

Syikli

UNIVERSITY PROPERTIES OF FINLAND ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



ALSO IN FINNISH



Auditorium

Aurum's goal is Excellent rating

Campus

Visma Solutions landed at campus

Locker room

Keijo Hämäläinen has two passions

Experimentation pays off



A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, I decided to try something new. I built an everlasting lamp in my yard, with a frame made from stone and the lamp part made from aluminium. The lamp will never require any treatment or maintenance – you will only have to replace the light source.

Experiments are a key part of the operating culture of The University Properties of Finland (SYK). We want to reflect the nature of our owners, the universities. Hence, our values include responsibility for the development of our own operations in cooperation with the universities. Our goal is to conduct interesting experiments.

We have budgeted half a million euros per year for “demo projects” or the development of learning and research environments. We also have a shared experiment budget of 900,000 euros per year with the universities. As in the case of the demos, the universities pay half the costs of these experiments. The initiative for an experiment comes from a university or from us.

Naturally, we never conduct an experiment just for the sake of experimentation. If the experiment proves successful, we introduce it as part of our operations.

One of the first social corridor spaces was built at the Savilahti

campus in Kuopio back in the day. Up until then, corridors had been just corridors – deserted and empty. In Kuopio, a café was opened in a corridor for people to meet and learn from each other. Since then, similar social corridors have appeared all over Finland.

An experiment can lead to an innovation that will boost research, promote learning and thus make the world a better place.

Mauno Sievänen
CEO

From university reform to campus development

University Properties of Finland (SYK) arose from the common goal of Finnish universities to be autonomous and financially sound. Currently, SYK’s main tasks are development of university campuses and risk management for university properties.

SYK WAS ESTABLISHED a decade ago amidst the upheavals of the nationwide reforms of institutes of higher education, as part of the capitalisation of new, independent universities. The long-standing chair of SYK’s Board of Directors, **Petri Lintunen**, played a major role in creating the new system.

“Petri was also heavily involved in establishing the independence of universities in Finland, and this led to the emergence of SYK,” explains the company’s CEO **Mauno Sievänen**.

Lintunen had a major influence on the founding of SYK and the stabilisation of operations under new ownership. Lintunen also wanted to document the development of the new company from the outset, as the historical university reform programme extended to real estate and the handling of national assets.

Post-doctoral researcher **Mikko Puustinen** was enlisted to keep a record of events from SYK’s earliest days. Four documentation rounds have been carried out to date.

“One thing that makes SYK so different is that I regularly get to chat with people and to create a record of events and the prevailing mood. An extensive amount of material has accumulated in this way over the years, which will really be a treasure trove in the future,” Puustinen says.

Shortly after the establishment of SYK, it became clear that it could be more than a real estate maintenance company.

This resulted in a vision for the development of campuses and learning environments, under the direction of Mauno Sievänen.

“SYK has taken a new approach to shaping campus life and in determining how facilities can be as functional as possible,” says Puustinen.

In Sievänen’s view, one of SYK’s most important achievements has been ensuring that campuses remain in use and retain their vitality, despite Finnish universities having significantly reduced the amount of space they occupy. Campus infrastructure has also been renewed through renovations and the construction of new buildings.

For example, the teaching infrastructure has been renewed at all the faculties of medicine within the past ten years, according to Sievänen.

SYK’s work also has an important social dimension by ensuring that university properties remain healthy and safe. Problems with indoor air quality have been resolved, and a clear operating model has been put in place for dealing with potential problems.

You never know **what will happen** when talented people who are excited about what they do bump into each other by accident.

text Marjo Kanerva | photo Shutterstock



Chance encounters

KAMPUSKLUBI (the Campus Club) is all about random encounters. Operating at the Hervanta campus of Tampere University, Kampusklubi brings together businesses and experts, researchers and students from a variety of fields. A diverse selection of people who possess different types of expertise but are all interested in R&D meet at the club.

These encounters evolve into new networks, action and collaboration, which at their best leads to shared projects, innovation and successful business.

Themes of interest to the participants are grappled with at the club. Lately, the participants have been especially interested in morning events focusing on AI and virtual reality.

Kampusklubi has 38 member companies, ranging from large enterprises to startups. Annually, 4,000 visitors attend the events. ▀

[Read more](https://sykoy.fi/en/campus-club/) <https://sykoy.fi/en/campus-club/>

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From research to practice

text Marjo Kanerva | photo Shutterstock

BUILDING USERS and customers appreciate how SYK takes them into account in building design. The model of co-development is an excellent example of a practice that was initially triggered by a research project, namely the learning spaces programme of SHOK, a collective of Finnish companies, institutes of higher education and research institutes.

