



# 9

## Responsible University: In Search of HR and Leadership Solutions

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### Introduction and Key Concepts

In this chapter, we describe development projects dealing with leadership and recruitment at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF). The aim of the projects was to find good practices, broadly discuss recruitment and leadership issues within the institution and to foster development in these human resources (HR) areas so that the university could live up its strategic plans, and, while doing so, become more responsible. The projects were genuinely iterative and interactive: the key ideas (proactive recruitment, HR leadership model for a responsible university) presented in this chapter were invented during these interactive development projects.

The strategic role of HR in universities has expanded, as the expectation of actorhood in HE—turning universities in to social actors with specific goal-orientation, responsibility, social planning, innovation policies and mission statements—has progressed (Krücken and Meyer 2006).

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A key aspect of HR is recruitment, which is increasingly streamlined with universities' goals (Siekkinen et al. 2016). Finding suitable and committed people is also crucial for fostering innovation (Amabile 1988) and for the outcomes of the university. Shattock (2003) has noted that if there were one single component in creating a successful university, this would be making well-suited academic staff appointments.

The following question related to the development projects is relevant in the chapter: How can HR function to support the accomplishment of institutional strategy (and hence, to foster a responsible university) through leadership development and improving recruitments?

The strategic aim is that the institution can innovate, better outcomes can be reached, and the institution can become more responsible in contributing to the strategic aims chosen.

The strategic aims of the UEF link closely to the ideal of a responsible university as we see it. The University's development projects aimed at fostering strategy and merger through HR measures such as developing leadership and recruitments. It is possible to see that all good and productive research, teaching and interaction with the society are, in a sense, responsible, and can contribute to the betterment of contemporary society. However, the aim of (contributing to) solving pressing global problems appears to be one of the most recent and strongest emphases in providing social relevance and acting in a responsible way in higher education. We will especially start from this latter understanding of responsibility. The approach is also in line with the strategy of the UEF, as we will demonstrate below.

In 2015, the UEF launched an institutional project aiming at developing institutional recruitment and leadership practices. Developing leadership had been a target area throughout the history of the UEF, since the establishment of the institution in 2010. These initiatives were launched as the university leadership group saw that successful recruitment is a fundamental way of implanting strategy and enhancing quality (and improving institutional responsibility). Leadership, on the other hand, is a central phenomenon affecting the institution, in various ways, by decision-making and through everyday interaction, and in implementing institutional strategy. In this chapter, we will concentrate especially on leadership and recruitment in the context of strategic research.<sup>1</sup>

By institutional *leadership*, we are referring both to the university leadership (the people, leaders) officially in charge of the institutional strategy, including departmental and faculty leaders responsible for implementing the strategy and other everyday operations. Leadership (the phenomenon, leadership actions) refers here both to human relations aspects and managerial tasks of these leaders.

*Recruitment* is a process in which new employees (academic faculty is in our focus) are hired to fulfil certain tasks and roles that would help the institution strengthen its roles in the areas chosen.

By *HR*, we refer here to human resources function and leadership (the phenomenon) dealing with people and issues related to people. This involves both administration and institutional aspects of leading and being in charge.

*Innovation* means the introduction of something new: a new idea, method, or device. In the context of global problems, innovation refers to novel ideas, methods, and so on that contribute to solutions to these problems.

As noted, in this chapter, we will concentrate on some shared ideas on how the overall strategy might be fostered and supported by HR. In other words, we are interested here in HR aspects such as leadership and recruitment development in supporting the fulfilment of these aims. This chapter is not, however, about criticism of the strategy, strategic thinking, or NPM approaches, but a description of a practical and interactive development project trying to find HR solutions to practical questions about strategy implementation. Hence, we do not tackle aspects like links between strategy and macro-level dynamics, nor the actual or overall implementation of strategies, for example (see Fumasoli et al. 2015).

In what follows, we start by discussing the idea and ideal of a responsible university as we see it, and how the UEF Strategy links with this ideal. We then proceed to a discussion of leadership and describe how it has been developed at the UEF. Then we approach a recruitment development project. We will end our discussion with an overview of lessons learned.

