Implementation Plan of the Strategic Plan

University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice

2024



Vision

The University of South Bohemia wishes to be:

- · a sought-after friendly university with a motivating learning and working environment
- a competitive university in Europe and the world
- a university with an unmistakable identity that benefits the city and the region
- an academic institution supporting students and staff

Mission

The University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (USB), as a top centre of education, independent knowledge and creative activity, is oriented towards the scientific, cultural, social and economic development of society and its activities fulfil the mission of a university higher education institution according to Section 1 of the Higher Education Act: it develops education, supports independent knowledge and creative activity in research and development and actively fulfils its social responsibility in the cultural, economic, social and environmental field.

As a research organisation, USB's main mission is to independently conduct basic and applied research or experimental development and to publicly disseminate the results of these activities through teaching, publications or knowledge transfer. Educational and related scientific and research, development and innovation, artistic or other creative activities are developed at the USB in the natural sciences, agriculture, humanities, social sciences and health, at an international level. In addition to educational and creative activities, USB also carries out complementary activities to help fulfil the USB mission.



Values

Professionalism

The University of South Bohemia relies on highly qualified and competent staff in all areas of its activities.

Ambition

The University of South Bohemia is a responsive institution and aims high in all areas of its activities.

Responsibility

The University of South Bohemia is committed to social responsibility and the principles of sustainable living.

Integration

The University of South Bohemia connects internal and external partners and is a free environment for the expression and implementation of their ideas.

Openness

The University of South Bohemia subscribes to the principles of democracy and freedom and is open to accepting and sharing new ideas and approaches, as well as forging new partnerships.

Internationalisation

The University of South Bohemia relies on international cooperation to achieve its mission.

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Implementing the vision in 2024

The Implementation Plan of the Strategic Plan of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice for the year 2024 (hereinafter referred to as 'IPSP 2024') represents an integral part of the strategic management of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (hereinafter referred to as 'USB').

It is based on the Strategic Plan of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice for the period 2021–2030 and its aim is to specify the set priorities and prepare key measures for 2024.

The Implementation Plan of the USB Strategic Plan for 2024 is organized, like the Strategic Plan, into five priority areas: education, research, internationalization, openness, and governance. Beyond these five priority areas, one crosscutting area has been identified – social responsibility – which is included in all the chapters below, as we consider social responsibility to be an extremely important attribute of all activities carried out at our University. The most important planned activities (expected actions) for 2024 at the University-wide level are added to each priority objective.

In order to support the implementation of selected strategic measures in the field of educational activities, management, internal processes and, to a lesser extent, the third role of universities, the CR Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has announced the Support Programme for the Strategic Management of Universities for 2022–2025 (SPSM). Selected activities to be funded by the SPSM in 2024 are marked with the symbol •

The IPSP 2024 is accompanied by a report with an interim evaluation of the use of SPSM funds.

A separate annexe to the IPSP 2024 is the USB Investment Plan 2024 (IP).

Education

Objective 1.1 Quality of education

Activities planned for 2024

Establishment of a system of substantive quality control of education

- Following the analysis of the conditions for the implementation of the state final examinations currently applied at USB faculties, a proposal will be prepared to update the relevant provisions of the USB Study and Examination Regulations and related internal standards of the faculties.
- In cooperation with members of the USB Management and quality coordinators from individual faculties, a draft update of the internal regulation 'Rules of the Quality Assurance System' will be prepared and the experience with the newly set up system of regular evaluation of faculties and degree programmes will be evaluated.

Modification of the USB budget methodology for education

- Adjustments will be made to the quality criteria in the budget methodology.
- Rules for assessing the quality of the DDP will be set.

Strengthening personal responsibility for quality and compliance with educational standards

• The development of the portfolio of activities of the USB Career Centre, proven in the course of the project 'USB Development – ESF II', will be continued, with a view to building systemic support for degree programme guarantors in the area of student and graduate care and communication with potential employers.

Strengthening the substantive importance of the institution of academia

- The existing communication over sharing and evaluating examples of good practices among quality coordinators will continue.
- Following the survey of students' attitudes towards quality assurance of educational activities carried out in autumn 2023, the results of this survey will be discussed, including any recommendations that can be drawn from the data obtained.

Developing care for learners at risk of academic failure

- The development of the portfolio of activities of the University Psychological Counselling Centre and the Support Centre for Students with Special Needs, proven in the course of the project 'USB Development ESF II', will be continued with regard to building a system for the prevention of academic failure.
- Based on the analysis of the factors of academic failure manifested in USB degree programmes and the
 identified possibilities of predicting academic failure, a set of implemented measures aimed at reducing
 academic failure will be selected for detailed qualitative analysis in order to obtain a more detailed picture of
 the real functioning of these measures.
- In the case of a successful evaluation of the project application of the OP JAK project 'USB Development ESF III', the project will be launched. One of the key activities of the project will be, inter alia, the collection and evaluation of data on barriers to study and academic failure, the implementation of measures to reduce academic failure and the evaluation of the effectiveness of measures taken to reduce academic failure.

System support for teachers

- Activities aimed at strengthening the teaching skills and abilities of teachers will be supported, using the experience gained in the implementation of the strategic project 'USB Development ESF'.
- In the case of a successful evaluation of the project application of the OP JAK project 'Development of USB ESF III', the project will be launched. One of the key activities of the project will be to support the training of USB staff in pedagogical-psychological and didactic areas and the development of other relevant skills, knowledge and abilities, to support the collegial exchange of experience and feedback in the preparation and implementation of educational activities.
- Technical and methodological support for academic staff in the use of flexible forms of education will continue. Following the establishment of the position of technical and methodological support at CIT in 2019, this position will be maintained, and its systemic use will be ensured, especially in the development of learning materials and courses for distance learning (IS STAG, LMS Moodle, MS Teams, eLibrary, etc.). The CIT staff member will be the administrator of the newly introduced technical resources for flexible forms of education and will provide technical and methodological support to academic staff, especially focused on the effective use of technology to support distance or combined learning.
- In connection with the outputs of the project 'Standards of Teaching Quality', implemented in 2023, specific possibilities of implementation of these outputs in the conditions of USB will be discussed (especially methods and tools of evaluation of teaching quality and the competence framework defining pedagogical competences of university teachers).

