



**STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION  
PLAN OF  
NEWTON UNIVERSITY**

**for 2024**

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# **Strategic implementation plan of NEWTON University for 2024**

## **Preamble**

NEWTON University (hereinafter referred to as ‘NEWTON University’ or the ‘NU’, functioning under the Czech official name Vysoká škola NEWTON, a.s.) has been operating in the Czech Republic for the eighteenth years, until May 2023 under the trade name NEWTON College.

The school has been conducting teaching, along with all other activities, at two locations – in the centre of Brno and at the Prague Congress Centre – for many years. Since 2021, with the approval of the responsible Slovak and Czech authorities, the activities of the university have been extended to include a workplace in Bratislava.

NEWTON University profiles itself as a standard higher education institution focused on teaching in professionally oriented bachelor's and master's degree programmes in both Czech and English. Its integral component involves the implementation of scientific, research, and development activities, with particular emphasis on projects related to other creative endeavours conducted in collaboration with businesses and public entities..

The Strategic Plan of Educational and Creative Activities of NEWTON University for the period from 2021 is directly related to the previous Long-term Plan of Educational, Research, Development and Other Creative Activities of NEWTON University, which was prepared for the period of 2016 – 2020, as amended by its regular annual updates, as well as the priority objectives, goals and recommendations contained in the published Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education for Higher Education for the period from 2021, as amended by its further updates.

The role of the Strategic Plan is to contribute to the identification of key opportunities, challenges and risks that NEWTON University will be gradually confronted with in the course of the future years, as well as to provide guidance for rational decisions on their implementation in order to maximise the benefit of the university's students in particular, as well as its academic and scientific employees and the university as a whole in the societal level.

The purpose of the presented Strategic Plan is to responsibly reflect the situation especially in the field of education, international relations and internationalisation, science, research and

other creative activities, to provide incentives for necessary changes, to stimulate innovation, but at the same time to preserve proven values, principles, norms or practices.

The Strategic Plan is a dynamic document that undergoes regular annual updates through the creation of annual implementation plans. This iterative process involves modifications, changes, and the identification of entirely new directions of development and objectives.

In compliance with the provisions of the current Higher Education Act, NEWTON University has prepared and hereby submits the Strategic Implementation Plan for the 2024.

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## Priorities and goals of NEWTON for the period 2021+

For the period from 2021 onwards, the Strategic Plan of Educational and Creative Activities of NEWTON University (hereinafter referred to as the "Strategic Plan") contains the following priorities and objectives:

### A. Educational activities

- A.1 Innovation and development of accredited fields of study
- A.2 Improvement of availability and relevance of flexible forms of education
- A.3 Development of students' competences relevant for practice and employment in the 21st century
- A.4 Development of staff competences for teaching and curriculum development
- A.5 Innovation and development of lifelong learning programme.

### B. Creative activities

- B.1 Creation of the conditions (material, human, financial, etc.) necessary for high-quality creative activities.
- B.2 Development of cooperation with external partners, application and commercialisation of the results of creative activities of the university
- B.3 Targeted building of professional and social authority of the higher education institution

### C. Internationalisation

*(NEWTON University's Institutional Strategy for Internationalisation 2021-2030)*

- C.1 Internationalisation of educational activities
- C.2 Development of students and staff global competences

### D. Organisation, management and operation of the university

- D.1 Implementation of strategic management tools
- D.2 Quality assurance and quality management of university's activities
- D.3 Innovation and development of material, technical and information equipment

### E. Students care

- E.1 Pro-client approach, the offer of additional services
- E.2 Fostering NEWTON community belonging

## A. Educational activities

The main subject of educational activity of NEWTON University is the implementation of higher education through accredited study programmes within the field of education, specifically in the 5th sector - Economic Specialisations.

Since 2011, when only 224 students were enrolled at the then NEWTON College, the number of students has grown to over 1,600 by 2021. In 2022, it reached over 1,800 students in accredited programmes (data according to the annual reports on the university's activities).

On the personnel side, the implementation of accredited study programmes in 2022, as per the annual activity report, was facilitated by more than 50 academic staff members at NEWTON University on employment contracts. Among them are 16 professors and associate professors (12.5 full-time contracts in total), 41 research assistants (including 26 teachers / 20.9 full-time contracts with a scientific degree), and 4 language lecturers.

From the very beginning of the university's existence, elements aimed at ensuring the professional outlook, employability and at the same time the necessary mobility of graduates on the labour market have been promoted in the conception and preparation of individual study fields. The individual fields of study are considered in their interrelationships and contexts, and an important element in the design of study fields is the promotion of an interdisciplinary approach both in terms of the cooperation of specific academic staff and in the curricula and syllabuses of the individual study subjects.

Standard face-to-face and distance teaching methods are gradually being supplemented by alternative methods based mainly on the use of the principles of distance communication-based teaching – this direction became crucial in the spring of 2020, when a number of restrictive measures were implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic, making standard teaching based on student-teacher contact impossible.

NEWTON University does not support the implementation of purely distance and detached forms of learning; its philosophy, vision and mission are based on emphasising the importance of contact between students and teachers or professionals, as well as between students and each other. Thus, NEWTON University seeks to promote in particular modified and blended forms of learning that enable active discussion, sharing and exchange of experiences, teamwork to create solutions, etc.

Special emphasis is placed on professional practice in all fields of study, with the aim of validating acquired theoretical knowledge in the specific contexts of companies or institutions. This process includes obtaining essential feedback, both from the perspective of the student-

participant in the practice and the university as a whole. Students undertake their professional practice at partner organisations, and the number of participants continually grows.

