

# **WORK PROGRAM FOR THE CANDIDACY OF THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRIMORSKA**

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## **INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>**

The Faculty of Humanities at the University of Primorska is a higher education hub where thoughts and practices about people, society and culture from the humanities, social sciences and arts are intertwined through teaching and research activities.

At the end of the 20th century, with the intensive development of society towards technological progress and the emergence of the acronym SMET<sup>2</sup>, later changed to STEM, a period began in which the direction of education was dictated by industry and the need for human resources. Instead of parallel development and mutual support, other areas were pushed aside and too often considered less important. The result has been a decline in interest in the humanities, social sciences or the arts enrolment. At this time, our Faculty entered the academic sphere as a new, ambitious and development-oriented institution.

Society soon perceived the shortcomings of the new approaches and realised that they could not and could not offer answers to all modern challenges. It, therefore, upgraded the STEM concept to STEAM to enhance creativity and innovation. The need to strengthen literacy and critical thinking dictated an upgrade in reading and writing content, and STREAM was designed. With each upgrade of the initial technological concept, it became more apparent that today's society needs a multifaceted education in which humanities, arts and social sciences are indispensable. In response to technology-oriented concepts, the concept of SHAPE was developed, which placed the human being and their role in society at the centre. This concept corresponds to the current orientations of the Faculty of Humanities, which has contributed to the creation of skills to understand and address the complex challenges of contemporary society and to create the conditions for sustainable development.

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<sup>1</sup> In the text, I use the masculine form to express all genders. This form is used neutrally and applies equally to females, males and non-binary gender.

Using the AI: for the Slovenian text I used Vejice 1.0 and Sopomenke 2.0; I corrected my own English translation with Grammarly; I did the full Italian translation with DeepL.

<sup>2</sup> SMET (Science, Mathematics, Engineering, Technology). STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics). STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics). METALS (Mathematics, Engineering, Technology, Arts, Literacy, Science). SHAPE (Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts for People and the Economy).

But society is evolving and posing new challenges. Therefore, none of these concepts is sufficient on its own, and it is necessary to develop interdisciplinarity, which is crucial to realising the objectives of the Society 5.0 concept, where technological progress is used to create a sustainable, inclusive and smart society centred on human values. The Faculty of Humanities is, therefore, also at a turning point in its development and on the threshold of a period in which it will have to go beyond its current ways of thinking and acting and actively engage with its content in the contemporary academic sphere, where it can contribute by developing critical thinking within interdisciplinary collaboration, with the common goal of creating a better future centred on the human person.

Leading a faculty is demanding, and at such a crucial time, all the more challenging. I am therefore grateful to all my colleagues and students who have recognised in me the qualities needed to face the new challenges and have convinced me to run for the position of Dean of UP FHŠ.

I present the proposal for the work programme of the Faculty of Humanities of UP for the period 2025-2029 in the following, and I conclude with a personal presentation.

## **PROGRAMME**

The work programme I present is based on the values and mission of the Faculty of Humanities and the University of Primorska: responsibility and quality, freedom and openness, belonging, flexibility, and innovation. I have designed the programme based on the analysis of the faculty's self-evaluation and annual reports and following the UP Medium-Term Development Strategy (with the current version for 2021-2027 and the draft version for 2025-2030).

The programme reflects my vision of the future of the faculty and its characteristics and potentials through the prism of the contemporary world and society. While promoting good practices, academic excellence, interdisciplinary cooperation and innovative teaching and research approaches, it also envisages introducing changes to improve the functioning of the faculty at all levels and for all its members.

Through the programme and how we work, I want to give everyone in our faculty community an equal opportunity to participate in governance, curriculum development, research, continuing education and the establishment of respectful and tolerant communication and relationships.

### **1. COMMUNICATION**

I intend to pay particular attention to strengthening and improving communication. I believe that open, transparent, and inclusive communication is the cornerstone of any successful academic institution. It enables better collaboration between students, academic staff, and administration/management, thus contributing to the achievement of common goals.

I plan to set up regular consultations with students and staff to better understand their needs, ideas, and concerns. I will also work to develop effective communication channels that will allow for faster and more direct information on important matters related to the faculty's activities.

