;
- University Politecnica;
- Kosova Accreditation Agency;
- National Qualification Authority;
- Wus Kosova.

Tempus Project: "Supporting and Developing the Structures for QA at the Private Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo". The project aimed to introduce and enhance quality standards and mechanisms at the Private Higher Education Providers in Kosova, this in order to facilitate comparability, credibility and Quality Assurance practices in accordance with the Bologna principles and the *Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Kosova (2005-2015)*.

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) country report – The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) project is an annual assessment of the entrepreneurial activity, aspirations and attitudes of individuals across a wide range of countries. GEM is the largest ongoing study of entrepreneurial dynamics in the world which cover 75% of world population and 89% of global GDP. Universum hosts the Kosovo National Team to conduct country report.

Politics and Elections - A survey of voters' opinion litics and Elections - A survey of voters' opinion: The Institute for Development Policy (INDEP) and Universum College (Universum) conducted extended field surveys in order to quantify citizen motivation behind their voting preferences. The question we have asked included modalities for the most pressing political and public policy issues discussed in the election, including the issues that drove political party

preferences in voters. Additionally, the initial questions were aimed to assess general demographic information of the sample.

Kosovo National Election 2014: Public Policy concerns during the election campaign: Institute for Development Policy (INDEP) and College Universum have conducted a series of surveys which enriched the election debate with accurate data on the opinion and evaluation of the voters on different public policy issues. Respondents were asked to identify the main reasons why they choose to vote for one party over the other, to clarify whether they trust the programmes of the parties, to state the reasons for trusting them or not as well as to specifically clarify their standing on major public policy actions. As a result of this, the report is divided in different subcategories and each of them reflects on the results of the survey pertaining to different areas of public policy.

Leadership and Office Management: Part of the UNDP Project, we have signed a contract to deliver two trainings for Dragash Municipality officials and local working group members. During two months period there will be a two full day training on Leadership and Organizational Skills and one two months training on Office Management.

Economic Development of the Centre Region: Universum College now is running an EU Project on Training and Education of young people for Rural Tourism Development. The aim of this assignment is to support identified potential and existing entrepreneurs and institutions from the project area regarding development of the tourism industry in rural areas. The specific objective of this assignment is to provide training to project beneficiaries (rural households, unemployed young individuals and women and relevant associations and institutions) on business startup, handicraft, and institutional development.

Entrepreneurship Development Skills Project: Universum College won the project from YEP/ USAID to train 1000 young people. The main objective of this assignment was to provide support to 1000 Young Entrepreneurs (ages 18-35) in 16-20 different municipalities in a phased approach. In the end every successful young entrepreneur will be able to develop a viable business plan

Provisions of Business Development Skills Training for Young Entrepreneurs (USAID YEP): Universum carried out trainings at different sites for the USAID Young Entrepreneurs Program (YEP) and trained over 180 participants at four different locations (Prishtina, Strpce, Klina, Gjakova).

Sub-contractor in the Economic Growth through Tourism of EU Commission Universum was sub-contracted by the EU Commission to conduct training and business skills development for Tourism Entrepreneurs in the region of Prishtina, as part of the regional development strategies. Over 100 candidates were trained including:

- Households with tourism development potentials
- Municipality officials which support the tourism development in the region

Analysis of The Kosovar Commercial Real Estate Market: The real estate market analysis is a primary research commission by Forton-MKA (Commercial Property Advisers). The principal objective of this study is to evaluate the trends of the retail and the office market potential of the city of Prishtina (the capital of Kosovo). The focus of this study is to conduct field research in the region of Prishtina, and to evaluate the trends and the potentiality of the inventory of the existing commercial buildings, and the forthcoming projects designated for rent in retail and office markets. Specifically the study would acquire data for the following issues:

1. Office Market in Prishtina,

2. Office stock and office space delivery,
3. Office vacancy and office development projects,
4. Rent and selling prices and their trends,
5. Retail Market in Prishtina,
6. Retail concepts (prime streets, shopping centers, retail galleries and big boxes),
7. Retail vacancy and development projects, and
8. Retail and selling prices.

Business Outlook: Business Outlook is a 10-year research project, which is aimed at measuring the trends and movements in the business environment in Kosovo annually. Business Outlook contributes to the advancement of both our students and staff. On the one hand, the students of Universum gather the complex data needed to construct the quantitative analysis, whereas the staff complements the quantitative data with a qualitative analysis upon the data concerned. That being said, the Business Outlook shows the momentum of businesses' performance, and predicts the potential shortcomings and/or challenges of the latter. By doing so, the Business Outlook, released at the beginning of each year, shows to the business community, foreign investors and public governors the current trends of performance and the forecasted movements in the business sector in Kosovo, as to sharpen their policies and to smooth their involvement. You may find the electronic version of the Business Outlook in Kosovo at the following website: www.universum-ks.org.

