

EVALUATION REPORT FOR EVALUATION OF RESEARCH ORGANIZATION IN THE SEGMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN YEAR 2025

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION NAME: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER (CRN): 70883521

THE LIST OF EVALUATION UNITS IN MODULE 3:

Faculty of Technology, Faculty of Management and Economics, Faculty of Multimedia Communications, Faculty of Applied Informatics, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Logistics and Crisis Management, University Institute

CHAIRPERSON OF INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION PANEL

Name and surname: prof. Roberto Pantani

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LIST OF INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION PANEL MEMBERS

Name and surname	Position in IEP	Current position
Prof. Roberto Pantani	Chairman	Full Professor, University of Salerno
Prof. Ing. Martina Lichovnicková, Ph.D.	Member	Professor, Mendel University
Dr. Robert Lloyd	Member	Associate Professor, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Fort Hays University
Pedro Jorge Sequeira Cardoso, PhD	Member	Coordinator Professor, Universidade do Algarve
prof. Ing. Pavol Tanuška, Ph.D.	Member	Professor, Slovak University of Technology
Anja Zorko, M.Sc.	Member	Head of the Centre for Creativity, Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana
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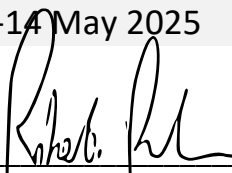
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Date of on-site visit of higher education institution: 13-14 May 2025

In Salerno date 31.10.2025

Signature


(IEP chairperson)

OVERALL EVALUATION IN MODULES 1 TO 5

OVERALL EVALUATION

Provide a summary evaluation of the HEI as a whole across all five modules. Justify your evaluation and highlight the main strengths and/or weaknesses of the evaluated HEI. The overall grade is determined according to the rules of the "Methodology VŠ2025+".

MODULE	MODULE WEIGHT	GRADE [A–D]
MODULE 1 and 2	50 %	C
MODULE 3	30 %	A
MODULE 4	10 %	A
MODULE 5	10 %	A

OVERALL RATING

B – Very good

Qualitative assessment:

Tomas Bata University (TBU) presents a clear, mission-driven profile with strong institutional capacity, highly competitive on a national level and with a significant regional impact. The average research quality is high, although uneven across disciplines. The institutional strategy, instruments (doctoral school, Research Council, Technology Transfer Centre), and financial resilience are rated between very good and outstanding: Module 4 and Module 5 are graded A, reflecting excellent R&D&I support, quality control, HR measures, mobility and budget growth. These strengths serve as the foundation for translation, industry connections, and increasing international engagement.

Module 3 (social relevance) is graded A: faculties such as Technology, Applied Informatics and the University Institute translate research into patents, innovation vouchers and practice-based student projects; regional engagement and labour-market alignment are notable positives. At the same time, some newer humanities and logistics units still need to consolidate international publication and doctoral pathways.

Modules 1 and 2 (research quality and performance) are mixed. Engineering, materials and selected computer-science subfields show solid Q1/Q2 output and national standing, but several social-science and humanities areas publish disproportionately in lower-rank outlets, producing a conservative overall grade (proposed C/B depending on field). This disciplinary unevenness explains why institution-level strategic performance (Modules 3–5) overcomes measured research excellence (Modules 1–2).

As an overall judgement: TBU is institutionally excellent, internationally competitive and regionally influential (Modules 3–5: A), with targeted actions needed to raise and equalise research quality across all disciplines (Modules 1–2: C).

Recommendations:

- Strengthen publishing quality (mentoring, editorial engagement) and reduce reliance on low-selectivity journals.
- Audit and correct RIV records to eliminate mismatches between the university's declared outputs and the publications/data used in Modules 1–2.
- Consolidate doctoral pathways and internationalisation for newer/less-traditional units (Humanities; Logistics & Crisis Management).

