Department Strategy and Action Tracks

2023-2028

Department of Anthropology

KØBENHAVNS UNIVERSITET

Department Strategy 2023-2028

The world around us is facing unprecedented challenges: intensifying climate change, environmental degradation, global pandemics, increasing (health)care needs of chronically ill and elderly, changing demographics, violent conflicts, forced migration, rising socio-economic inequality and precarity as well as structurally imbedded forms of discrimination. Cutting edge anthropological research as well as anthropological skills are crucial for the kinds of societal change necessary to meet these challenges head.

At the Department of Anthropology, we aspire to:

- Engage in original and cutting-edge anthropological research that pushes the boundaries of existing knowledge in order to contribute to societal change;
- Consolidate our position as a world-leading center of research-based anthropological education providing students with robust, societally-relevant knowledge, competences, and skills;
- Be agenda-setting and increase our impact in terms of addressing key societal challenges;
- Be a department with a thriving working environment grounded in our core values.

Our mission

We are a dynamic, agenda-setting Department of Anthropology, engaging with human and social diversity to address critical contemporary challenges

Our vision

We want to be an inclusive and diverse Department, which pushes the boundaries of knowledge to understand and address societal problems and possibilities through interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research collaborations and engaged teaching

Our values

Awareness We are aware of potential biases and structurally-imposed disadvantages

Respect Everyone can expect to be treated respectfully

Open-mindedness We are curious about a diversity of perspectives

Transparency Clear expectations foster good collaborations, and thriving work and study environments

Inclusiveness Students and staff should feel welcome and included

Courage We dare to fail and learn from our efforts to develop professionally

MISSION

WE ARE a dynamic, agenda-setting anthropology department, engaging with human and social diversity to address critical contemporary challenges

VISION

WE WANT to be an inclusive and diverse department, which pushes the boundaries of knowledge to understand and address societal problems and possibilities through interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research collaborations and engaged teaching.

RESEARCH

*How might we engage in original and **cutting-edge anthropological research that pushes the boundaries** of existing knowledge in order to contribute to societal change*

Key strategic challenge:
- Funding conditions for anthropological research
- Societal recognition of the importance of anthropology
- Nurturing of original research environments and career development

ACTION TRACKS

EDUCATION

How might we aspire to consolidate our position as **a world-leading center of research-based anthropological education** providing students with robust, societally-relevant knowledge, competences, and skills.

Key strategic challenge:
To offer world-class education in anthropology in an inclusive and diverse study environment that develops the critical thinking and practical skills of our students, thus enabling them to achieve meaningful and impactful working lives.

ACTION TRACKS

SOCIETAL IMPACT

How might we aspire to become more agenda-setting and increase our impact in terms of **addressing key societal challenges**

Key strategic challenge:
To find time and resources to generate in-depth research and engage in collaborative partnerships that makes a difference to society at large.

ACTION TRACKS

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

How might we become a department with **a thriving working environment grounded in our core values** (Awareness, respect, Open-mindedness, Transparency, Inclusiveness, Courage)

