

**Election programme of the candidate for Dean of the Faculty of Art and Design of Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem, prof. Mgr. Zdena Kolečková, Ph.D. for the years 2023-2027**

**Preamble - What about?**

About:

Current needs

Design

Individual approach

Institution

Collective responsibility

Communication

Cultivation

National and international excellence

Renunciation

Courage

The needs of society

Balance

Sharing

Confidence

Solidarity

Specifics

Collaboration

Creation

Art

Savings

Ústí

Great uncertainty

This electoral programme is formulated and written in the specific situation of the turbulent year 2022. It responds to the current developments in the preparation of the state budget for 2023, the budget of the Ministry of Education and Science and its budget chapter for HEIs, the preparation of the calls for the Jan Ámos Komenský Operational Programme and the National Renewal Plan, as well as the stage of completion of the implementation of Metodika 17+, i.e. the mechanism of evaluation and financing of research organisations (including universities) by the Council for Science, Research and Innovation of the Government of the Czech Republic. It also anticipates the impact of the forthcoming amendment to the Law on HEIs.

**Given the fluid nature of the environment, it cannot be seen as anything other than a projection of the candidate's ideas about the running of the institution in conditions that will be dynamically changing in the years 2023-2027. (This is evidenced by the alarming absence of a medium-term planning horizon for the structure of the state budget on the part of the Ministry of Finance, and hence the Government of the Czech Republic, for the years 2024 and 2025.)**

### **Starting Point**

The election period follows a very complex situation determined by many external factors:

- a) the COVID-19 epidemic and the associated across-the-board government measures and limited teaching in 2019-2021.
- b) the escalation of geopolitical developments with the acceleration of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict
- c) the economic impact of both of the above points and the current state of the European economy as well as the development of the economic situation (and the dramatic onset of inflation) in the Czech Republic
- d) the direct impact of point c) on the way universities are financed
- e) climate crisis
- f) preparation of the amendment to the Higher Education Act
- g) implementation of HE evaluation systems according to Metodika 17+, including the hot phase of preparation for the evaluation of Modules M3, M4, M5 within the International Evaluation Panel; response to the processes implemented so far and submission of sub-topics for revision of their shortcomings
- h) specificities of Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem, the Statutory City of Ústí nad Labem and the Ústí Region, viewing them as "structurally affected areas"
- ch) the portfolio of studios, their focus accentuating the situation a decade ago, the unbalanced interest in the offered study programmes or in individual studios
- i) the development of current trends in the fields of art and design, curatorial activities and art, art history and curatorial research
- j) uneven staff structure, dispersion of academic degrees needed to ensure accreditation of individual study programmes and specialisations
- k) imbalance in the degree of involvement in the work process of FUD's sub-staff (academics and THP)
- l) the accumulation of functions related to points (i) and (j), which was necessary
- m) the incompletely anchored organisational structure of the Faculty of Art and Design, and the competences and job descriptions of the staff are not entirely clear.

### **Faculty in crisis period – upcoming challenges:**

Continuity of transition from one dean's period to the next one

Finding continuities with what has been successful and what represents potential for the next phase of faculty development

Careful evaluation of the permeability of communication channels and timely information to the entire academic community

Accelerating management and decision-making processes by targeting an effective mechanism to a specific area, curriculum, specific department – spreading out and clarifying the responsibilities of managers; strengthening the decision-making positions and responsibilities of middle management

An end to the accumulation of functions; sharing of managerial and professional competences of members of the academic community; involvement of a wider range of members of the academic community in decision-making processes on the running of the school

Increase in the responsiveness and operability of the internal environment; creation, reintroduction, strengthening of the structure of "small" and "large" communication teams within the Dean's collective board; convening of a "super-collective board" of all heads of studios at least once a year, more often if necessary

Introduction of a more operational, multi-level communication with the Academic Senate – joint discussion of plans, continuous discussion of partial tasks and their analysis on the communication planes: dean + chair of the Academic Senate + chair of the Student Chamber of the Academic Senate; or: dean + the whole Academic Senate (with regard to the specific issue under discussion)

Precise formulation of the competences of individual positions; revision of the workload of individual staff members; systematisation of the operation of individual departments

Participation of the Dean in departmental meetings as needed and when addressing key issues; detection of problematic moments and their resolution on the basis of departments, programmes, specialisations

Synchronisation of "office" hours of the entire faculty management apparatus; availability of the Dean's office on all five working days of the week; clear establishment of conditions for home office mode

Emphasis on the necessary career advancement of staff, with intergenerational spacing, to ensure the full "accreditability" of individual SPs and habilitation and appointment procedures in the future

Emphasis on the performance and reporting of quality creative activities of academic staff and students; special emphasis on the quality of outputs from doctoral studies

Finding intersections between the various study programmes; creating a communication space and community base for the comprehensive personal development of students across all levels of education

Consistently fulfilling the "third role" of the faculty, creating a positive image of the faculty in the external environment

Developing and deepening collegial, open, friendly, trusting, yet professional communication between teachers and students

In the context of available and functional mechanisms to ensure equal learning conditions and possibilities of appeal/recourse in case of feeling of injustice or pressure exercised on a group or individual.

