



Univerza na Primorskem
Università del Litorale
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Koper, April 11, 2023

**CANDIDATE ACTION PLAN FOR RECTOR
UNIVERSITY OF PRIMORSKA (UP)
prof. Klavdija Kutnar, PhD**

1. CANDIDATE AT A GLANCE

Name and surname: Klavdija Kutnar.

Date of Birth: 23rd December 1980.

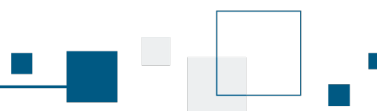
Nationality: Slovenian.

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Academic/Research Career:

- 10/2022–: Leader of the project GDI UP (MVZI & NextGenerationEU, 6.4 mil. EUR).
- 2020: Petra Šparl Award for the best paper by a young woman mathematician.
- 2019: Congress Ambassador of Republic of Slovenia.
- 11/2019–: Rector of UP.
- 07/2018–09/2022: Principal investigator of the investment project »InnoRenew CoE« at UP FAMNIT (3.3 mil. EUR).
- 07/2018–06/2021: Principal investigator of the fundamental research project J1-9110.
- 03/2018–: Professor of Mathematics and Research Counsellor, UP.
- 04/2015–: Assistant Director of UP IAM.
- 05/2014–04/2016: Leader of the international project WoodWisdom-Net+ W3B at the UP.
- 07/2013–03/2018: Associate Professor of Mathematics and Senior Research Fellow, UP.
- 05/2012–: Member of UP Senate.
- 03/2012–11/2019: Dean of UP FAMNIT.
- 11/2011–03/2012: Acting Dean of UP FAMNIT.
- 07/2011–: Member of »N« projects N1-0011, N1-0032, N1-0038, N1-0062, N1-0209 and N1-0140.
- 07/2011–06/2013: Core SRA postdoctoral project (Z1-4006).
- 01/2011–11/2011: Vice-Dean for Scientific-research Work at UP FAMNIT.
- 09/2010–02/2011: Postdoctoral Fulbright Scholarship, Ohio State University, Columbus, USA.
- 03/2010: Research and Development Achievement Award for 2009, Fund for Scientific Excellence of the UP.
- 02/2010–: Department of Mathematics Chair at UP IAM.
- 2010–: Leader of bilateral projects (Spain, Canada, USA, Russia, etc.).



- 2009–: Reviewer for 15 SCI journals.
- 2009–: Member of core research projects J1-2055, J1-6743, J1-6720, J1-7051, J1-9186, J1-1695, J1-1715, J1-2451, J1-2481 and J1-3001.
- 09/2008–12/2008: Visiting Professor at Ohio State University, Columbus, USA.
- 07/2008–06/2013: Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Research Fellow, UP.
- 03/2008: PhD in Mathematics, UP FAMNIT.
- 01/2005–: Member of the research programme P1-0285.
- 01/2005–03/2008: Young Researcher at UP IAM (advisor: Prof. Dragan Marušič, PhD).
- 12/2003–: employed at UP.

Bibliography: See Cobiss.

Scientific Achievements:

- Original scientific articles in SCI Expanded indexed journals: 63.
- Number of citations (CI10) in the last 10 years (2013 - 2023): 413.
- H-index: 12.

Socioeconomically Relevant Achievements:

- 2022–: Member of Working Group for New Higher Education Legislation.
- 2022: Search Committee Member for new European Mathematical Society President (EMS).
- 2022: International Advisory Committee Member for the International Congress of Mathematicians.
- 2021–: Member of the European Math Society Meetings Committee.
- 2021: Member of Expert Group for Renovation of the National Financial System for Undergraduate Study Programmes.
- 2021: 8th European Congress of Mathematics Organizing Committee Deputy Chair (Portorož).
- 2021–2022: Member of Working Group for the National Higher Education Programme 2030 (NHEP2030).
- 2021–2022: Member of Working Group for the Scientific Research and Innovation Strategy 2030.
- 2021: Member of Expert Group of the Higher Education Council for preparation of NHEP2030 key elements.
- 2020–2021: President of the UniAdriion – Associations of Universities of the Adriatic-Ionian Area.
- 2019–2023: President of the Higher Education Council of the Republic of Slovenia.
- 2018–2022: Member of the RS Council for prizes and awards for outstanding achievements in science, research, and development.
- 2018–: Editor-in-Chief of the SCI journal *Ars Mathematica Contemporanea*.
- 2017–: InnoRenew CoE Executive Board Member.
- 2017–: Managing Editor of the scientific journal *The Art of Discrete and Applied Mathematics*.
- 2017–: Editorial Board Member of the scientific journal *Algebraic Combinatorics*.
- 2016–2018: Member of Peer Counselling Group for Financing Higher Education in Slovenia.
- Invited speaker at international scientific conferences: 20 times.
- Delivering courses at universities abroad: 5 times.
- Co-organization of international scientific meetings: 51 times.

