



**IF4TM**

**D5.1.7 Individual social engagement plan for Belgrade Metropolitan University**

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Abstract	Individual social engagement plan for the University of Belgrade
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## TABLE OF CONTENT

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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET .....	2
VERSIONING AND CONTRIBUTION HISTORY .....	2
TABLE OF CONTENT .....	3
FIGURES .....	3
TABLES .....	3
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Engaged research .....	5
3. Engaged education/teaching.....	11
4. Social engagement .....	14
5. Measuring “social engagement” - Indicators.....	15
6. Recommendations .....	16
7. Next steps.....	17
8. References.....	17

## FIGURES

---

Figure 1 Three missions of HEIs .....	4
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## TABLES

---

<b>Table 4:</b> The list of possible indicators for measuring of social engagement progress or success .....	15
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### 1. Introduction

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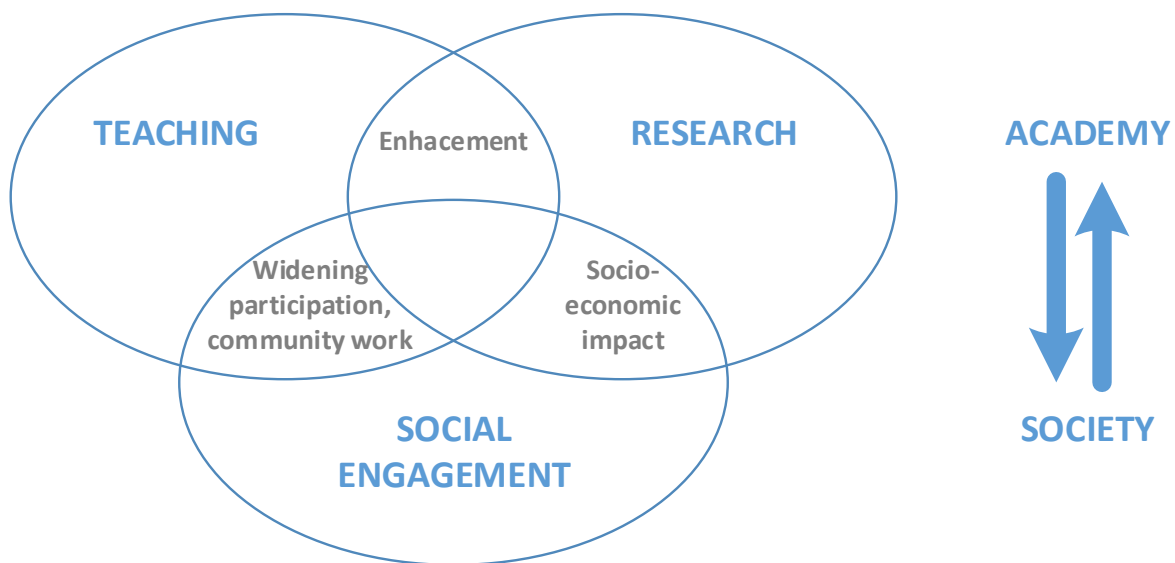
#### 1.1 About the project

ERASMUS+ project “*Institutional framework for development of the third mission of universities in Serbia*” (IF4TM) is intended to enable development of the third mission at higher education institutions (HEIs) from Republic of Serbia, members of the project consortium. Workpackage 5 (WP5) „*Social engagement dimension*“, within this project, is focused on social engagement dimension, social involvement and responsibility as well as closer interaction of universities with wider community. The aim of activity 5.1 “Defining universities’ social engagement plans” is to suggest guidelines and recommendations for development of individual social engagement plans for Serbian Higher Education Institutions.



## 1.2 Missions of modern universities

From their establishment, universities have been the centers of education and research. These two fields are known as first and second mission of universities or HEIs. These two missions have been naturally grown, bearing in mind that HEIs represent the extraordinary concentration of human resources, but also impressive infrastructural resources such as libraries, laboratories, sports facilities, etc., which should be open for wider community. Consequently, in recent period universities have adapted and articulated its role in the social, cultural and economic development of the wider society [1] and have tried to improve the visibility of university activities focused on services to society and industry. This is called the “third mission” of universities and this activity is a vitally important component of any university’s role. The “third mission” is not a separate mission, it is in synergy with two others in order to improve HEIs’ contribution to society (Figure 1).