- Create an R&D&I Coordinating Council to improve horizontal coordination, speed decisions on multidisciplinary calls and unify monitoring/impact indicators.
- Implement performance-based, transparent R&D&I KPIs with interim (annual/biennial) monitoring (grant success, publication quality, doctoral output).
- Introduce a university-level directive for equipment acquisition, plus a centralized equipment/infrastructure registry/sharing platform and multi-year reinvestment planning.
- Formalise doctoral monitoring (drop-out, time-to-degree, completion rates) and alumni career tracking to inform policy.
- Reduce excessive teaching loads for supervisors, expand international PhD recruitment and pursue diversified PhD funding (private/EU).
- Strengthen HR succession, promotion pipelines and targeted support for early-career researchers; accelerate measures to promote women to senior ranks.
- Publish a transparent annual Results & KPI Dashboard aligned to Ministry objectives (department-level trackers, OA/FAIR, PhD flows, gender).
- Use alliance memberships strategically (PIONEER) to win prestigious EU grants and take more leadership roles in international consortia.
- Accelerate digitisation (grant admin, HR, PhD workflows) to cut administrative burdens.
- Seed applied interdisciplinary work via micro-grants / accelerator (Bridge Fund / innovation lab) to translate research and boost weaker departments.

SUMMARY RATING IN MODULE 3

MODULE 3 – SUMMARY RATING

After evaluating the individual units, please provide a summary evaluation of social relevance in Module 3 for the HEI as a whole. Please assess the balance of the evaluated units, how they contribute to the mission and vision of the HEI and describe the strengths and weaknesses of the HEI assessed in Module 3.

The summary rating is determined in accordance with the rules of the Methodology HEI2025+ as the average of the grades of the individual units, weighted by their size in terms of FTE staff.

EVALUATED UNIT	Grade [A–D]
Faculty of Technology	A
Faculty of Management and Economics	A
Faculty of Multimedia Communication	A
Faculty of Applied informatics	A
Faculty of Humanities	B
Faculty of Logistics and Crisis Management	B
University Institute	A
Summary grade	A

Summary quality assessment:

The Tomas Bata University in Zlín (TBU) demonstrates exemplary social relevance through the coordinated endeavours of its seven constituent units under the guiding motto “Educate and Create”. Its research-intensive units - notably the Faculty of Technology and the University Institute (including the Centre of Polymer Systems, Footwear Research Centre, Centre of Energy Materials and Devices, Technology Transfer Centre) - translate advanced research on polymer, composite and environmental sciences into patented innovations and licensable technologies; its applied-innovation faculties - the Faculties of Applied Informatics (including CEBIA-Tech and ICT Technology Park research centres) and Multimedia Communications - are driving significant advances in automation, artificial intelligence and the creative industries, as evidenced by a 400 percent increase in innovation vouchers and extensive student engagement in practice-oriented projects; The social-science faculties—Management & Economics (including Centre for Applied Economics Research), Humanities (including their Research Centre), and Logistics & Crisis Management - contribute substantially to regional governance, business practice, education and resilience, achieving high graduate employment rates and securing European-funded research projects that inform policy and societal development.

Strengths:

- State-of-the-art laboratories and technological infrastructure, reinforced by membership in the PIONEER Alliance, underpin TBU’s leadership in both STEM and creative disciplines.
- A comprehensive portfolio of degree programmes aligned with labour-market needs, robust industry partnerships, and active participation in regional innovation platforms ensure that research outputs are rapidly translated into societal benefit.

Weaknesses:

- Newly established or less-traditional faculties (notably Logistics & Crisis Management and selected Humanities programmes) have yet to consolidate international publication profiles and doctoral training pathways.

- Elevated teaching loads within certain units constrain faculty research capacity, while internal administrative processes require further digitisation to enhance operational efficiency.

Contributions to Mission and Vision

Each faculty embeds learners within interdisciplinary and practice-based contexts — whether through the development of inclusive digital museum applications, optimisation of polymer recycling processes, or provision of strategic guidance to small- and medium-sized enterprises — thereby actualising the University’s vision of fostering innovation with demonstrable societal impact. The University’s commendable gender balance and consistent national rankings further attest to its commitment to inclusive excellence.