In 2023, the accreditation procedure for the extension of the validity of the accreditation for the professionally oriented bachelor's degree programme in Economics and Management, implemented in both on-campus and distance forms of study at the locations in Prague, Brno, and Bratislava, was successfully completed. The accreditation was extended for another 5 years.

Similarly, the accreditation procedure for the extension of the validity of accreditation for the professionally oriented bachelor's degree programme in Global Business and Management in English, offered in both on-campus and online forms of study at the Prague and Brno locations, was successfully completed, resulting in the extension of accreditation for another 5 years.

In addition to accredited education, NEWTON University gradually develops lifelong education profiled in a similar way to its accredited courses of study and intended for both its own graduates and the general professional public. Lifelong learning programmes are in the form of special training courses, short-, medium- and long-term training programmes, purpose-oriented training courses or skills training. Alternatively, accredited long-term programmes hold a special position among continuing education programmes aimed at obtaining professional degrees such as MBA, MSc. or LL.M., implemented in cooperation with foreign partners. In line with its clients' needs and interests, NEWTON University offers language training and preparatory courses within its own capabilities and those of its partner educational institutions.

In the implementation of its educational activities, NEWTON University emphasises the added value that students obtain as a result of their educational activities, an integral part of which is not only their own knowledge, skills, competences or other insight acquired during the course of their studies, but also the professional experience gained through internships and work, contacts with the network of specialised companies and organisations, with their managers, etc. All of this is aimed at achieving the overarching goal of fulfilling the graduate's outcome profile, designed with a perspective on their future practical utility. This includes their readiness for entrepreneurial endeavours or employment in a dependent work setting.

Within the educational process, NEWTON University focuses on the individualised development of personalities and managerial skills of its students, supports independent, critical and at the same time creative thinking, encourages students to reflect on their own social and environmental responsibility, contributes to the awareness of the need for lifelong learning and development.



Individual objectives of priority A. Educational activities reflect the following areas and directions:

- A.1 Innovation and development of accredited fields of study
- A.2 Improvement of availability and relevance of flexible forms of education
- A.3 Development of students' competences relevant for practice and employment in the 21st century
- A.4 Development of staff competences for teaching and curriculum development
- A.5 Innovation and development of lifelong learning programme.

Within the first group of objectives A.1 Innovation and development of accredited fields of study, NEWTON University will focus on the following activities in 2024:

- a) design, preparation, processing and submission of an application for extension of the accreditation of the professionally oriented follow-up master's degree programme in Economics and Management in the full-time and combined form of study in the study locations of Prague, Brno and Bratislava;
- b) preparation of a comprehensive proposal for accreditation of a professionally focused postgraduate study programme in the field of the 5th sector – Economic Specialisations, conducted in the English language, encompassing both on-campus and online learning modes at the Prague study location;
- c) preparation of a comprehensive proposal, which will serve as the basis for the decision on potentially submitting an accreditation application for a new accreditation in a bachelor's study programme in a different field of education than the 5th sector – Economic Specialisations. This applies to both full-time and combined form of study at the Prague study location.

Attention will be also focused on the objectives defined as intermediate, which include:

- support of students' motivation to study and their active involvement in study activities (maintenance and development of motivation in the form of a functional system of merit scholarships, continuous innovation of forms, methods, and tools of teaching aimed at promoting students' interest, modernisation of curricula and course syllabuses in accordance with new knowledge, use of knowledge from practice in teaching, use of elements of practical teaching, etc.);
- control of the quality of teaching in all implemented study programmes and forms of study of ex-ante character (content of study plans and syllabuses of study courses with regard to the fulfilment of the declared knowledge and skill profile of the graduate of the study programme, elimination of duplications in study plans and syllabuses of courses, from 2024 with an emphasis on the modification of curricula in relation to the

- extension of the validity of existing accreditations), implemented through coordination and harmonisation meetings, subject groups or guided inter-subject consultations;
- innovations in the content of individual subjects in terms of the implementation of the declared profile of knowledge and skills of a graduate, reflecting the latest findings assured by individual guarantors, lecturers and others teachers (on the basis of the outputs of internal and external evaluations of NEWTON University's activities, realised by the managers, within the framework of academic workshops, coordination and harmonisation meetings, inter-subject consultations, etc.);
  - ex-post control of the quality of teaching in all implemented programmes and forms of study (alignment with the curricula and syllabuses of study courses, implementation of teaching in the ranges specified by the valid accreditation and the dates corresponding to the valid timetable, control of the quality of teaching, etc.) carried out by management, including the relevant Vice-Chancellor and the Chancellor of NEWTON University, as well as administratively by the staff from student administration;
  - strengthening the NEWTON University staff responsible for the study programmes with emphasis on the presence of full-time contract academics who do not teach substantially at other universities, in particular professors and associate professors, as well as lecturers with research degrees and lecturers studying in doctoral programmes.

The second group of objectives is devoted to **A.2 Improvement of availability and relevance of flexible forms of education**, where NEWTON University has been striving since the early years of its existence to make use of effective forms and methods of acquiring knowledge and skills, both within its accredited study programmes and other lifelong learning activities.

Elements typical of the educational process as perceived by NEWTON University are interactivity, high frequency and intensity of contact between students and a teacher, between students themselves, and between the university and practice, as well as individuality of approach responding to the diversity of specific learning needs of students and lifelong learning students.