From the beginning, SYK has vigorously invested in research. Throughout its ten-year history, the company has invested at least 500,000 euros each year in research, development and innovation. In addition, SYK has fostered a culture of experimentation through various demo projects.

1

Ecosystem projects

In the Virpa C and Virpa D ecosystem projects, companies and research organisations are piloting digital real estate and user services in a number of areas, including Kampusareena, the Tellus space at the University of Oulu, and the Medisiina D building. The research restaurant Flavoria in Medisiina D is a joint initiative of the University of Turku, Sodexo and a number of other companies.

As part of the Virpa C project, 400 sensors were installed on the fifth floor of Kampusareena. The sensors are being used to collect data every hour for a period of three months. This will help us study things such as the interactions between lighting, heating and air conditioning systems.

Ken Dooley, technology director, Granlund Oy

Amongst other things, business practices have been developed. A good example of this is the indoor air operating model, which draws on the latest research findings for planning and implementing structural refurbishments and rectifying indoor air problems.

SYK Academy coordinates the company's research and development projects, monitors trends and weak signals and supports employees' skills development. SYK Academy is also organising a variety of events to disseminate research results.

Initially launched by **Olli Niemi**, SYK's research, development and innovation activities are now coordinated by learning envi-

2

Publications

Further results of the Learning campus project have been published, and are available in the materials bank on SYK's website. In cooperation with the European Restore network, a booklet entitled *Regenerative Construction and Operation* has been published on the challenges of sustainable development in real estate maintenance.

SYK takes a bold approach to innovation and experimentation. Together with SYK, we are offering universities an international level of research challenges and genuine partnership in real estate research.

Ari Ahonen, industry professor, Faculty of the Built Environment, University of Tampere

The co-development of working and learning facilities has given a boost to research and cooperation between SYK and university staff and students. There is now increased courage to experiment with new solutions.

Emma Kostainen, lecturer, Department of Teacher Education, University of Jyväskylä

ronments expert and adjunct professor **Suvi Nenonen**. **Ari-Pekka Lassila** is in charge of demo activities.

According to Nenonen, cross-sectoral research is becoming increasingly important.

"For example, digitalisation and sustainable development require a systematic approach. There is a need for cooperation between faculties of law, business economics and technical sciences, as well as new methodological initiatives. Good examples include the knowledge management research projects carried out at the University of Tampere's CoreLab in cooperation with the real estate and construction sectors".

3

Achieving results together

Research, development and innovation activities have so far resulted in 15 theses and several doctoral dissertations or parts of them. Research carried out with researchers is published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at conferences almost every year.

SYK has played an active role as a real estate specialist in the u05G project, which explored alternative ways of implementing local 5G networks.

Marja Matinmikko-Blue, university researcher, u05G project coordinator, University of Oulu

Dedicated to natural sciences, the goal of the Aurum building is to raise Turku to the world map of research. The responsibly constructed building is an efficient platform for this aspiration. ▷

text Anne Hänninen, Marjo Kanerva
photos Marjaana Malkamäki, Jussi Vierimaa
illustration Katri Nietosjärvi



According to architect Piia Viitanen, the way to find right solutions is to involve the users in the design of the building.

'Only **Nobel** *is missing'*



"SYK has raised the bar high," says Director Aki Havia.

A new gold nugget for use by the University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University will rise in the Turku campus. Aurum, or "Gold", is a natural choice of name for a building for natural scientists.

SYK has raised the environmental bar extremely high in the construction of Aurum: the goal is the BREEAM rating of "Excellent", which has been achieved only by very few buildings in the Nordic countries.

"We want to build good and responsible buildings. In a new building, our goal is 'Excellent', and in the case of a renovation, we aim for 'Very Good'," says **Aki Havia**, Director, Project Management at SYK.

BREEAM strongly guides the planning and implementation of the project. An extremely wide range of issues from project management and materials to waste management must be considered when constructing according to the BREEAM standards. Energy efficiency and the quality of indoor air are especially important. To obtain the rating, a project must report how often buses pass the building and what kind of communal spaces there are in the building, for example.

The classification is not an end in itself; instead, the BREEAM system has been designed to ensure that the correct issues are taken into account.

Spaces lead towards a Nobel Prize

Pleasantness is a key issue, and not only because of the rating or comfort.