Mentoring:

- Co-mentoring: 4 doctoral theses, 2 master's theses.
- Mentoring: 1 doctoral thesis, 4 master's theses, 6 final project assignments.

2. ACTION PLAN for the period 23. 11. 2023 – 22. 11. 2027

When looking back at the first 20 years of UP some would have preferred a much faster development. And then there are others who argue that going step by step, at a slower pace, would have been optimal. But all in all, we can be really proud of the journey we have taken and all the things we have accomplished along the way. Although the university was only intended to play the role of a regional institution, we now, without any doubt, hold a visible and recognizable place in the European universities network. One thing has been essential in that respect: we have been drawn and held together through sharing the same goal, pursued with relentless youthful energy.

Now that we are entering our twenties, a certain calming down is probably expected of us. But at the same time, we need to stay focused and determined, never forgetting what our mission is supposed to be. We must be aware of the fact that the times are indeed changing, with the circumstances being favourable to those institutions that can make quick adjustments or even deeper transformations. This should not be all that difficult as far as our university is concerned. We are now members of two important university networks where the common European future of university education and research will be determined. We have just enough youthful energy that all the goals ahead of us will not be a burden, but rather a joyful challenge.

The action plan is based on the goals and activities set up in the UP Mid-term Development Strategy 2021–2027 and in the UP Mid-term Development Investment Plan 2022–2027. The activities for the realization of all investment projects (from new construction and renovation of buildings to maintenance works), will continue in the second mandate. They will all be realized in accordance with the planned timelines. At the same time, the analysis of the university's infrastructure needs in accordance with the long-term strategic goals will be approached. A new investment plan will be prepared. Below is a brief description of the planned orientations within each section of the UP Mid-term Development Strategy 2021–2027.

1. Scientific Research Excellence

To achieve this section's goals, the university's support services for preparation of successful project applications will be strengthened. In the next three years pilot internal sabbatical tenders will be published with similar eligibility criteria as in the tender at the beginning of 2023. The university regulations for sabbaticals will be adopted in the final year of the mandate. An internal fund to secure the necessary financial resources for sabbaticals will also be established in the final year. Until then, pilot sabbatical projects will be financed from the rector's fund. The internal call for internal postdoctoral positions will be reintroduced from 2024 onwards (similar to 2021 and 2022).

2. Increasing Scientific Research Activities Among all Researchers

The basis for achieving this section's goals was set with the adoption of the Rules on Stable Funding of Scientific Research Activities of the UP (002-21/22) and the Criteria for Allocating Funds for Stable Funding of the Scientific Research Activities of the UP (002-22/22) in 2022, and with additional funds secured by Article 103 of the ZZrID for the stable funding of scientific research activities at UP (which, over the period of the next four years, will be increased by 4 times compared to 2021). We adequately prepared for the new legislation by creating internal research programmes before the ZZrID came into force. Up until 2023, the internal research programmes were financed from the rector's fund, and in 2023, when UP began to receive funds from the research development pillar (RSF), they obtained additional funding from RSF funds. Two internal research programmes have already been transformed into research programmes this year. It is expected that, as long as the internal research programmes

show expected scientific excellence, at least six more internal research programmes will be transformed into research programmes by the end of the mandate. The strengthening of internal research programmes and the increase of scientific research activities of all researchers at UP will also be facilitated through opportunities within the European University Transform4Europe, by organizing multi-day research events for target groups and by consistent operation of the university in accordance with the Action Plan of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers at UP, which was adopted in 2022 as part of the preparation of the application for obtaining the HR Excellence in Research Award. It is expected that the process of obtaining the HR Excellence in Research Award will be successfully completed this year.

3. Pedagogical Excellence

Activities to achieve this section's goals are partially included in the framework of the development goals set up in the 4-year contract with the ministry on financing study activities and students' interest activities (2021-2024). In the future, the activities will also be performed within the European University Transform4Europe. The review of the realization of the indicators, written in Annex N of the UP Annual Report 2022, however, shows that the activities also need to be included into the development goals within this development pillar for the next 4-year contract with the ministry. The preparation of the development goals will start in the second half of 2023 since, in accordance with the national legislation, negotiations with the ministry will be performed in 2024. Nevertheless, the activities to achieve the goals of this section will also be carried out within the project GDI UP - Green, Digital & Inclusive University of Primorska, a project financed by the recovery and resilience plan (MVZI & NextGenerationEU). Within this project the implementation of the »digital PAI« has already started in order to ensure the appropriate increase of digital competences of the teaching staff.

