



University of Zagreb
Faculty of Organization and Informatics
Pavlinska 2, 42000 Varaždin, Croatia

www.foi.unizg.hr/en
ured-dekana@foi.unizg.hr
tel: +385 42 390 800



COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

From: June 2022 To: June 2024

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent

June 24, 2024

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that University of Zagreb Faculty of Organization and Informatics reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Full Prof. Marina Klacmer Čalopa, Ph.D.
Dean



Part II. Description of Actions

The University of Zagreb Faculty of Organization and Informatics (UNIZG FOI) is one of the largest institutions of its kind in Croatia. It has around 2,800 students at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral level. UNIZG FOI has been an active member of society. It's long-standing footprint in society has been valorised through its deep connections with entrepreneurship (especially in IT). Beyond its role as an educational pillar, UNIZG FOI has emerged as a forward-looking hub for education, entrepreneurship, and digital innovation. It always stands ready to shape the future, not only by shaping the minds of its students but also by contributing significantly to the broader entrepreneurial and digital landscape.

A prerequisite for a digitalized society is the continuous and effective implementation of digital transformation at all levels. This includes the digitalized economy, digital business administration and all public services that make up our daily lives. UNIZG FOI continuously works on improving and modernizing study programmes, which follows social and technological changes. That is why we continuously work on connecting with the business sector, and listen to the needs of employers. We emphasize work-based learning and problem-based learning but also other innovative learning and teaching methods. This is usually implemented in cooperation with our partners from the business sector. An emphasis is on the development of students' critical thinking and the ability to solve specific problems.

UNIZG FOI is staffed by experienced professors, researchers, and professionals with expertise in entrepreneurship, economics, information systems and organizational sciences.

The strategic map and the related goals and activities provide a balanced view on the development of the UNIZG FOI. The map includes all the aspects that a modern higher education institution must have. The strategic vision mapping and mission implementation strategy has five perspectives, based on a balanced score system method. The original perspective is developmental (learning, growth and development or short learning and development) and the major challenge is to foster the development and mobilise UNIZG FOI capacities. At the implementation level (processes and organisations), a series of measures are envisaged for turning development initiatives into regular practice. This certainly requires extensive organizational efforts. The strategy envisions the establishment of new organisational units as well as corresponding changes in the management system. All of this is done to satisfy the stakeholders within the HE sector, which in this case relates to the labour market, students, the public sector, and society. Due to this, a stakeholder perspective is foreseen in the mapping. Considering that higher education also has a wider social mission, a special perspective is devoted to public accountability.

Following UNIZG FOI's vision of becoming a leading high education institution recognized for its innovative approach to learning and teaching, a unique educational approach has been developed for years through connecting professional and technological knowledge, business aspects, applied use of knowledge and technologies as well as digital innovations. Through its strategy, UNIZG FOI has emphasized the importance of building bridges with entrepreneurs and industry, fostering interdisciplinarity and internationalization, and espousing innovation in education, and a competitive but responsible mindset among its employees and students.

UNIZG FOI has connections with various international institutions, and students of EE have opportunities to participate in exchange programmes or collaborative projects with universities abroad. The mobility of professors/teachers and students to relevant universities has also increased.

UNIZG FOI has the Economic Advisory Board which has the aim of designing curriculum with inputs from professionals, ensuring relevance to market needs. Strong ties with local businesses and organizations ensure that the Programme is tailored to meet the specific skills required by the job market. Positive outcomes and success stories of alumni in the field of economics and entrepreneurship reflect the programme's effectiveness in meeting market demands.

Representatives of business leaders participate in the QA Committee, and they also take part in working groups for the review of study programmes or the preparation of qualification standards.

UNIZG FOI has the Start-up Academy which provides financial and other support for the incubation of student start-ups. These programmes provide support, mentorship, and resources for students or alumni interested in launching their own businesses. This is performed by providing the provision of professional services, including accounting and legal consulting. Each student team may receive up to €3,000/year.

UNIZG FOI has partnerships with local and regional startup incubators. It is a scientific partner of the deep-tech venture builder “Nuqleus” - an advanced startup incubator. By connecting industry and academic institutions, Nuqleus aims to support the development of deep-tech startups - from idea to market entry. UNIZG FOI is supported by Technology Park Varaždin (TPV), of which the institution is a co-founder. In TPV, 50% of its start-up companies are started by UNIZG FOI students.

UNIZG FOI participate in hackathons and innovation challenges. These events encourage students to collaborate on solving real-world problems and showcase their entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills (L'Oreal Brandstorm 2023 – UNIZG FOI students won second place). Inviting successful entrepreneurs, industry experts, and business leaders for guest lectures and workshops (World and European Money Week) exposes UNIZG FOI students to real-world experiences and insights. This helps in bridging the gap between academia and industry. UNIZG FOI hosts networking events, bringing together students, faculty, alumni, and professionals from industry.