As the projects developed, conclusions were drawn and further discussed with participants. In the end of the chapter, we draw together some key aspects university leadership would need to take into account if

having similar strategic aims, and summarize key lessons learned from the development projects in the form of a model.

## Responsible University

For our purposes, we define a responsible university here as *an institution that carries out quality research and teaching, responds to the needs of society through basic tasks and aims at solving certain global problems of humankind while venerating the fundamental freedom of science* (for freedom of science in HE policy context see Kekäle et al. 2017).

In their discussion on Responsible University, Grau et al. (2017a) give their interpretation of the topic: Universities are key players in both knowledge-based economy and investment in education, science and technology. Because of this:

they have the singular responsibility of helping to provide appropriate and adequate responses to both legitimate needs and interests: i) to contribute to overcoming the global challenges of the world, which are very well summarized by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and ii) to contribute to the social, cultural and economic development and international competitiveness of their societies. (Grau et al. 2017a, 38)

The interpretation may be farfetched, as it assumes that the *singular* responsibility lies in universities. However, currently there appears to be good grounds for attaching universities' strategic aims to attempts to solve global problems on a trans- or multidisciplinary basis (Grau et al. 2017a). The missions and relevant tasks of university institutions have been under discussion for a long time, and the expectations have broadly turned towards solving grand challenges. One reason for this is the cumulative knowledge on negative impacts of climate change and environmental crises (<http://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/>). Kaldewey (2018) notes that “grand challenges” have become a dominant theme in scientific discussions and policymakers' funding schemes in the twenty-first century. Many funding mechanisms tend to connect these targets with resources (see e.g. EU Horizon programmes—<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020>).

If “responsive” university (Tierney 1998) was mainly interested in local engagement, “responsible” university, in the sense of Grau et al. (2017a), adds global challenges to the formula. These two need not be mutually exclusive; realistically, global problems tend to give a university a broader strategic focus and a conceptual umbrella, under which the university directs and conducts strategic research and other operations. Global problems may affect all potential stakeholders, whereas local questions tend to be relevant to only a limited number of operators.

A critical question is: Who is the university responsible for? Answers to such questions may depend on the institution in question, its strengths and profiling. There may be different “local” communities to be served. Some of them may be located far from the university campus. There are reservations: It is unrealistic to expect any definition of responsibility to mean that the whole university is totally committed to a similar understanding of strategic aims, such as bringing solutions to pressing global problems identified. Clark’s (1998) unified culture does not easily exist in comprehensive universities (Kekäle 2007). Academic freedom is still the legal basis for legislative framework for universities in Finland, while diverse steering mechanisms fundamentally affect this freedom (Kekäle et al. 2017). Need-driven research and curiosity-driven research are present as well. Building on existing institutional strengths, a certain voluntarism, support structures and strategic funding, and recruitment of suitable scholars who want to work in the strategic area (Amabile 1988) might provide suitable ways to improve an institutional profile, and therefore improve responsibility. This is also in line with the UEF strategy. Proactive recruitment can be used for identifying suitable scholars for strategic areas (Kekäle 2017). It also helps if the whole institution benefits from improving its institutional reputation and increasing possibilities attached to the strategy (Grau et al. 2017b). Academic leaders and researchers are supposed to implement the strategy.

## Responsibility and the UEF Strategy

The UEF strategy is connected to solving wicked global problems, as identified from the point of view of expertise and strengths of the stron-

gest research areas at the institution (the strategy can be found at the UEF web pages—<https://strategia.uef.fi/?lang=en>). Our understanding is that even prioritizing solutions to significant global problems would clearly indicate responsibility.

The interdisciplinary topics and grand challenges in focus at UEF are as follows:

1. ageing, lifestyles, and health;
2. learning in a digitized society;
3. cultural encounters, mobility, and borders, and
4. environmental change and sufficiency of natural resources.

There are researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds working on these broad themes. The idea is that researchers from different disciplinary fields and specialisms at the University can cooperate on these topics. It has become increasingly clear that we cannot solve complex and global problems from within single disciplines (e.g. Lasker and Weiss 2003; Dick et al. 2016). The connection to global challenges brings social relevance and coherence to the University's institutional profile.