Effective organizations that support the meaning of educational activities

• Following the announced amendment to the Higher Education Act, the USB Study and Examination Regulations will be updated to simplify and clarify the conditions of study across USB.

Objective 1.2 Link to practice

Activities planned for 2024

Qualifications framework and learning outcomes as part of the standards

• As part of the process of re-accreditation of degree programmes, the internal structure of degree programmes will continue to be refined in terms of the continuity of the Framework of Qualifications for Higher Education, the profile of the graduate and what the student is expected to learn in individual subjects.

Linking academically oriented degree programmes with research practice

- Cooperation with CAS departments will continue to be supported, e.g. joint lecture activities will be developed, involvement of experts in the development of newly prepared accreditations, etc.
- In the case of a successful evaluation of the project application of the OP JAK project 'USB Development ESF III', the project will be launched. One of the key activities of the project will be the development of work with gifted students in cooperation with research.

Linking vocationally oriented degree programmes with institutions enabling professional employment

• In cooperation with schools in the South Bohemian Region, the implementation of the system of internships in degree programmes preparing future teachers will continue.

Incorporate the issue of recognition of prior learning into the USB Study and Examination Regulations

Following the announced amendment to the Higher Education Act, new USB Study and Examination Regulations
will be issued, the update of which will also include a more comprehensive and flexible solution to the issue of
recognition of prior learning.

Development of professionally oriented bachelor's studies

• Following the NAB review, the experience of differentiating between academic and vocational programmes and their delivery (with emphasis on the use of practitioners and students' work experience) will be discussed within the USB management, quality coordinators, the College Rector and the IEB.

Strengthening the relevance profile of graduates of degree programmes

• During the first year, when the new method of evaluation of faculties and degree programmes (in a five-year cycle) is being implemented, evaluation and subsequent University-wide reflection takes place. Based on the experience of the first year of evaluation, a discussion will be initiated within the IEB to improve the handling of this curriculum data.

Promoting active learning

• Students' non-formal learning activities will be supported (in particular the promotion of entrepreneurship and the promotion of students' social activities.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Student Affairs, Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation

Objective 1.3 Modern educational infrastructure

Activities planned for 2024

Development of information, counselling, and support services for prospective students

- The development of the services provided by the USB Career Centre, piloted under the project 'USB Development ESF II', will continue.
- The development of the services of the Support Centre for Students with Special Needs, piloted under the project 'USB Development ESF II', will continue.
- The development of the services of the University Psychological Counselling Centre, piloted under the project 'USB Development ESF II', will continue.
- Following the announced amendment to the Higher Education Act, the USB Scholarship Regulations will be updated and the USB student scholarship support system will be updated.

Building, modernising and upgrading facilities/equipment for degree programmes

- Building, upgrading and innovation of facilities/equipment for degree programmes will be supported in 2024, especially in line with the IP. E.g. renovation of the USB Aula, finalisation of the project for the construction of the FAT USB Chemistry Pavilion, preparatory work for the renovation of the Mlýnská stoka building, preparation for the renovation of the FED USB Stadium and the start of the renovation of the FED USB buildings, preparation for the construction of the Vltava IV ZSF USB building, etc.) and with the support of the OP JAK 'EFRD Quality', etc.
- The specifics of other instruments at the level of USB faculty investment actions are contained in the USB IPSP Annex USB Investment Plan 2024.
- In the case of successful evaluation of the project application of the OP JAK project 'EFRD Quality', the solution
 of this project will be initiated, with the key activities being the support of the infrastructural background of
 the USB to increase the quality of teaching through the acquisition of instrumentation, aids and the
 implementation of building modifications, completion or renovation of premises according to the identified
 needs of the USB components.
- The support and development of the infrastructure acquired within the framework of the OP will be ensured in accordance with the conditions of sustainability by the faculties that own this infrastructure, in the form of modernisation of teaching, infrastructure development projects, or reinvestments in instrumental and infrastructural equipment for educational purposes.

Digitisation of the student affairs remit

- Extension of electronic enrolment to other faculties.
- Extension of electronic applications in IS STAG to other faculties.
- The transfer of documents from the existing website to the USB intranet will continue.
- The connection of IS STAG to the Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) system will continue.
- The development of the system for managing internships in IS STAG at faculties implementing professionally oriented degree programmes will continue.

Responsibility

Vice-Rector for Student Affairs, Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs, Vice-Rector for Development, Bursar

Objective 1.4 Efficiency and quality of doctoral studies

Activities planned for 2024

Financial stability of the DDPs

- On the basis of the input and discussion suggestions gathered in previous years, the discussion on the system
 of scholarships and other remuneration for students in DDPs will continue, with possible incorporation of
 consensus adjustments aimed at harmonizing the financial conditions of study in DDPs across USB, including a
 possible update of the USB Scholarship Regulations (provided that an amendment to the Higher Education Act
 regulating this area is approved).
- Implementation of the OP JAK project 'Development of USB Infrastructural background of doctoral degree programmes', which will deal with the development and modernisation of the material and infrastructural background of doctoral degree programmes.

Harmonisation of standards governing the implementation of DDP at USB

• In connection with the update of the USB Study and Examination Regulations required by the forthcoming amendment to the Higher Education Act, the text section on the conditions of doctoral studies will be updated.

Responsibility

Vice-Rector for Student Affairs, Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation

Objective 1.5 Flexible forms of education

Activities planned for 2024

Development of distance education

• Activities aimed at expanding the portfolio of forms of study at USB to include distance learning will be supported, both towards the creation of pilot degree programmes in distance learning and towards ensuring an adequate administrative framework (e.g. enrolment and others, see above).