Employment Barometer: is another 10-year research project, which is aimed at measuring the trends and shifts in the labor market in Kosovo. The Barometer is released once per year, and it is conducted through the students' work and staff's academic analyses. The Employment Barometer shows the current indicators in the labor market in Kosovo, and forecasts the shortcomings and/or prospects in the latter. To that extent, the Employment Barometer informs policy makers, private investors, business owners etc about the needed steps to improve the potential challenges, and the prospective interventions that need to overcome the predicted challenges.

Business in Kosovo 'Policy Paper Series': Business in Kosovo 'Policy Paper Series' is a series of working papers that discuss, quantitatively measure, qualitatively analyze, and theoretically test the current leanings and challenges of the Kosovo's business environment. The series contributes to the expansion, and to some extent innovation, of the policy debate over the business in Kosovo, the regional interdependence of the latter, and from time to time the interference of the global business trends in the Kosovo's business performance. The series of papers are aimed at informing the policy-makers and academics about both the shortcomings and prospects of Kosovo's business, through engaging with policy solutions and directions from most of the developed market economies' practices. Each paper written as part of this series undergoes a rigorous peer-review procedure from the international Research Committee of the college, while allowing each author to express his/her views on bases of policy values. Each paper produced in this series is published by the Universum College Press, and made available online. The 'Business in Kosovo' Policy Paper Series is the first of its kind in Kosovo, and has greatly promoted the study of policy, from both market and government standpoint, as a mean to being informed and capable of addressing rational policy solutions.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Universum sees itself as a teaching institution with well-developed taught degrees. Under our strategic investment plan, Universum plans to significantly increase financial allocations to research by 2015. In addition, all academic programs at our institution will see an improvement in conditions and receive more funding.

Markedly, an area of great importance to our institution is research, where management envisages increased investment. Stress is placed on the need to carry out an active search for funding from a wide variety of sources possible and to attract researchers and teaching staff from outside Kosovo. Staff retention and development remain a high priority. The institution itself has, thus far, been the main financier for funding research. Our aim is to expand our research range, quality, and products. To this end, we have adopted a research strategy and created a stronger mechanism to carry out the objectives. Universum is currently implementing an integrated teaching, research and staff development policy, by making it obligatory for staff to spend a greater proportion of their time conducting research. Additionally, UC is consolidating its research policies, priorities, partners, commercialization opportunities, and national and international research schemes.

In terms of teaching, there are less significant short-term concerns. We have made considerable improvements by clearly highlighting program and course teaching and learning outcomes, introducing variable and flexible modes of delivery, and introducing technology (E-learning System) into teaching and providing training where necessary. Life-long education and distance learning are points that Universum has prioritized in its teaching plan. Universum is channeling students from a traditional lecture-based system, based on rote-learning and oral examinations, to one based on a variety of teaching approaches and examination procedures, including seminars and problem-based learning, with continual assessment, essays, projects, and written examinations.

All academic programs of our institution strive to achieve the maximum symbiosis of teaching and research, and are also designed with the needs of the society in mind. They reflect the Bologna Declaration by following the three-tier BA/MA/PhD model. This, along with the ECTS system, is intended to lead to greater inter-institutional cooperation and increased links with other universities and colleges in Kosovo and in other countries abroad (Europe, Northern American and Asia Pacific). UC is extending the package of Bachelor programs with new competitive programs as well as offering another Master's program, as a continuation of Bachelor studies and a necessary step to fulfill the stipulations of the Bologna Declaration. Our long-term strategic orientation is the creation of a reputable regional and international institution of higher education by focusing at the national level and also introducing new joint-Universum is slowly moving towards introducing new technologies in teaching; it is becoming common to have reading materials required for courses available electronically. This will be particularly useful since libraries in Kosovo are still inadequately stocked. We note that e-learning is still difficult to implement with many students, but we have received positive feedback from those that actively use it.

Where services are concerned, Universum is paying particular attention to the students' learning expectations. Through student feedback, institutional policies have been improved and implemented such as library staffing, subscription to international journals, career development services, and facilitating student campus life. We have since established the Employment Barometer, Graduate Skills Survey, and an Alumni Association in order to support our students and alumni.

Recent institutional changes and reforms carried out at our institution, specialized areas, up-to-date curriculums, costs of study and importantly our internationalization strategy will boost our competitiveness in the future. The strategy reflects the determination of our institution to become widely recognized as one of the leading institutions in Kosovo, a goal that also motivates such things as participation in the activities of international organizations, its commitment to higher education networks: International Association of Universities (IAU), Global College Network (GCN), European Association for International Education (EAIE), European Higher Education Society (EAIR) etc.

Please feel free to consult the undersigned for further information.

Yours truly,

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