I will work with the management and teaching staff to establish a clear structure for greater participation in the decision-making process, with the aim of improving the quality of study programmes and research. I am confident that improved communication will create a more cohesive, innovative and successful academic environment where every voice is heard and valued.

### **2. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

The faculty's scientific research is conducted in two institutes and two research groups. Although the average achievements per researcher in the two groups are excellent and

comparable, a closer analysis shows inconsistencies and that only a certain number of researchers achieve higher quantitative results.

The main objective of the activities in this area will be to promote responsible and open research activities among all employees, which aligns with the UP Medium-Term Development Strategy, which foresees an average of 1.5 publications per researcher per year in WoS or SCOPUS journals. Additionally, I will promote the publication of scientific monographs or chapters in scientific monographs.

Accordingly, we will continue to develop the faculty's monograph series and scientific journal and encourage colleagues (researchers and students) to publish. I will encourage the publication of scientific research in Slovene, in open access and following FAIR.<sup>3</sup>

It will also be necessary to encourage more researchers to actively apply for interdisciplinary and international research projects, which will increase research opportunities and contribute to the visibility and impact of the faculty in the national and international academic environment.

Through active research, we will achieve scientific excellence, which will create the conditions for securing stable funding through research programmes. Above all, the latter is necessary to legitimise the implementation and mentoring of doctoral studies at the faculty level.

I also plan to foster collaboration between the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences at the University of Primorska and to create research groups that will address key challenges of contemporary society, such as migration, cultural identity, digital ethics and sustainable development. To facilitate this, I will support establishing a research centre for digital humanities, which will combine knowledge from the humanities and technology, focusing on researching the impact of digitisation on culture and society.

### **3. STUDY**

In line with contemporary trends in the humanities, it will be necessary to continue updating the content of courses and programmes to integrate interdisciplinarity, innovative research and teaching methods, digitisation, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

I will encourage changes and the development of study programmes that align with the profession's development and requirements, in contrast to the current practice of prioritising form over content when it comes to change.

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<sup>3</sup> FAIR (FAIR) Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).

The focus will be on digital and applied humanities content, responding to current and emerging trends and research that can attract domestic and international students and influence enrolment.

I will encourage collaboration between different disciplines within the humanities and beyond, as well as the creation of new content in collaboration with other faculties at UP.

A key activity in the field of studies will be the establishment of a complete vertical of existing study programmes, which will enable students to make easier choices at the end of their undergraduate programmes and to have more opportunities to study at UP FHŠ.

We will promote the creation of new and the provision of existing study content to deliver training to external stakeholders and microcredentials.

I will encourage teaching staff to pursue continuous training in pedagogy and other subjects to acquire competencies that are in line with the needs of the modern teaching process and the use of new technologies.

I will establish a departmental recruitment planning and strategy, focusing on the profession's needs and the integration of junior assistants.

Providing adequate compensation for PhD work is a commitment we will strive to uphold within the faculty's financial means and in agreement with the University's management. This approach ensures the faculty's long-term stability.

#### **4. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Within the already well-developed international cooperation, I plan to deepen and intensify participation in exchanges within the framework of existing partnerships and exchanges with international universities, particularly universities in the T4EU network.

I plan to further review the existing cooperation agreements and structure the division of contracts at the departmental and faculty levels to improve cooperation and exchanges.

I will encourage applications for bilateral scientific research projects and COST projects to strengthen international links and increase networking.

As part of internationalisation, I will support an increase in the proportion of international students from Western European countries through the promotion of programmes abroad and the delivery of programmes in English.

I will support and encourage the development of internationally accredited study programmes, which will have an impact on the international visibility of the faculty.

I will encourage colleagues to apply for national and international awards, which will increase the visibility and reputation of the faculty.

## **5. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Quality assurance activities, such as regular self-evaluations and surveys, are already established practice. I intend to deepen and build on these processes by promoting quality monitoring at the courses, programmes, departments, and faculties level. I intend to do this through a communication plan and developing a precise way to work faster to implement action plans and remove obstacles to establishing a quality loop or achieving higher quality more quickly.

## **6. ADMINISTRATION/SUPPORT SERVICES**

To increase the efficiency and speed of administrative processes for students and staff, I will promote the introduction of new digital tools to make existing processes more efficient. This will relieve overburdened administrative staff and make the Faculty more transparent and efficient.

I plan to implement a structured review and reassign work tasks to improve communication between management and non-teaching staff.