**Figure 1** Three missions of HEIs

The “third mission” can be classified/summarized into following activities: (a) engaged research (technology transfer and innovation, etc.); (b) engaged education (lifelong learning/continuing education, public training, etc.); enabling studying to vulnerable groups; creation of the open society and support to the cultural diversity and broader horizons through participation in mobility schemes (c) social engagement (public access lectures and other public events, initiating public debates on important social issues, voluntary work and consultancy by university staff and/or students, etc.). Universities are expected to assume a more active role in regional and national economic development while facing competition from other public and private higher education and research institutions [2]. As economies are becoming increasingly knowledge-based, great expectations have been established for universities as drivers for knowledge, value creation [3] and shaping of innovation system, especially at regional level. Additionally, the social impact of higher education is also high on the European agenda because the European Commission expects higher education to support societal development through continuing education [4].



## 2. Engaged research

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*“Community engaged research is a collaborative process between the researcher and community partner that creates and disseminates knowledge and creative expression with the goal of contributing to the discipline and strengthening the well-being of the community. Community engaged research identifies the assets of all stakeholders and incorporates them in the design and conduct of the different phases of the research process. It promotes better research and translation of findings. Other benefits of community engaged research include development of research that is responsive to community need, increased capacity built through partnerships, expanded funding opportunities and greater opportunities to translate findings into practice.”* (<http://www.community.vcu.edu/faculty-support/-cenr-support-at-vcu/what-is-community-engaged-research/>)

From these definitions we can conclude that universities and employed staff should be aware that research can not be concluded just for sake of science but also need to be for society sake. If research is categorized as a second mission of university, community engaged research may be categorized as one of components of the Third Mission of universities.

As Belgrade Metropolitan University accepts the Declaration of Metropolitan Universities, cited in the following section.

### *Declaration of Metropolitan Universities*

*We, the leaders of metropolitan universities and colleges, embracing the historical values and principles which define all universities and colleges, and which make our institutions major intellectual resources for their metropolitan regions,*

- *reaffirm that the creation, interpretation, dissemination, and application of knowledge are the fundamental functions of our universities;*
- *assert and accept a broadened responsibility to bring these functions to bear on the needs of our metropolitan regions;*
- *commit our institutions to be responsive to the needs of our metropolitan areas by seeking new ways of using our human and physical resources to provide leadership in addressing metropolitan problems, through teaching, research, and professional service.*

*Our teaching must:*

- *educate individuals to be informed and effective citizens, as well as capable practitioners of professions and occupations;*
- *be adapted to the particular needs of metropolitan students, including minorities and other underserved groups, adults of all ages, and the place-bound;*
- *combine research-based knowledge with practical application and experience, using the best current technology and pedagogical techniques.*

*Our research must:*

- *seek and exploit opportunities for linking basic investigation with practical application, and for creating synergistic interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarly partnerships for attacking complex metropolitan problems, while meeting the highest scholarly standards of the academic community.*



*Our professional service must include:*

- *development of creative partnerships with public and private enterprises that ensure that the intellectual resources of our institutions are fully engaged with such enterprises in mutually beneficial ways;*
- *close working relationships with the elementary and secondary schools of our metropolitan regions, aimed at maximizing the effectiveness of the entire metropolitan education system, from preschool through post-doctoral levels;*
- *the fullest possible contributions to the cultural life and general quality of life of our metropolitan regions.*

(As quoted in Metropolitan Universities: An Emerging Model in American Education, compiled and edited by Daniel M. Johnson and David A. Bell, University of North Texas Press, Denton, Texas, 1995.)

From this Declaration we can notice that research should

- seek and exploit opportunities for linking basic investigation with practical application, and
- for creating synergistic interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarly partnerships for attacking complex metropolitan problems, while meeting the highest scholarly standards of the academic community

Obviously, Metropolitan Universities are committed to do research that is solving practical problems in order to solve complex metropolitan problems.

What makes a university a metropolitan university? It takes more than just a location in a metropolitan area.

- It takes a willingness to serve as an intellectual resource for society.
- It takes a direct involvement in addressing the challenges whose resolution will benefit society.
- It takes offering an excellent education to students of all ages, races, and backgrounds.

As described in the Declaration of Metropolitan Universities, **a metropolitan university is an integral part of its region, shaped by its community even as it works with its community to shape their joint future.**

The following section can give more information about the “metropolitan model” that Belgrade Metropolitan University is committed to implement and support.

### *Metropolitan Model*

A Metropolitan University is one that concentrates resources to serve surrounding communities, their diverse and expanding populations, their connecting technological corridors, and their international partners. The mission of a typical Metropolitan University is found in their desire to strive for national excellence while contributing to the economic development, social health, and cultural vitality of the urban or metropolitan center served.