The period since the beginning of 2020 has clearly pointed to the need to implement further flexible forms of education, especially a distant education based on intensive and effective use of modern technologies. Government restrictions, which prevented the personal presence of students and lifelong learning students during teaching directly on the premises of universities, meant that the introduction of distance forms of education was necessary at an accelerated pace, for which universities were not adequately prepared (among other things, with regard to the NAB [National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education, NAU – Národní akreditační úřad pro vysoké školství, in Czech] rules in force at the time, which set out the requirements for the possible methods and course of implementation of educational activities of universities).

NEWTON University fully supports the trend of improving the accessibility of higher education through the implementation of relevant flexible forms of education, especially distance learning based on blended learning.

It is certainly not the aim to create a university "without students" operating only "remotely" – such steps would be in complete contradiction with the basic principles and values of NEWTON University, its vision and mission.

The purpose of implementing flexible forms of education is to enhance the efficiency of the educational process in terms of its effectiveness, efficiency and economy. Properly used, distance forms of education are a significant variant of especially mass lecture classes, involving more participants, increasing the attractiveness of the educational process, etc.

Specific targets for 2024 in this regard include:

- a) innovation of the system of professional support for the implementation of distance education at NEWTON University (technical background in the form of specialised classrooms/studios and technical equipment used by individual teachers (laptops, cameras, high-capacity Internet connections), technical, knowledge and skills support for teachers in the implementation of distance learning, etc.);
- b) the continuous knowledge acquisition and, on this basis, the beneficial adjustments to mechanisms ensuring effective, evident, transparent and credible verification of distance education results;
- c) the continuous adaptation of various procedures and tools for verifying the quality of education to a form that also enables the monitoring of the quality of distance education.

Attention will be paid to diagnostic and counselling activities aimed at strengthening, supporting, and developing students' talents or qualities. This applies both during their studies, with a focus on reducing the risk of academic failure, and after graduation, with an orientation towards professional practice, personal life, and further education. These efforts are evident in the activities of the NEWTON Careers Centre and the NEWTON Business Accelerator.

Collaboration with our own Erudikon Foundation, as well as with other foundations and endowments that reflect and support the interests of capable prospective students, regardless of their socio-economic background, age, nationality, or special needs arising from health or other difficulties, will be continued.

The third set of objectives under Priority A. Educational activities are the objectives oriented to **(A.3) the development of students' competences relevant for practice and employment in the 21st century.**

The need for developing competences among students relevant to practice and employment in the 21st century is evident. In addition to the primary emphasis on fostering students' professional competence through practical studies, NEWTON organises and implements other activities. These include targeted support for the soft skills development, integrated into accredited study curricula, development of the NEWTON Career Centre where individuals can access both informational support and engage in their entrepreneurial pursuits, such as start-ups, joint projects, and co-financing of business plans etc.

In 2024, the activities of the NEWTON Careers Centre, as well as the NEWTON Business Accelerator (incubator), which brings together activities to support students' entrepreneurial activities and entrepreneurship, student start-ups, student projects, etc. will continue.

The ongoing goal for 2024 is to further expand the number and variety of partner organisations, encompassing various types of business entities (small and family businesses, medium-sized enterprises, large and multinational corporations, foreign economic entities), as well as public institutions, non-profit organisations, and other entities, with professional practice opportunities for NEWTON students. Special emphasis will be placed on ensuring capacity for professional practice in English, catering not only to students of the Global Business and Management study programme, where the language of study is English, but also to students of programmes conducted in Czech.

The next group of objectives of priority A. is oriented towards **(A.4) the development of staff competences for teaching and curriculum development**. NEWTON University sees the development of the competencies of its academics and staff, both in the direction of training and development of their knowledge and professional skills, as well as the development of the competency of their personalities.

The development of knowledge, skills and abilities in the field of pedagogy and andragogy is a key objective, complemented with training and development required by the introduction of flexible forms of education based on the intensive use of electronic means of distance communication. Unquestionably, space for the cultivation of subject-specific expertise and skills should be allocated.

New needs and requirements for academics demand updating models for evaluating the quality of their performance. The significance and potential of various platforms supporting the development of academic competencies, exchanging experiences, implementing best practices, and sharing successful strategies are growing.

For 2024, as part of this objective, the following goals have been formulated:

- a) ongoing refresher and extension trainings for NEWTON academic staff on the verification of academic achievements using remote electronic communication (Zoom.us and Exam.net systems);
- b) stabilisation and further improvement of the system of electronic platforms for the operational sharing of information, handling queries, and exchanging experiences (pedagogical experiences in general, distance learning system control, management of final theses, formal rules at NEWTON concerning studies, the evaluation of student success etc.);
- c) updating and adapting the form, content and frequency of academic workshops provided in previous periods to meet the new needs of academic staff development (the emphasis in 2024 will be on the ability to effectively conduct final qualification papers, including these in English);
- d) continued development of a system of group and individual knowledge and skills support for the delivery of distance learning at NEWTON University;
- e) continuous implementation of support for the professional and personal growth of academic staff and other teachers of NEWTON (creation and development of a range of individual and group development events oriented on development of pedagogical, didactic, technical and communication and presentation skills, etc.);
- f) ongoing support for publications as well as other professional creative activities of academics of NEWTON University, including funding for contributions to prestigious professional journals.

The final, fifth set of objectives focuses on the **innovation and development of lifelong learning programs (A.5)**. In addition to accredited higher education studies, NEWTON engages in the development of educational and developmental activities within the realm of lifelong learning (hereinafter referred to as 'LLL'), particularly postgraduate studies (however, there are no exceptions for LLL courses that do not require a university diploma, language courses intended as supplementary education for students of secondary schools or universities or for the professional public, professionally oriented training and skills training for specific institutional sponsors, etc.).