Flexible study organisation

- The update of the USB Study and Examination Regulations forced by the announced amendment to the Higher Education Act will be used to increase the flexibility of the organisation of studies, including addressing issues of permeability and transition between different forms of study and between studies and lifelong learning programmes.
- The implementation of the SPSM will continue to support and develop platforms for flexible forms of education and support digitisation processes in the field of education.
- In the case of a successful evaluation of the project application of the OP JAK project 'USB Development ESF III', the project will be launched. One of the key activities of the project will be, among others, the evaluation and revision of the structure of studies in accordance with the current societal challenges and needs.

Teaching/study materials and support

 Support will continue to increase the availability, relevance and quality of teaching and learning materials supporting flexible forms of learning.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Student Affairs

Objective 1.6 Development and professionalisation of LLL

Activities planned for 2024

Development of the LLL system and LLL programmes for the public

- The further development of the LLL system and LLL programmes for the public will be supported with an emphasis on improving the accessibility and relevance of LLL programmes, especially through the use of flexible forms of education (creation of an online university programme, partial online courses) and increased use of interactive teaching and learning materials.
- In terms of systemic linking of LLL activities and degree programmes, development activities will also include further development of FTTS programmes and other qualification programmes; attention will be paid to changes resulting from the amendment of the Teaching Staff Act.
- The development of the USB Goethe Centre in the newly equipped premises will be supported, among other things, in connection with the strengthening of the linguistic and intercultural competencies of students and participants in LLL programmes (see also the link to Objective 3.1).
- The LLL module will be developed on a new platform enabling more efficient administration and connection to the USB Business Centre, LMS Moodle and the new USB website, and the LMS Moodle portal will be continuously updated as part of the development of flexible forms of learning in LLL programmes.

Further education for USB students and staff

- Support for further training of USB staff will continue, focusing, among other things, on strengthening the
 professional competencies of staff with regard to the possibilities of using information and other support
 systems (IS STAG, LMS Moodle, eLibrary, Merlingo, MS Teams, etc.) in order to expand, streamline and improve
 their use
- The activities of the language and digital skills education system will also continue, particularly with regard to the need to implement flexible forms of education.
- The development of training for USB staff also includes activities aimed at strengthening pedagogical competencies (see section 1.1).

Strengthening cooperation between USB components in the framework of LLL activities

- Support for LLL coordinator positions will continue as an effective tool to strengthen the cooperation of USB units in LLL activities. Support for these staff will be implemented taking into account the capacities of individual USB units and the new demands arising from the need to make greater use of flexible forms of training.
- The support for the cooperation of USB units in the implementation of LLL programmes and the sharing of examples of good practice (including through the active involvement of all USB units in the LLL Council) will also continue, making the system of LLL programmes more transparent and efficient in relation to other USB educational and cultural activities.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Student Affairs

Objective 1.7 Alumni

Activities planned for 2024

Increased interaction with alumni

- The services provided by the USB Career Centre, piloted in the framework of the project 'USB Development ESF II', will be further developed, including selected services for graduates or for students in the transition phase between studies and finding a job.
- Events for the USB Alumni Club will be implemented according to the prepared methodologies.
- The range of benefits for graduates provided through the USB Business Centre will be further expanded.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation, Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs

Expected sources of funding

- Operational Programmes of the CR for the period 2014—2020, European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Transnational and International Cooperation Programmes
- Operational programmes of the CR 2021—2027, Cross-border cooperation programmes, Transnational and international cooperation programmes
- Horizon 2020 (ongoing) and the new Horizon EUROPE (FP9; EU research and innovation programme 2021—2027)
- Just Transition Fund, Invest EU, Support and Recovery Facility/National Recovery Plan 2020—2030; EC Community Programmes incl. Digital EU; Reacteu etc.
- Support programme for the strategic management of universities for 2022– 2025
- Development support programme in the field of higher education
- MEYS programme funding
- Own resources
- Institutional and earmarked funds, system support
- Other additional sources (local government/city, regional, donations, foundations, etc.)
- Sources of the 'Integrated Territorial Investment of the České Budějovice Agglomeration' (ITI)



Research

Objective 2.1 Research excellence

Activities planned for 2024

Strengthening the international status of USB research

Launching preparations for the USB International Assessment in 2025: a broad discussion of strategies, approaches and follow-up methodologies and motivational tools to support and develop the four fundamental pillars of science and research at the USB — excellence, interdisciplinarity, societal relevance and internationalisation, consolidation and linking of existing regulations and tools. A clear vision and a clear grasp of these four core areas will be essential for the success of the USB in this evaluation.

Supporting excellent teams

- Following the discussion on the concept of excellence and in conjunction with the launch of the preparations for the USB international evaluation, the development of motivational tools to promote excellence and the pathway to excellence, including the identification of excellent and potentially excellent research areas and areas that we would like to promote by nature and given the societal demand, including through the establishment and support of new teams.
- Creation of tools to support interfaculty cooperation in science and research, including motivational tools, systems of centralisation, consolidation or mutual support and reporting so that the USB as a whole has an overview of such cooperation (e.g. creation of virtual interdisciplinary centres or working groups connecting scientists from different disciplines and faculties, possibility of grant support for interdisciplinary research across faculties).

HRS4R implementation

Outputs will be developed and implemented according to the Revised HRS4R Action Plan. In 2024, USB enters
the phase for the renewal of the HR Award, which includes, among other things, a one-day on-site inspection
of the USB by independent evaluators appointed by the European Commission.

Responsibility

Vice-Rector for Science, Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation, Vice-Rector for Development

Objective 2.2 Social relevance of research

Activities planned for 2024

Open Science

- Continued development of the in-house data repository on the DDPACE platform in line with Open Science principles, including continued support for the USB data steward position. Subsequent linking of this repository to the National Research Data Repository Platform once it is ready.
- In addition to open access to scientific knowledge (e.g. open access to publications and data), open science
 encompasses a range of other activities, including sharing research infrastructure or engaging with societies
 outside the scientific community (e.g. citizen science). Mapping open science on USB and using the outputs to
 share good practices as well as to potentially consolidate and centrally support such activities.

Support for projects linked to the region and the socio-economic needs of society

Creation of methodologies and support tools for strengthening the societal relevance of science and research
at USB (applied research, regional cooperation, cooperation in public policy making, activities on projects
reflecting the UN Sustainable Development Goals, etc.), including the possibility of grant support in this area.

