

Nordic Five Tech alliance calls for strengthening the support to Nordic collaboration across education, research and innovation

The Nordic Five Tech alliance of technical universities calls for support to strengthen the collaboration between the Nordic countries across education, research and innovation. The alliance is launching a new strategy that has the potential to enhance and underpin Vision 2030 of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

With Vision 2030, the Nordic Council of Ministers aims for the Nordic region to become the most sustainable and integrated region in the world. Education, innovation and research are mentioned as the pillars of future development together with a green and innovative economy that can create jobs and secure the competitiveness of the Nordic region. The vision also highlights the need to find solutions to such imminent threats as climate change, pollution and threats against biodiversity.

These goals can only be achieved if measures are taken to ensure viable tools and mechanisms to support, develop and innovate collaboration between the Nordic countries.

Sustainability is the permeating theme and at the core of the new Nordic Five Tech alliance Strategy 2021-2025. Since 2006, the alliance has expanded the collaboration within education, research and innovation to the benefit of the Nordic region and stakeholders. For example, the N5T universities have benefited from knowledge sharing and collaboration on research funding, research infrastructure and industry collaboration. We have developed a common Nordic campus that has given students an opportunity to use the benefits and complementary strengths of each university. Other Nordic universities and research institutions have benefited from collaborating with N5T universities in research applications including the Stockholm trio¹, SINTEF in Norway and VTT in Finland. The last 14 years have given us valuable insights that will be put into use in the implementation of the new strategy.

The N5T alliance sees many opportunities for the new strategy to both enhance and underpin Vision 2030 of the Nordic Council of Ministers. With the strategy, N5T aims to strengthen research support related to Nordic and European funding opportunities across the alliance and increase the position and competitiveness of N5T research infrastructure internationally. We want to initiate the development of a Nordic model to achieve sustainable communities through collaboration with municipalities as living labs, create a strong Nordic platform for AI research and strengthen the focus on life-long learning that will benefit the Nordic region as a whole.

Nordic Five Tech

Nordic Five Tech (N5T) is a strategic alliance of the five leading technical universities in Denmark (DTU), Finland (Aalto), Norway (NTNU) and Sweden (KTH and Chalmers). The alliance was established in 2006 with the aim to utilize their shared and complementary strengths and creating synergies within education, research and innovation across the Nordic region. It is the only alliance of technical universities in the Nordic region.

Common Nordic values constitute the foundation of N5T, including openness, mutual trust, conviction of people's equal value, a focus on creativity and innovation and respect for nature and the environment.

¹ The Stockholm trio: KTH, Karolinska and Stockholm University

A need for new ways of collaborating to ensure a strong Nordic profile and competitiveness

We currently see a tendency where the size and ambition of EU funding programmes and consortia are outperforming Nordic efforts across education, research and innovation. As an example, all N5T partner universities are part of different European University Network consortia as each consortia must consist of universities from different parts of Europe.² Moreover, the number of co-publications between the different universities, normally used as an indicator of links between researchers, disciplines, institutions and countries, have decreased in recent years, because of a lack of funding possibilities supporting researchers working across borders in a specific European region. In fact, EU funding programmes advocate for a European dimension that can be difficult to achieve when collaborating in the Nordic region. These developments call for both the renewal of the way we approach collaboration and increased support to the Nordic universities if we want to ensure and develop the strong profile and competitiveness of the Nordic region.

With the experience and focus on sustainability, the N5T alliance can be a strong partner for the Nordic Council of Ministers in the development of the Nordic region and the achievement of Vision 2030. The N5T leadership would like to meet with representatives from the Nordic Council of Ministers to discuss and exchange ideas for the implementation of Vision 2030 and how the Council can support and prioritize Nordic University collaboration.

Endorsed by the Nordic Five Tech University Presidents

Ilkka Niemelä, President, Aalto University, Finland

Stefan Bengtsson, President and CEO, Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden

Anders Overgaard Bjarklev, President, Technical University of Denmark

Sigbritt Karlsson, President, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden

Anne Borg, Rector, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

² KTH and Aalto are part of the University Network for Innovation, Technology and Engineering, Chalmers and NTNU are part of the European Universities of Technology Alliance and DTU is part of the EuroTeq Engineering University.

NORDIC FIVE TECH

CHALMERS



NTNU
Aalto University