Key strategic challenge?
Financial challenges and potential future budget cuts - uncertainty.
Inclusiveness of multiplicity and diversity.
Stress and poor work-life balance.
Lack of trust between management and employees.
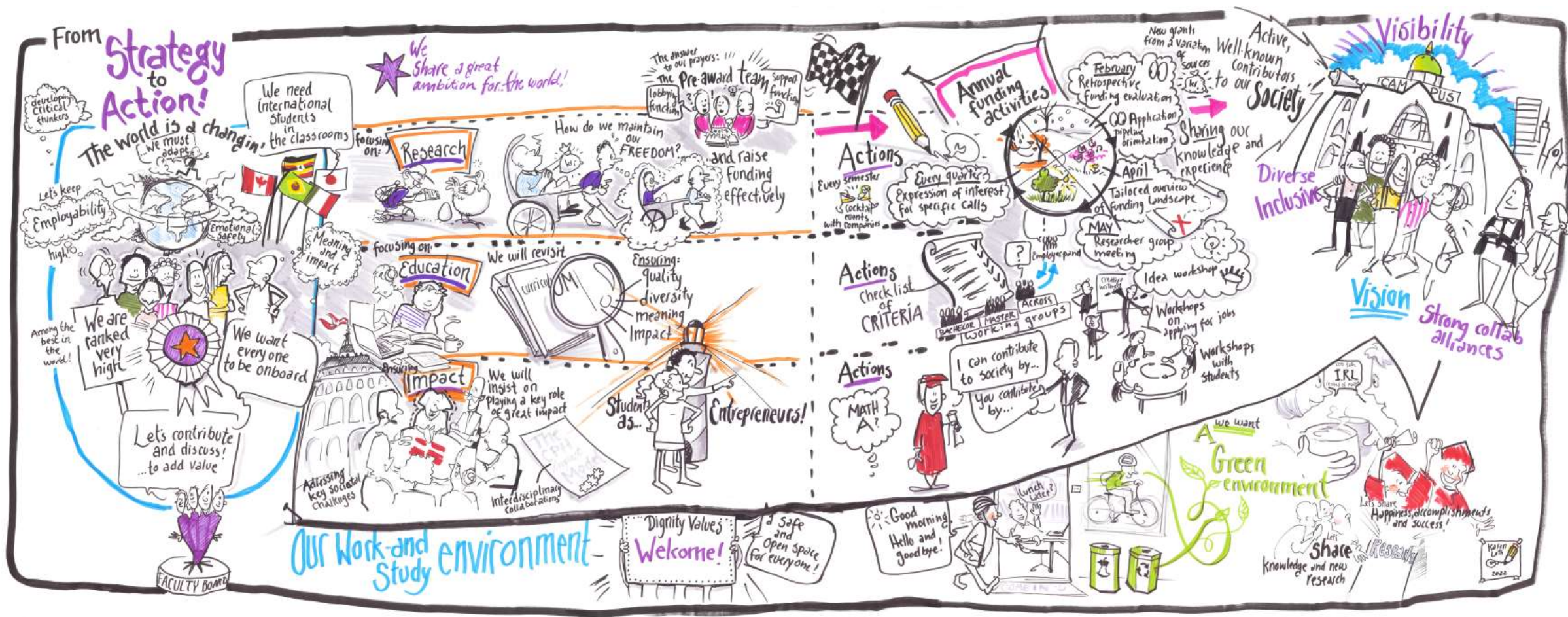Lack of career development opportunities and internal competition.

ACTION TRACKS

One pager. Strategy overview

Our strategy

Strategic aspirations 2023-2028

1

RESEARCH
We aspire to engage in original and cutting-edge anthropological research that pushes the boundaries of existing knowledge in order to contribute to societal change

2

EDUCATION
We aspire to consolidate our position as a world-leading centre of research-based anthropological education providing students with robust, societally-relevant knowledge, competences, and skills

3

SOCIETAL IMPACT
We aspire to be agenda-setting and increase our impact in terms of addressing key societal challenges

4

WORKING ENVIRONMENT
We aspire to be a department with a thriving working environment grounded in our core values (awareness, respect, open-mindedness, transparency, inclusiveness, courage)

Key targets

1 Research

Maintain our position as highest internationally ranked discipline at the Faculty of Social Sciences (QS rankings)

Secure DKK 18 million/year in external funding

2 Education

Revisit and update 30 course descriptions and curricula through collegial peer review every second academic year - diversity, societal relevance and graduate skills in focus

Improve the employability of our graduates and halve our graduate 4th-7th quarter unemployment compared to 2020 (NB. statistical time lag means that the effect of ongoing initiatives will not be immediately discernable)

3 Societal impact

Build 3 interdisciplinary SSH "go-to" teams for larger strategic partnerships (national & international) with focus on environment, health and mobility/ conflict

Make 4 short impact info-videos on chosen projects (one from each researcher group) for circulation on website and social media

4 Working Environment

1 fully operationalized on and off-boarding process for all employees, to ensure inclusiveness and recognition in collaboration with relevant TAP functions

1 re-introduced Friday afternoon research seminar series, organized by 1 responsible VIP

28 actions from 2022 WPA follow up plan fully implemented

Research

1

We aspire to engage in original and cutting-edge anthropological research, that pushes the boundaries of existing knowledge, in order to contribute to societal change

Current situation

The Department has a strong track record of attracting internationally prestigious grants, however due to a recent fall in secured grants we are currently experiencing a lack of sufficient funding to maintain original and cutting-edge research. At the same time, according to the Faculty of Social Sciences' new pre-award team, our Department has the highest percentage of rejections (almost half), which have scored above or just around funding thresholds indicating great potential. There are also concerns over academic freedom, possibilities of critical thinking and originality in the 'market university' which are shared by colleagues throughout higher education and research in Denmark. Independent research funds are increasingly being shifted towards strategically earmarked funding focused on societal challenges. As core funding is reduced, we are increasingly dependent on external funding. Finally, there is insufficient understanding amongst key societal stakeholders (and research peers from other disciplines) about the relevance of anthropological knowledge and methods.