For the year 2024, NEWTON University has defined the following objectives in this area:

- a) continued updating of the specific training course offerings;
- b) establishment of a comprehensive system for targeted feedback regarding training programmes and lifelong learning activities;
- c) revising the range of educational activities tailored for individuals interested in university's studies, university's applicants, including foreign language applicants, and those applying for studies in Czech Republic;

- d) extending the array of courses and comprehensive lifelong learning programs to address current practical needs, encompassing programmes that foster the development of competencies (soft skills) relevant to practice and employment in the 21st century.

## B. Creative activities of the university

NEWTON University purposefully supports academic, research, development and other creative activities, conducts its own research projects, has received grants and other research projects from public funds, and publishes its own professional journal.

From 2018 to 2021, the implementation of the project "Methodology for Evaluating the Results of Verification Testing in Initial Education and Its Application in a Model Case Study" was carried out under the leadership of Assoc. Prof. RNDr. PhDr. Oldřich Hájek, Ph.D., MBA. The project was supported by the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic and is currently in the sustainability phase. The main objective of the project was to develop a certified methodology for evaluating the results of external comparative evaluation tools in initial education and to subsequently validate this methodology in model case studies. The intention of the project was to create a comprehensive and user-friendly methodological support for application by users. The main application partner of the project – the Czech School Inspectorate (ČŠI), played an important role, being the subject of implementation of validation evaluation tools in primary education in the Czech Republic. The essence of the project guarantees an increase in the quality of decision-making of the CSI based on research-oriented cooperation with NEWTON.

The creative activity of NEWTON University is mainly focused on contract research projects carried out with specific partners from practice; from 2021 to 2023, six of such projects were carried out with the total amount of funding 620,000 CZK.

Since 2005, an integral part of the university's creative activities has been the publication of the professional journal *Scientia & Societas* financed exclusively from its own resources, available in both print (ISSN 1801-7118) and electronic form (ISSN 1801-6057) (see also [www.sets.cz](http://www.sets.cz)). Published quarterly, it focuses on original scientific and review articles in economics, management, legal sciences, political science, psychology, and other social sciences. The content includes research projects results and other pertinent information.

The journal *Scientia & Societas* has been included once again in the List of peer-reviewed non-impacted periodicals published in the Czech Republic since January 1, 2015. Furthermore, it is listed in the ERIH PLUS database (European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences). In November 2018, the periodical was added to the Index Copernicus database, with an *Index Copernicus Value* (ICV) of 62.55 for 2018. The procedure for inclusion in the Scopus citation and abstract database is currently underway.

NEWTON University is aware that as an accredited higher education institution, it is not only accountable to its students - its clients, but also contributes to the representation and thus the reputation and image of higher education in the Czech Republic as a whole.



As evidence of NEWTON University's success in this area, one can consider not only its consistent top-ranking position in the 'Best School/Faculty of the Year' polls organised by an independent media entity but also its involvement in various activities aimed at the general development of society and in professional and scientific-popularising social dialogue.

NEWTON represents an open community, comprising not only academics, teachers, and students but also researchers, collaborators from the field of practice, and other professionals in diverse economic and managerial disciplines. This inclusive community extends to alumni, prospective students, parents, and supporters.

Key values shared in the NEWTON environment include a sense of belonging, collaboration, open communication, friendliness, and respect for others.

Within the framework of creative activities, the university intends to continue all the activities described above in the coming years, establishing further strategic partnerships, especially with business entities, but also with public or non-profit entities, and thus actively contributing to the need for greater interconnection between educational institutions, the corporate sphere and public administration.

NEWTON University is also interested in the implementation of scientific, research and development activities carried out under public grant schemes, and in this respect it is seeking to obtain the status of a research organisation, although unfortunately unsuccessfully so far (unsuccessful application, including unsuccessful dissolution proceedings in 2022 and 2023).

The first group of objectives under Priority B. Creative activities of the university is focused on **creating the conditions (material, personnel, financial, etc.) necessary for the implementation of quality creative activities (B.1).**

The following specific targets have been set for 2024:

- a) preparation and submission of a new application for research organisation status;
- b) the implementation of the 17. edition of the 'European Entrepreneurship Forum' conference, as well as the preparation and proposal of the concept for the implementation of the next editions of the conference in the following years;
- c) further qualitative development of the university's journal *Scientia & Societas* aiming to achieve a 100% share of published papers in English, with the goal of, among other objectives, obtaining indexation in the Scopus database;
- d) preparation and submission of proposals and applications for the implementation of research grant projects financed from public funds (especially TA ČR) with the position



of NEWTON University as the main investigator of the project, as well as participation in the preparation of similar projects of other principal investigators.

On an ongoing basis, NEWTON emphasises the involvement of students in research and creative activities as research assistants, trainees, scholarship holders or full members of research teams (especially in creative activities) and the creation of organisational (organisation of teaching and the design of schedules, individual teaching workload providing space for the implementation of other activities), information (availability of resources, full-text databases of professional resources, etc. ), financial (financing of conference fees, payments for publishing in prestigious journals) and, if necessary, methodological (mentoring and methodological support from experienced scientists and researchers from professors and associate professors' board of the university) prerequisites for successful implementation of research, other creative and specifically publishing activities by all academic members of NEWTON University.