I also plan to involve students in certain tasks to relieve the burden on administrative staff, and I will seek new recruitments in agreement with the university management.

I will encourage my administrative colleagues to attend various training courses to acquire new competencies as part of their annual interviews.

I will also encourage applications for professional exchanges or guest lectures to acquire new competencies at universities at home and abroad and at other UP members.

I will strive to reward proactive, self-initiative and overworked colleagues.

## **7. STUDENTS**

I will support and encourage the development of integrated support services for students, including career counselling, psychological support and tutoring.

I will also encourage greater student participation in governance, which I plan to achieve mainly by increasing and improving communication between management and students. I plan to hold more frequent and regular meetings with student representatives of all levels.

I will strive for greater involvement and active participation of students in the Student Council. I will also provide them with the support of the UP FHŠ promotion department and support the active participation of students in promotion.

I will encourage the development of the student community and help implement their wishes, needs, and events within the extracurricular activities.

I plan to intensively seek ways to fund scholarships, internships, and employment opportunities for students, especially in cooperation with the local community.

I will encourage student involvement in research and publishing high-quality student work. I will work to strengthen communication between students, academic staff and administration.

## **8. INFRASTRUCTURE**

In the area of infrastructure, I identify shortcomings in three areas.

The first is the lack of adequate office space for teaching staff and researchers. I will work with the UP management to find a solution.

The second area is the lack of ICT, specifically the lack of modern versions of software, which is essential for research and also for teaching and contemporary training of students. The shortage also includes an insufficient number of computers for working with students. I will endeavour to purchase laptops with the appropriate software to be used by students of various disciplines. I will work with the UP management and the UP-Infrastructure group to solve this shortcoming.

The third area is the lack of adequate facilities within the faculty to provide places for students to study independently or in groups, to work on projects in groups or just to socialise. I consider this to be very important and together with the UPUK management I have planned changes and adaptations to the existing spaces in the UP FHŠ library.

Additionally, I plan to create an internal system or maybe even an app that will ensure more economical use of private cars, reduce the number of journeys, consequently, the cost of commuting, and lessen the faculty's carbon footprint.

## **9. DIGITISATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

I will promote the digitisation of learning processes and administration to improve the efficiency and accessibility of education.

I plan to introduce hybrid and web-based courses (especially for micro-credentials) to allow flexible learning and greater accessibility for students, which aligns with the university's strategy for digitising education.

I will promote using artificial intelligence as a tool for research and teaching, but it should align with UP's ethical principles, strategy, and national guidelines. In doing so, I will promote the organisation of relevant training for all staff.

## **10. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

I plan to build a strong and competent team of Vice-Deans, selected in a democratic and transparent way. I believe that this process must be conducted in close cooperation with the Heads and members of all the departments in the Faculty, as this is the way to identify and engage the best individuals for key areas of work.

I intend to change the team of Vice-Deans slightly; I will keep the areas of Vice-Deans for Research, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, and I will separate the areas of International Cooperation and Quality into two Vice-Dean positions. In addition, I intend to introduce a new member of the team for the Finance and Business Management.

Alongside the team of vice-deans, I also plan to create working groups to speed up the completion of individual tasks and partly relieve the burden on administrative assistants.

I aim to build a team based on professionalism, diversity and collaboration. I want to focus on involving younger colleagues with the capacity and desire to develop their leadership skills. As the Faculty needs the fresh ideas and energy that young people can bring, I will strive to offer them the opportunity to be involved in decision-making processes. Young colleagues may be assistant vice deans or members of working groups. This will ensure that our leadership is strengthened with new skills and ideas while building a stable and cohesive community ready to face future challenges.

I will seek to reward or relieve colleagues involved in governance.

## **11. FINANCE**

I will work to maintain financial stability and improve the situation. I intend to do this by seeking additional funding sources such as sponsorship, donor, commercial and project funding.

I plan to optimise the use of funds, ensure better transparency of financial flows and rationalise the use of funds.

To implement better business operations, I foresee the introduction of a new Finance and Business Management function.

## **12. ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROMOTION**

I will promote the development of programmes for the sustainable development of the local community in line with UP's strategy. This includes organising public lectures, workshops, and cultural events linking the faculty with the local community and the wider public.