### **Specific steps for 2023**

#### **Faculty development, programme challenges and fulfilling standards**

Start-up and implementation of newly accredited bachelor, master and doctoral degree programmes; completion of the accreditation process for the Curatorial Studies programme; submission of the accreditation file for the Habilitation Procedure and the Procedure for the Appointment of Professor

Preparation and implementation of the PhD Infra project under the Jan Ámos Komenský Operational Programme – creation of specialised doctoral workstations with upgraded equipment and modernised infrastructure

Collaboration in the preparation of the university project RUR within the framework of the Operational Programme Fair Transformation, with the faculty being the gestor of a large sub-activity called Art for Communities, included in the Creative Community activity

Preparation of the project for the NPO (National Recovery Plan) - accreditation and implementation of the professional bachelor's degree programme Production in cultural and creative industries

Completion of the monitoring period for Metodika 17+, or preparation of data collection for the International Evaluation Panel 2025 (collection of qualitative indicators in 2018-2023)

#### **Operational economics and building management**

Preparation and implementation of a study of the economics of the operation of the main building of the FUD, the House of Arts and the Ceramics Studio in Dubí; continuous evaluation of the development of energy prices and search for ways to manage the financing of economically demanding operations

Strengthening internal communication with all THP staff, coordinating their work profiles, discussing possible involvement in new challenges (administration) and operational cost-saving (technical support, workshop staff)

#### **Creative activities**

Evaluation of the possibilities of supporting creative projects from internal sources according to the current budget for 2023 and careful consideration of support for other related activities

Targeting and making full use of the FUČ Fund; transparent support for artistic activity and the organisational framework that generates and sustains it

Finding ways to fund creative outputs from non-faculty sources; targeted support for multi-source funding and increased encouragement to apply for external grant applications, including research grants

Implementation of the 1st Design Ústí show at the House of Arts Ústí nad Labem and support for young regional artists

Support for other design shows under clearly defined and unchanging rules

Targeted support of student creative projects, with emphasis on their quality and on the developmental and community character of the upcoming events

Implementation of a year-round exhibition programme in the House of Art Ústí nad Labem

Implementation of the international project Gardening of Soul, supported by EEA and Norway Grants

### **Study matters**

The study agenda is professionally covered and stabilized thanks to the accreditations currently underway or already fully implemented. This is a unique situation within the whole university. In this respect, the area of Fine Arts is fully saturated, while in the areas of Design and Graphic Design, there is a need to get ready for the preparation of the report for the NAU and to meet the expected development indicators. Doctoral studies can also be further developed in the sense of the currently forthcoming accreditation, which represents a more realistic option of completing the entire study within its newly established (extended) optimal length

The decreasing number of applicants and students is alarming. It will be necessary to continue to analyse the negative trends, to notice even partial fluctuations, to speak openly about the growing (fundamental) risks associated with this fact. Trends need to be monitored in annual, medium and longer term cycles

In 2023, interest in study – the number of applicants and enrolments, but also the ongoing turnover, drop-outs and overall failure rates – needs to be assessed in this respect, by programme, specialisation, department and studio

In view of the gravity of the current situation, in which the effects of the failure of the normal teaching cycle in previous academic years are reverberating, it is necessary to place increased emphasis on student motivation, continuous updating of study materials and adherence to continuous fulfillment of study obligations

Recognizing the seriousness of the following statement, it is necessary to declare in advance that, if the candidate is elected dean, students will not automatically be recognized for the extreme number of failed courses and their transfer to subsequent years. This step is motivated by the desire to build a sense of personal responsibility in specific cases and also by the need to level the playing field for all students

FUD will take care to support exceptionally talented students and to develop opportunities for public presentations of their projects in the official artistic institutions

If the economic situation permits, FUD will launch a call for short-term fellowships related to exceptional support for the realization of two selected diploma projects (open call based on the presentation of the work-in-progress phase), for the Design and Fine Arts programmes

Aware of the importance of presenting the outputs of the studies outside the campus and presenting them to a wider audience in unexpected contexts, a comprehensive presentation of the diploma theses and a group exhibition of the students of Curatorial Studies should take place in the city centre in 2023 (in the early stages of negotiations for a presentation is the House of Culture in Ústí nad Labem)

## **Personnel Development**

It is necessary to appeal to each of the staff to focus on their future career progression and to implement the steps leading to the implementation of the staffing plans initiated by the current Dean of FUD

Career advancement should be viewed in all its stages – from assistants with at least a master's degree required, through the development of their careers towards attaining a doctoral degree, to habilitation and appointment procedures ensuring a comfortable direction for FUD not only during the planned term of office, but with a more distant view to 2030 to ensure accreditation requirements within all accredited areas

Every full-time academic staff member should be aware of the hourly allocation of this commitment, which is 40 hours per week. Each academic must justify to himself or herself whether his or her activities, consisting of a teaching, creative and managerial component, meet this time requirement. Each staff member is viewed as an individual being whose contribution to the faculty is unique. Each must be treated and discussed in the line of staff member – head of department – dean. The already launched HAP system will be a certain, but not directive, guide to assess his/her activities in this respect.