Responsibility

Vice-Rector for Science, Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation

Objective 2.3 Support and development of research infrastructures

Activities planned for 2024

Development, modernisation, and renewal of research infrastructure

- Support for the CENAKVA and Centre for Polar Ecology research infrastructures will again be conceptually
 ensured by allocating funds from the LCDRO specifically for the further development of these research
 infrastructures.
- The development of research infrastructure for all faculties will be largely supported by the projects prepared or implemented under the JAK OP.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Science, Vice-Rector for Development

Objective 2.4 Systematic support for young researchers

Activities planned for 2024

Systematic support for the creation and retention of jobs for young researchers, university postdoctoral positions

- Continued development and support of a system of university postdoctoral positions to attract young researchers from outside USB.
- Some of the faculties traditionally launch internal grant competitions, as USB does as a whole.

Development of doctoral studies

- USB will host a University-wide conference for doctoral students.
- The USB in cooperation with the faculties conducts seminars for trainers in order to promote the quality of training work.
- USB in collaboration with faculties run seminars for PhD students across USB on topics enabling the development of general skills applicable to academic and non-academic careers.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Science, Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation

Objective 2.5 Technology (knowledge) transfer

Activities planned for 2024

Systemic support for collaboration with practice and development of application potential at USB

- Functional, professional, and systemic support for the administration of intellectual property protection, the entire commercialisation process and cooperation with practice will continue to be provided by the Technology Transfer Office (TTO).
- The USB will continue to develop competencies in the field of IP protection, both through individual training of TTO employees, who will then spread awareness of IP protection among scientists and researchers, and through the course 'IP Protection', sponsored by the TTO and available to all master's and PhD students. In addition, the newly published company establishment study support materials developed for this course in the framework of the Czech-Norwegian cooperation in 2023 will be implemented.
- Rector's ordinances related to the whole area of intellectual property, commercialization, and knowledge transfer (with faculty involvement) will continue to be implemented and applied.
- The TTO will continue to be active in creating a regional, national and international network of innovation players.
- The TTO will continue to develop systemic support for the promotion of S&R results and their PR into practice through its own website (further development), social networks, databases of the national Transfera.cz platform and other foreign databases (e.g. IPI Singapore, HKTDC, DEIP) and also through new portals (e.g. Busyman portal and by submitting to various national and international competitions for which the results are suitable).
- The TTO will support and develop Proof-of-concept (PoC) activities through funding from the TA CR SIGMA programme (if available) or Czechlnvest or other providers for the development of PoC activities.
- The TTO will continue to support and develop the establishment of spin-off companies for appropriate S&R results at USB and monitor the development and actively support existing spin-off companies with a USB stake.
- The TTO will continue to develop the in-house IP protection monitoring software with additional modules added.
- The TTO will strive to obtain additional financial resources for its development, as well as to support other related PoC activities for scientists and researchers, development of the knowledge transfer area, active cooperation with application practice, investors and other entities and networking with regional, national and international innovation partners.

Responsibility Rector, Vice-Rector for Science, Vice-Rector for Development

Expected sources of funding

- Operational Programmes of the CR for the period 2014—2020, European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Transnational and International Cooperation Programmes
- Operational programmes of the CR 2021—2027, Cross-border cooperation programmes, Transnational and international cooperation programmes
- Support programme for the strategic management of universities for 2022– 2025
- Development support programme in the field of higher education
- Own resources
- Institutional (long-term conceptual development of research organisations) and earmarked funds (CSF, TA CR, MEYS, MA, other agencies); systemic support (e.g. large research infrastructures)
- Foreign funds
- Horizon 2020 (ongoing programme) and the new Horizon EUROPE (FP9; EU research and innovation programme 2021–2027)
- Just Transition Fund, Invest EU, Support and Recovery Facility/National Recovery Plan 2020—2023; EC Community Programmes incl. Digital EU; Reacteu etc.
- Other additional sources (local government/city, regional, donations, foundations, etc.)
- Sources of the 'Integrated Territorial Investment of the České Budějovice Agglomeration' (ITI)



Internationalisation

Objective 3.1 Development of global competencies of students and staff

Activities planned for 2024

Support for language and intercultural training of USB students and staff

- The language skills of academic and non-academic staff will continue to be strengthened through LLL language courses for USB staff and language courses abroad, including online courses.
- Cooperation between the Goethe Centre USB and the departments or institutes of FED USB and FAR USB will be supported in the development of students' language competencies.
- Implementation of courses focused on multicultural preparation for USB students.
- A systematic offer of Czech language teaching for foreign students and staff will continue.

Developing international mobility of USB students and staff

- Continue the digitisation and implementation of Erasmus Without Paper and the introduction of the European Student Card on USB.
- Student stays abroad and internships will continue to be supported, as well as stays for students studying in double degree programmes at USB faculties. The financial support will be primarily provided by the Erasmus+ programme or allocated own financial resources from the SPSM and the scholarship fund of the USB faculties. Furthermore, from the upcoming OP JAK programme.
- Students going on mobility will be recognised for the courses (and credits) they have taken at the foreign university.
- Cooperation with partner universities outside the EU will continue within the framework of Erasmus+ KA 171 (International Credit Mobility).
- USB staff trips and visits of foreign professors to USB will be supported by the Erasmus+ programme, SPSM.
 For these purposes, USB will also use other financial sources such as OP RDE, Horizon 2020 and Horizon EUROPE projects.
- Increasing the number of foreign academic staff will be implemented by supporting the arrival of foreign post-docs and senior researchers at the USB from the funds of the OP RDE projects ('Development of USB-International Mobility' and 'Development of USB-International Mobility'.
- The continuation and development of the activities of the External Relations Service will be ensured in the context of the professionalisation of the services provided, specifically the activities of the Welcome Officer and the Go Abroad Officer.
- Administrative support will be set up for the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme, other mobility programmes and the work of the KreativEU consortium of European universities through the activities of a professional staff member.