"Beautiful spaces will attract people into the building, and when top people are under the same roof, you will create top research and education," says **Päivi Mikkola**, Chief Operating Officer at the University of Turku.

Ulla Achrén, Director of Administration at Åbo Akademi University, sees the new facilities as an asset when competing for new students. A student suspecting indoor air problems or otherwise poor facilities will vote with their feet.

Functional facilities also create a good cycle, as they assist in boosting education and research, as well as the international visibility of researchers. This, in turn, increases the level of education.

"The only thing we don't have is a Nobel Prize!"

Solar power and geothermal heat

In addition to BREEAM, SYK has set its own strict energy saving goals. SYK is a party to the property sec-

tor energy efficiency agreements for 2017–2025. SYK's goal is to cut 7.5 percent from the heating energy consumption of its properties by 2025. A separate goal for each campus and building has been set.

"In addition to reducing our consumption level, we will start to use solar panels and geothermal heat as our sources of renewable energy," Havia says.

Aurum's energy will come partly from solar panels and geothermal heat, the investment costs of which will, according to surveys conducted at the design stage, be covered during the systems' service lives.

Many parties involved

An equally important part of responsible operations is to ensure that the buildings constructed serve users now and in the future, and that they are healthy, safe and pleasant to use.

SYK's approach is to do this work in cooperation with the users, authorities and neighbouring buildings.

"In cooperation with local residents, we determined traffic arrangements that calmed down the area's parking traffic and thus assisted in developing the entire area. That was quite special!" says **Piia Viitanen** from Aihio Arkkitehdit Oy, the designer of Aurum.

In the case of Aurum, the main users of the building have been involved in the design process from the very beginning, and regular meetings will continue until the end of the construction project.

Some 200 square metres per floor of empty corridors were eliminated from the six-storey building by identifying key functional needs of the users and



Ulla Achrén believes that shared spaces and equipment will benefit both universities considerably.

Energy will come partly from solar panels and geothermal heat.

CARBON SINKS IN NAMIBIA

THE UNIVERSITIES OF TURKU AND NAMIBIA are planting trees in Namibia to absorb harmful carbon dioxide emissions and support the country's economy.

Seawater or saline groundwater cleaned with the help of solar energy will be used to irrigate the trees. The tree area will act as a carbon sink, i.e. it will absorb carbon dioxide emissions.

"The University of Turku plans to be carbon neutral by 2025, and this is one way of reducing the university's carbon footprint. Property management and energy consumption play a key role here, which is why SYK is a natural choice of partner for us," says **Kalervo Väänänen**, rector of the University of Turku, now retired.

SYK is also involved in the project to even out its carbon balance.

Feasibility of a desalination method based on solar energy that has been developed in Finland in the generation of household water is being tested in Namibia. Namibia is one of the world's driest countries: approximately 22% of its surface area is desert, and climate change will make the situation even worse.

"It has been proven that solar energy can be used to turn seawater into potable water at a reasonable cost.

We are currently in the process of planting a research garden where we will test the use of the desalinated seawater as irrigation water and the applicability of different tree and plant types for this purpose."

"This second phase will last at least a lifetime. It takes time for trees to become fully grown," Väänänen says.

In the autumn, the University of Turku will start an IT master's programme at the University of Namibia, where researchers and students will design automation of the irrigation system. The goal is for the system to independently control and optimise the irrigation of trees.

AURUM

- * Construction started: 2018
- * To be completed: 2021
- * Gross floor area: 23,000 m²
- * Location: University campus, Turku



Shared coffee room provides language immersion for both parties.

developing new kind of synergic space solutions.

“Were both universities to build their own buildings, the price tag would be completely different,” Mikkola says.

Creating new together

Joint development was a way for SYK to obtain hidden information from the users: which aspects of the user functions should be considered and what kind of spaces are needed. The design also focuses on how people operate in the building and how the digital tools they will use must be taken into account when designing the spaces.

“This approach requires some input from the users of the building, but that is the only way to achieve good results. Only the users are able to explain how they work in a specific laboratory and what pieces of equipment can be placed in the same room. That’s something an outsider cannot say,” Viitanen points out.

In designing Aurum, the involvement of the users allowed the creation of an entirely new shared laboratory: teams of five different professors will be able to use the same space. Only actions requiring special conditions will be performed outside the space.

“SYK always offers clear instructions and specifies goals, but offers some leeway to find the optimal solution. Nobody asked us to create a new laboratory concept – it was created during the cooperation with the users,” Viitanen says.