4. Innovative Study Programmes

The development of innovative study programmes is carried out within the framework of the development goals set up in the previously mentioned 4-year contract with the ministry and within the framework of the GDI UP project, which was also already mentioned. In the next period, special emphasis will be given to the development of the offer of lifelong learning and micro-credentials for non-standard groups of students and to the preparation of joint and/or double degree study programmes at all levels. These activities will be performed in close cooperation with partner universities within Transform4Europe and with the 37 partner institutions within the European Network of Innovative Higher Education Institutions (ENIHEI), which make up a forum to exchange knowledge, ideas and experiences on how higher education can promote an innovation culture, and enable creativity, entrepreneurship and talent.

5. Cooperation with Society and Industry

In recent years, we have significantly strengthened cooperation with society and industry. New partnerships with the economy and users of knowledge in the local, national and international environment were established. Many partnerships were established in the ecosystem with InnoRenew CoE, which we co-founded in 2017 as coordinators of the first Teaming project in Slovenia. In the coming years the UP Centre for Knowledge Development and Transfer and the UP Science Centre will be strengthened in order to further increase/improve cooperation with society and industry. The GDI UP project will also be important in this respect. Among other things, the first Hub of the New European Bauhaus Academy (NEBAcademy) will be established within this project in cooperation with the European Commission in this year, in the European Year of Skills. In the coming years the hub will offer various training courses for professions in the construction industry with the aim of establishing the construction ecosystem for green and digital transformation. As part of the UP Science Centre, the

House of Science will be established in Piran in order to strengthen the connection with schools and teachers on the one hand, and, on the other hand, strengthen cooperation among the faculties and research areas within the university.

6. Recognition in the Global Network of Universities

UP became recognizable in the global network of universities mainly because of the following three achievements: joining the European University Transform4Europe, being included in the European Network of Innovative Higher Education Institutions, and the establishment of the UNESCO chair in partnership with Škocjan Caves Park. These international partnerships will be used to increase our visibility in the Slovenian higher education and research community. For further strengthening of our role in the global university network, a fund for additional co-financing of UP scientific journals that are not yet included in the SCI, SSCI or A&HCI databases will be established. Also, a university bookstore will be set up.

7. Internationalization at Home

The importance of achieving this section's goals is constantly increasing due to the growing numbers of international students (currently 19.53%) and employees (currently 12%). A mixing space for connecting and socializing between students, alumni, employees and members of the local community will be established in Foresteria, in the premises where the VPIS office operated until recently. A virtual environment for the exchange of ideas, experiences and cultures will be established via appropriate upgrade of the website »Welcome to the UP«.

8. High Student Motivation and Staff Efficiency

The University Clinic for UP students and employees will be established in cooperation with the Koper Health Centre. The University Library, which will offer access to a collection of resources, including books, journals, research papers and multimedia materials and will provide study spaces, will be established in the premises of the former Kolosej cinema. The library will be accessible 24/7 for all students and employees of UP. Sport UP will also remain an important element of this strategic section in order to properly address the measure »M1.12 Providing physical and sports activities for all students« defined in the National Higher Education Programme 2030. Acquisition of new dormitories for students, however, remains the main activity within this section. Namely, despite the fact that the new Student Dormitory Barka with 55 beds was recently established and that an additional 82 beds in the facility at Prisoje 9b in Koper will be provided by October 2023, the problem of student beds remains the weakest point of our university.

9. Balanced Staff Structure

The UP Gender Equality Plan of the UP will be followed and the measures defined in the HR Strategy Action Plan for UP researchers will be implemented in order to achieve this section's goals. Even though the priority at UP should be personnel rejuvenation, which we will achieve via the development funds and the GDI UP project, we need to be aware of the importance of the appropriate inclusion of emeritus professors into our activities. An Emeritus Professors Fund, financed from the rector's fund, will be established in order to enable the appropriate knowledge transfer to younger colleagues.

10. Quality Management

The focus will be on self-evaluations. This year, a new system of self-evaluation of scientific research activities in accordance with the new national legislation was introduced. After preparing the self-evaluation of scientific research activity for the year 2023, we will evaluate the established system and prepare possible adjustments. With the goal of simplification while simultaneously obtaining better

quality information, the IT support for the self-evaluation of scientific research activities will be established in 2023. In addition, activities for updating the system of study programmes self-evaluations will also be started this year. It is worth mentioning that towards the end of the second mandate, an application for the extension of accreditation of the university will need to be submitted and that a new mid-term development strategy for the next seven-year period will need to be prepared. Consequently, during the entire mandate appropriate records will need to be prepared. Internal events for preparation of guidelines for a bold transition into a new strategic period will also be organized.

I am looking forward to the next four years of our UP journey and I would greatly appreciate your support.

Prof. Klavdija Kutnar, PhD