Development of professional competencies of staff in the field of internationalisation

Developing the professional competencies of USB staff in 2024.

Responsibility

Vice-Rector for International Relations, Vice-Rector for Student Affairs

Objective 3.2 Internationalisation of USB degree programmes

Activities planned for 2024

Increasing the number and quality of degree programmes (DP) offered in foreign languages

• Support for new foreign-language degree programmes, especially in the form of foreign-language versions of existing degree programmes.

Increasing the number and quality of joint degree programmes in foreign languages

Enhancing the quality of double/joint degree programmes implemented jointly with European universities.

Internationalisation of degree programmes accredited in the Czech language

- Supporting the language skills of foreign USB students through the Czech language courses for foreigners.
- Systemic creation of courses taught in foreign languages for incoming students.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for International Relations, Vice-Rector for Student Affairs

Objective 3.3 Simplify the process of recognition of foreign education

Activities planned for 2024

Automatic recognition of results of studies abroad

• Creation of a methodological guideline on the recognition of studies abroad and its implementation at USB based on domestic legislative or methodological changes to the process of recognition of foreign education, including updating relevant provisions of the USB Study and Examination Regulations.

Responsibility

Vice-Rector for International Relations

Objective 3.4 Creating an international environment and promotion abroad

Activities planned for 2024

Development of international marketing

- Acquisition trips and online meetings will be conducted in 2024 to develop cooperation with foreign universities. Several university-wide cooperation agreements (Memorandum of Understanding) are planned to be concluded to support educational and research activities and student mobility.
- In 2024, multilingual documents or the necessary language versions of texts will continue to be created on the USB.
- The promotion of USB foreign language programmes offered to international applicants and students will be strengthened through online and offline presentations abroad.
- Cooperation with the European Region Danube-Vltava (ERDV) will continue to be supported and strengthened.
- Cooperation with the ESN USB Budweis student association will be developed and supported in the framework of international marketing.
- Cooperation with AIESEC will continue to be supported (use of AIESEC's offer of foreign internships and integration of their services into the managed internship system).
- Participation in international educational and student fairs and online events (webinars, social media).
- Cooperation with selected portals will continue to be developed (e.g. within the Study in the Czech Republic initiative).

Developing services for international students and workers

- Support for the activities of the European Student Network (ESN USB Budweis) at USB will continue under the auspices of the USB Welcome Officer.
- The cooperation with EURAXESS Czech Republic and the activities of the USB contact point will continue.
- The so-called USB buddy system will be supported.

Strengthening cooperation with foreign students and graduates

- The involvement of international students in USB activities and the promotion of USB abroad through international student ambassadors will be encouraged.
- The involvement of USB students going abroad in the international promotion of USB will be encouraged.

Responsibility

Vice-Rector for International Relations, Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs

Objective 3.5 Strategic management of internationalisation

Activities planned for 2024

- Cooperation with universities that are part of the Knowledge & Creativity European University (KreativEU) consortium will be developed.
- USB will develop further cooperation with selected EU and non-EU universities.
- Activities will be supported to increase the number of bilingual information systems within USB infrastructures, including the activities of a specialist staff member to coordinate translations and prepare foreign language materials.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for International Relations, Vice-Rector for Management and Public Relations, Vice-Rector for Development

Expected sources of funding

- Operational Programmes of the CR for the period 2014-2020, European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Transnational and International Cooperation Programmes
- Operational programmes of the CR 2021–2027, Cross-border cooperation programmes, Transnational and international cooperation programmes
- Support programme for the strategic management of universities for 2022– 2025
- Own resources
- Institutional (long-term conceptual development of research organizations) and special-purpose funds (CSF, TA CR, MEYS, MA, other Agencies)
- Horizon 2020 (ongoing) and the new Horizon EUROPE (FP9; EU research and innovation programme 2021–2027)
- Just Transition Fund, Invest EU, Support and Recovery Facility / National Recovery Plan 2020–2023; EC Community Programmes incl. Digital EU; Reacteu etc.
- Other additional sources (local government funds /city, region, donations, foundations, etc.)
- Sources of 'Integrated Territorial Investments of the České Budějovice Agglomeration' (ITI)

Openness

Objective 4.1 Marketing

Activities planned for 2024

Promoting the reputation of the University

- In 2024, the University will implement marketing promotional activities resulting from the updated Marketing Strategy Action Plan, which was developed and will be approved at the end of 2023, with the aim of building the USB brand as a modern provider of quality education and increasing brand awareness. It includes a new visual advertising campaign for applicants as well as a visual unification of the remaining materials for the promotion of studies at USB, which the University used for the first time in 2023. In 2024, the implementation of the set communication strategies and their updates will continue, especially the unification of the visual and content presentation of the remaining components of the university on the website or the update and visual change of the materials for the promotion of studies at USB.
- The University will continue its cooperation with PSch, SSChs and HVS through the promotion of studies at schools, planning events with the support of USB, the implementation of the 'Day with the University' and 'Open Day. Attention will be paid to maintaining a high standard of quality in the professional activities provided to schools (e.g. activities of the MEVPIS centre, lectures and seminars, personal visits of experts in teaching in schools, children's or junior universities).
- To improve the promotion of the University, the collaboration between the Marketing Department and the USB Technology Transfer Office will continue to be developed in 2024 with the aim of expanding the USB B2B offering in the coming years.
- The University will continue to maintain and develop mutual cooperation with key partners with influence on the development of education, such as the City of České Budějovice, the Regional Office of the South Bohemian Region, local governments, ministries, secondary schools, HVS, HEI, the Chamber of Commerce, JAIP, JVTP, LAG Associations, Institute of Certification of Accountants CR, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, etc.
- The use of social networking will continue to be developed in 2024, with a focus on building a profile on the professional network LinkedIn and the use of social network X.
- Furthermore, cooperation with student associations (e.g. the Student Union of the University of South Bohemia, ESN USB Budweis, etc.) will be expanded. In addition to co-organizing traditional and new social events for USB students and the general public, the new web portal studentskyzivot.cz, which was created with the support of USB by the Student Union of the University of South Bohemia, will be developed.
- The University will continue to develop cooperation within the framework of communication platforms with employers in order to support the employability of University graduates (cooperation within projects, student professional activities, summer schools, involvement of experts from the sphere of application in LLL programmes, assessment centre for students with CSOB, shadowing of managers, internships, EURES European Jobday and professional events).
- Courses on virtual reality will continue to be organised so that the University can provide support to other entities in the region in this modern field.

