



Aarhus BSS

Strategy 2022-2026

CONTRIBUTORS

We thank all contributors to the 2022-2026 strategy and look forward to continue fulfilling the ambition for Aarhus BSS: to increase the quality of all our academic endeavours, to gradually adapt our educational portfolio to societal demands, and to continuously recruit and train the requisite faculty and students. This is our coherent value proposition.

– The Faculty Management Team, Aarhus BSS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	6
MISSION AND VISION.....	7
STRATEGIC GOALS	8
EDUCATION	10
RESEARCH	13
COLLABORATION	15
IMPLEMENTATION	16

Department of Law

Department of
Management

Department of
Political Science

Department of Economics
and Business Economics

Department of Business
Development and Technology

Department of Psychology
and Behavioural Sciences



Introduction

Aarhus BSS is a top European, quality-driven, research-based school of business and social sciences committed to make a continuous impact on society and business through excellent research and education. As of 2017, Aarhus BSS in its entirety is a Triple Crown School (AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS).

Degree programmes and graduates

The academic fields and departments at Aarhus BSS consistently place very favourably in international academic rankings. In the previous strategy period 2017-2020, Aarhus BSS continued to have some of the most sought-after Bachelor's degree programmes in the Danish university system and to host some of the most coveted Danish Master's degree programmes from the perspective of employers and graduates alike – in terms of employment, salaries and career prospects. Graduates and employees from Aarhus BSS remain attractive to our academic peers both nationally and internationally, and our alumni continue to swell the ranks of senior officers in both private and public organisations.

External research funding

External research funding is edging close to DKK 300 million per year. Compared to the situation at the beginning of the previous strategy period, this is an increase of 70 per cent. We successfully attract funding from the Danish National Research Foundation (DNRF), and Aarhus BSS is the host of its third DNRF Centre of Excellence (the Centre for the Experimental-Philosophical Study of Discrimination, CEPDISC) and a DNRF Chair (in Economics).

Close to 50 per cent of the external research funding attracted derives from private sources and funding from the EU. Under the EU Horizon 2020 programme, Aarhus BSS has attracted an ERC Synergy Grant as well as several ERC Consolidator Grants.

Faculty recruitment

The recruitment of international faculty (professors, associate professors and assistant professors) has progressed steadily, increasing the total international faculty body from 20 per cent in 2016 to 31 per cent in 2020. At the end of 2020, the tally was approximately 160 international faculty members from 30 coun-

tries. Increased use of tenure track employment at the junior level is key to international recruitment, and the number of assistant professors in tenure track positions increased from 10 at the end of 2016 to 23 at the end of 2020. The Aarhus BSS Graduate School (PhD training) has seen an increase in the annual number of qualified applicants from 328 in 2016 to 563 in 2020 – an increase of more than 70 per cent.

Adapting and learning

The end of the previous strategy period coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic from early 2020, and the strategy was extended to cover 2021. Despite external stop-and-go regulation since mid-March 2020, the educational output of Aarhus BSS remains largely unaffected by the summer of 2021 (as measured by the number of passing grades and graduating students).

Aarhus BSS researchers managed to attract substantial external funding for COVID-19-related research and were able to contribute significantly to the research-based advice given to policy-makers since March 2020. In particular, Aarhus BSS researchers have advised the Danish government on matters of population sentiment and opinion, behaviour during the pandemic, economics, public governance, and the law. Aarhus BSS expects to rebound from COVID-19 quickly, retaining and adopting useful lessons from the pandemic in relation to education, research and administration, while at the same time shedding “the new normal” and putting the pandemic behind us. We will return to being a campus university but with enhanced digital competencies.

We commit to academic excellence and this obliges us to provide viable answers to societal challenges. For this reason, we must reinforce the academic interchange between business and social science and broaden our collaboration with core disciplines at Aarhus University as well as with international peers. So far, several interdisciplinary centres have been formed to harness the academic strengths across the school, including the Crown Prince Frederik Center for Public Leadership, the Centre for Integrative Business Psychology (CIBP), the Platform for Inequality Research at Aarhus University (PIREAU) and the Centre for Energy Technologies (CET).

MISSION

To offer high-quality research and research-based education within and across the fields of business and social sciences, and produce highly skilled graduates who will form the future workforce and create value for society and stakeholders.

VISION

We contribute to the conditions for society's welfare and development by aspiring to the highest international quality in education, research and collaboration.

Strategic goals

During the strategy period 2022-2026, the strategic goals of Aarhus BSS are focused on three core activities: education, research and collaboration.

Emerging from a collaborative approach and the previous 2017-2021 strategy, our emphasis on high-quality academic research and educational results combined with an international outlook and close ties to external stakeholders remain the most important objectives in our quest to deliver graduates and research that make a positive impact on societal innovation, growth, welfare and sustainability.

Research and research-based degree programmes within the core disciplines of business, including business technology, and social sciences still form the backbone of Aarhus BSS' strategy. We will continue to develop our well-established educational brands and explore relevant collaboration within and between our disciplines, bringing social sciences into business and vice versa.

