



KEVÄTPÄIVÄT 2015

Session 1.3. Strengthening cooperation in marketing – A Nordic perspective

Chair:

Riikka Vanhanen, Administrative Planner – International Services, JAMK University of Applied Sciences

Speakers:

Mary Gestrin, Senior Adviser, Nordic Council of Ministers

Timo Heino, Senior Adviser, Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs/ Team Finland

Pauliina Mikkonen, Programme Manager, University of Helsinki

Malla Suntioinen, Programme Manager, University of Helsinki

This session largely repeated the messages that the chancellor Wilhelmsson stressed in his keynote on Nordic higher education area. In the session we heard different perspectives on how the Nordic countries and Finland position themselves and what kind of cooperation there is in common marketing.

Senior Adviser Mary Gestrin from the Nordic Council of Ministers gave insight about the brand work that has been prepared by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Nordic ministers have agreed on a joint strategy for branding the Nordic countries where the main goal is to strengthen the competitiveness and international influence of the Nordic society, including the education sector.

Ms Gestrin invited all Finnish HEIs to join a conference on education export in September 2015 which will be organized by the NCM. The significance of Nordplus programme as a tool for Nordic cooperation was emphasized in the discussions and it was wished that the funding would continue after the current programme period is over in 2016.

Senior adviser Timo Heino presented the possibilities that Team Finland has to offer for Finnish actors in internationalization. He emphasized that the coordination of Finnish mechanisms for internationalization has significantly improved since the Team Finland was established four years ago. It remains to be seen what kind of role Team Finland will play during the next government period. HE sector in the Team Finland's planning team is represented by the Ministry of Education and Culture, but none of the Finnish HEIs nor CIMO are part of the team. This raised some criticism and concern in the audience.

A more practical case was given by the Helsinki Summer School's programme managers, Susanna Mikkonen and Malla Suntioinen who told about a common summer school concept in biology that is being developed between the University of Helsinki and the Stockholm University. The Helsinki Summer School in general is one of the most important tools for the University of Helsinki to recruit international students.

Head of Communications Marjo Somari from CIMO added her viewpoints on country branding on national level as well as cooperation in marketing with Nordic countries. CIMO has been cooperating with "sister organisations" or relevant HEIs from the other Nordic countries already for years. The cooperation includes joint booth at NAFSA as well as meetings where operational questions (best practices in alumni work, use of social media, events, etc. etc.) are being discussed. The focus as well as funding models of the Nordic actors are slightly different and, naturally, the countries also compete with each other. But all these aspects can be openly discussed and the best ways to cooperate can be identified.

One of the challenges in joint marketing efforts is the number of organisations playing in the same field: we should be aware of what the others are doing, not overlap but to take complement each other. This concerns both the national perspective as well as the Nordic one.

Session report by Outi Jäppinen, CIMO