Our key research challenges

- Funding conditions for anthropological research due to increasing dependence on external funding;
- Societal recognition of the importance of anthropological knowledge to solve key societal challenges;
- Nurturing of original research environments and career development for anthropological scholars at different levels

Our goals

In the 2023-2028 period, the Department of Anthropology will endeavor to:

- Strengthen capacity to attract external funding (18 million kr./year);
- Secure a culture of sharing opportunities for funding and intra-Department collaboration
- Diversify funding sources by improving cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations
- Enhance engagement in national and international research communities and interdisciplinary networks (through board and association membership);
- Support research communication of groundbreaking research findings and societal impact (including the definition of what constitutes a break-through)

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1 **Research**

Tasks

To achieve these goals, we will:

- Develop a sound pipeline of research projects together with pre-award team to achieve target of 18 million kr. per year;
- Make groundbreaking research findings and researcher groups more visible to societal stakeholders and funders through 2 media trainings, 1 enhanced website and development of new forms of dissemination together with the Faculty of Social Sciences' Communications team;
- Build strategic alliances between 4 researcher groups and relevant external stakeholders;
- Strengthen internal procedures for quality assurance of grant proposals (minimum 2 rounds of peer review) and the shaping of priorities through long-term relation work in cooperation with pre-award team;
- Revitalize research seminars and researcher groups by fostering an inspiring and inclusive research environment;
- Build strong alliances with stakeholders beyond academia in all main research fields through engagement in committees, boards, networks and collaborative research projects.

Our way of working

If we are to engage in original and cutting-edge anthropological research that pushes the boundaries of existing knowledge in order to contribute to societal change, we must ensure academic freedom, possibilities of critical thinking and originality (the capacity to go beyond the given and generate innovative ideas and new perspectives) at the Department of Anthropology in the everyday ways we work. Moreover, we must capitalize on and share experiences of new forms of cross-sectoral and cross-disciplinary collaboration as a concrete way to diversify and expand our funding sources. In carrying out our research we must be united by our values of openness, curiosity, kindness and engagement.

Education

2

We aspire to consolidate our position as a world-leading center of research-based anthropological education providing students with robust, societally-relevant knowledge, competences, and skills

Current situation

The Department of Anthropology contributes to no less than six degrees program, its own BSc in Anthropology, MSc in Anthropology and Master in Health Anthropology (continued education), while also actively participating in the teaching of the University of Copenhagen's MSc in Global Development, MSc in Social Data Science and MSc in Global Health. The study environment at the Department of Anthropology can sometimes be experienced as rather exclusive (not least due to high GPA entry requirements), and while anthropology graduates have an education of high quality, many of them (up to 20%) struggle with getting their first job in the months, thus finding the transition from student life to working life difficult. Following difficult pandemic years, students at the Department have reinvigorated their study environment through a number of new initiatives supported by the Faculty and Department. Students and staff are interested in developing more interaction outside of classroom and supervision settings.

Our key education challenges

- Offering world-class education in anthropology in an inclusive and diverse study and learning environment that develops the critical thinking and practical skills of our students, thus enabling them to achieve meaningful and impactful working lives.