Internal communication as a tool for strengthening a positive attitude towards USB

• At the same time, traditional and new informal social events for USB employees will be organized this year, such as the USB Representative Ball, the Opening of the Academic Year, the Advent Concert, etc.

Responsibility Rector, Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs

Objective 4.2 Public Relations

Activities planned for 2024

Development of communication with the public

- The University will continue to refine its communication with the public and the environment, e.g. through a unified USB website, the LLL web portal, regular press releases, regular publication of articles on science and research on the USB at www.sciencezoom.cz or regular publication of the University's journals.
- Long-term cooperation with regional and national media through the USB Marketing Office will continue.

Open Science

- The USB Publishing House will publish prestigious scientific monographs, as well as texts intended for teaching, and this activity will co-create awareness of the results of research work at the USB among the professional and lay public. The University will continue its publishing activities through specialised web portals (e.g. www.sciencezoom.cz; elearning.jcu.cz; eknihovna.jcu.cz; czv.jcu.cz; www.jctt.cz).
- In 2024, popularization events will be organized, such as the European-wide Researchers' Night, Academic Half Hours popularization lectures for the public, Day with the University, etc.

Developing communication with alumni

- The University will continue to build a University-wide coordination platform for communication with its own alumni through regular updates of the alumni and employer database, questionnaire surveys, roundtables and, above all, targeted communication and presentations. The University-wide alumni club will continue to use the alumni newsletters, the web platform for alumni needs will be kept up-to-date in 2024 and its connection to the University's information systems will be further optimised.
- For Alumni Club members, discounts on literature, promotional items and now also on lifelong learning courses will be provided through business centre.
- In addition, alumni club members will be provided with alumni office system licenses and a university email account upon registration in the IDM system.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs

Objective 4.3 Fundraising

Activities planned for 2024

Improving the fundraising concept

- The University will continue to maintain and develop cooperation with partners in this area, such as Pivovar Samson, s.r.o. or EG.D, a.s. At the same time, the University will proactively approach the expansion of the network of partners by other important commercial entities, e.g. by renting advertising space in the media at its disposal, within the framework of organized social events, etc.
- The cooperation with the Student Union of the University of South Bohemia will be maintained, with which the University regularly applies for financial support from the Statutory City of České Budějovice to organise social events for the general public. The City of České Budějovice, together with the South Bohemian Region, will also contribute financially to the operation of the University Goethe Centre in 2024.
- In 2024, the USB together with the Statutory City of České Budějovice will also be involved in the preparation of activities under the newly acquired title of 'European Capital of Culture 2028'.

Responsibility Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs

Objective 4.4 Social responsibility

Activities planned for 2024

Strengthening USB's corporate social responsibility activities

- The University will continue to support new technologies in the field of building management (intelligent lighting control responding to the intensity of daylight, building shading, current room usage, etc.). Furthermore, the measurement and control system will be developed to achieve the highest possible energy efficiency of USB buildings.
- In 2024, activities supporting sustainable development, energy self-sufficiency with an emphasis on energy saving, environmental protection, etc. will continue to be implemented (smart investments photovoltaic systems on the USB Campus, waste management, involvement in national projects focusing on this issue, a project to develop the green environment of the USB Campus, etc.)
- Establishment of a strategy and strategic partnership for sustainable development and green transformation
- Degree programmes, courses and an LLL course focusing on green transformation will be supported.
- Traditionally, public discussions on society-wide topics will be encouraged and co-organised.
- Sport and an active approach to life will be promoted, for example, the Children and Youth Olympics in the South Bohemia Region.
- The University will continue to offer the capacity of its virtual reality classroom to interested high school students and the general public.
- Furthermore, the creation of optimal conditions for the employment of disadvantaged citizens will be promoted, including the provision of employment opportunities.
- Several faculties will further develop courses focused on Industry 4.0 and the possibilities of using artificial intelligence.

Responsibility

Rector, Vice-Rector for Development, Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs, Bursar

Expected sources of funding

- Operational Programmes of the CR for the period 2014—2020, European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Transnational and International Cooperation Programmes
- Operational programmes of the CR 2021—2027, Cross-border cooperation programmes, Transnational and international cooperation programmes
- Support programme for the strategic management of universities for 2022– 2025
- Development support programme in the field of higher education
- Institutional and earmarked funds, system support
- Foreign funds
- Horizon 2020 (ongoing) and the new Horizon EUROPE (FP9; EU research and innovation programme 2021—2027)
- Just Transition Fund, Invest EU, Support and Recovery Facility / National Recovery Plan 2020—2023; EC Community Programmes incl. Digital EU; Reacted et al.
- Other additional sources (local government funds /city, region, donations, foundations, etc.)
- Sources of the 'Integrated Territorial Investment of the České Budějovice Agglomeration' (ITI)

Management

Objective 5.1 Transforming the environment and setting up processes in relation to the strategic management of the institution