The programs of a Metropolitan University embrace regional needs while focusing and striving for national excellence. Through dedicated efforts in serving as intellectual and creative resources to contributing to the economic development, social health and cultural



vitality, the need for the services of a Metropolitan University is essential. The location, population, demographics and psychographics of the institution's target regions affect a Metropolitan University's design.

The Metropolitan University of today strives to build close relationships with its stakeholders while serving as the "catalyst" for change and a source of development and advancement of the environment in which it resides. It is noted within the hierarchy's of government and business alike that Metropolitan Universities will be at the forefront of progressive education. Not only for the traditional student, but also for those students who strive to continually educate and develop themselves to the needs of their future.

Metropolitan Universities are significant players in the development of business and cultural leadership for their communities. They hone in like lasers on the needs of the business, cultural, non-profit, governmental, and social needs of their service area. They have significantly high levels of student and community engagement, research aimed at local issues, strong undergraduate research, global perspectives, and alternative educational delivery systems.

Metropolitan universities seek to play in their communities, such as

- regional economic development,
- contributions to lifelong learning, and
- first generation access to higher education.

By the **Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities**, these are institutions that:

*“strive*

- *to be responsive to the needs of our communities,*
- *to include teaching that is adaptable to the diverse needs of our metropolitan students, and*
- *to build close working relationships with elementary and secondary schools so as to improve the overall quality of education.*

*Metropolitan Universities combine research-based learning with practical application and are dedicated to creating interdisciplinary partnerships and forming alliances with outside public and private organizations to resolve complex metropolitan problems. Within the university environment, our colleges and universities seek to educate students to become informed and engaged citizens who will play a role in the betterment of society.”*

These two sections clearly show that Metropolitan Universities are, by definition, committed to community engaged research. By choosing its name, Belgrade Metropolitan University gave a clear and public commitment a willingness to serve as an intellectual resource for society. It takes a direct involvement in addressing the challenges whose resolution will benefit society. It takes offering an excellent education to students of all ages, races, and backgrounds. In education, BMU offer **online** bachelor and master programs, allowing

- students in remote and rural areas to access the quality higher education and to belong to a “virtual metropolitan community of students”,
- employed students to upgrade their knowledge and skills on order to respond better to new needs of employers and labour market,



In area of research, Belgrade Metropolitan University (BMU) give priority to the applied research that serve its community, including local companies, in order to contribute to the development of Serbian knowledge-based industry. Most of research projects performed by BMU staff should solve some problems of nearby communities and businesses.

Research should lead to development of innovations, offered by BMU industrial partners. So, **innovation development** is an integral part of BMU's "community engaged research". In its **Business and Education Centre** in Niš, has a special organisation units "**IT Innovation Centre**" aiming to bring together IT companies, BMU faculties and students, engaged in different innovation development projects. Joint interdisciplinary teams may develop prototypes of new innovative IT-related products. IT Innovation Centre is a kind of a "bridge" between already existing and established IT companies and BMU faculties and students. By developing prototypes of their future innovative products, companies may engage the intellectual capacity of BMU faculties and students. BMU faculties can focus their research activities in area that are relevant to companies and their development problems. Students can get their first experience using non-formal education, by working together with engineers from IT companies and their professors and teaching assistants, developing new prototypes of software systems, or developing new innovative IT products and applications, with partner IT companies

Business and Education Centre of BMU in Niš is in the process of developing its "**IT Business Incubator**", the organisation unit aiming to provide necessary conditions to start-up companies of its current or former students. BMU is trying to develop entrepreneurial spirits among its students and staff, by providing, both formal education in entrepreneurship by the course *OM325 Entrepreneurship*, but also by providing them all conditions to start their own business, by using services of its *IT Business Incubator*.

Development of innovations and innovative start-ups are closely related with generation of creative ideas. In order to encourage its students and faculties to generate new ideas for future innovations, BMU also offers to its students and faculties an appropriate environment for creative and critical thinking in its **Creativity Centre** that is also an organisational unit of Business and Education Centre in Niš. The Creativity Centre, as one of outcomes of IF4TM projects aims to support creative thinking of its students and generation of ideas for new projects aiming to develop innovations, i.e., innovative products, processes or services.