Our goals

In the 2023-2028 period, the Department of Anthropology will endeavor to:

- Consolidate initiatives focused on facilitating the transition from student life to working life
- Make students aware of, and give them experience with, the societal value of anthropology
- Create a study environment based on the department's core values
- establish processes for how to improve quality and ensure diversity in teaching and curricula
- Make clear to faculty management that administrative support to create and run an alumni network is needed

2

Education

Tasks

To achieve these goals, we will:

- Implement, evaluate, and further develop the recently established collaboration with Magistrenes A-kasse, Ballisager, and others – 2 "life after university" workshops for final year MSc students per academic year
- Revisit and update 30 course descriptions and curricula through collegial peer review every two academic years - diversity, societal relevance and graduate skills in focus
- Set up a working group to explore if the transition from student life to working life can somehow be anticipated and strengthen in courses on the MSc in Anthropology
- Make it an integrated part of all courses to remind the students of the department's core values, and to enforce these values when needed
- Create regular peer supervision of teaching where colleagues are paired up, supported by our pedagogical consultants
- Create a "business case" for the creation of an alumni network and involve relevant stakeholders in a dialogue with the faculty management

Our way of working

To offer world-class education in anthropology in an inclusive and diverse study and learning environment that develops the critical thinking and practical skills of our students requires us to engage in continuous and constructive collegial peer feedback on our teaching curricula and activities. We need to ensure openness, curiosity, and respect towards different fields and ways of doing anthropology, among both teachers and students. We also need to engage in more dialogues and collaboration with external partners in ways that bring them into direct contact with our students and staff.

3 Societal impact

We aspire to be agenda-setting and increase our impact in terms of addressing key societal challenges

Current situation

With researchers at the Department of Anthropology working on the challenges of green transition, climate change, living with chronic illnesses, epidemics, reproduction, digital transitions, cashlessness, heritage, transnational crime, migration, life-enhancing design, political violence and so much more, there is no shortage of societal relevance of the knowledge that comes out of colleagues' research. Still, anthropologists in general and anthropological researchers in particular are too often at the margin of impact; that is, not part of the core group of actors in collaborative partnerships and more applied projects. And while anthropology has definitively established itself as a profession in Denmark with increasing numbers of employers specifically calling for anthropological qualifications, there is still a lack of societal recognition of the importance of anthropological knowledge and methods in efforts to solve key societal challenges through interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research collaborations. Moreover, career advancement within academia continues to be primarily based on peer-reviewed research outputs making it difficult to prioritize impact-oriented work on the part of especially, junior scholars who are often on fixed term contracts.

Our key societal impact challenges

Finding time and resources to generate in-depth research and engage in collaborative partnerships that makes a difference to society at large.

Our goals

In the 2023-2028 period, the Department of Anthropology will endeavor to:

- Develop the "Copenhagen Impact Model", which is based on societal engagement and interdisciplinary collaborations during all phases of the research process
- Support student-driven experiments and entrepreneurial activities

3 Societal impact

Tasks

To achieve these goals, we will:

- Continue the development of 1 collaborative impact book project (case-studies and the Copenhagen Impact model)
- Set up a process for making short movies of 4 chosen projects (one from each researcher group).
- Build interdisciplinary 3 SSH "go-to" teams for larger strategic partnerships (national and international) with focus on environment, health and mobility.
- Participate in strategic meetings with private funding agencies: Innovation Fund Denmark, Realdania and Novo Nordisk Foundation.
- Develop and implement a model for student-driven entrepreneurial activities with Lighthouse.
- Develop 1 elective case-based course for international students from social sciences.

Our way of working

If we are to be an agenda-setting Department of Anthropology that increases its impact in terms of addressing key societal challenges, we will need to integrate societal impact as a core element in research and education. We need to develop a working culture where it makes sense to work with impact by allocating resources (time) for reaching our goals and by recognizing and rewarding staff working with impact (promotion, tenure etc.) alongside their research, teaching and collegial contributions to a thriving working environment.

4 Working Environment

We aspire to be a department with a thriving working environment grounded in our core values (awareness, respect, open-mindedness, transparency, inclusiveness, courage)

Current situation

The past few years at the Department of Anthropology have been difficult and turbulent. Just as students and teachers were slowly adjusting to a more normalized life after the lockdowns that characterized the early phases of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, substantial budget cuts and restructuring were announced at the Faculty of Social Sciences. These processes culminated in 2022 as we lost two colleagues who were made redundant just as our administrative support colleagues underwent a substantial restructuring. These drastic changes have understandably led to a lot of uncertainty, but at the same time they have strengthened our shared ambition to continue our efforts aimed at creating an inclusive and respectful working environment with a good work-life balance and transparency in decision making, albeit with a multiplicity of views on how best to get there. Moreover, in support of ongoing green transition processes, the Faculty of Social Sciences and all the Departments need to revisit all working practices to determine where improvements can be made.