Activities planned for 2024

Financial stability

- USB will continue to develop the current methodology for the allocation of the institutional part of the budget through the implementation of the performance and quality monitoring methodology, S&R evaluation, etc. The methodology of distribution of the institutional part of the funds set for 2023 and 2024 will be applied in relation to the methodology of S&R assessment in the HEI segment and in relation to the development of strategic instruments shaping S&R (M17+, institutional accreditation, quality assessment, infrastructure assessment, grants, etc.).
- Effective use of financial instruments of development potential (e.g. EU SF, programme funding, strategic management support programme, higher education development programme, foreign grants and projects, etc.).
- Systemic use and updating of the Strategic Priorities Fund, the Strategic Management Support Programme as a long-term and conceptual tool for the development of the USB, including support for interdisciplinary cooperation and joint projects of multiple components.
- Creation and setup of a USB fund concept aimed at supporting curriculum innovation, which will contribute in an administratively low-cost way to the modernization of teaching, improvement of support services and the implementation of initiatives originating from students or individual staff.
- Creation of analyses and subsequent conditions for the use of innovative technologies in the management system, strategic planning and effective management of activities in the field of financing and management (data-based decision-making, development of software for property management, prediction of student success).
- Establishing rules for the use of reserves and management of central strategic instruments (Strategic Priorities Fund, etc.) and continued centralisation and digitisation of USB management and administration activities
- Development of the USB e-commerce hub to include other commodities including intangibles (e.g. LLL courses).
- Further centralisation of the University's management and administration activities, especially in the area of energy management, e.g. development of a metering and control system on the USB campus, efficient object passport, etc.
- Integration of e-courses into the USB e-business centre. Conferences will be implemented on the platform of the content management system.
- Evaluation and revision, or creation of internal processes and tools targeting e.g. the following areas: ethics of scientific work, plagiarism, cyber security, etc.

Automation/digitisation of activities and operational agendas

- There will be an intensive use of the electronic organisational structure introduced in 2022 and an extension of the use of this tool for other processes.
- The computerisation of travel orders will be ensured in connection with the electronic organisational structure.
- The internal regulations in terms of USB crisis management will be updated.
- Economic electronic systems and student information systems will be updated.
- The University will actively develop cooperation with South Bohemian innovation companies.
- The digitization of the accreditation process and its integration with the USB intranet will continue.
- In 2024, the new IS of the USB file service will be substantially implemented.
- In 2024, a new centralised USB helpdesk will be developed to include additional services.

Data-driven decision making

- The development of management reporting and data warehousing will continue to be supported, especially project activities in relation to the project registration system and in the field of science and research.
- Existing software (e.g. M&R, ESS, EPS, Revisio, AMI, etc.) will be used and upgraded to expand the functionality and efficiency of building management with an emphasis on energy savings.

Quality system

• The system of tools for monitoring and quality assurance will continue to be developed (USB IEB activities, greater involvement of the USB Academic Senate and the USB Board of Trustees in the preparation and discussion of USB strategic management).

- Implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation panels (including IEP M17+), further development of the activities of the international councils at USB, and development of foreign language documentation at USB will continue.
- Preparation of internal mechanisms for the distribution of funds supporting priority development areas.

Responsibility Rector, Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs, Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation, Bursar

Objective 5.2 Human resources

Activities planned for 2024

Incentive system

- An attractive environment will be created for existing and potential USB employees (stabilisation and incentive
 programmes, salary conditions, objective and transparent staff evaluation, staff care, gender policy, benefits,
 etc.), facilitating the transition from practice to academic careers.
- The offer of benefits will be stabilised, including measures to possibly support its development.
- A coherent internal system for staff development will be prepared in connection with the development of LLL.

Personnel policy

- The internal regulations and measures will be continuously updated in connection with the amendment of legislation.
- In 2024, the wage rates in the USB Wage Regulations will be updated and implemented. Evaluation of the functionality of the USB Career Code (especially its implementation by faculties) and evaluation of suggestions from the USB International Council will continue.
- Implementation of the HR Award Action Plan and the USB Gender Equality Plan.

Responsibility Rector, Vice-Rector for Internal Evaluation, Bursar

Objective 5.3 Development and renewal of infrastructure

Activities planned for 2024

Technological development and renewal of IT, ICT, etc.

- Further development of electronic support for teaching, including e.g. increasing the efficiency of online education administration by linking IS Verso LLL and LMS Moodle, development of the USB eLibrary (expansion of electronic study materials).
- Central staff support for e-learning systems will be expanded.
- Continuous renewal of outdated IT equipment to support distance learning and study, especially combined forms of study, lifelong learning, and staff development.
- Development of a USB computing cluster that was built in 2022.
- Development of a virtualization cluster with emphasis on high availability and staff substitutability.
- The construction of the USB backup data centre in the FAT building will continue.
- Development of a USB-based identity management system (IDM) in connection with the introduction of an electronic organisational structure.
- Further technological development of the USB e-commerce centre.
- The USB website and intranet will be expanded implementation of other remits (scientific councils, senates, etc.)
- Development of a USB editorial system for electronic journals, extension with a conference module.
- Personnel and software support for the implementation of measures arising from the obligations under the Cyber Security Act. Implementation of regular training and penetration tests.
- Extension of electronic applications in IS/STAG, electronic confirmation of studies.
- Continued connection to the USB Single Digital Gateway (SDG).
- Revision of the connection of IS STAG to the university repository of DSpace outputs, further development of the connection between IS STAG and EWP.
- Stabilization and development of IT services staffing.
- Further development of computer science as a degree programme in cooperation with relevant faculties.

Implementation of the investment strategy

- Developing, building and upgrading educational and research facilities in line with the strategic development of the USB and the individual USB units.
- Implementation of investment actions in accordance with the IP, especially the renovation of the USB Aula, finalisation of the project for the construction of the FAT USB Chemistry Pavilion, preparatory work for the renovation of the Mlýnská stoka building, preparatory work for the renovation of the FED USB Stadium and the start of the renovation of the FED USB buildings, preparation for the construction of the Vltava IV ZSF USB building, gradual revitalisation of the USB campus, renovation of the Na Zlaté stoce 1619 building, renovation of the O building, etc.
- Material and technical renewal of equipment at individual USB units will be implemented, including the acquisition of machinery and instrumentation.
- Ongoing renovation and renovation of properties in accordance with current needs and barrier-free operation.
- Periodic evaluations of energy optimisation of operations will be carried out through a building management system linked to energy management ('green university').
- Promoting the concept of a sustainable university (optimization of rainwater management, waste management, energy self-sufficiency, campus revitalization, etc.)
- Purchase of equipment (including software) for strategic management of the organisation.