In relation to the fourth interdisciplinary topic in the UEF strategy, environmental change, for example, according to NASA (2018), 97 per cent or more of actively publishing climate scientists agree in peer-reviewed scientific papers that the measurable climate-warming trends in the past century are extremely likely to have been caused by human activities (<https://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/>). According to our current understanding, climate change may even threaten life on earth, or cause unforeseen problems for humankind (<http://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/>). As Wells (2017, 31) notes as an international observation:

Perhaps never before in recent history has the role of higher education been so intricately tied to the economic, social and environmental fabric of the modern world. The demands from all stakeholders for quality, robust and diverse systems of higher education to take an active responsibility in addressing the challenges of the world's pressing issues is likewise unprecedented.

Attempting to find solutions to global problems is a responsible action, since these efforts may positively affect many or all humans and stakeholders. However, aiming at something is relatively easy; fostering possibilities in outcomes and getting results are more difficult tasks.

What can an institution (or a group of researchers) do in terms of HR if they aim at becoming increasingly responsible? After all, employees (humans) carry out research and are a major cause of work outcomes; therefore, also HR matters. At the UEF, we have focused on the HR measures in leadership training and recruitment development. We will discuss these next, starting with the leadership phenomenon.

## Leadership—A Contingent, Contextual, and Significant Phenomenon

Social concepts, like leadership (Middlehurst 1993), are not value-free; an observer can view them from different angles depending on his or her perspective and values. We can attach different meanings to these phenomena, but we can also study them empirically. Hence, the relevance of leadership, for example, has been discussed, and different schools of thought exist.

O'Reilly et al. (2010) note that proponents of leadership argue that leaders are in any case responsible for making decisions that may help (or might hinder) organizations in their basic tasks in competitive environments (e.g. Hogan et al. 1994). In contrast, those who view organizations as heavily constrained claim that leadership is largely an irrelevant social construction (e.g. Mukunda 2012). However, O'Reilly et al. (2010) note that empirical evidence over the past 20 years shows that leadership matters in organizations. An overall conclusion in relation to leadership studies is that there is no one best method of successful leadership, but leadership depends on disciplinary and departmental cultures and other contextual and social factors (e.g. Kekäle 2001).

We can see that significance of leadership has increased in Finland in past years (Kekäle et al. 2017). We base this claim on recent developments in the Finnish HE system, but also results of interviews of human

resource directors and labour union representatives in Finnish universities in 2017.

Jenni Varis carried out the interviews. Her doctoral research (*forthcoming*) has progressed alongside the responsible university project. The 10 semi-structured interviews, five of HR directors and five of labour union representatives, have concentrated on researchers and teachers in universities and have been analysed qualitatively (Galletta 2013). We can recognize different meanings and purposes of leadership from the interviews.

Several interviewees notioned that the significance of leadership has increased, but we can also identify several areas in which leadership is especially relevant. Especially, *problem solving* was seen as a remarkable function for leadership. The main role for supervisors in problem-solving situations was to discuss problems with employees, early and enough. Second, a leader was seen as an *enabler*. The enabling role means that a supervisor would facilitate working conditions or share tasks so that an employee could manage his/her tasks as intended. Some interviewees pointed out that the role of leadership is more important in the beginning of an academic career, during which the role of a *mentor and an advisor* is emphasized more than being a representative of an employer. In this context, the role of supervisor is not always clear for scholars in their early years, even for supervisors themselves.

We can say that the role of supervisor is relatively complex. Academic communities are highly autonomous, albeit within the framework of increasing steering mechanisms (Kekäle et al. 2017), but also the tendency of strategic steering has increased. Several interviewees, both HR directors and labour union representatives, notified the role of strategic leading and decision-making, but at the same time, scholars ought to react to strategic demands in their actions. However, we can determine that constructive discussion is the key point in academic leadership. Several interviewees, especially labour union representatives, pointed out that decision-making has centralized, and leaders have more power nowadays in Finnish universities. Anyhow, leadership of an individual scholar's work is indirect rather than direct. Strategic choices made by a university rather guide than force, but in the long term resisting them may affect a scholar's academic career negatively. The negative influence can appear as a lack of resources or differentiation from a research group



or other networks. While recognizing these harmful scenarios, it was pointed out that outside today's strategic focus areas, breakthroughs could still be made, or the areas may rise to a strategic centre later.

