

Aalto attracts

17.6.2009

Aalto University, which will start in the autumn of 2009, is looking to put itself both on the world map and at the top of the international tree. The new university will function in areas where Finland is strong and which are important in global competition.

Aalto University is a combination of Helsinki University of Technology, Helsinki School of Economics and the University of Art and Design Helsinki. The university will emphasize the creation of new expertise, close cooperation with business life, wide-scale national and international networking and the effort to reach the top of the international tree.

"The venture is an important part of the development of Finnish universities towards a more competitive direction internationally. Because our language is so different, Finland has not been one of the most appealing countries in students' eyes. Profiling and more teaching in English will give us better access to the world map," says **Tuula Teeri**, the first Rector of Aalto University.

The target of being one of the world's leading universities has been set for 2020. The high standard will be seen in what universities will be cooperating with Aalto University and how the new university will be rated by the international science and art communities.

Ideas and innovations

The aim of Aalto University is to raise the quality of teaching and research and to improve interdisciplinary cooperation. The additional resources will mean more teachers and improved preconditions for long-term basic research.

"By creating an interdisciplinary system we will be creating the conditions for generating new ideas. Those involved in the cooperation will include the students, teachers, researcher as well as business life and society," Teeri stresses.

Aalto University will be focusing on entrepreneurship training and the development of innovation systems. The new university's know-how will be found at the crossroads of global challenges and the strengths and core competence of Finnish society.

"A cross-border science community will create the prerequisites for exploiting new, commercially interesting ideas, which as time goes by will help in creating new jobs."

Change is necessary

The new university has met its fair share of criticism. There have been appeals and demonstrations demanding that the University of Art and Design withdraws from the venture. Opponents fear for the independence of the instruction and artistic freedom.

"Changes always cause opposition. Our task is to be able to show quickly that change is necessary. On no account is the aim to restrict freedom of research or artistic expression, but to create better preconditions for the operations," Teeri emphasizes.

"I believe that the change that is taking place in our university world is right. If implemented successfully, it will lift Finland to the top of the world as a country with a high level of expertise."



"Aalto University will build up Finland's competitiveness with a high-level research and teaching," says Rector Tuula Teeri.

RELATED LINKS:

>> www.aaltoyliopisto.info