The fourth organizational unit of the Business and Education Centre of BMU in Niš is **Education Unit**. It provides supports to all BMU education programs currently offered at the Centre (bachelor programs, for example), or to be offered soon (short programs, for instance). The aim of the Education Unit is to educate students. Other three organizational units are to support the development of their *creativity* (Creativity Centre), *entrepreneurship* (IT Business Incubator) and *innovation development* (IT Innovation Centre, as shown in Figure 1. To educate students and to develop their *creativity*, their *entrepreneurship* and *skills to develop innovations*, is the mission of the Business and Education Centre of BMU in Niš. It will be a "factory" students with ideas for new inventions, new innovative start-ups, and innovative products, processes or services. All four units have equally important roles, but *they are all driven by generated ideas for new inventions*, that might become successful innovations if the market support them. Figure 2 Figure 2 spws



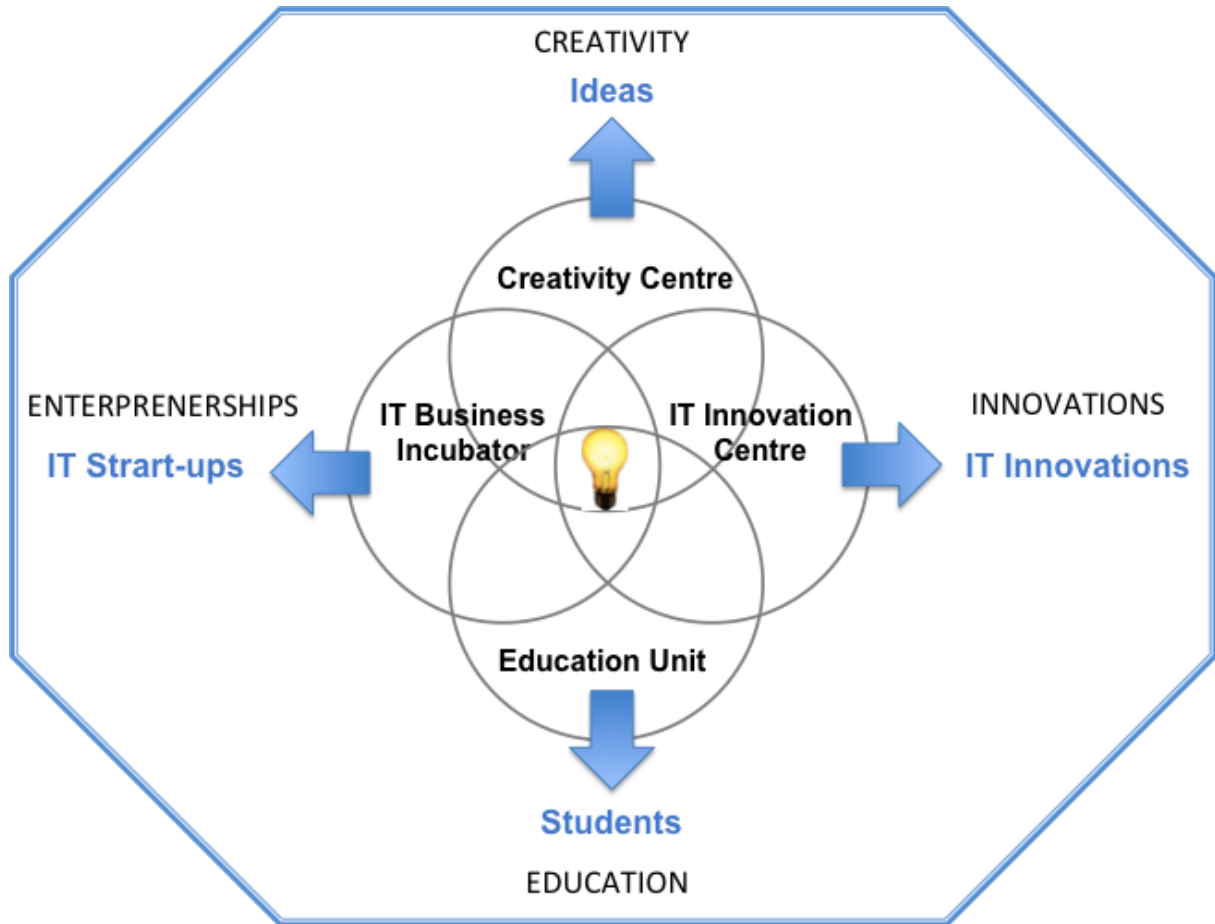


Figure 1: The roles of four organizational units of Business and Education Centre (BEC) of BMU

Figure 2 shows a usual workflow in BEC aiming to launch new innovative products, processes or services on the market.