## Leadership Development at the UEF

The UEF is a comprehensive, multidisciplinary university, established through a merger between the universities of Kuopio and Joensuu, starting from the year 2010. A full merger is a major process, which makes it difficult to concentrate on aspects other than internal organization for some years; hence, these development projects were fully initiated some five years after the establishment of the UEF. Leadership, however, has been a target area for development throughout the merger process.

According to some estimations, most mergers fail (Koi-Akrofi 2016), and, therefore, leadership matters even more, which also stresses the importance of leadership development. The full merger process has been described elsewhere (e.g. Puusa and Kekäle 2013, 2015; Tirronen et al. 2016) and we will not describe this in detail here. Let us note that some 2600 employees work at the UEF, there are 15,000 degree students and 15,000 continuing education students. The UEF is one of the largest universities in Finland and is ranked among the top 300 universities in the world in many fields (see <https://www.uef.fi/en/etusivu>).

The UEF merger has posed many challenges, as has the overall steering by the ministry. For example, after 2010 Finnish university funding has diminished by several hundred million euros. Hence, the aim in leadership development was to arrange leadership education in the turmoil of the merger, and to provide leaders with opportunities for discussion among colleagues.

If the institution and researchers aim to contribute to solving grand challenges, leadership implies fostering such goals: leadership is about getting things done and hiring the best people for specific tasks. If successful, this can aid in solving global problems and all task-oriented work. Contributing to solving global problems would demand identification of strengths and some concentration of resources, among other things. Currently in Finland, the decision on strategic aims of a university rests

on university leadership: the University Board will set the official strategies and priorities for the institution (according to the Universities Act (558/2009), the board is to determine the main objectives of the university operations and finances, the strategy and steering principles). Still, researchers also legitimately steer their own research; their commitment is crucial, but funding and leadership support no doubt affects this.

With respect to leadership training, the UEF arranges three annual discussion and development seminars for all academic leaders, involving departmental heads, deans, directors of administration, as well as rectors. In addition, three levels of general leadership training are provided, as well as frequent 360 degree assessments of leadership.

At least the following topics and support structures and mechanisms have been discussed during the UEF leadership training and seminars:

- Strategy and funding
- Feedback and support
- Recruitment policy
- Interaction and direction
- Social atmosphere
- Terms of employment
- Reward systems
- Correction of problems

All these topics connect to leadership and management. They are aspects that support operations, and culture as an internal logic and value/assumption system behind the operations by which the institution appears to be working.

Leadership development is a contextual issue. The institution has arranged numerous different occasions since the year 2010. The key aims of leadership training have been to overcome and to implement the merger, and to implement and foster the strategy. There have been tens of public discussions on the topics. We cannot go into detail regarding these lengthy discussions here. The information serves as a background. It also forms the basis of the forthcoming model (Fig. 9.1).

As Tierney and Lanford (2016, 26) point out, these leadership aspects can either help or hinder productive work. For example, burdensome

evaluations can prevent the implementation of innovative programmes and research agendas, and punitive evaluations may frighten individuals from testing novel ideas. Such support structures can affect the moods and support or hinder productive work, even motivation to innovate.

In what follows, the focus will be on the project of recruitment development which has been carried out more in parallel with the timeframe of the Nordic Responsible University project.

## Recruitment Development at the UEF—The Process

Recruitment and strategic aims to address global challenges connect in the following way: Success in recruitments—the motivation, quality, and commitment of the faculty—crucially determines academic work outcomes. They also are crucial for responsibility—as value added in the areas chosen. Human capabilities and extended motivation to research a certain complicated area—as opposed to using one’s time and energy for something else—is needed if we are to contribute to solving global problems.