Other objectives within the priority are oriented to the sphere **(B.2) of development of cooperation with external partners, application and commercialisation of the results of creative activities of the university.**

NEWTON University encompasses two primary thematic strands in its creative activities. The first focuses on the field of economics (business economics, corporate finance, public finance, the efficiency of the private versus public sector). The second strand revolves around research dedicated to exploring the abilities of current and future managers in navigating and developing human systems within the ever evolving societal and market environment (with emphasis on identifying, understanding, and enhancing managerial qualities, with a particular focus on cognitive processes, functions influencing decision-making and action, adaptation to change and stress, as well as psychophysical, mental, personality, and social dispositions and their configuration and development).

The overarching goal of this research is to both broaden and deepen knowledge within these subfields and disciplines, with a continuous emphasis on applying this knowledge to studies and practical scenarios. Practical applicability extends to enhancing the employability of NEWTON University students in the labour market and overall professional practice, as well as contributing to the overall competitiveness of the Czech economy by fostering the qualities of skilled professional managers.

Emphasis is given to the proper publication of results stemming from scientific, research, and other creative endeavours, in the range of publications and conference presentations, as well as transferring acquired knowledge into accredited teaching and lifelong learning courses, applying it within the realm of real businesses and other entities (including a keen interest in commercialising results and establishing long-term partnerships, which may involve contributing to the necessary costs associated with research activities).

NEWTON University's academic community, comprising students, collaborators, practitioners, and managers, actively engages in research activities with a particular focus on seizing international partnership opportunities.

The specific objective set for 2024 involves significantly expanding cooperation in contract research and other creative activities. This includes initiating a minimum of eight new projects with partners from the private and public sectors, followed by maximizing the involvement of NEWTON students in project implementation.

NEWTON University will consistently support the expansion of collaboration with scientific and research institutes in the Czech Republic and abroad, as well as with various educational institutions, especially those offering tertiary education (including private, public, and, where appropriate, state universities, as well as higher vocational schools).

The last group of objectives included in Priority B. Creative activities of the university, is group **B.3 Targeted building of professional and social authority of the higher education institution.**

NEWTON University actively participates, both institutionally and individually, in various professional organisations, institutions, and associations, such as the Czech Chancellors' Conference, the Council of Universities, the Association of Private Universities, and the association of universities providing postgraduate educational programmes (CAMBAS) and collaborates, to varying extents, with numerous other universities, including those abroad.

NEWTON in particular focuses on cooperating with secondary schools with the aim of not only fostering interest in the study of economics and management at universities but also to promote economic studies, enhance awareness of the often imprecisely or unclearly defined role and contribution of managers and management as a whole, along with addressing other specific issues.

NEWTON endeavours to bridge the world of students with successful executives who have excelled in various fields. The school frequently organises meetings with personalities from academic, professional, and vocational environments. These meetings take on various formats. Some allow all participants to hear the life and professional stories of the invited guests, ask questions, and engage in discussions on any topic. Others are specifically designed to address particular professional issues, events, etc.

It is in the interest of NEWTON University to be a transparent and open socially beneficial institution whose activities contribute to economic, social, cultural and environmental development at local, regional, national and transnational levels.

The following specific targets are set for 2024:

- a) ensuring the operation of the NEWTON University Alumni Club, including motivating alumni to become actively involved in the club's activities;
- b) keeping the professional but also to the general public regularly and openly informed about what is happening within the NEWTON University, through various communication channels including social media (Facebook) and NEWTON TV;
- c) caring about good relations with the community, including all administrative authorities, as well as the image of NEWTON;
- d) targeting branding of NEWTON University used in the international environment as a sign of a trustworthy institution with undisputed professional and general social authority;
- e) supporting and strengthening the participation of individual NEWTON academic community members in social dialogue regarding issues related to the institution's professional orientation in economics and management;
- f) continuously expanding and deepening cooperation with educational and research organisations, local government units, state and public administration institutions, professional societies, chambers, and private business entities, both domestically and internationally (refer also to section C. Internationalisation below).

## C. Internationalisation

Internationalisation is a fundamental pillar for the ongoing development of NEWTON University, encompassing both the educational realm and the creative activities of the institution.

The commitment to internationalisation is evident not only through study programmes conducted in the Czech language, which incorporate English language courses at the bachelor's level and teaching of selected subjects in English-language at master's degree, but notably through the implementation of the accredited, professionally oriented bachelor's degree programme, Global Business and Management, conducted entirely in English.

NEWTON University actively engages in the ERASMUS+ programme, providing students with opportunities to complete part of their studies at foreign partner universities. In 2020, NEWTON was once again awarded the ERASMUS+ Erasmus Charter for Higher Education certificate, valid for the period 2021-2027, fostering collaboration between universities within and outside the UE.

NEWTON University currently collaborates with more than 50 educational institutions (universities) in more than 20 different countries, including France, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey. Apart from the ERASMUS+ network, NEWTON students have opportunities for study exchange programs in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Taiwan, and Georgia.

In addition to international networks, NEWTON University actively establishes institutional collaborations (Memorandums of Understanding), which have been concluded with non-European universities, such as the National Taichung University of Education in Taichung, Taiwan, and the International Black Sea University in Tbilisi, Georgia. The most recent example of European collaboration is the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation signed with Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Management in December 2022.

NEWTON also excels in establishing individual contacts with specific lecturers from foreign academic environments, as exemplified by the recent (November 2023) lecture titled 'Fascinating Journey into Game Theory' given by Prof. Roberto Serrano, conducted in English.

Under Priority C, Internationalisation, NEWTON University's interests and ambitions have notably expanded in recent years, particularly towards meeting the standards of foreign independent accreditations and certifications specific to business universities.

NEWTON University has successfully achieved several goals. From 2023 NEWTON is a member of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), a respected

American professional organisation founded in 1916, uniting business universities. Additionally, it has recently become a member of the prestigious Business Graduates Association (BGA), an international organisation based in London that brings together the world's best business schools.