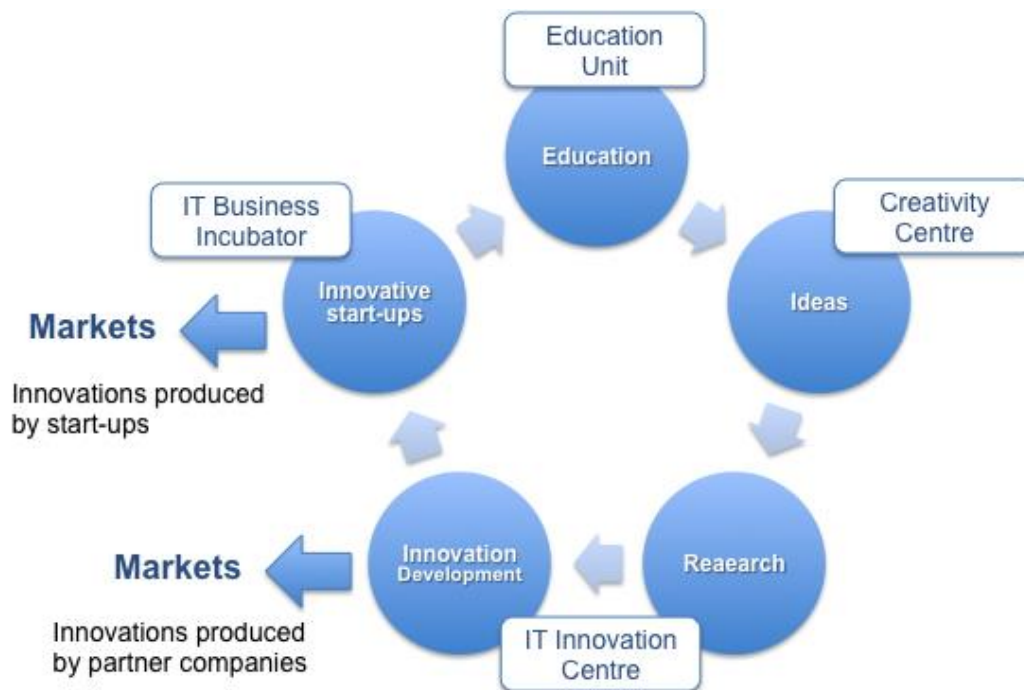


Figure 2: Innovation development workflow process in BEC



Figure 3 shows all four organizational units of BEC that integrate all functions necessary to realize the *ultimate goal* of BEC:

- *Launching successful innovative IT products* on the markets by partner companies, as results of a collaborative process that includes
  - education of *creative students*,
  - generation of *ideas* for new innovations,
  - engaged applied *research* driven by new ideas and market and community needs, and
  - development of *innovative products* implementing new ideas and research results, produced by established partner companies or by start-ups.