Experience from coexistence

Aurum is the third shared space for the University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University. A solid foundation for cooperation had already been created.

“It’s very typical of people in Turku to think about what they can achieve through cooperation. Space solutions are a good means of doing just that,” Mikkola says.

Geologists and IT people from the two universities have been the trailblazers in the sharing of spaces, and experiences have been positive. Both universities have their own space – a floor or a wing – plus the shared spaces where experts from the same field come face-to-face with each other.

“The separate areas are important for us to guarantee a Swedish-speaking environment for our students. On the other hand, you can see in the geology building that a shared coffee room is a genuine language immersion for both parties involved,” Achrén says.

Using resources wisely

The flexibility and modifiability of the spaces make them efficient. All the teaching spaces are shared and can be used for different purposes.

“When the restaurant is closed, the space can be used as a venue for events, to present project work or to do group work,” Viitanen says.

Efficient use of space means resources are being wisely used. For the same reason, avoiding the building of unnecessary space is important to SYK. Modifiability ensures that the building will remain useful for both the users and SYK throughout its lifecycle.

“A key issue for us and our owners is retention of the value of buildings during use. That’s why we should build them well, make sure they serve their users and keep them up-to-date,” Havia points out. ▀

“When top people are under the same roof, you will create top research and education,” says Päivi Mikkola.



More openness

Green bonds to finance sustainable projects. According to SYK’s Anssi Koski, if green funding became more common, it would benefit everybody.

text Susanna Rapp | photo Marjaana Malkamäki

Why is sustainable financing topical right now?

Many companies consider sustainability an even more integral part of their business, and with good reason. In my opinion, the financial sector must also be involved in the fight against climate change by any means possible.

There is still room for growth in the Finnish market. We started last November by issuing the first green bond in the property business, which was the third green bond ever in Finland. Everybody would benefit from green financing becoming more common.

What is the goal of a green bond?

A green bond increases transparency as well as an understanding of how funds are used and what is the impact from the use of the funds.

The financial sector being involved better guarantees spending that is actually sustainable. Although there are no standardised criteria for green bonds, their use is being monitored and reported.

In many cases, an independent third party determines how green a company’s promises are. The Norwegian research institute Cicero assessed our company and green financing programme, and found them ecologically advanced. According to Cicero, our projects play their part in responding to the challenges created by climate change and the low-carbon approach.

How does sustainable financing impact SYK’s operations?

We invest funds in accordance with a specific frame of reference in certified and environmentally sustainable projects such as the Aurum construction project in Turku. We are committed to ensuring that the energy consumption of buildings funded with the green financing is at least 15 percent lower than required by the building legislation, for example. This is an ambitious goal, but we aim to reach it. ▀



ANSSI KOSKI

- ★ Deputy CEO and CFO, SYK
- ★ Own green act: I’m an avid recycler and minimise all forms of packaging materials in my everyday life.



The fairly new Tampere University wants to use their spaces and facilities to create an atmosphere that supports creativity and creates surprises.

text Anne Hänninen
photo Marjaana Malkamäki

Wearable solar panel and Oxford model

Surprisingly enough, Tampere has Finland's youngest university, which is only living its first year now. It was born when the University of Tampere and the Tampere University of Technology merged.

The merger was effected because of a desire to reach a leading position in the universities' strongest competence areas. Technology, health and society are the fields in which Tampere wants to become an attractive global-scale university.

"We have huge potential that will not go anywhere or even be recognised without people from different fields meeting. Now it's 'allowed' for researchers in the fields of technology and social sciences to meet, as we are in the same university," explains Mari Walls, President of Tampere University.

At a personnel event, she was approached by a social psychology researcher who had been contacted by a chemistry researcher out of the blue to discuss the launching of a solar panel being developed at the university.

The flexible solar panel acts like fabric. How should the behaviour of people be taken into account when launching the invention? Should the panel be placed in a hat or rucksack, or on the shoulders, or how should usability be addressed?

"This gave rise to a great discussion which, I believe, led to a research application."

Creativity from spaces

It is the university's duty to create a safe atmosphere where people dare to contact their colleagues to ask them about something not in their area of expertise.

"In this respect, the facilities are the key – they are not just walls or desks. We want to create spaces that support creativity and the element of surprise. That's what the solar panel story is all about."

Tampere needs places where meetings are possible, especially ones where the younger generations of researchers and students feel at home.

"The most popular area in our city centre campus is the new Cafe & Aula Toivo. It is almost always full of students and researchers. It includes modifiable booths of different sizes for working, a café and a speaker's corner for events. We need more spaces like it."