In the area of implementation of the HAP system and the Career Regulations, the new management will logically follow the decisions of the current FUD management not only in 2023

## **Development of communication across faculties, universities, academies**

Development of interfaculty communication and diplomacy within the University, involvement in interfaculty research and development projects – in relation to currently upcoming or ongoing challenges and programmes

The above-mentioned efforts will in fact be necessary, both for conceptual reasons and in view of the need to find a systematic way of financing the operation and, above all, the creative activities of the faculty

Creating a stimulating dialogue and coordinated strategies within the Czech art schools and faculties – in the context of the platforms of the Association of Art Faculties, through the appeal to the newly elected rector in terms of taking positions within the meetings of the Czech Rectors' Conference and within the competence of the Commission of Art Schools and Faculties of the Council of Higher Education

Once again, these will be absolutely necessary, mutually conditional ways of cooperation, which will allow the otherwise overlooked voice of the individual art colleges and faculties to be made visible

## **Internationalisation**

In the coming term, given (not only) the fluctuating interest of applicants, it will be necessary to accelerate the way in which the Faculty is presented in the international context

At the same time, it is necessary to take maximum advantage of the fact that the Faculty of Art and Design – so far the only faculty in the entire university – implements a complete full-time follow-up Master's programme in English (consistently apply this fact as one of the qualitative evaluation criteria)

The proportion of foreign PhD students in the doctoral study programme Visual Communication is also admirable (on a university scale)

FUD has historically excelled in the quality and frequency of international professional, institutional and individual contacts and exchanges, thanks to long-standing international partnerships, grant activities and shared exhibition and publication activities

At the same time, FUD is developing the ERASMUS+ programme to a degree unparalleled by other faculties, both in the areas of incoming and outgoing and in the frequency of Erasmus contracts

Thus, the above mentioned points need to be further developed in 2023, building on the successes of the previous faculty leadership and, in the case of ERASMUS, tending towards the situation before the COVID-19 epidemic.

### **Faculty of Art and Design at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in 2027**

If I am elected Dean, I will strive to ensure that in 2027 the faculty has a dynamic, intergenerational team of Vice Deans and Associate Deans to successfully guide the school through the coming difficult and volatile period in a pluralistic dialogue of views. During this period, part of the team will pass on experience to younger colleagues, while on the other hand, younger colleagues will guarantee innovation and the application of new communication and technological practices. This managerial challenge is based on the need for immediate but competent and anticipatory responses to turbulent developments in the international situation, to technological developments, to developments in the field of art and design, to developments in visual communication, and to the speed of accelerating change in the current funding conditions for higher education. Towards 2027, therefore, FUD must strive to be rightly perceived as a successful, confident art faculty that confirms its place in the portfolio of other art colleges from which it differs

- a) the characteristics of its location and the social needs of the region for FUD
- b) a portfolio of upgraded programmes that ensures the profiling, specialisation and individualisation of each student and takes into account the development and employment potential of each graduate
- c) the quality of the institutional (human and technological) facilities, the "surface" or "space" offered to each student
- d) the courage to enter into society-wide debates and encourage interdisciplinary links
- e) offering academically oriented study programmes across the full spectrum of its degrees, complemented by a single professional bachelor's programme that takes into account the opportunities for graduates to work in the booming cultural and creative industries

### **A few comforting words at the end...**

We anticipated the economic crisis under the current FUD leadership, although we had no idea what its dimensions would be about. Even at this moment we do not know according to what rules our daily reality will unfold after 1 January 2023, a few weeks before the new dean takes office...

However, the internal environment of the faculty is prepared for this situation as much as possible. All documents, internal regulations, guidelines, but especially most of the successful accreditation materials ensure the continuity of further development. These firmly set boundaries guarantee the smooth running of the institution and its gradual transition from one dean's term to the next...

The recipe for successfully managing the upcoming electoral period is therefore a fearless step towards the crisis years and the overall courage to name the shortcomings of the current situation. Furthermore, it is necessary to humbly and sensibly take measures that could at least partially put

the brakes on the surely worsening economic situation. A willingness to initiate and accept unpleasant restrictions and to accept their consequences internally will therefore be essential. It will be necessary to convince oneself that the logical decline in study/work comfort makes sense and to cultivate the determination to pursue one's vision. In this way, together we can become a confident regional school with a national reputation and international reach. It won't be easy. We must strengthen within ourselves the ability to sacrifice for the whole, to set aside our own interests in favour of the development and internal cohesion of our faculty. Only then, after four years, will we be able to perceive FUD as the collaborative work of several hundred artists.

In Ústí nad Labem, 30 October 2022

prof. Mgr. Zdena Kolečková, Ph.D.