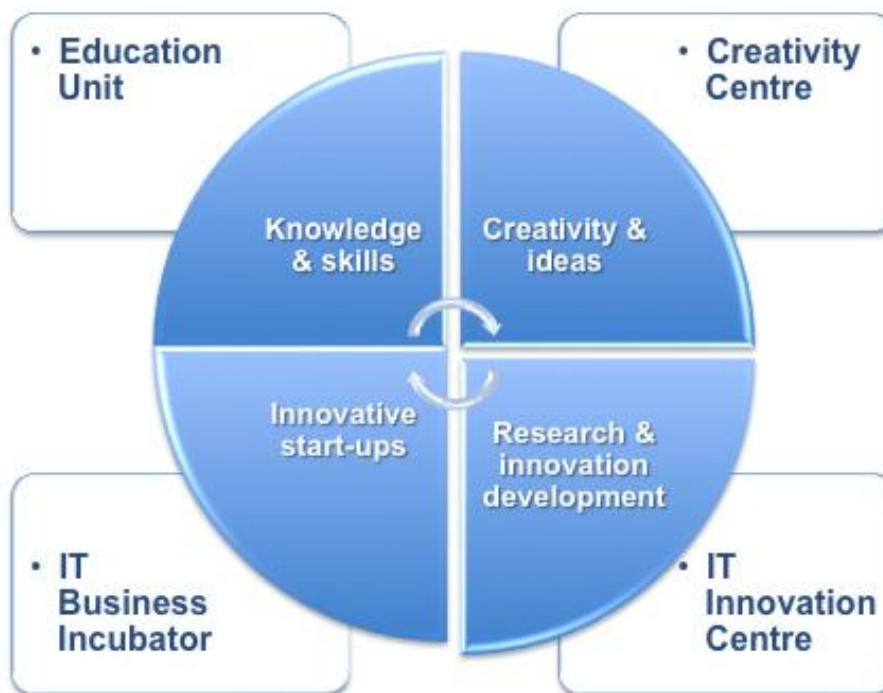


Figure 3: Four organizational units of BEC and their roles

As it can be seen, BMU engaged research is a part of a collaborative process that integrate all needed functions for innovation development. BMU partner companies can produce innovative product. They may be well established companies, probably having a small development group operating in *IT Innovation Centre of BEC*, or a start-up company, operating in *IT Business Incubator of BEC*, created to produce and launch on markets realize an innovation based on a generated idea and implementing research results.

Launching innovative products satisfying market or community needs is the final result, but many in-process results need to be achieved before an innovation is produced. Results of an engaged research are usually needed, as new ideas usually require a specific research. The following planning procedure needs to be implemented in order to get research results according to market or community needs:

- research of community needs
- research of global market needs
- generation of ideas how to satisfy identified community or market needs
- searching business partners



- searching for external funding opportunities, if it is necessary
- realization of research activities according to selected ideas and identified market or community needs,
- analysis of research results in order to decide whether they can be used for development of a innovative product or service,
- perform development of innovative product or service with a partner company

Engaged research has an important role in a collaborative development process of an innovation, as it may provide some unique product features as result of own research. *It is important to perform research based on previously identified needs of the community or global or specific markets.* Community needs may be specific for a geographic region or for an industrial sector where BMU is primarily operating. Market needs may be global and generic, and innovative products or services satisfying such needs are then produced for global markets. In some case, research is focused on needs and problems of a specific market (a region or a sector), where a company may have a competitive advantage. In any way, any engaged research must be driven by real needs of a community or a market. Market pull strategy should be primarily implemented. Product push strategy may be implemented only in special and rare cases where a new technology and innovation is expected to open new markets.

As the result of BMU engaged research, the following results are expected:

- **Innovation development projects with** IT companies (operating in IT Innovation Centre, or outside), involving BMU faculties and students
- **Industrial projects and consultancies**
  - BMU faculties are stimulated to perform different consulting activities or industrial projects for companies.
- **Start-up companies**
  - IT Business Incubator is going to provide different services to its tenants - start-ups, mainly created by its students and faculties.
- **BMU spin-off companies**
  - BMU is planning to be founding member of spin-off companies created by its faculties and students, as well as by its partner companies, as joint-venture companies.
- **Revenue from IPR and equity investments** into start-up and spin-off companies

### 3. Engaged education/teaching

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Engaged education/teaching and learning address community labor market needs as well as helping students to become knowledgeable and active citizens of their city, their region, their nation and the globalized world [5].

#### **Address labor market and community needs**

Labor market and community needs are becoming more dynamic. As BMU is a private HEI, having no financial support from public sources and state budget for education, it has to be always in line with labor market needs and needs of major or target employers. Market research and close communication with target employers is crucial. In order to achieve market-driven education, BMU is realizing the following marketing strategy in education:



- Permanently analyse global trends in industry development in order to identify future jobs and company needs
- Create and regularly update the database of companies expected to employ BMU students
- Perform surveys of target groups of companies on their current and future labor needs
- Establish *Employer Advisor Boards* at faculty or study program level, in order to critically analyse current programs and education process, and to propose changes according to new market needs.

**Provide flexible study programmes in the context of lifelong-learning, continuing education, distance learning, etc.**

BMU currently offers bachelor, master and PhD degree programs in

- computing (software engineering, information technology, computer games and information systems),
- business and marketing, and
- digital arts (graphic design, interactive design and fashion design).

All bachelor programs are offered for in-campus, online or blended learning education, and students may choose the most suitable mode of education. Master programs are mainly offered only online, as most of students are employed.

After analysing market needs and global trends, BMU is planning to extend its offer of programs according to the following directions:

- **Short programs** (similar to short-cycles in EU) lasting from 3 to 12 months, providing 30 to 60 ECTS, preparing students for a specific job, according to current needs of specific groups of employers. Target students:
  - *freshmen* seeking for a fast track education for jobs on demand on the labor market,
  - *graduate bachelor or master students* that need to get knowledge and skills in other disciplines, due to the needs of their jobs, or that need to change their profession and are looking to get education for jobs offered on the labor market,
  - *unsuccessful bachelor students* that dropped out their studies and want to get a short education for a job offered on the labor market.
- **Life-long learning (LLL) courses** with duration up to 3 months, offered to those who want to get new knowledge and skills in areas of their own profession, or in other disciplines.
- **Degree programs for international students** in collaboration with partner universities from EU and USA

Most of these programs will be offered for in-campus, online and blended learning education. This flexibility is needed to satisfy different needs of customers, i.e. students and learners.