Fewer lecture halls

The university community operates in three campus areas: the city centre, Hervanta and Kauppi. Discussion about the future development of the campuses is still ongoing. The work is unfinished – the goals will be clarified this autumn.

"I can already say that the least popu-

lar of the four proposed campus scenarios was the option of three equal prongs, i.e. the current status."

One development theme is the impact of digital content on teaching.

"When studying is possible anywhere at any time, fewer lectures are needed. Will we be adopting the Oxford model, where professors hold sessions to teach less than ten students at a time?"

Fewer lecture halls will be needed, and Walls thinks there are too many separate offices as well. However, before starting to force researchers to use multi-function spaces, they need to be allowed to try them out and see the benefits for themselves.

Multi-function user challenge

The rearrangement of functions can even free up entire buildings. These spaces will be taken up by day-care centres, schools, businesses or research institutes.

A property with a variety of users introduces entirely new challenges. For example, the university cannot offer porter services for the other tenants. How should SYK respond to these changes in your opinion?

"SYK is currently working mostly based on subcontractors and partners, and the ownership of outsourced services is not necessarily strong enough to resolve these problems. So, should SYK hire more employees to bear responsibility for the multi-function properties?"

Walls also wonders how SYK will anticipate the needs and ways of working of future student generations.

"We won't be able to see for ourselves until in five years how successful the new university community is." ▀

MARI WALLS

- ★ President of Tampere University
- ★ She has been the director of the Marine Research Centre of the Finnish Environment Institute, a professor of biodiversity study and environmental science at the University of Turku, a research programme director at the Academy of Finland and president of the Natural Resources Institute Finland.

There is a chronic lack of competent employees in the software industry. Visma Solutions Oy, a company that develops financial administration and ERP software, is no exception to this rule. Hence, the growing company decided to expand to where new experts are made: a university campus.

“The students have the latest research data at their disposal, and their views are fresh. Keeping in continuous touch with new trends and new people is important for a software firm,” says **Inka Lampinen**, Talent Acquisition Specialist at Visma Solutions.

Since last autumn, the company has had a branch office at SYK’s Skinnarila campus in Lappeenranta, right next to the Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology (LUT University) and the Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. The company’s head office is still located in the centre of Lappeenranta.

This is Visma’s home territory: the company’s roots are in Lappeenranta and LUT, in particular. **Ari-Pekka Salovaara**, who studied at LUT, established the company in 2004 while he was still a student. Originally, the company’s name was Severa. It was later merged with the Visma Group.

Important recruitment channel

The Visma Solutions sales team mainly works in Helsinki, but most of the company’s software development takes place in Lappeenranta, which means that recruitment needs are focused on Lappeenranta. 

Ida Koskinen works at Visma in parallel with her studies towards an international marketing degree. Sara Sepponen in the background.

From school to work

Software firm **Visma Solutions** wanted to get close to people who can. At the Lappeenranta campus, basic research and business support each other.

text Tommi Niittymies | photos Jani Kautto



For a student, the commute to Visma is very short, Iida Koskinen (left) and Inka Lampinen say.

VISMA SOLUTIONS

- ★ A Finnish software firm that develops cloud-based software for businesses. Part of the Norwegian Visma Group.
- ★ The most important products include the electronic financial administration software Visma Netvisor, as well as the ERP systems Visma Severa and ValueFrame.
- ★ Approximately 220 employees, net sales EUR 48 million (in 2018).

Inka Lampinen is in charge of recruitment process, cooperation with academia and employer image development.



Joona Hietala (left), Inka Lampinen and Iida Koskinen are taking a breather in Street Café.

Inka Lampinen says that Visma does not focus solely on people's educational background; the applicant's personality and suitability for the company culture are the most important elements. In practice, the institutes of higher education in the region – and especially their IT study lines – are an important recruitment channel.

Although intangible knowledge work such as software engineering is basically independent of physical location, innovations will only thrive in practice if people also interact face-to-face. The importance of physical location is further emphasised in Visma's new office: the transfer from studying to working life is literally very short.

"Many students work for us part-time while they're studying. Now it's easier all year round as well, because we're located in the campus area right next to the university," Lampinen says.

R&D and business hand in hand

Naturally, the cooperation between businesses and academia is not limited to companies recruiting students. The cooperation is bidirectional: experts from companies act as visiting lecturers in different courses, for example.