Responsibility Rector, Vice-Rector for Internal Management and Public Affairs, Vice-Rector for Student Affairs, Bursar

Expected sources of funding

- Operational Programmes of the CR for the period 2014—2020, European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Transnational and International Cooperation Programmes
- Operational programmes of the CR 2021—2027, Cross-border cooperation programmes, Transnational and international cooperation programmes
- Horizon 2020 (ongoing) and the new Horizon EUROPE (FP9; EU research and innovation programme 2021—2027)
- Just Transition Fund, Invest EU, Support and Recovery Facility / National Recovery Plan 2020—2023; EC Community Programmes incl. Digital EU; Reacteu etc.

- Support programme for the strategic management of universities for 2022– 2025
- Development support programme in the field of higher education
- MEYS programme funding
- Own resources
- Institutional and earmarked funds, system support
- Foreign funds
- Other additional sources (local government funds /city, region, donations, foundations, etc.)
- Sources of the 'Integrated Territorial Investment of the České Budějovice Agglomeration' (ITI)

Abbreviations & Acronyms

AIESEC Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales

AMI Assets Management Information

B2B Business to Business

CAS Czech Academy of Sciences

CENAKVA South Bohemian Research Centre of Aquaculture and Biodiversity of Hydrocenoses

CIT Centre of Information Technologies

CR Czech Republic

CSF Czech Science Foundation
DDP Doctoral degree programme
EC European Commission

EFRD European Fund for Regional Development

ERDV European region Danube-Vltava

ESF European Social Fund

ESS Electronic security systems

EU European Union

EURES European Employment Services

EWP Erasmus Without Paper

FAR Faculty of Arts

FAT Faculty of Agriculture and Technology

FED Faculty of Education

FFPW Faculty of Fisheries and Protection of Waters

FHSS Faculty of Health and Social Sciences

FSC Faculty of Science

FTTS Further training of teaching staff
HEI Higher education institution

HKTDC Hong Kong Trade Development Council

HR Human Resources

HRS4R Human Resources Strategy For Researchers

HVS Higher vocational school

IP Investment Plan

ICT Information and communication technologies

IDM Identity Management
IEB Internal Evaluation Board
IEP International Evaluation Panel

IPSP Implementation Plan of the Strategic Plan

IS Information system

ITI Integrated territorial investments

JAIP South Bohemian Agency for the Support for Innovative Entrepreneurship

JVTP South Bohemian Science and Technology Park

KA Key activity

LAG Local action group

LCDRO Long-term conceptual development of a research organisation

LLL Lifelong learning

LMS Learning Management System

M17+ Methodology for the evaluation of research organisations and programmes of targeted support for research,

development and innovation

MA Ministry of Agriculture

MEYS Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

MEVPIS International Environmental Education, Advisory and Information Centre for Water Protection Vodňany

MSCA-IF Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – Individual Fellowships

M&R Measuring and regulation

NAB National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education

OP JAK Operational programme Jan Amos Komenský

OP RDE Operational programme Research, Development and Education
OP RDI Operational programme Research and Development for Innovations

PoC Proof of concept
PR Public relations
PSch Primary school

SDG Single Digital Gateway

SF Structural Fund

SPSM Support programme for the strategic management of higher education institutions

S&R Science and researchSSch Secondary school

STAG Information system of the student affairs remit

SW Software

TA CR Technology Agency of the Czech Republic

TTO Technology Transfer Office

UN United Nations

USB University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice

Annexe 1: Interim report on the use of SPSM funds in 2023

As of 31 August 2023, the monitoring of the implementation of the SPSM activities in 2023 was carried out by means of a questionnaire survey. We expect the fulfilment of the set objectives and indicators in 2023.

Table: overview of the SPSM funds disbursement as of 20.9.2023, expected SPSM funds allocation for 2024.

PRIORITY OBJECTIVE SZ2021+	Allocation of funds for 2023 (rounded in thousands of CZK)	Allocation for 2023 (%)	Utilisation of appropriations as of 20.9.2023 (rounded in thousands of CZK)	Utilisation as at 20.9.2023 (%)	Estimated allocation of funds for 2024 (rounded in thousands of CZK)	Forecast allocation for 2024 (%)
1. Develop competences directly relevant to life and practice in the 21st century	5 694	14.9	1 307	3.4	4 662	12.2
2. Improve the availability and relevance of flexible forms of education	8 597	22.5	4 242	11.1	9 059	23.7
3. Increase the efficiency and quality of doctoral studies	730	1.9	243	0.6	1 725	4.5
5. Build capacity for strategic management of higher education	3 994	10.5	1 625	4.3	4 731	12.4
6. Reduce the administrative burden on university staff so that they can fully devote themselves to their mission	6 311	16.5	4 992	13.1	6 997	18.3
Internationalisation of universities	8 242	21.6	4 971	13.0	7 240	19
Other priority objectives	4 613	12.1	3 515	9.2	3 766	9.9
Total	38 180	100	20 895	54.7	38 180	100
Share of investment expenditure in total allocation	9 261	24.3	4 459	11.7	6 669	17.5
Share of internal competition in the total allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0

As of 20.9.2023, orders/allocations of funds for activities in the total amount of CZK 3 120 196 are registered within the SPSM.

Detailed evaluation of individual measures, including their description and the fulfilment of indicators will be prepared according to the MEYS guidelines in the Report on the achievement of the objectives of the strategic plan of the university and the use of funds from the Support programme for the strategic management for the year 2023.



Implementation Plan of the Strategic Plan of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice for the year 2024:

- discussed by the Scientific Council of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice on 11 October 2023
- approved by the Academic Senate of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice on 24th October 2023
- 3) approved by the Board of Trustees of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice on 1 November 2023

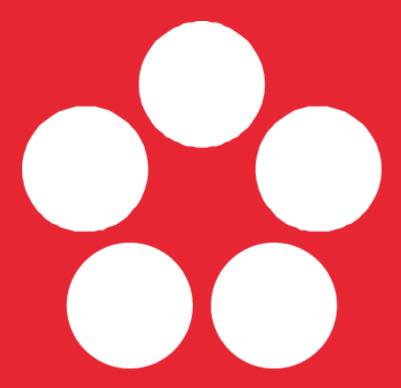
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