NEWTON University is currently finalising a comprehensive International Strategy for the years 2024-2030. This strategy will serve as the required institutional framework for the internationalisation of NEWTON University by 2030.

In 2024, NEWTON University is dedicated to achieving several goals within Priority C: Internationalisation. As part of the **Internationalisation of educational activities (C.1)**, the National Accreditation Office for Higher Education of the Czech Republic is currently reviewing the extension of the validity of the bachelor's degree programme in Economics and Management in full-time and distance learning in the English language at the Prague and Brno study locations.

Additionally, the goal for 2024 is the preparation and submission of an application for the accreditation of a professionally oriented study programme for a follow-up master's degree in the 5<sup>th</sup> field of Economics. This programme will be conducted in English, in both full-time and distance learning forms, at the Prague study location. In accordance with Czech legislation, a one-year or one-and-a-half-year study programme is under consideration, aligning more closely with practices in the Anglo-Saxon academic environment and meeting the expectations of foreign applicants for this study.

In 2024 and the subsequent years, NEWTON University will not only concentrate on maintaining and further developing its accredited study programmes in the Czech Republic but will also strive to meet certification standards set by foreign accreditation authorities for universities with a business focus, which include the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the Business Graduates Association (BGA).

Moreover, the focus from 2024 onward will extend to establishing a validation scheme or a dual education programme in a follow-up master's programme, in collaboration with a selected educational institution (university) in the UK, Ireland, or the USA.

In the year 2024, there are plans to design, prepare, and launch a professionally oriented postgraduate educational programme MBA (or Executive MBA) implemented exclusively in English. This programme is intended to be accredited by CAMBAS (Czech Association of MBA Schools) and will emphasise personal development, the relationship between business and society, sustainability in business activities, and the utilisation of modern technologies, including AI, for overall business development.

Ongoing objectives include integrating foreign and non-native English-speaking members of the academic community into academic life and general events at NEWTON University. The efforts focus on attracting visiting professors to the university for at least one semester of the academic year and promoting the expansion of international cooperation in the implementation of creative activities.

Within the second group of objectives, **C.2 Development of students and staff global competences**, continued attention is directed towards language preparation, especially for bachelor's students, ensuring access to study materials and literature in foreign languages, primarily English, for both bachelor's and master's students. Additionally, support is provided for alternative forms of international mobility, encompassing virtual and blended mobility for students and employees.

As the level of internationalisation increases at NEWTON University, with a growing number of students in English-taught study programmes in the future, there is a corresponding need to internationalise the entire university environment, the application of new tools for electronic information exchange about studies and the implementation of mechanisms for recognition of the results of previous and parallel studies from abroad.

In 2024, there will be specific changes in promotional and marketing activities related to the educational and other activities in foreign languages. Equally significant is the ongoing and emphasised internationalisation of the NEWTON University environment (premises, information systems, staff communication proficiency in foreign languages, and active integration of foreign language students into the NEWTON 'ecosystem' etc.).

Other specific objectives of this focus in the period 2024 include in particular:

- a) the use of AI tools to implement the process of internationalisation of NEWTON University environment (translation, information exchange, communication);
- b) preparation and subsequent implementation of a system of contact, virtual and blended mobility of students and academic staff;
- c) further expansion of the possibilities of access to foreign language study materials, in particular by providing access to e-books (i.e. to one of the virtual libraries of electronic publications);
- d) continuous emphasis on increasing the number and intensification of partnerships with foreign universities, as well as other foreign partners like educational institutions, research institutes, partners from practice, as well as international networks and alliances of universities.



## **D. Organisation, management and operation of the university**

The primary document governing the internal organizational structure of NEWTON University is the internal regulation in the form of the NEWTON Statutes, followed by individual internal standards and regulations, particularly the directives and instructions of the Chancellor.

The University is equipped with technical and informational facilities that cater to the diverse activities conducted within the institution, with a primary focus on educational activities.

The technical facilities are situated in suitable premises located in the central parts of the cities where NEWTON University operates. These locations are always conveniently accessible by public transport. For instance, in Prague, the address is 5. května 1640/65, Prague 4, within the Prague Congress Centre, entrance 6, 4th floor. In Brno, it is Rašínova 2, adjacent to Svobody Square. For the newest site in Bratislava, the premises are in the city centre at Tomášikova 22.

All premises used by NEWTON University are approved for teaching purposes. Their standard equipment includes data projectors, relevant IT equipment, whiteboards, tables, and chairs for teaching spaces, etc.

A key element of the technical and information facilities is the Information System (IS) introduced at the beginning of the academic year 2014/2015. It is a proven system developed and supported by IS4U for a long time, with famous implementations used by institutions such as Mendel University in Brno, the University of Economics in Prague, and private universities like Škoda Auto - University of Mladá Boleslav.

In response to government restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, NEWTON University has consistently addressed the challenge of transitioning to effective distance education since Spring 2020. The institution acquired several licenses for various information platforms, most notably Zoom.us and WebinarJam. In 2021, there was a significant shift towards extensive use of Google products, including Google Meet. Additionally, the Exam.net system has been successfully implemented for verifying student success. Throughout the academic year 2020/2021, when in-person teaching was impossible due to government restrictions, NEWTON successfully converted all planned contact teaching into an online form. This involved implementing real-time teaching through remote electronic communication.

At present and in the future, NEWTON University aims to leverage the knowledge, expertise, and skills acquired in implementing remote electronic communication for teaching. The intention is to continue using this teaching approach, particularly in accordance with the principles of 'blended learning,' while also serving as an effective means of support. This contributes to making the teaching process more attractive and dynamic.