One of the paradoxes of computer science and software engineering is that their progress is both fast and slow at the

same time. On one hand, programming languages and tools develop so quickly that keeping abreast of development is arduous even for professionals, while on the other hand, major breakthroughs in basic level algorithmics, for instance, take place very rarely, as such breakthroughs require years of patient research.

Jussi Kasurinen, Adjunct Professor at LUT, who is in charge of the information technology study programme, says that it is precisely this bipartite development that creates a natural division of labour between academia and businesses.

"Both supplement each other. Companies offer information on the current status of practical software development, and this practical knowledge is shared with students by visiting lecturers, for example."

"On the other hand, basic academic research feeds innovation. It's no coincidence that business hubs all over the world are located close to educational and research hubs."

As an example of the coexistence of basic research and business, Kasurinen mentions the study of 3D scanning algorithms at LUT. Researchers were studying two alternative approaches and were able to prove that one was a theoretical dead end. This saved companies using 3D scanning in their business a great deal of sweat and tears in their development work.

Regional magnet for experts

Jussi Kasurinen emphasises the significance of the Lappeenranta campus community and close cooperation as a source of attraction for the entire region.

The Helsinki metropolitan region is clearly the largest software industry hub in Finland, which leads to a cluster phenomenon that feeds itself: expertise and jobs are created where they already exist. The software firm hub that has developed around the Lappeenranta campus is an important regional counterbalance to this development trend.

"Offering students an employment opportunity right here is important. Many people who are in the final stretch of their studies are also about to start a family, and employment after your studies influences your place of residence for years, maybe even the rest of your life," Kasurinen says. ▀



text **Tuulia Tikkamäki** | photo **Seppo Wiik**

Jewels of the campus

Mira Lindholm, 22, from Tampere is a third-year student of environmental engineering at the University of Oulu. In her free time, she likes to keep up with news and policy, as well as exercise in a variety of ways. We collected Mira's best tips for the Linnanmaa campus.

Getting around: Mobile app

If you don't know how to easily get around the campus yet, a mobile app designed for university students will come in handy. The app will show you our class schedule and the locations of your lectures. If you click the status, you will see where you are right now and where you're going. The app makes it much easier to find different spaces on the large campus! It also includes the university restaurants and their menus.

For group work: Tellus

Tellus, a highly popular space open for all, is at the heart of the campus. At Tellus, you can use university computers, take a nap in a beanbag chair, read a book or do group exercises. Tellus is the best when you have to do group work! There is also coffee and snacks, so you can spend the entire day there if you like.

For networking: Guild rooms

If you want to build networks and get to know other students, the best places to do it are the guild rooms of the student organisations. Each student organisation has its own guild room, where you will be sure to meet plenty of fellow students. That's where we students usually hang out during our leisure time on campus! ▀

There are very clear ideas of what people from the west and east are like, but people from Central Finland are more difficult to describe. A resident whose roots in the region extend all the way back to the 1870s is a good person to start with.

Keijo Hämäläinen pauses for the longest time during the hour-long interview.

“It’s a way of acting and communicating. Our heart rate is slightly slower than people in Helsinki, but we’re conscientious and get things done. We value people and trust in them. Honesty, geniality, openness.”

All these definitions fit the rector of the University of Jyväskylä. One cannot be so sure about his heart rate though, as without getting a little out of breath he would not have achieved so much in the world of science and academia – let alone on the orienteering course. He has been boosted by both his innate competitive spirit and the need to do things the hard way.

Semi-boisterous student

Young Keijo Hämäläinen did ski jumping, judo and a bit of everything. There was little to do in Suolahti. School was easy until he got a legendarily disciplinarian teacher who emphasised mathematics. The teaching took root. He even found his future wife at the age of 15.

“Maybe I had more time, because I no longer had to run after girls. Self-discipline, the striving to improve, the search for your limits and getting to know yourself – all of them have been directed towards the world of academia since secondary school.”

The family’s first secondary school graduate – with six of the highest grades – to go to university, the world was his oyster. He chose physics. His resumé for the next few decades is replete with merit, academic positions and positions of trust in Finland and abroad. Hämäläinen was the vice rector of his alma mater, the Universi-

ty of Helsinki, between 2015 and 2017.

He has made several major choices along the way.

“Before I started as vice rector at the University of Helsinki, I received many offers – one from the Stanford University, for example. But we wanted our children to have their primary education in Finland. Then there were grandchildren and the desire to take care of my elderly parents. The offer from Jyväskylä was an opportunity to work at a place I had already idolised as a child. It was a decision made by the heart that I haven’t regretted for a single day – my quality of life was tremendously improved.”