Our key working environment challenges

- Financial uncertainty.
- Finding ways of working that are more inclusive of multiplicity, diversity and sustainability.
- Insufficient trust between management and employees.
- Experiences of stress and poor work-life balance.
- Few career development opportunities and internal competition due to limited tenured positions for junior scholars and the UCPH Professor-promotion program.

Our goals

In the 2023-2028 period, the Department of Anthropology will endeavor to:

- Operationalize an on- and off-boarding process for all employees to ensure inclusiveness and recognition.
- Set up clear and relevant expectations in PDR meetings to ensure transparency in career development.
- Implement social activities for staff and students to enhance sociality and collegiality – through Friday cafes, the Department Day in September and activities at the Ethnographic Exploratory.
- Give room for staff to focus on core tasks to reduce stress and improve work-life balance.
- Create a Department Faculty Board with VIP representation to improve trust and transparency in decision-making processes.
- Develop sustainable working practices that facilitate our research, teaching and impact.

4 Working Environment

Tasks

To achieve these goals, we will:

- Develop and implement an on- and off-boarding processes for new employees in collaboration with relevant TAP functions
- Revisit career development plans for each VIP staff through PDRs
- Organize weekly common lunches (each Wednesday) and encourage colleagues to engage in everyday office life.
- Re-introduce the Friday afternoon research seminar series organized by 1 responsible VIP.
- Include TAP functions (IT, budget, communication, pre-award, post-award) in relevant VIP meetings
- Reduce number of staff involved in organizational processes & improve project and resource management skills through 1 training workshop
- Implement all 28 action points agreed in our 2022 WPA follow up plan
- Establish a Sustainability Laboratory at MEGA seminar 2023 "To discuss, experiment, and strategize around a common, yet locally differentiated, set of principles and approaches to sustainable research practices"

Our way of working

If we are to be a department with a thriving working environment grounded in our core values (awareness, respect, open-mindedness, transparency, inclusiveness, courage) we must ensure that these are incorporated into all work processes related to research, teaching and impact. We need to ensure a constructive dialogue between the Faculty Management Team, Department Faculty Board, VIP staff, TAP staff and students. Colleagues and management need to be appreciative of both formal achievements and the more 'invisible work' that goes into ensuring the daily workings of our Department. We need to help each other manage our time and resources, reminding each other that starting a new task should always entail removing an existing task!

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MISSION

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VISION

WE WANT to be an inclusive and diverse department, which pushes the boundaries of knowledge to understand and address societal problems and possibilities through interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research collaborations and engaged teaching.

RESEARCH	EDUCATION	SOCIETAL IMPACT	WORKING ENVIRONMENT
3 goals:	**3 goals:**	**3 goals:**	**Overall goal:**
• Diversification of funding sources • Pre-call lobbying • New large grants	• Improved course description and learning objectives • Improved course curricula • Better support of transition from student life to "life after university"	• A clear scoping of impact (CPH Model) • Make sure students are able to work with all aspects of CPH Model during their education	• Implement social activities to enhance sociality and collegiality • Give room for staff to focus on core tasks • Develop sustainable working practices
Key activities:	**Key activities:**	**Key activities:**	**Key activities:**
ANNUAL WHEEL ACTIVITIES: • Retrospective funding evaluation • Application pipeline orientation • Overview of funding landscape • Idea workshop • Quarterly follow-up on who applies to what	• Work groups develop description checklist • Input from study council and employers' panel • Renewing graduate follow-up interview • Scraping job ads • Send course convenors and review course description	• One-pager describing CPH Model • Operationalize CPH Model • Revisit project design course to address impact • Changemaking oriented master education (specialization track) • Intellectual understanding of change/intervention (conference?)	• Implement all 28 action points agreed in our 2022 WPA follow up plan