Ethical considerations, social responsibility, and sustainability are fundamental principles integrated into every process at UNIZG FOI. Both as an institution and as individual members, UNIZG FOI actively engages in community service and voluntary work, contributes donations to various NGOs and civil society organizations, and incorporates a substantial environmental, social, and governance (ESG) agenda into its curricula. This is achieved through student projects, seminars, and as a formal part of its curricula. UNIZG FOI does have a single strategy in this respect, but we apply our practices to individual areas.

The lecturers are regularly educated in these areas (e.g., education on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), workshops on the PlagScan tool; procedures regarding ethics in research). In addition, Faculty Council members sign statements on the (non)existence of conflict of interest in accordance with the Public Procurement Act. The Ethics Committee is appointed in line with the Code of Ethics of the University of Zagreb. Research ethics is approached very seriously. Students are obliged to sign a Statement of Originality of Work, and professors/teachers and associates are encouraged to use the PlagScan tool or Turnitin for plagiarism detection. Students and employees are encouraged to participate in local community activities with/for people from socially disadvantaged groups, as well as take part in blood donation drives, ecology-oriented projects/activities, 3D printing of face visors that are donated to medical staff and other employees in direct contact with citizens in risk of COVID-19, etc.

Active involvement in local events and community gatherings showcases UNIZG FOI's contributions and fosters a sense of community. Collaborative research projects with local entities, address specific challenges or opportunities in the region. UNIZG FOI facilitates internships and job placement programmes for its students within local businesses and organizations. This not only benefits the students but also strengthens the ties between UNIZG FOI and the local job market.

UNIZG FOI organizes and participates in outreach programmes that involve faculty members and students. These programmes provide educational resources, workshops, or services to the local community. UNIZG FOI extends its expertise to the community by providing workshops on digital literacy, entrepreneurship, finance, strategic planning in educational institutions, and information security.

Social responsibility, ethics, and sustainability also serve as guiding values at the UNIZG FOI in its main strategy. These principles are deeply embedded in the teaching, research, and voluntary work undertaken by both employees and students. UNIZG FOI takes pride in the public recognition received for its achievements in these areas at the local, national, and international levels. UNIZG FOI has received the national volunteering award, and in 2022, it was also recognized by the City of Varaždin.

Centre for Volunteering and Humanitarian Work (CZVHR FOI) at UNIZG FOI gathers volunteers – professors/teachers and students with the aim of supporting the local community and increasing social sensitivity. The Centre's activities are led and coordinated by team members: leader, coordinator of volunteer activities and student coordinator. Depending on the volunteer projects, students, teachers and members of the local and international community are involved in the work. Volunteer activities are documented by the number of volunteer hours in volunteer booklets. Based on these activities, volunteer contracts are also concluded.

UNIZG FOI employees, through their proactive actions, consistently demonstrate their awareness of the importance of their role in society and their impact on it. They also recognize the necessity of aligning with the needs of both the local and broader community, establishing strategic partnerships, and collaborating with the private and public sectors. Consequently, it is essential to contribute to a better perception of UNIZG FOI in the public eye, its position within the academic and professional communities, and to continue to brand UNIZG FOI as a community of experts. Collaborating with community members allows students to enhance their organizational and interpersonal skills.

UNIZG FOI's core processes align with the University Code of Ethics, emphasizing human, intellectual, and academic freedom. The code encourages humane relationships among all members of the academic staff and the broader community, as well as the harmonization of previously defined rights with responsibilities in scientific, educational, artistic, formative, and professional work. We have held several workshops on plagiarism and licenses, and every year UNIZG FOI professors/teachers are referred to additional education at a foreign language school.

UNIZG FOI maintains collaboration with local government units, the city, and the county government. It supports socially beneficial projects initiated by staff and students that contribute to community development or address social issues. Additionally, we promote socially responsible behaviour among students and staff by organizing events such as seminars dedicated to spreading social responsibility. This includes encouraging staff and students to participate in volunteer activities.

The Office for Students with Disabilities at UNIZG FOI applies an individual approach to each student in order to help and support their academic goals and achievements. Their recommendations are considered a great help for professors and staff as it contributes to them providing the best individual approach that fit to a student's specific needs. Concerning the students' needs, some require extra time for exams; visually impaired students need different font size; deaf students and students with hearing impairment require specific communication software etc. Those specific recommendations are shared with professors/teachers and students, so they can make adjustments according to specific requirements for each course and student's individual needs. The UNIZG FOI website has options for specific adjustments such as Dyslexia letter type, contrast, screen size / font size, etc. in order to address the specific needs of persons with disabilities. At the end of each academic year, the report regarding the adjustments in teaching and learning methods for students with disabilities is submitted to the UNIZG FOI Faculty Council and it is made available at the Alfresco Share UNIZG FOI Platform.