Promising orienteer

Keijo Hämäläinen returned home to combine two of his

text Pekka Vänttinen | photo Mikko Vähäniitty

Hämäläinen, now 55, has been the rector for two years. He says he is not doing administrative work. Instead, he is an academic leader.

“You cannot lead an expert organisation by barking commands. You must find a way to combine academic freedom, a strategic vision and goal orientation. It’s all about enabling people’s passions while informing them of the expectations and the bigger picture. Communication – internal and external – is even more important than decision-making.”

Communication also means profiling yourself: finding your strengths, reinforcing them and standing out from the crowd with their help. Jyväskylä’s strategy is “competence and wellbeing for the individual”. There are two pillars: education and sport and health sciences. They are something that puts the university in its place in the field of univer-

sities – not to compete, but to contend.

“Contention is an integral characteristic of the world of academia. If it’s missing, you’re missing a driver. However, contention must not become unhealthy competition, a zero-sum game of funding models where the number of publications is compared, for example. That would erode cooperation,” Hämäläinen says.

Centralised funding works

The significance of universities as part of the regional ecosystem has again been understood. Nevertheless, Hämäläinen hopes that the funding

mechanisms will be left as they are. He wishes centralised funding through the ministry to continue. This is a topical theme due to the pending regional government reform.

“If the funding were local, it would be easy to say: this is what we need and don’t do anything unnecessary. However, the strength of a university lies specifically in doing something that isn’t relevant just at this moment. There’s nothing unnecessary in universities.”

In other respects, the rector confesses that he is a supporter of the neo-Humboldtian approach, where an autonomous university grapples with major social issues, seeking solutions. The work is facilitated by the famous campus designed by architect **Alvar Aalto**, as well as new and renewable facilities. They create a communal operating culture and integrate the university more closely with the city. ▀

passions – management of the University of Jyväskylä and orienteering.

BEST LEADERSHIP TRAINING

“I will never stop talking about orienteering: I’m planning to write a book about it one day. For me, the sport has offered the best leadership training ever.

The basic approach is this: if the map doesn’t correspond to the terrain, the terrain wins. That’s how I’m thinking when I’m creating a strategy for the university. A leader must compress an abstraction into a map in the real world. You must see the big picture and focus on what is essential while listening to the little signals – you must believe in what you’re doing.

If you’re looking at the map to see where you are, you’re already lost. You must know where you’re coming from and what you will have to face next. Every leader should practise orienteering.”

Keijo Hämäläinen has just completed his fifth Jukola orienteering relay race. For him, the sport is exercise, relaxation and much more.

More courage

SYK's demos are all about trying new and different use of space by allowing customers and users of the premises to participate in the planning process.

text Marjo Kanerva | illustration Katri Nietosjärvi

Examples of success

Most demos involve physical space, but some demos on the digital environment and sustainable development have also been realised in the last few years.

A "hall of mirrors" project which digitally combines the Joensuu and Kuopio campuses of the University of Eastern Finland was realised last year. In this demo, an image of the opposing party's room covering an entire wall was created. This created a feeling of presence

or that all the participants were in the same room.

The plan is to build an IoT network and a cloud platform covering the entire campus in Tampere. Computers and sensors connected to the electricity and telecommunications network will collect data on, for instance, indoor air quality, lighting and the presence of people. Data stored in the cloud can be utilised in research, teaching and services, for example.

A traditional auditorium of

Established process

SYK requests new demo proposals from universities once a year, in the autumn. The Executive Board selects the proposals to be realised after a presentation prepared by the SYK Academy based on principles specified in the request for proposals.

SYK invests in projects that focus on joint development, financing and assessments, as well as the opportunity to realise the project within one calendar year. The scalability and novelty value of the solution also have an impact on decision-making.

The effectiveness of the demos is studied before and after implementation by, for instance, describing how the space has been used, as well as by measuring the conditions and user satisfaction.

Some five to nine demo applications are submitted annually. A total of approximately 60 demos has been or will be realised between 2012 and 2019.

SYK's annual demo budget is a maximum of EUR 100,000 euros per university. The university pays for half the costs and SYK pays for the other half. Hence, the total costs of a single demo site are a maximum of 200,000 euros. SYK invests in the property, and the university invests in equipment and furniture. SYK invested some 5 million euros in the demo practice between 2012 and 2018.

the University of Jyväskylä has been transformed into a modern multi-function classroom with a flat floor.

