



Tampereen Teekkarit ry's Internationalisation Plan

This internationalisation plan has been created to develop the international activities of Tampereen Teekkarit ry (later the Teekkari Union). The purpose of the internationalisation plan is to describe all aspects of the internationality of the association's current operations, to outline the future direction for their development and to list concrete measures to achieve the goal of internationalisation.

Description of current activities

International students as technology students in Tampere

Tampere already offers three bachelor's degrees in technology and more than 20 master's degrees entirely in English. In addition, a huge number of exchange students come to the Hervanta campus every year to take part in the teekkari culture in Tampere. The number of guilds operating in English at the Teekkari Union is also on the rise with the new degree programmes, and the opportunities for international students to influence the teekkari community are emphasised. The activities of the Teekkari Council, the Board of the Teekkari Union and other bodies must be critically examined to guarantee equal opportunities to influence and participate so that the association's operations remain of high quality and meaningful for the actors.

Advocacy and advocacy in the association

The governing bodies of the Teekkari Union, such as the Teekkari Council and the Councils (Guild Council, Fuksi Council and Corporate Council), always include students studying in international degree programmes who do not necessarily use Finnish. Other bodies, i.e. the board, committees and the Teekkari section, do not necessarily have international students.

The biggest challenge for international students to participate in the association's activities is the language barrier. The rules define Finnish as the official language of the association, but efforts have also been made to increase the use of English in places where it is necessary. Efforts have been made to make the Teekkari Council accessible also to people who do not speak Finnish. The working language of the association's operational activities (Teekkari section, committees, and board) has been Finnish. The activities have been felt to require fluent communication, and the use of Finnish has been seen as a significant factor in ensuring the meaningfulness and fluency of the activities also for people for whom speaking English would restrict participation. The association's operational bodies have stated that participation requires fluency in Finnish. The same applies to, for example, various committees, employee positions and officer positions, if this has been deemed necessary for the smooth operation of the position.



In the Teekkari Council, discussions can be held in Finnish or English. At meetings, delegates can discuss in the language of their choice. Usually, the discussion takes place mainly in Finnish. If the situation so requires, the conversation will, if possible, be translated orally and outline afterwards into another language. If there are Finnish-speaking councillors in English-speaking council groups, the groups are encouraged to translate the discussion to their councillors during the meeting in order to streamline the meeting. Depending on the resources, the meeting materials will also be translated into English at the same pace as the materials in Finnish are delivered to the Teekkari Council. The minutes shall be translated on the basis of notes taken by the secretary invited by the council.

In the internal communication channels of the institutions subordinate to The Teekkari Union (e.g. Telegram groups), the language has varied according to the intended use, but in official announcements the language has been kept accessible to everyone. In the case of international students, it is important to ensure that they are not left out of the institutions in which they are involved. This will be ensured by encouraging Finnish-speaking participants in the institutions to help non-Finnish speakers understand discussions that take place in Finnish.

Communication and language

The association's communications are outlined in the communications plan of the Teekkari Union. The official communications of the Teekkari Union are always carried out in both Finnish and English. The communication plan supports the participation opportunities of international students. The communications of the Teekkari Union are accessible and reach a wide range of technology students and other stakeholders from Tampere, including international students.

For example, if general communication channels communicate about a position for which you cannot apply without knowing fluent Finnish, the message will state it in English. This also applies to events that are held in Finnish. In these cases, it is not necessary to translate the message entirely into English, but the aim is to write a short description of the Finnish content of the message, its limitations and the reasons for the restrictions in the English legend at the beginning.

The official language of the association is Finnish, and the official versions of the association's guiding documents are in Finnish.

Events

The Teekkari Union has organised more international events in recent years. The Teekkari Union events differ in their ability to reach and engage international students. As mentioned above, the events will be communicated in the ways outlined in the communications plan that reach international students. The international involvement of

events varies depending on the event. For Wappu's teekkari events, equal participation is possible in English. At the annual festival of the Teekkari Union, the language is Finnish in accordance with the official language of the association.

The Teekkari Union's events require a large number of volunteers every year. The participation of volunteers is not limited by language, unless the task requires fluency in Finnish, such as working as a security steward at the Teekkari Dipping. In other events, such as annual celebrations, international students can participate as volunteers.

New students

New students are primarily freshmen starting their degree studies and exchange students, whose study time varies from six months to a year. At the beginning of the school year, the guilds organise freshman info sessions, where the association presents itself and which are also held in English. Upon request, the association will also be presented during the spring orientation week, but due to the timing of the orientation week, the low number of incoming students and the change of board year, it has not been possible to prioritise this date. The most important teekkari event of the freshman year, the Teekkari Dipping, will also be accessible to degree students and exchange students from abroad, whose timing of studies it suits. The Fuksi Council also includes persons supervising international freshmen.