In order to ensure current and correct information, UNIZG FOI communicates on daily basis with local and national media, uses different types of social media, and shares information through

webpages and social media. The Student Union is very active in providing information connected with everyday students' lives (via the newsletter STAK).

Students' initiative is very important as well in ensuring ethics, responsibility and sustainability (ERS). The accessibility analysis for architectonic barriers was carried out by a student in a wheel chair. Additionally, some students require peer assistants who help them during their studying but also during other parts of their social life. The course "Peer Support for Students with Disabilities" enables peers to learn how to provide specific types of individual support and to share their experiences with other students. This course is organized at the university level and provides an opportunity for lateral student mobility. Some students have even established social media tools to address these issues.

UNIZG FOI faculty are deeply involved in projects that have a social impact. As part of the course Social Entrepreneurship, students volunteer within the projects of the Association for Down Syndrome of Međimurje County, Association Spas Varaždin, Red Cross, People's Kitchen of Caritas (Socijalne samoposluge Varaždin), UNIZG FOI's student association eStudent, etc. UNIZG FOI is among the first institutions that use waste sorting boxes, we have LED lamps in all rooms, and that has shredders with which only paper is destroyed. Lastly, the institution is trying to make all business digital (removing application forms, indexes, printed copies of final/diploma theses, decisions, etc.). Currently, all documents are sent to professors/teachers in digital form.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

UNIZG FOI is involved in research activities, with a focus on information systems, software engineering, the economics of entrepreneurship, organizational sciences, and related fields. UNIZG FOI often engages in collaborative research projects. Research activity at UNIZG FOI is growing in terms of the number of published papers in prestigious journals and projects. The image of the UNIZG FOI symbolizes a recognizable scientific and research institution. Project activities are intensive. On average, 15-20 projects are submitted to different funds annually. In December 2023, UNIZG FOI participated in projects with a total budget of EUR 207 million, where its co-funding totalled EUR 4 million. Approximately, 80% of its faculty that are in scientific-teaching professions are involved in project activities. There are currently 20 active projects and nearly 160 finished projects. More than 50% of these projects are international, which are conducted in cooperation with partner universities.

In September 2023, the Faculty Council accepted the Gender Equality Plan.

UNIZG FOI continues to support socially responsible causes through ongoing programmes and initiatives. Key activities include: 1) The Annual Blood Donation Event: UNIZG FOI students organize an annual event where both students and employees contribute to blood donation; 2) Supporting NGOs and Civil Society: UNIZG FOI actively engages in hosting, supporting, and donating to various local and national NGOs and civil society groups. These initiatives showcase UNIZG FOI's commitment to promoting social responsibility within the institution and beyond, contributing to a positive impact on the community and society at large.

In addition to these actions, a humanitarian action was organized in 2023 to help the Bedem Ljubavi Association and the Social Self-Service organization "Bread of St. Ante." On 17 May 2023, UNIZG FOI volunteers responded to the national volunteer campaign "Hrvatska volontira" and marked it with the cleaning and beautifying the UNIZG FOI environment. During May 2023, the 11th Student Research Symposium on Intercultural Learning was held, and the volunteers of the Centre made a significant contribution to the organization and success of the symposium. The centre regularly participates in the national event Festival of Science, as part of which a digital exhibition of art works by preschool and elementary school children is organized. About 80 children's works in different techniques were submitted to the exhibition. The works were published on FB (Facebook) and the Centre's website. On an annual basis, UNIZG FOI donates a large number of computer equipment to kindergartens and schools, and through the e-school project, we have improved the educational system in almost all schools in Croatia.

The UNIZG FOI library regularly participates in international professional meetings, such as "Libraries and the UN Agenda 2030: the role of libraries in promoting sustainable development" with a poster presentation entitled "UDC 502 The environment and its protection", and publishes information related to climate change and biodiversity. The UNIZG FOI Library is currently organizing plastic cap collection campaigns for the Leukaemia and Lymphoma Association.

Part of the policy regarding ERS is published at the Centre for Volunteering and Humanitarian Work, which is an official UNIZG FOI webpage. Volunteers and stakeholders outside the UNIZG FOI have access to the centre. Procedures for volunteering are in line with the (official) regulation of the Volunteering Act and the Volunteering Code of Ethics.

UNIZG FOI strives to act in accordance with green recommendations (Green FOI). It has acquired an electric vehicle, and installed a charging station. In 2023, it received the Friend of Bicycles Plaque.

Based on the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, two professors/teachers from UNIZG FOI were appointed on 18 February 2022 as a member and deputy member of the National

Committee for the Development of Volunteering at the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (Official Gazette 22/2022). This achievement is considered an honour for UNIZG FOI.