Shattock (2003) has noted that if we would single out one component in creating a prosperous (or responsible) university, it would be success in academic staff appointments. A literature review on HR in higher education shows that, in universities, people are the most important asset and are key to long-term organizational performance (Mugabi et al. 2017, 9). Therefore, if an institution and a department aims at concentrating on certain topics, the crucial issue in recruitment is to find researchers who share these goals and who fit the existing research groups (Kekäle 2017).

UEF launched a project on developing strategic recruitment in the summer of 2015. The authors have worked on the development project throughout its existence. External consultants were first involved. However, this external contribution remained rather obscure, and their efforts concentrated mostly on scaling traditional interviews. The UEF terminated cooperation with external consultants since the cooperation did not provide results.

Throughout the development process, recruitments were widely discussed within the university: in the leadership group, with academic leaders of the university, and during two discussion rounds at the faculties. Since 2015, the university's leadership group discussed the topic and operational goals and proposals several times on the basis of international approaches to recruitment practices. Since 2016, in annual leadership seminars with leaders of the university, as well as the university's internal bodies dealing with research, leaders have frequently participated in discussions on how to develop recruitment. In the discussions, we have concluded that the university's vacancy announcements have not reached the global network of scholars to a sufficient degree, at least when considered against the university's strategy, stressing increasing international recruitment. Recruitment has increasingly become proactive, and a model of this has been formed through discussions in an iterative manner (Kekäle 2017).

As noted, the development work was based on international literature, internal discussions among the UEF leaders, and interviews. In the UEF strategy, the university has identified five top-level international research areas. Jouni Kekäle interviewed the professors in charge of these areas. Each interview lasted for an hour. They dealt with best practices and problems associated with recruitments. The ideas behind the proactive recruitment model (Kekäle 2017) were explicitly discussed and tested in the interviews. The research professors interviewed supported the proactive recruitment model, maintaining that, for many practical reasons, they already used a similar approach in identifying potential candidates.

After that, the rector of the UEF and Jouni Kekäle visited each of the four faculties' leadership groups and discussed recruitment issues, explaining and refining the proactive recruitment model. Responsibility, as a catchword, was not used explicitly, but the focus was all the time on the betterment of work outcomes and the implementation of the strategy by HR. Key professors and leaders responsible for recruitment were present. The participant agreed that the proactive recruitment model generally provides a good approach to improving recruitments. Another discussion round in the UEF faculties' leadership groups took place, this time led by the authors. The proactive model was discussed directly.

The proactive recruitment model (see Kekäle 2017) was identified through this interactive and iterative process. According to the model, a research group continuously, and proactively, strengthens its research profile, and constructs international networks of researchers within the research area. The motivation and orientation of a candidate is crucial: internal motivation and continuous improvement, plus suitability to the research interests and profile of the group. The aim is that benefits will follow. The person-organization fit is difficult to assess sufficiently on the basis of traditional open job announcements and interviews, when the candidate is briefly met for the first time. Instead, a long-term, proactive cooperation and information on key candidates is needed.

In Finland, the traditional approach to recruitments has been to declare vacancies open and then wait for the candidates to appear with not much prior headhunting. This was the official approach set by the ministry of Finance before the University Act of 2010, aiming at equal treatment of Finnish citizens in the recruitment of civil servants. The suitability of candidates was assessed mainly on the basis of documents, perhaps with an added interview. Proactive recruitment gives more room and grounds for the assessment process of person-organization fit, by making this a continuous process of networking before the actual recruitment (Kekäle 2017).

A pitfall in the traditional approach is that according to a global survey, the biggest obstacle to changing jobs is that the candidate does not know what it is like to work at an organization (LinkedIn Survey 2015). Overcoming both these problems requires a proactive approach and a broader network of contacts. Only sufficient experience, prior cooperation, and follow-up time can help to bring in information on the suitability of the person-organization fit. The only rational grounds for a recruitment decision are the candidate's ability, merits, and skill in relation to the task, and his or her capacity to cooperate with the recruiting research group. Assessing these well tends to require rather deep (proactive) knowledge. In such a way, an institution can become more responsible.