For the year 2024, Priority D, which focuses on the organisation, management, and operations of the university, comprises three groups of defined objectives:

- D.1 Implementation of strategic management tools
- D.2 Quality assurance and quality management of the university's activities
- D.3 Innovation and development of material, technical, and information facilities

Within the framework of the group of objectives **D.1 Implementation of strategic management tools**, NEWTON University intends to maintain its focus on verifying the effectiveness and subsequently updating the university's strategic management systems. This includes updating and defining the management and support systems for human resources.

Regarding human resource management, the emphasis will continually be put on supporting and further developing young academics, specifically in reconciling their work and family life, systems of incentive-based rewarding for all NEWTON employees, as well as support for career development for academics, will be stabilised

Attention will also be directed towards reducing the administrative burden on academic staff through the creation of efficient, successful, and cost-effective online systems to support their activities.

Particular emphasis will persist on ensuring the overall quality of university's activities, with a focus on both educational and other creative endeavours.

Nevertheless, the attention will persist in the area of financial management. Emphasis will still be placed on applying effective strategic management tools to enhance the prediction of economic results, detect existing economic risks, and expedite decision-making on potential investments. This approach also extends to determining the limits of operational financing for NEWTON University's activities.

The specific targets for 2024 include:

- a) completion and implementation of the first version of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) as a basic tool to promote gender equality across the entire institution of the university and all its processes;
- b) implementation of the whistleblowing system, already started in 2023, in response to the requirements of the new legislation;
- c) maintenance and further development of specific tools to support on-line teaching and distance learning verification of study success using remote electronic communication (to the extent that this is possible and effective within the current form of accreditation of study programmes; with the focus on distance forms of teaching and verification of



learning outcomes, e.g. in courses and programmes of postgraduate education), which includes financial security, building the knowledge base of academic and other employees necessary for the effective use of the various tools, etc;

- d) continuous evaluation and, if necessary, updating of strategic and senior executive financial management toolkits;
- e) evaluation and subsequent updating of mechanisms for collecting, analysing, and reporting relevant data for quality assurance and management of all internal activities, which includes strategic, senior executive, and executive management, covering both quantitative and, to an appropriate extent, qualitative data.

On an ongoing basis, attention will be paid to supporting initiatives and activities aimed at the exchange of experience, sharing and transfer of good practice, etc., especially in the preparation of strategic documents (vision, mission, strategy, strategic objectives) and accreditation applications, with the active involvement of a wide group of partners, especially students, all NEWTON academics and employees, external partners from the ranks of collaborating experts, representatives of employers or representatives of local and regional governments, etc.

Activities and measures to reduce the administrative burden on NEWTON academics will also be supported, as recommended and instructed by the MEYS [Ministry Of Education, Youth And Sports, Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy, in Czech], as well as activities aimed at ensuring data collection and reporting to the extent necessary for the needs of the MEYS (coordinated with other universities and the MEYS itself),.

The second group of objectives **D.2** is oriented towards the issue of **quality assurance and quality management of the university's activities.**

NEWTON University has prioritised the quality management of its activities since 2012. Looking ahead, the university is exploring the potential use of international and supranational accreditation agencies or organisations to assess and enhance the quality of its educational activities, complementing the efforts undertaken by the university itself.

The specific objectives within this group of goals formulated for the period 2024 include:

- a) updates to the internal quality assessment system of NEWTON University's activities, including preparations for a new periodic comprehensive report on the internal quality assessment of the university's educational and other activities;
- b) evaluation and further development of the system of internal quality assessment of NEWTON University's activities in relation to the evaluation of support and service activities and the management activities of the university;

- c) evaluation and development of the internal quality assessment system of the NEWTON University in relation to human resources management with emphasis on the effectiveness of employee adaptation, training and development of employees, motivation, rewarding and employee care;
- d) continuously refining mechanisms for translating the outcomes of internal (and external) evaluations of the quality of NEWTON University's activities into practice (*including defining competencies related to the steps below: addressing evaluations and suggestions regarding specific academic and non-academic employees, individually addressing findings with employees, assessing the significance of the evaluation findings, proposing corrective actions, including potential disciplinary or personnel measures, etc.*).

The last group of objectives **D.3 Innovation and development of material, technical and information equipment** includes objectives oriented to the development of conditions for the performance of educational, creative and other activities at NEWTON University.

In this regard, there is still a focus on implementing modern technologies to facilitate and streamline educational activities (within the accreditations, in particular by extending existing approaches and tools considered as standard to other optional instruments). It is therefore necessary to continue to pay attention to the electronic security issues of the communication systems used at the university, including verification of the identity of the person communicating, etc.

The specific objectives for 2024 include:

- a) (see also above) completing the implementation of whistleblowing in response to the requirements of new legislation in the form of the whistleblower protection act;
- b) continuous implementation of technological equipment that extends and enriches the possibilities of the educational process and the communication of academics and other teachers with students and students of long-life learning programmes;
- c) verification and, if necessary, subsequent adjustments to the form of security elements and ensuring individual IT systems of NEWTON University;
- d) assessment of the functionality of the IS information system, including the possibility of replacing it with an alternative system.

On a continuous basis, the modernisation of current technical and technological equipment for teaching, research, administrative and other activities (as well as and current technology, IT hardware, and software, as well as LAN infrastructure etc.) will be ensured. The development of the NEWTON University library's collections, including a focus on electronic publishing and access to electronic databases, and the activities of NEWTON Books Publishing will

gradually shift towards a gradual focus on electronic publishing and electronic distribution of e-journals, e-books and other electronic publications.