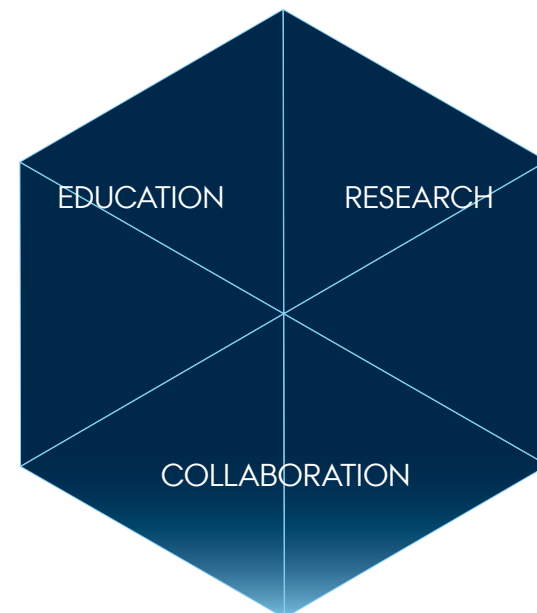
Our academic portfolio spanning business and social sciences – our two foundational disciplines – along with select interdisciplinary initiatives created in the mix of our core disciplines allows us to advance knowledge across academic fields. This approach keeps us competitive and at the forefront as a provider of skilled graduates and scientific breakthroughs.

With intensified competition for resources and students, it is important for Aarhus BSS to be visible and recognised for its research and teaching in both academia and the public at large in Denmark and abroad. Our ability to attract and develop talented employees and students is a prerequisite for our success, which is why we offer our students and employees an inspiring study environment and attractive workplace as well as a vibrant physical campus.

Our strategy aligns with that of Aarhus University, which sets new and higher goals for academic development and the scope of national and international collaboration. Aarhus BSS will continue to enhance its position as a quality-driven institution characterised by high international standards within education, research and collaboration.

Our professional administrative staff play a key role in this by supporting our academic departments with responsive, flexible and coherent administrative services in alignment with our strategic goals.

CORE ACTIVITIES



Education

Our goal is to strengthen our degree programmes through high-quality research-based teaching, focusing on job market relevance and on creating great job prospects for our graduates.

The school shares Aarhus University's commitment to learning and research that has a positive impact on society and views students and graduates as the most important ambassadors of the university's knowledge. We will intensify our efforts to increase enrolment of students with strong qualifications, who are motivated and engage actively in their studies and in developing their academic and professional skills. Furthermore, we will continue to strengthen the quality and relevance of our research-based education to ensure excellent employment opportunities for our graduates in Denmark and abroad. In particular, Aarhus BSS graduates must meet the requirements for future leaders in business, public organisations and civic society.

The future of education is rapidly changing, driven largely by challenges presented by the accelerating uptake of digital technologies. We utilise digital solutions to complement physical teaching where it is didactically meaningful and expected to increase learning.

We will strengthen and develop our successful educational brands to elevate the student experience, provide our students with skills and qualifications needed in the future job market and prepare them for lifelong learning. This includes offering an inspiring and supportive learning environment, enhanced use of digital competences and opportunities, competency development combining practical experience with extensive theoretical knowledge, and a focus on future career prospects, including entrepreneurship and venture creation.

International outlook

Maintaining an international outlook is equally relevant as a means of educating highly skilled, entrepreneurial and internationally competitive graduates, who will form the future workforce, exercise leadership, propagate innovation and create value for society and stakeholders.

The internationalisation of degree programmes and the student body is challenged mainly by current Danish legislation. At present, it is difficult for Aarhus BSS to develop programmes in English and attract more national and international students to these – despite the strategic aspirations of the school. Instead, we will direct our efforts at retaining our international students on the Danish labour market upon graduation.

We will improve our students' international outlook by embedding relevant international elements into research and teaching, by hiring a significant proportion of talented faculty with international experience, and by providing an international curriculum and the opportunity to interact with international peers at home and abroad.

Career development and employability

Our graduates form the future workforce and create value for society and stakeholders. Therefore, it is essential that we are persistent and focused on retaining our students and increasing the employability of our graduates.

Aarhus BSS will improve its career development offers and engage more students in taking an active part in their own career planning and in future-proofing their employment prospects. Therefore, we will continue to engage in a systematic and focused dialogue with employers and alumni from the private and the public sector. In particular, we view internships as a natural and integrated part of the academic experience to prepare students for their subsequent careers. Furthermore, increased interdisciplinary collaboration between our disciplines will improve the academic and professional development of students and ultimately their job prospects upon graduation.



Research

Our goal is to further strengthen the quality of our research and optimise its impact on academia, business and society.