Activities of full members

Three of the association's 17 full members operate entirely in English and several others have international admissions. Thus, internationality is also an important theme for guild members. The association aims to support the internationality of guilds by enabling international guilds to have equal opportunities to influence the association and by making member services equally available to international operators.

Activities of supporting members

International students also participate in the activities of the supporting members. According to its needs and resources, the Teekkari Union strives to support supporting members in taking these members into account, for example through its membership services.

The future direction of internationalisation

Internationalisation as a technology student from Tampere

In addition to international students, internationality is an important quality and skill for students from Tampere and elsewhere in Finland. By acquiring internationality skills, local technology students can better welcome fellow students from abroad and also promote an international working atmosphere when entering working life. It is also important for the association to develop the international skills of technology students from Finland, for example to ensure the efficient operation of the Teekkari Council.



Events

The association must continue to organise events for international students. In the future, if resources are available, the association could also support events that promote the internationalisation of its members and supporting members, such as English-language excursions and other events that bring together international students and students from Finland. Events organised through international cooperation could also promote internationalisation as a technology student from Tampere in the future.

The annual celebrations can be made more accessible to international students, for example, by making a singing lecture also in English and adding songs in English, as well as by communicating bilingually according to the communication plan.

Activities of full members

Several full members have activities that promote the international character of their members. Some guilds also participate in their own European umbrella organisations as local associations. By modelling on these guilds, the Teekkari Union can also increase support for the internationalisation of the entire teekkari community and, in the future, also support guilds in achieving these goals.

Activities of supporting members

Some of the supporting members organise activities that promote internationalisation, such as excursions, for their members. In the future, the association may be able to support such activities.

Communication

In accordance with the communication plan, the association's communications must continue to be bilingual. In addition, English translations of the association's official documents, such as materials delivered to the Teekkari Council and guiding documents, must be prepared within the resources of the association's actors to improve the involvement of international actors.



Development measures

International Project Officer

The implementation of the internationalisation plan begins after its approval, and for this it is a good idea to recruit an international project officer to develop the plan and operations, as well as to investigate and, if possible, implement the measures mentioned below.

International cooperation

There are technology students all over the world, and cooperation with these actors is an excellent way to create conditions for internationalisation also for technology students in Tampere. Before the pandemic, Tampere had an active local organisation of the Board of European Students of Technology (BEST). This local association has since ceased its activities, but in cooperation with the association's old actors, it would be possible to recreate the local association in Tampere under the auspices of The Teekkari Union, which would make its activities more continuous also in the future.

As the BEST local association, the Teekkari Union would be able to participate in international events, both academic, personal and career development, as well as organize similar events in Tampere. There are few other similar international associations that focus specifically on uniting all technology students, so becoming the BEST local association would be a development step towards internationalization. It is also good to establish relationships with individual international technology student associations to promote these goals.

Internationality survey

The association can prepare an internationality survey aimed at international guilds and/or guild international students, and possibly exchange students. The aim of the survey would be to find out the experiences, needs and wishes of these individuals for the association in order to take international students into account. In addition, the survey should measure satisfaction with current international activities. The questionnaire could address themes such as:

- Brief info about the Teekkari Union's activities and events
- Which events and activities of the Teekkari Union have you participated in?
- Have you wanted to participate in one of the activities of the Teekkari Union, but have not felt that you can due to language barriers, for example?
- How satisfied are you with the Teekkari Union's ability to take you into account as an international student?
- What new or more would you like from the Teekkari Union in terms of internationality in general?



- What do you think is good about the teekkari community?
- In your opinion, what areas could be improved in the teekkari community?
- How would you improve these things?
- What do you think are the most important things to communicate also in English? Which ones don't?
- Do you still have any experiences, wishes, feedback or needs that you would like to share with the Teekkari Union?

The results of the internationality survey must be reviewed extensively, and the internationality plan can be updated based on the results of the survey.

Mapping of the International Council

The necessity and composition of the International Council should be examined. Issues to be identified could include:

- Do guilds need a council?
- What would be the Council's objective?
- Who would be included in the Council based on this objective? Freshman coordinators for international students, those responsible for international events, those responsible for international cooperation, those responsible for external excursions or something similar?

Updating the document

The internationalisation plan should be updated at appropriate intervals by also taking it for comments by the council, as the plan is not just a description of existing activities, but a document that draws guidelines for the future. The document should be updated according to changing needs and the needs to be mapped with the internationality survey.