Action Track overview

Action Track: Research

Action Track owner: Stine Krøijer	
3 MEASURABLE GOALS • Diversification of funding sources • Pre-call lobbying • New large grants	**3 INDICATORS OF PROGRESS** • From 2023, we will measure the amount of funding sources/funding bodies/instruments, that are applied for -> we then aim to increase the diversity = number of various sources by 10% over the next 3 years. • 2 share-back meetings per year re pre-call lobbying experience and learnings / contacting at least 1 potential funder per main researcher group • Millions – 18 million kr./year in external funding
MAIN CHALLENGES Starting application processes earlier (see annual wheel below) • Having the time to build consortia • Lack of admin support for application writing	**KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT TO BE COLLECTED** • Pre-call/Non-call lobbying/networking • Optimized pre-award unit support • Trends in funding landscape presented
STAKEHOLDERS • Funding agencies • Pre-award Team • Faculty leadership • Mary Centre	**MINDSET AND BEHAVIORS** • Open-mindedness, courage, respect and inclusiveness will be crucial as we take collective responsibility for securing external funding
EXPERIMENT • Organize a cocktail event for potential funders to align anthropological research possibilities with needs of funders	

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Action Track: Education

Action track owner: Kasper Tang Vangkilde	
3 MEASURABLE GOALS • Improved course descriptions and learning objectives which clearly explain pedagogical aims as well as societal relevance of all courses • Improved course curricula reflecting course topics/themes, reading list contributor backgrounds, student backgrounds, methodological diversity and societal relevance • Better support of transition from student life to "life after university" – improved employability of graduates	**3 INDICATORS OF PROGRESS** • 3 working groups covering BSc, MSc and elective courses established to provide inputs for checklist a checklist for reviewing course descriptions and reading lists • 30 revised course descriptions and reading lists • 2 thesis writing seminars combined with "life after uni" sessions held in Spring semesters
MAIN CHALLENGES • Agreeing on the checklist template as well as defining human and social diversity • Ensuring that improvement of course descriptions and curricula is a collegial and respectful process by making sure that course conveners have a clear mandate to make final decisions on course content while taking collegial inputs into account	**KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT TO BE COLLECTED** We need to establish three working groups to ensure that checklist templates reflect the needs and requirements of BSc courses, MSc courses as well as electives.
STAKEHOLDERS Teachers, Study Council, students, study administration	**MINDSET AND BEHAVIORS** Open-mindedness and mutual respect are key to ensure that course conveners are supported in the curricula they develop
EXPERIMENT • 3-4 workshops for thesis students with the headline: Write, eat and search: a social and professional community for thesis students at IA. The purpose is to combine the practice of writing skills with job searching.	

Action track: Societal Impact

Action track owner: Simon Westergaard Lex

3 MEASURABLE GOALS	3 INDICATORS OF PROGRESS
• Have a clear scoping of impact – what is it and how do we work with it (CPH impact model) • Make sure that students are able to work with all aspects of the CPH model during their education	• All master students are able to explain how they can contribute to society with their education hereby increasing employability with 2% over five years • All employees can explain what impact is and how they work with it using the CPH impact model to document and show impact – which will support our goal of reaching 18 mio Kr. in external funding by increasing credibility and invitations for collaborations and dissemination
MAIN CHALLENGES	**KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT TO BE COLLECTED**
There are structural and normative challenges for master students to work with and address impact and changemaking	Work on the Copenhagen Impact Model by soliciting further inputs from researchers, teachers, students and stakeholders
STAKEHOLDERS	**MINDSET AND BEHAVIORS**
How to work with changemaking? Researchers, Mary Centre, Lighthouse, Politicians, Private sector	• To be more inclusive towards more practice-oriented students (not loosing them to other masters) • To focus on quality and not just quantity of impact

EXPERIMENT

• **Studieordnings-laboratorie** for KA track on social change. A two-hour meeting
Criteria for participation:
• Thesis project about ongoing change process with external partners
• Social change as an intellectual project
• Rethink consequences for theory course, project-design course, thesis demands, ethics and communication

Work Environment actions

Action plan owner: Hanne Overgaard Mogensen

Task in focus on seminar dialogues: Implement all 28 action points agreed in our 2022 WPA follow up plan

Following **initiatives** and **activities** with connection to the 2022 WPA follow up plan were decided at the seminar, based on the process facilitated by Resonans. The first point can be implemented by all right away. The other points needs further concrete planning.

- Presence at the department, show an interest in and greet colleagues daily.

- Discuss communication practices: what do we expect from each other in terms of response time, etc.?

- Revitalize and rethink "Instituttets Dag" (The annual event where the department celebrates itself and communicates to others what is going on at the department)

- Extended peer feedback process - include peer feedback on external reviews and preparation for re-submission

- Administrative support at the department level (an octopus/go-to person)