Research forms the basis of all education at Aarhus BSS and is crucial for having a direct, knowledge-based impact on society. At Aarhus BSS, high-quality research is predicated on open and merit-based recruitment, training and retention of researchers, provision of state-of-the-art research infrastructures – mainly in terms of IT as well as access to labs, field and data – and ample resources to conduct research and interact with academic peers.

High-quality research-based education can only exist with researchers who excel within their fields and incorporate that expertise into their teaching. Therefore, we will develop talent and thus strengthen our research base and the quality of our scientific output. We will achieve this by recruiting and developing talented PhD students and faculty, and by providing transparent recruitment processes promoting gender equality and diversity, attractive working conditions and ample career opportunities.

As many universities and business schools, Aarhus BSS remains challenged in terms of faculty gender composition. Only approximately a third of tenured faculty (professors and associate professors) are female, whereas there is equal gender representation among junior faculty (assistant professors) and in the Aarhus BSS student body. To reach our goal of the highest possible quality, it is of utmost importance that Aarhus BSS and Aarhus University succeed to attract talent and to eliminate barriers that restrict access to the entire talent pool.

Contribution to society

With quality being the key driver of our research agenda, we will focus on combining scientific rigour with societal returns, contributing to creating decisive value for the individual and for society as a whole. We will accomplish this through top-quality research published in relevant high-ranking outlets, through international collaboration on research, and by attracting flexible and prestigious

research funding from a broad spectrum of prominent external funding sources, which support scientific breakthroughs. These include the European Research Council, major private foundations, the Danish National Research Foundation and the Sapere Aude Programme of the Independent Research Fund Denmark.

In order to remain relevant and at the forefront, our research agenda calls for both a disciplinary and an interdisciplinary approach to in-depth research and an international outlook. We are committed to delivering both basic and applied research contributions to the development and welfare of society. We will maintain a positive and competitive research environment that will support international and interdisciplinary collaboration and enhance our impact on society and our international reputation. We will reinforce the academic interchange between business and social science through relevant research collaboration, e.g. within social data science, inequality, and sustainability, and we will explore opportunities to broaden our collaboration with other academic disciplines at Aarhus University and with international peers.



Collaboration

Our goal is to improve the scope and quality of our collaboration with national and international stakeholders to ensure that our degree programmes, research projects and services rendered to society remain impactful, relevant and adaptable to change.

Collaboration at Aarhus BSS manifests itself in many ways. Our faculty members collaborate with peers across disciplines and borders, and employers from the private and public sector are an integral part of many endeavours, including the development of our educational portfolio. Furthermore, a wide range of public, corporate, institutional, governmental and professional contacts, spanning a variety of industries and organisational levels, are involved in activities at Aarhus BSS, from student fairs and mentoring to case competitions and lectures, in research and innovation activities, and in funding and advisory roles.

We will dedicate our efforts to strengthen relations with private and public entities in Denmark in order to meet their demands for knowledge and talent as well as improve our contributions to the world of practice. Furthermore, we will continue to encourage faculty members to engage in the public debate and research dissemination as well as in relevant decision-making processes, thus improving our imprint on society.

International collaboration

Collaboration efforts also depend on maintaining an international outlook. We will continue to work towards strengthening the quality of our external collaboration through international networks of both academic and corporate partners.

Aarhus University envisions a Denmark connected to global society. The achievement of this vision involves an ambitious journey to which Aarhus BSS contributes through our commitment to promoting an increased global exchange of knowledge and talent. We offer our researchers the opportunity to realise their potential and excel within their research areas. Among other things, we provide opportunities for our researchers to participate in research collaborations at a high international level and

otherwise engage in activities that strengthen the impact of our research on academia and practice.

Aarhus BSS will expand our international networks and the nature of our strategic collaboration with recognised business schools and universities. This collaboration will have many forms, e.g. benchmarking activities, exchange and mobility agreements for students and faculty and memberships of international accreditation bodies.

Mobility is a crucial element for students seeking global careers, internships and international experience, since operating in a globalised world requires a continuous focus on flexible and adaptive knowledge as well as a global mindset. We will strive to strengthen and expand collaboration with leading multinational businesses in Denmark and build connections with international companies and organisations abroad in order to offer our students more opportunities to collaborate in international and culturally diverse settings. Targeted collaboration and interaction with our alumni in Denmark and abroad will be a key factor for achieving success, not least for our continuing educational portfolio and focus on lifelong learning.



Implementation

Aarhus BSS closely monitors the implementation of this strategy. We conduct a strategic planning process on a yearly basis, in which all departments develop a whitepaper outlining activities and priorities for the coming year in alignment with the strategic goals of Aarhus BSS.

The department whitepapers include a data-based follow-up on metrics regarding education, research and collaboration. Following this, the faculty management team meets for a strategy seminar and selects a set of priorities for the coming year based on the whitepapers.

This approach allows Aarhus BSS to adapt swiftly to any changes in framework conditions, thus increasing our contribution to society. Our strategic planning process is consolidated with the strategy implementation at Aarhus University and with quality assurance practices.