Degree programs, short programs and LLL courses will be offered in the following education areas and disciplines:

## 1. Computing

### 1.1. Software Engineering (BSc, MSc, PhD, ShP, LLL)



- 1.2. Information Technology (BSc, ShP, LLL)
- 1.3. Computer Games (BSc, ShP, LLL)
- 1.4. Information Systems (BSc, MSc, ShP, LLL)
- 1.5. Information Security (MSc, ShP, LLL)

## 2. Management

- 2.1. Industrial and Operations Management (BSc, ShP, LLL)
- 2.2. Business and Marketing Management (BSc, Msc, ShP, LLL)
- 2.3. Sport Management (BSc, ShP, LLL)
- 2.4. Management and Development (PhD)

## 3. Digital arts - Design

- 3.1. Graphic Design (BSc, ShP, LLL)
- 3.2. Design of Interactive Media (BSc, ShP, LLL)
- 3.3. Fashion Design (BSc, ShP, LLL)
- 3.4. Design of New Media (MA, Doctor of Arts)

Besides different CE and LLL programs and courses offered commercially, BMU is also offering open and free workshops and courses to different target groups>

- **Open Workshops**
  - Workshops in different disciplines are periodically offered free to general public, such as Drawing, etc.
- **Open Online Workshops and Courses**
  - Some online courses, or workshops are offered free to all Internet users.
  - Currently, the following open workshops are offered:
    - Web Design
    - Development of Video Games
    - Fashion Design Basics
    - Project Planning
    - Basic Programming in *Visual C# and Java*
    - Product Promotion of Facebook
    - Package Design
    - Photoshop

In order to provide financial support to its students, as well as benefits of non-formal education, BMU has developed and implemented different dual education models scholarship schemes:

- **Dual Education (DE):**
  - BMU develops collaboration with IT companies willing to pay tuition fees and scholarships to students that works for them up to 20 hours a week during their studies.
  - BMU and *Innovative Software Technologies* d.o.o. have a DE program allowing more than 10 students a year to get financial support for their studies.
  - BMU and *PowMio* company from Germany have a DE program allowing few students a year to get financial support for their studies



- **Metropolitan Scholarships**
  - Offers a range of scholarships and vouchers to future students, usually to winners of its tournaments
  - Students from the least developed 40 municipalities in Serbia have *50% deduction* on standard tuition fees for all online programs
  - Students with disabilities get *20% deduction* on standard tuition fees for all online programs.

## 4. Social engagement

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Social engagement is usually related to links and activities of mutual benefit between university members and communities within its home city, region and country.

Community engagement should be one of the main responsibilities of the University since it is essential for economic and social future of each country. This is why the University and its students are engaged in many initiatives, volunteering activities, sports, cultural and other type of events for the wider community, etc.

BMU has the following plan for its social engagement activities:

- **Cooperation with secondary schools**
  - Visit up to 200 secondary schools per year to promote BMU programs and activities
  - Organize and offer of training courses to teachers and students parents
  - Give new and used equipment to schools
  - Realization of the 4 months tournament: “The Best IT project of the Year”
- **University Open Days**
  - University is open to visitors few days a year. Visitors are informed about programs and projects of BMU, with classrooms and labs, and with faculties and students from each program.
- **Metropolitan Talents**
  - Tournaments of secondary school students in IT, management and design.
- **Met Mobile Challenge**
  - The tournament open to secondary school students in designing of mobile applications
- **Met Creative Bite**
  - The tournament open to secondary school students in design
- **Met Biz Challenge**
  - The tournament open to secondary school students in management and design
- **Do you have an idea?**
  - The tournament of BMU students for the best business idea that could lead to a new innovation and entrepreneurial activity
- **Digis e-Learning Platform**
  - Digis is e-learning platform based on Moodle LMS, designed and administered by BMU dedicated to secondary school teachers and students. It provides free courses for teachers and students. Teachers may create and post their own online courses to be used by their students.
- **Conferences**