The plan is to monitor the number of parking spaces available at the Skinnarila campus in Lappeenranta with the help of images and object recognition, and a nature experience in the form of a virtual forest will be built in the lobby of the Borealis building in Joensuu. The city centre campus in Tampere will experiment with increasing biodiversity by building a green roof and a couple of lawn areas for several plants to grow on.

Users involved in planning

To maximise the impact of the demo funding, users of the space and customers are involved in the planning process. The planning covers not only physical, but also digital and social spaces. Joint development assists in creating a shared goal for the project.

The Co-SYK operating model utilises methods of service and experience design, as well as usability methods, such as workshops and surveys.

The users are the source of ideas. Whenever possible, the users arrange a pilot project to further develop the concept. The process utilises mutual learning. 

Satisfied users

Some of the immediate effects of the demos have been increased utilisation rate of the spaces and improved customer satisfaction. In most cases, people say there is a better opportunity for independent study in the new space.

The demos and experiences obtained from them have also influenced broader decisions made by SYK in new construction and renovation projects. Adding workstations to a lobby was tested at the Tampere campus at Hervanta. It was observed that the workstations would have to be raised for people sitting down not to feel uncomfortable when other people passed by. A suitable elevation is some 40 cm above the regular floor level. This observation was later utilised in the Kampusareena building, for example. The good practice has spread to other institutes of higher education, such as the Niemi campus in Lahti.

5

Father of demo practice

SYK's demo practice started in 2012. In the early stages, the demo practice was personified by **Olli Niemi**, the head of SYK's research, development and innovation operations between 2010 and 2018. Niemi was a firm believer in the power of random interdisciplinary encounters, and he originally suggested that SYK allow users to participate in the planning of spaces. Niemi retired at the turn of the year.

The culture of experimentation is now promoted by the SYK Academy, coordinated by **Suvi Nenonen**. The contact person for all demo projects is **Ari-Pekka Lassila**. ▽



"OVERNIGHT STUDY IS SURPRISINGLY POPULAR"

IN THE F WING of the University of Lapland, the central lobby Agora and a space separated from the lobby with glass walls, called F-hub, invite you to study or relax. They offer a pleasant environment to study for an exam or do group exercises. Students can choose a traditional lecture hall table with chairs – or lounge on a sofa or in an armchair.

The spaces were partly created by students: in 2014, students attending a ser-

vice design course were given an assignment to redesign an old library.

The users were involved in the planning process. To collect background data for the renovation, the students observed individual and group work practices in different spaces: how people studied alone and with others, and how people in the university worked outside classrooms. Students and employees were interviewed, and students' wishes and ide-

as were collected through Facebook.

According to **Hanne Alajoutsijärvi**, Property Coordinator, the space is functional and popular.

F-hub is always open: you can enter with an access pass 24/7.

"Overnight study is surprisingly popular. Sometimes the porters have to wake students who have fallen asleep on the sofas in the morning," Alajoutsijärvi says.

text **Hannele Hautaniemi**
photo **Jani Kautto**

Butt-naked academics

OUR UNIVERSITY is in one of Finland's most beautiful locations. Many Finnish campuses are in the middle of a busy urban area, but when we look out of our windows, we see the green forests of Lappeenranta and the blue of Lake Saimaa.

My funniest memories from my time as the rector of LUT involve the Karelian lakeside scenery – especially the university's lakeside saunas. Two saunas were built on the shore of Lake Saimaa, right next to the university, a long time ago. We often offer our visitors from abroad an opportunity to enjoy the warmth of a sauna followed by a dip in the refreshing Lake Saimaa. Unfortunately, they sometimes forget their keys in the sauna building when they go outside to cool off.

So, like the lake, foreign academicians clad in a towel and trying to cover themselves with their bath whisk are sometimes also part of our campus scenery. There they blunder around in the yard, trying to decide whether to get help or hide in the name of modesty. Naturally, the students and campus personnel always guide them to the porter so that they can return to the warmth of the sauna safe and sound.

Despite the mishaps, our love for our lakeside saunas has only grown. We are blessed to be able to teach, learn and practise science in one of the world's most beautiful working environments, which will no doubt continue to offer many memorable and funny moments. ▽



Juha-Matti "Juhis" Saksa is the rector of LUT University. Saksa's attitude to life is positive, and he searches for scale in places that humans have destroyed. His most recent trip was to Chiatura in Georgia to ride mine lifts and see the marks left by old manganese mines.