I will encourage organising events that address topical issues in society and the humanities and involve the general public.



I will encourage cooperation with members of the Faculty's Alumni Club and their involvement in promoting the faculty and their work.

I want the faculty to become a space for dialogue between academia and the wider community.

I plan to increase the faculty's visibility in Slovenia and internationally through an improved promotion strategy, including social media, websites, public events, and collaboration with students and alumni.

As Dean, I will strive to achieve the programme's objectives and make the Faculty of Humanities an example of excellence. I believe that together, we can create an environment that supports teaching and research excellence and fosters students' and staff's personal and professional development. I intend to build on the knowledge, experience and positive relationship with the university leadership I have built as a member of the UP Senate. I want to build on the existing successes of the faculty, address shortcomings, improve communication, accelerate individual processes and look for new development opportunities that will benefit our community.

With your support and participation, we can improve the performance of the faculty.

Koper, 18 October 2024

Assist. Prof. Dr. Zrinka Mileusnić  
  
**Zrinka**  
**Mileusnić**  
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## **PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATE**

Name and surname: Zrinka Mileusnić

Birth date: 16.06.1973, Rijeka, Croatia.

ORCID: 0000-0001-7590-0212

SICRIS: 26261

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **Primary education**

Viktor Car Emin Primary School, Lovran, Croatia.

### **Secondary education**

CZKUOIK- Centar usmjerenog obrazovanja za kadrove u kulturi i obrazovanju, (today Prva riječka hrvatska gimnazija), Culture and Science, Rijeka, Croatia.

Sheboygan Falls High School, Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, USA.

### **Diploma, Master's degree, PhD**

Diploma: 2002, Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana.

Master's degree: 2009, Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana.

PhD: 2015, History of Europe and the Mediterranean, Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska.

### **Other education and training**

2012: Pedagogical - andragogical training for higher education teachers and associates, UP PEF.

2015: training "Pushing the boundaries - being helpful to students with disabilities", UP PEF.

2015: Training for tutors at UP.

2015: training Teaching international students - intercultural awareness across the curriculum (CMEPIUS; EHEA project and IEREST project - Intercultural Education Resources for Erasmus Students and their Teachers).

2016: course for teaching university subjects in English "Academic Teaching Excellence" (British Council, CMEPIUS).

2017: training course Integrating an International Dimension into Studies - Internationalising the Curriculum and Writing Learning Outcomes (CMEPIUS; EHEA project).

2020-: regular training for professionals and NAKVIS training: Shaping the Universities of the Future in the Light of the Emerging Alliance of European Universities, Quality Assurance at a Distance, Hybrid Approach in Higher Education, Regulations on the Conditions for the Provision

of the Library Public Service, Designing a Quality System of Micro Evidence, Quality in Higher Education.

2023/2024: Specialist Studies in Digital Archaeology, International Hellenic University.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

2002-2004 Researcher on the project Murska Sobota - Nova Tabla; University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts.

2004-2016 University of Primorska, Scientific Research Centre.

2016- University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities.

### **ELECTIONS**

2004-2009: Researcher in the field of archaeology, UP ZRS.

2009-2016: Researcher with Master's degree in Archaeology, UP ZRS.

2008-2016 Assistant (teaching) in the field of archaeology, UP FHŠ.

2016-2025 Associate Professor and Research Fellow in the field of Archaeology, UP FHŠ.

### **PEDAGOGICAL WORK**

Since 2008 I have been involved in the teaching process at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska. Since 2010 I have been involved in the teaching process at the second cycle study programme Heritage Tourism at the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica, University of Primorska.

In the academic years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, I taught two courses as part of the international Tempus project "Curricular reform of heritage sciences in Bosnia and Herzegovina" - BIHERIT (Curricular reform of heritage sciences in Bosnia and Herzegovina), as part of the introduction and implementation of heritage studies at the Faculties of Arts of the Universities of Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Tuzla.

In 2014 I participated as a lecturer at the 8th International Summer School of Museology Piran and at the International Summer School HEMAINE (Heritage Management, Interpretation and Education).

In 2015, I participated as a lecturer at the DIANET International School.

Since 2015 I have been participating as a lecturer and co-organiser at the International Summer School of Museology (Piran).

In the 2018/2019 academic year, I taught three courses at the Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (1st and 2nd level).