Yet another intervention on recruitment development was carried out in early 2018. The UEF invested one million euros towards starting strategic recruitments before a former holder of a position retired. The idea

is to “bridge” the transition period so that work in the area can continue and the transition is smooth. Jouni Kekäle and the professors in charge of the recruitments discussed the recruitment process and potential problems they have experienced. As agreed on between the faculties and the rector, the funding was promised for costs related to bridging some 30 strategic posts.

The professors in charge of the recruitments had experienced problems in the following issues: problems in finding suitable candidates; the candidate turning down the offer after long negotiations. However, such problems were experienced only in a few cases. The recruitments were well underway, and in most cases looked promising. Proactive elements and prior headhunting had been added to most of them. The actual recruitment decision was to be made after an open comparison of potential candidates’ merits, which is in line with the university instructions. Targeted marketing of certain job announcements will be tested on the basis of feedback, in order to enhance networking.

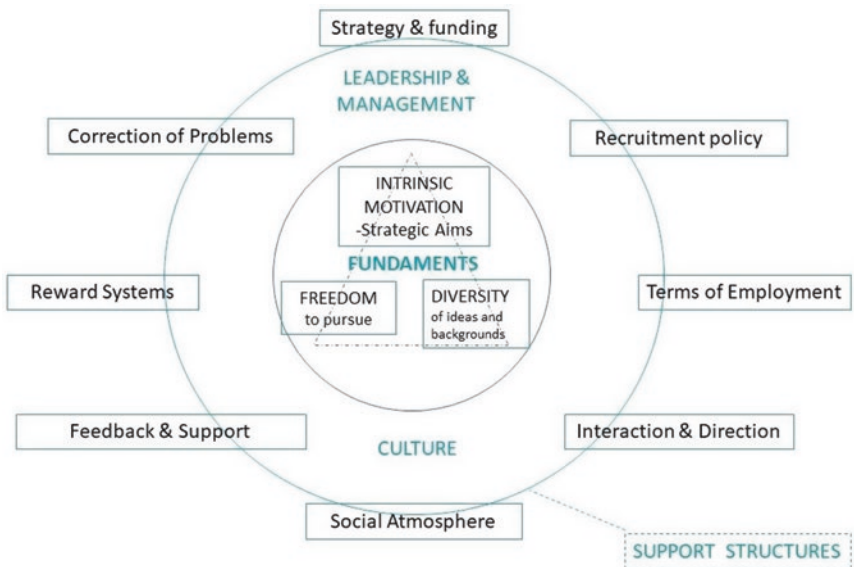
## **A Model for Fostering Responsible University**

Since the UEF aims at novel solutions and insight in overcoming critical problems in the areas chosen in the strategy, and in doing so enhancing responsibility, the overall ability to innovate—to bring new insights—appears to be a crucial strategic asset. Otherwise, potential solutions will not materialize. By improving recruitments, leadership, and other HR measures, the UEF attempts to foster a responsible university.

After thorough discussion within the organization about the proactive model, leadership and recruitment issues, the authors turned their interest to the question: How is it possible to foster innovations and what aspect should leaders pay attention to when recruiting in a proactive manner if they are to foster novel insights and solutions? The UEF aims at the strategy to find solutions to critical problems in certain areas; since specific solutions are so far missing, innovations are the target. The discussion that followed was theoretical: the intention was to give leaders guidelines in their future work. We did not have empirical evidence on the forthcoming model (Fig. 9.1), but logical reasons and prior empirical research gave grounds for putting it forward.

Committed and motivated people are needed for innovation (Amabile 1988); therefore, recruiting people who can contribute to solutions and add to current knowledge and capacities is a key issue when fostering the strategy via HR measures. Again, the process involved discussions among UEF leaders. One of the faculties and the dean wanted to discuss these issues in detail, so we arranged a two-hour discussion session. The discussions involved the following model for fostering innovations; the leaders present in discussions saw the approach as relevant and agreed with it.