- BMU organises three annual international conferences on e-learning, on information security and on innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable development.
- **Contribution to development of Higher Education and Research Policy in Serbia**
  - BMU professors are members of different working groups created by different ministries of Government of Serbia to prepare and propose new legislation or policy papers in different area, such as “Education Strategy Development of Republic of Serbia till 2020pp
  - BMU is currently consortium partner in two Erasmus+ projects preparing legislation to support part/time studies and short/cycle programs (project PT-SCHE) and the Third Mission of universities (projectIF4TM).
- **Round Table Forums on actual challenges in our society**
  - BMU plans to start with series of round table discussion panels, with invited panellists, to analyse and discuss actual challenges of Serbian society.
- **Students voluntary work**
  - Students are involved, form time to time, in different voluntary work activities

## 5. Measuring “social engagement” - Indicators

In terms of social engagement performance, it is necessary that BMU adopts set of measurable indicators, to monitor its success in this context. A list of indicators should respect specificity of the university and wider ecosystem in which the university works. Some indicators which can be implemented are shown in Table 4.

**Table 1:** The list of possible indicators for measuring of social engagement progress or success

No.	Type	Indicators
1.	Engaged research	No. of innovation development projects contracted with partner companies
		% of faculties engaged by innovation development projects contracted with partner companies
		No. of consultancies and industrial projects
		% of faculties engaged in consultancies and industrial projects
		% of BMU revenue from contracted projects and IPR
		No. of spin-off companies created by BMU
		No. of start-ups supported (IT Business Incubator)
		No of centres/labs/resources mapped and presented to wider community
		No. of people who used BMU facilities/resources
2.	Engaged education	No. of Continuous Education (CE) programs mapped and promoted
		No. of LLL courses offered and active
		% of CE and LLL students of BMU total
		% of BMU revenue from CE and LLL programs
		No. of students and learners in CE and LLL programs



		No. of open workshops and courses offered.
		% of BMU students with BMU scholarships or other financial incentives or tuition fee deductions
		% of BMU students involved in Dual Education programs
		Number of pro-bono classes outside of University
3.	Social engagement	No. of secondary schools, as collaboration partners
		No. of tournaments/competitions organized by BMU for external participants and number of external competitors
		No. of events organized by other organizations that used BMU facilities
		% of BMU students/professors volunteering for benefits of wider community
		No. of round tables organized and No. of people participated
		No. of Open Day visitors per year
		% of faculties involved in working groups and other governmental bodies to prepare policy recommendations and legislation
		No of public debates on important social issues

Besides these quantitative indicators, qualitative indicators are very much important as well. These could include: satisfaction of the target groups (business community, journalists, NGOs, etc., investigated in polls); tradition of certain good practices (e.g. whether some events are organized in constant time periods); tone of the media articles on certain matter (positive, negative, taking into account experts' opinion or not, etc.), etc.

## 6. Recommendations

BMU should demonstrate its strong commitment to its local community by developing the social engagement strategy which defines the short, medium and long term priorities. This document gives a preview of the existing and some planned social engagement activities taking into account the gaps yet to be filled.

Generally speaking in terms of social engagement of the BMU and its member faculties, short terms priorities are following:

- *Engaged Research:*
  - Attract students and faculties to use new Creativity Centre for brain storming sessions and for generation ideas for their projects
  - Joint innovation development projects with partner companies
  - Development of services of the IT Business Incubator
- *Engaged Education:*
  - Establish Employers Advisory Boards for each of BMU faculties (FIT, FAM and FDU)
  - Develop and introduce internal standards for development of short-cycle programs
  - Develop, offer and realize new short-cycle programs





- Create different models for Dual Education (DE) and make agreements with companies interested to participate in BMU DE programs.
- *Social Engagement:*
  - Launch series of Round Table Forums on actual challenges of Serbian society
  - Continue to involve BMU and Erasmus+ structural projects
  - Improve external exposure of BMU

## 7. Next steps

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The next steps in the realization of the recommendations and priorities identified in the previous section, are as follows:

- Put in full action new Creativity Centre
- Open IT Business Incubator and develop its services to its tenants
- Open IT Innovation Centre and define joint innovation projects with IT companies
- Make agreements with companies interested for some of offered Duale Education models.
- Develop and offer three short-cycle programs in 2017 according to new internal standards for their development
- Establish and put in action Employers Advisory Boards at the Faculty of Information Technology, Faculty of Digital Arts and Faculty of Management.
- Create a plan for Round Table Forums and organize first four forums in 2017.

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