

## Education and Research Strategy for Konstfack 2024-2026

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Approved by the Board of Governors 16 May 2024.

### 1.1 Introduction

Konstfack is a dynamic university and cultural institution for education and research within arts, crafts, design, visual communication and educational sciences. As a university, Konstfack safeguards both academic and artistic freedom. Our work is characterised by practical investigation of materiality and imaginative ability exploring traditions, boundary-breaking and new alternatives to what already exists.

Konstfack has a place in the world and the world has a place at Konstfack. We influence and interact with others in various spaces, situations and contexts. Starting from a fine and applied arts basis, we create stories, sensory experiences, artefacts, critical proposals, interventions, exploration and problematisation of materiality, relationships and possible futures. Art stirs up emotions, challenges and contributes to the diversity of expressions and perspectives that are central to democracy, a vigorous society and sustainable development. With education and research grounded in these strengths and capabilities we want to create a good environment for knowledge development and together work in a targeted way with external collaborations and the local and global society surrounding us.

The education and research strategy establishes five overall goals, concretised through a number of, partly overlapping, sub-goals. The strategy provides a common basis for our operations over the coming three years and will be further developed through the operational plan and action plans and in working groups and bodies. In connection with the Konstfack Development Day and the practical implementation of the annual operational plan in the course of the autumn, the strategy will be reviewed and adjusted if needed.

### 1.2 Overall goals

- A strengthened research environment
- Increased internal collaboration and knowledge sharing
- Strengthened strategic cooperation with external partners and surrounding society
- Increased internationalisation
- Strengthened focus on ecologic, social and economic sustainability and increased knowledge creation within digital development on the basis of our subjects

### **1.3 A strengthened research environment**

Konstfack wants to be a stimulating and relevant environment for researchers working on an artistic and scientific basis, as well as a place that facilitates cross-disciplinary initiatives. Education and research are both practical in nature and our ambition is to have an active and continual exchange between research, education and external partners to the benefit of teachers, students and surrounding society. Konstfack already provides for doctoral students within a framework of collaboration with other universities. We are now beginning a new phase, starting in autumn 2024, with our own third-cycle studies in artistic practice in visual, applied and spatial arts leading to a Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Artistic Practice in Visual, Applied and Spatial Arts. We need to develop our basic research and the artistic research field to become a leading actor. As a part of this, Konstfack will use active dialogue to work for greater understanding of the meaning of artistic research.

Defined sub-goals:

- Increase research at Konstfack and strengthen basic research
- Promote and actively support mutual links between research and education
- Develop a research infrastructure and work to establish Konstfack's workshops as key infrastructure
- Work together to increase external research grants to facilitate a greater proportion of active researchers
- With increased grant funding, give priority to the research element of teachers' time so as to create better opportunities for research, collaboration, funding application and raising the quality of core activities
- Strengthen collaboration between artistic and scientific research at Konstfack
- Develop and strengthen thematic research platforms that are relevant to our subjects and programmes
- Develop collaboration with external research groups, actors and environments, both nationally and internationally
- Work strategically on recruitment and employment conditions for long-term development of our research environment

### **1.4 Increased internal collaboration and knowledge sharing**

In order to develop a stimulating knowledge environment, where different practices and perspectives can meet and be tested, Konstfack wants to work to increase the promotion of internal exchange and collaboration. Collective learning, dialogue, debate, unexpected encounters and exchanges create opportunities for broadening and/or specialisation as well as an understanding of different methods, processes and discourses within education and research.

Defined sub-goals:

- Create forums and structures for increased collaboration and knowledge sharing between departments, programmes and divisions at Konstfack
- Identify themes that are relevant to several programmes at Konstfack with the potential to develop our subjects and share and increase our competence level to the benefit of teachers and students
- Increase teaching collaboration between programmes and departments
- Create clarity around the function and possibilities of the general workshops

### **1.5 Strengthened strategic cooperation with external partners and surrounding society**

Konstfack has a well-established tradition of collaboration with organisations, businesses, institutions, various professions, academic partners and social groupings. We aim to strengthen our subjects long term, contribute a plurality of expressions and ideas, carry out knowledge development together with others, critically and with empathy influence, make our mark and continue to offer education at the highest level as well as research that is relevant and to the point.

Defined sub-goals:

- Identify priority collaborations and long-term partnerships that strengthen the development of education and research at Konstfack
- Create the conditions for synergies between education, research and different programmes at Konstfack with a focus on external collaboration
- Work on long-term and forward-looking development of teaching and research through collaboration with placement schools and practice-related research
- Work for diversity in the choice of different local, international, geographical and social contexts
- Work to increase the number of students from under-represented groups\* at Konstfack through collaboration connected to courses and other activities, communication and follow-up of various interventions
- Work structurally to create well-functioning processes and procedures to facilitate external collaboration within education and research
- Work to establish innovation offices for artistic practices and to take the products of researchers and students further, influence and disseminate knowledge

\*According to the definition in the action plan for broader recruitment after statistical analysis.

### **1.6 Increased internationalisation**

Konstfack's students and teachers are active in and seek to influence the world in which we live. We investigate history, develop and preserve traditional crafts at the same time as engaging with new techniques, technologies and methods. We contribute a transformative power able to critically and creatively formulate, shape and propose future solutions and possibilities. We cherish pluralism and diversity to secure our relevance as a cultural and knowledge-based institution. A combination of openness, critical thinking, empathy, national self-awareness, international exchange and experiences help create a rich knowledge environment.

Defined sub-goals:

- Develop an international knowledge environment anchored regionally as well as nationally
- Survey and prioritise international partnerships with knowledge environments that complement and enrich Konstfack's existing strengths within education and research
- Create increased funding opportunities enabling non-European students to study at Konstfack
- Work to preserve existing international competence and attract additional international teachers and researchers to Konstfack

- Increase awareness of Konstfack's activities internationally and nationally

### **1.7 Strengthened focus on ecologic, social and economic sustainability and increased knowledge creation within digital development based on our subjects**

Based on our subjects and practice, Konstfack addresses two major societal challenges: the climate crisis and increased digitalisation. Individually and together, these offer opportunity as well as risk, while sometimes standing in opposition to each other. They create a need for changed attitudes, ideas and ethical considerations both at the level of society and for Konstfack's professions. Konstfack's sustainability definition is based on the UN's climate goals (SDG) and acknowledges planetary boundaries (Stockholm Resilience Centre). Sustainability is an established basic backbone within some of Konstfack's existing education programmes and research projects, while others use sustainability aspects as supplementary perspectives affecting the concept, methods or production.

The overall term "digitalisation" refers to emergent technologies and systems, their consequences, societal changes already taking place, potentially taking place or facilitated through these. We want to develop a greater understanding of how we can affect, influence and make use of digitalisation in our artistic practices and how this is linked to education and research.

Defined sub-goals:

- Identify the different ways in which various aspects of sustainable development may, in a relevant manner, be integrated with Konstfack's educational programmes
- Support initiatives linked to education and research that address shared sustainability goals and undertakings
- Create internal synergies between existing activities with a focus on sustainability and work to enable Konstfack's knowledge to contribute as a transformative power in collaboration with the surrounding society
- Identify how increased digitalisation and artificial intelligence may become influential and used in the fields where Konstfack provides education
- Support competence-enhancing initiatives and exploration within digital development at Konstfack in relation to our subjects, our professions and the educational programmes