If there is a strategy and a vision, an operational plan is needed. An institution needs to consider its means and measures within the limits of its power and direction rights. In the following, we shall put forward a model, which draws together aspects and which potentially fosters innovations and novel solutions to global problems. By fostering these, leaders might be able to provide good conditions fostering the outcomes in selected areas. In terms of leadership, one can support prerequisites and good conditions, but cannot guarantee breakthroughs. Recruitment is a most crucial issue, as the academic outcomes will depend on academic faculty (Shattock 2003).



**Fig. 9.1** HR leadership model for a Responsible University: How leaders can foster innovations

In the model (Fig. 9.1), the surrounding circle of topics represents the leadership areas and themes discussed during the lengthy round of UEF leadership seminars. Many of these topics also connect to Jenni Varis' research findings above. These leadership topics and support structures are relevant (but the fundamentals are even more relevant in fostering innovations). At the UEF, these themes and leadership structures are seen as crucial in terms of supporting good work. These are also practical means and ways of supporting the development of a responsible university via university leadership. In the model, they are referred to as support structures. We have discussed these intensively during the leadership training programmes (see section “[Leadership—A Contingent, Contextual, and Significant Phenomenon](#)”).

As noted, support structures do play a role by supporting responsible action, but they alone cannot provide innovations if the fundamentals are lacking. Amabile (1988) notes that as far as qualities of organization that support innovation go, the sufficient freedom, good project management, good resources, and encouragement appear to be crucial ones (Amabile 1988, 147). Nevertheless, if, for example, fundamental intrinsic motivation is missing, reward systems cannot facilitate innovations on their own.

In the strategic questions (How is it possible to foster innovation in the strategic areas, and therefore foster the possibility that the university can contribute to solving critical problems with new insights?), to become more responsible, the fundamentals in the middle of Fig. 9.1 appear to be crucial.

## **The Fundamentals: Intrinsic Motivation, Autonomy, and Diversity**

Creativity and innovation are crucial if one wishes to solve problems, let alone so far unsolvable and critical global challenges. As noted, from the perspective of university leadership, one can only foster prerequisites for



innovation, and, in that sense, fostering the fundamentals (Fig. 9.1) would appear to be crucial according to previous research findings.

Tierney and Lanford (2016, 22) note that research literature from different relevant disciplinary fields points to three factors that appear almost invariably to impact innovation in a positive manner. These are *diversity* (of thinking, backgrounds, and people, etc.), *intrinsic motivation*, and *autonomy*.

Recruiting scholars with persistent *intrinsic motivation* in the strategic areas appears to be a fundamental prerequisite for a group's ability to innovate. Based on her several studies, Amabile (1988) found that various personal traits (such as persistence, curiosity, energy, and intellectual honesty), self-motivation (internal motivation where the task itself is to be the greatest motivator), cognitive abilities, and expertise, as well as synergy and support from the group appear to be aspects that best promote creativity and problem-solving capacity. On the other hand, lack of motivation, external motivation, lack of skills and inflexibility inhibit creativity and problem solving. They can inhibit responsibility in our meaning.

As motivation "may be the most important component" in fostering creativity and innovation (Amabile 1988, 133), finding intrinsically motivated and skilled scholars who share the strategic goals of the university appears to be crucial. Proactive recruitment (Kekäle 2017) offers a model for identifying suitable scholars with intrinsic motivation. The idea is to proactively, before the actual recruitment decision, facilitate collaboration among scholars and groups with similar interests in order to learn about their motivation, skills, working pattern, and professional orientation. In this way, the pool of potential candidates becomes broader (Kekäle 2017).

*Diversity* appears to be a fundamental tenet of innovation; diverse teams tend to produce more creative results than teams with only members from a similar background. For example, Hewlett et al. (2013) found in their broad survey that (inherent and acquired) diversity in organizations unlocks and drives innovation. Phillips (2014) points out that decades of research (by organizational scientists, psychologists, sociologists, economists, etc.) demonstrate that socially diverse groups (diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation) are more innovative

than homogeneous groups. Moreover, groups with people of diverse individual expertise are better than a homogeneous group at solving complex, non-routine problems. Social diversity also seems to work in a similar way. Social innovations are embedded in diversity, and not only internal organizational issues, since they tend to involve universities, business, government, and civil society in quadruple helix partnerships (some diversity in strategy, too, might be useful).