## E. Students care

The domain of student care has consistently held special significance for NEWTON University. This interest is not only integral to meeting the needs of students as clients of NEWTON University but also plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining a cohesive community, which comprises students, alumni, academic and other employees (including former employees), as well as partners, supporters, and friends of the University.

NEWTON University commitment to its students extends beyond conventional educational institutions. The university actively supports its students (and alumni) in various activities, including extracurricular ones, post-graduation pursuits, professional and career-oriented ones, and more.

With the further development of the accreditation of undergraduate programmes in English, particular attention is dedicated to the proper care of international students and to creation of optimal conditions for their successful study and integration within NEWTON.

Within the first group of objectives **E.1 Pro-client approach, the offer of additional services** in the 2024, as in the previous period, NEWTON University will focus mainly on the development of partnerships between the university and students, including personal and financial support for students in the event of life crises, the reduction of academic failure for reasons other than directly academic, especially concerning the need to balance study with family life (in case of parents pursuing their education).

Continuously, this priority underscores the importance of ensuring the accessibility of university facilities for individuals with reduced mobility (both immobile and mobility impaired persons) and those with orientation challenges (including hearing and sight-impaired individuals). Additionally, it promotes healthy lifestyles, such as implementing a schedule that allows all groups of students to eat regularly and adhere to basic rules of mental hygiene.

The other objectives (**E.2 Fostering NEWTON community belonging**) aim at the targeted support and creation of the NEWTON University community, which consists of students, alumni, academics and other employees, university partners, as well as other advocates and well-wishers of the university, whether they communicate in Czech or English (or any other language) within the university.

Certain segments of the NEWTON University community are already partially institutionalised, such as the established Alumni Club. It is anticipated that specific-purpose groups will be formed in the future, notably including partners from individual companies and other entities affiliated with NEWTON University.

NEWTON sees the community as a resource for its future development, already recruiting partners and supporters of NEWTON University's activities, a source of people interested in postgraduate and continuing education courses and programmes, etc.

In 2024, the aim is to further develop Alumni Club activities, establish a tradition of specific club events, and engage alumni who have not yet participated in club activities.

Ongoing objectives for the future encompass creating conditions for the development of student interest activities, fostering student association activities, and supporting the establishment and activities of other specialised groups involving the university's partners from practical entities.

Other activities linking the University to practice, such as the NEWTON Careers Centre, the business' incubator (hub) NEWTON Business Accelerator and the NEWTON Business Angel Fund, a tool for development and financial support, will also receive continued support.

NEWTON University will persist in backing sports, cultural and other general and social activities of NEWTON students and other members of the academic community, will support the internationalisation of its community, actively engaging international students, including ERASMUS+ programme students, in the life of the university community. This emphasises the concept of the NEWTON community. Furthermore, ongoing support will be provided for the stabilisation and targeted development of NEWTON University organisational culture, image, and goodwill.

## Conclusion

The current turbulent times continually introduce significant changes driven by demographic, economic, socio-cultural, or other factors, which to a greater or lesser extent necessarily affect not all, but certainly many of the activities undertaken within NEWTON University.

Nevertheless, certain aspects of the NEWTON University's environment should undoubtedly remain stable and unchanged – this notably includes the preservation of academic freedoms, adherence to the ethics of teaching and research activities, a commitment to internationalisation, the cultivation of creative and imaginative thinking, and other fundamental, historically proven principles guiding the university's existence and operations.

The Strategic Plan, along with annually created implementation plans, serves as a cornerstone for responsible reflection on the necessity for change or the preservation of the status quo. This dynamic document remains open and will be continuously updated, supplemented, and amended in response to the evolving needs of NEWTON University as a whole, as well as the various interest groups contributing to its functioning in diverse ways.

Prague, 24th November 2023



Anna Plechatá Krausová, DPhil.  
Chancellor & Chairwoman of the Board  
NEWTON University

Attachment: University's Investment Plan for the Year 2024

*The document "Strategic Implementation Plan of NEWTON University for 2024" was discussed and approved by the NEWTON University Academic Council during its regular meeting on November 23, 2023.*

## **Attachment: University's Investment Plan for the Year 2024**

NEWTON University as a private university formulates an investment plan exclusively for actions reliant on financing or co-financing from public sources, whether from the public budget of the Czech Republic, the European Union's budget, alternatively for investment activities financed exclusively from private sources, provided that the projected investment expenditure exceeds 10 million CZK.

### **1. Summary of investment activities**

In 2024, NEWTON University will allocate investment funds, as in previous years, primarily towards the renewal of IT equipment and instrumentation to bolster the digitalisation of education, including the implementation of remote online electronic communication.

None of the investment projects surpasses 10 million CZK and none of these projects will receive financing or co-financing from the public budget of the Czech Republic or the budget of the European Union.

### **2. List of individual investment activities to be implemented in 2024**

In 2024, there are no ongoing or newly planned investment activities with a projected investment expenditure exceeding 10 million CZK.

Simultaneously, it is affirmed that in 2024, no ongoing or newly prepared investment actions, even with a lower amount, are financed or co-financed from the public budgets of the Czech Republic or the European Union.

### **3. Comprehensive information on the acquisition of machinery and instrumentation equipment in 2024**

For the year 2024, no investment activities of the nature of acquiring machinery and instrumentation equipment with a planned investment expenditure exceeding 10 million CZK are being prepared. Nor are there any investment actions, even with a lower amount, funded or co-funded from the public budgets of the Czech Republic or the European Union.