## **SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH WORK**

Scientific research fields: archaeology, heritage, cultural tourism, heritage tourism, medieval, modern, material culture, urban development, heritage promotion, heritage education.

Scientific research activities include participation in field research, post-fieldwork processing of site archives, analysis, preparation and publication of archaeological material. Most of the candidate's scientific research tasks and activities are part of the project activities of the Institute of Archaeology and Heritage of UP FHŠ.

I have actively participated in national and international projects of the Institute and the Faculty and in projects of other institutions (University of Parma, Archaeological Museum of Durres, Archaeological Museum of Udine, University of Zagreb). I have presented the results of my work to the scientific community in the form of papers at scientific meetings and conferences, as well as in the form of articles and monographs. I have participated in various exhibition projects.

Since 2015, I have been a member of the Editorial Board of *Annales Mediterranei*.

In 2017 and 2019, I was guest editor, and from 2020, editor-in-chief and editor-in-chief of *Studia Universitatis Hereditati* journal, and I achieved the journal's inclusion in ERIH PLUS, SCOPUS and ANVUR.

Since 2023, I have been the Editor-in-Chief of the monographic collection *Libri Universitatis Hereditati*.

I have reviewed numerous publications in the field of medieval and post medieval archaeology and underwater archaeology in the SAAS monograph collection (ZVKDS), the CPA Monographs collection (ZVKDS) and in national and international scientific journals.

In 2017/2018 I was the project leader of the international project ATAS - Ancient traps of the Adriatic Sea, EASME.

In 2023 and 2024, I was a project leader of the international project Renewal School for a New Generation, Norway Grants.

## **PRIZES**

The Bartol Prize for Higher Education Teachers 2019.

Golden plaque of the University of Primorska (higher education teacher/scientist) with a group of colleagues from the UNESCO Chair of the UP.

### **Mentoring of prize-winning student theses**

Bartol Prize of UP FHŠ for a student: BERNARDI, Karin. Ustanovitev in delovanje piranske bratovščine Filipa Nerija na osnovi zgodovinskih in arheoloških virov : zaključno delo. Koper: [K. Bernardi], 2017. 137 str., ilustr. [COBISS.SI-ID 1539952836].

UP Srečko Kosovel Prize for a student: VIŠNJIĆ, Josip. Arhitekturni razvoj srednjeveških istrskih fevdalnih utrd : uporaba metode "arheologije arhitekture" pri analizi razvoja utrd = Arhitektonski razvoj istarskih srednjovekovnih fevdalnih utvrda : primjena metode "arheologije arhitekture" prilikom analize razvoja utvrda : doktorska disertacija. Koper: [J. Višnjić], 2018. 617 str., ilustr., zvd. [COBISS.SI-ID 1540391620].

## **SOCIAL ACTIVITY AND MANAGEMENT**

Chair of the Ethics Committee of the Scientific Research Centre of the University of Primorska (2015-2017).

Deputy Head of the Department of Archaeology and Heritage, Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska (2015-2016).

Head of the Department of Archaeology and Heritage, Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska (2016-2024).

Member of the UP Senate (2019-).

Vice-Dean for Quality and International Cooperation, UP FHŠ (2021-2025).

Member of the UP Commission for Interuniversity and International Cooperation (2021-).

Member of the UP Awards and Prizes Committee (2023-)

Tutor coordinator at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska (2015-2019).

Tutor teacher (2015-2023).

Member of the Programme Committee and UP representative in the E-RIHS.SI consortium.

Evaluator for NAKVIS (2020-).

Evaluator for the Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education (AZVO; 2018-).

Evaluator of postdoctoral projects in the EUTOPIA inter-university network (2022-).

Evaluator of project applications in the international consortium E-RIHS ERIC (2024-).

External member of the matriculation board at the Moste Secondary School in Ljubljana (2015/2016).

Member of the Selection Committee for the Bartol Student Prize and the Bartol Award (2015/2016, 2016/2017, 2019/2020).

Secretary and Member of the Executive Committee of the Slovenian Archaeological Society (2019-)

Founding member of the Croatian Cultural Association.

Member of the Medieval Pottery Research Group, Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology,  
International Culinary Tourism Association, Inter Nations, Interpret Europe  
Member of TICCIH (The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage)  
Slovenia - Working Group on Industrial Heritage.