Research has identified that there is a particularly strong relationship between intrinsic motivation and *autonomy*, and, given this, Tierney and Lanford (2016, 24) boldly stress that autonomy is required for innovation in higher education. By challenging conventional wisdom, and often by advancing unpopular theories that undergo refinement, research can lead to important technological and other advances, which positively influence the overall quality of life for millions of people (Tierney and Lanford 2016, 24). These features appear to be essential in fostering innovation, and, therefore, in being or becoming a responsible university in the sense that we are dealing with the topic.

## Discussion and Conclusions

Leadership and recruitment can foster responsibility. For our purposes, we defined a responsible university as *an institution that carries out quality research and teaching, responds to the needs of society through basic tasks, and aims at solving certain global problems of humankind while venerating the fundamental freedom of science*. HR, as a shared leadership function, is crucial for accomplishment of this. We have presented a model that sheds light on key issues in leadership and recruitment within the aim of becoming a responsible university. The model which was discussed within the university also describes the overall outcomes and focus of the development projects we have described here.

Having presented a model for fostering a responsible university by the means of leadership, we still feel that there are some useful reservations to be made. Some of them are related to leadership in fostering responsibility and strategy; some others deal with the basic tasks and responsibility in academia.

*First*, we have already noted that leadership can mainly keep up and provide good conditions for successful work but cannot guarantee innovations or breakthroughs in relation to critical problems. The role of institutional leadership in relation to HR issues is that of a facilitator, but there is a big role to be filled anyway.

*Second*, the idea of a responsible university also returns to the complexity encompassing different disciplines and leadership of multidisciplinary and cultural projects. The integration, or at least the coexistence, of once deeply divided disciplinary cultures in human studies and natural sciences (Snow 1962) may be needed for the solution of global problems humankind is facing—and a responsible university is trying to solve. This has been a great leadership challenge for years.

*Third*, a topic related to leadership and innovation is that the cooperation on different platforms, which might be needed with external stakeholders, is far from easy (Tierney 1998). Different time perspectives and expectations can undermine fruitful cooperation. The business world, for example, may wait for short-term business solutions where profit can be calculated, whereas universities deal with long-term complex problems where business logic cannot always be at the forefront. If a fruitful cooperation is to take place, promising developments in line with stakeholder interests should be visible if one wishes to maintain commitment and motivation among participating stakeholders. This also means that different stakeholders can view responsibility in a different manner: business partners may hold different views than academics.

*Fourth*, a topic related to this is that while leadership is needed, for example, in Finland, the freedom of science is based on constitutional legislation (The Constitution of Finland, 731/1999, 16.3 §). This limits and frames the possibilities of leadership and directional power at the institutional level, and underlines the adage that leadership is persuasion, not domination. Leadership means that others voluntarily follow: most of all this requires mutual interest, good arguments, and negotiations. However, in recruitment situations, there is more room to direct research and to consider if there are mutual interests—by recruiting scholars who are committed to the aims of the institution.

With regard to lessons for other universities and “beyond the Nordics”, it appears that the pressure to contribute to the solutions to pressing criti-

cal problems is global. Contributing to a focused set of aims in these matters would be responsible indeed. The process we have described here has been highly interactive. It requires mutual trust and interaction. The situation in other universities may be very different and local solutions could therefore differ. The case here can serve as an illustration of one approach in fostering such demanding strategic aims by HR means.

Leadership development is like chasing a moving target. As the world changes, working solutions may need to change as well. The process we have described is ongoing. It has been an iterative learning process in which HR and academics have been cooperating. Such mutual learning appears to be difficult: it requires resilience, trust, and willingness to understand different parties. Still, at least the process at the UEF appeared to bring synergies and benefits that would not otherwise have materialized.

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## Note

1. Education is also to be considered as a tool in becoming a responsible institution. Universities train future leaders and provide them with meta skills like critical thinking, problem solving, and learning to learn. The alumni, then, will find their way and provide relevance to society. Hence, the potential practical solutions to global problems may indirectly result from higher education, but not necessarily invented within the campus walls.

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