Summary recommendation:

TBU is already a Central European leader in creative industries, polymer science, and socially pertinent innovation. Improvements are however possible. The IEP suggest to:

- Elevate international engagement by leveraging alliance memberships and networks to secure prestigious EU grants, strengthen the participation of academic staff and researchers in editorial boards of top-tier international scientific journals, expand contract research abroad, host more foreign experts, and build robust doctoral programmes.
- Diversify and stabilize funding through stronger pursuit of non-public, commercial and private sources—innovation vouchers, spin-offs, incubators, industry partnerships—and by broadening revenue streams beyond traditional public subsidies.
- Rebalance academic workloads to free up faculty time for high-impact research: reduce teaching loads where excessive, institutionalize sabbaticals and mentoring for early-career scholars, and formalize incentives for publications in top-tier journals.
- Deepen interdisciplinarity by forging systematic collaborations across STEM, creative, social-science and humanities units—joint projects in AI, sustainability, digital innovation, crisis management and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Interdisciplinary research can help strengthening departments with less research outcome.
- Digitize and streamline processes—from grant administration to internal communications—to boost efficiency and transparency.
- Systematize impact measurement with unified KPIs and tracking tools that capture societal, gender and sustainability outcomes, alongside metrics for public-engagement and media outreach.
- Enhance visibility and outreach via coherent publication and communication strategies—national and international media, webinars, podcasts and dedicated communications teams—to raise each unit’s profile and reinforce the HEI’s “Educate and Create” mission.

EVALUATION REPORT IN MODULE 3

NAME OF EVALUATED UNIT: Faculty of Humanities

FORD: 5. Social Sciences

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE EVALUATED UNIT

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation

Indicator 3.1 is a non-evaluated indicator that provides basic information about the evaluated unit such as its mission and vision, organizational structure, size and staffing, or R&D&I capacities.

Commentary:

The faculty's mission aligns with the University's slogan "Erudire et Creare" and is characterized by interdisciplinarity, social relevance and connecting teaching with practice. The vision is opting at becoming a respected, work-relevant, sustainable faculty for bringing creativity, knowledge, products and services to the society.

The organizational structure of the faculty is comprehensive but coherent, and consists of Faculty Bodies, Academic Officials, 4 departments of (1) pedagogical sciences, (2) school education, (3) health care sciences and (4) modern languages and literature, and two centres of (5) FHS and (6) Language as well as Advisory Boards and Working Parties.

With regard to students, the size of the faculty can be illustrated by the number of study programs and students. The faculty has had a slight decline in number of students from 1866 in 2019 to 1617 in 2023 (Table 3.1.4). It has kept the number of study programs (Table 3.1.5) stable in the evaluation period, and increased the focus on lifelong learning courses (LLC). At the moment, the faculty reports 15 study programs (8 BA, 3 MA, 1 PhD, 3 LLC) and 1836 students of which 1617 (88%) are women.

In 2019, the staffing of the faculty comprised 69 members. In 2023, that number increased to 85, of which 61 are women, representing 71% of the total (Table 3.1.1). This bias towards more female members is particularly evident in the largest group of personnel: the group of assistant professors (55 members) of which 43 are women (Table 3.1.1).

The R&D&I capacities (table 3.1.6) show a substantial share of industry group related to Social sciences (62%), Medical and health sciences (22%), humanities and arts (10%), less relations to Natural sciences (3%) and Engineering and technology (3%). There are no relations at all to Agriculture and veterinary sciences (0%).

The faculty is heavily involved in teaching; about 70% of the academic staff's capacity is dedicated to teaching, which is also reflected in achieving excellent evaluations on national level, in particular within Education. The faculty supports students but also staff at the university with pedagogic and language skills, and thus contributes to internationalisation and staff's teaching quality. It provides the region with expertise in cooperation with the practice field. The combination of the faculty's disciplines enables good structures for interdisciplinary work within the faculty. It is less technical oriented than most of the other faculties.

RECOGNITION BY THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

3.2 Recognition by the research community	
Evaluate the position of the evaluated unit in the R&D&I research community based on the facts presented in indicator 3.2 and its annexed tables (3.2.1 to 3.2.5).	
Rating [1–5]:	4
Qualitative assessment:¹ The self-assessment shows that the faculty has increased its level of recognition since the last evaluation with regard to internationalisation (i.e. databases WoS and Scopus, research cooperations, mobilities, memberships in editorial boards, invited lectures, evaluation boards, and conference co-organization). The faculty has a significant increase in publications in JIMP-journals (from 10% in 2019 to 51% in 2023), international collaborations (from 4% in 2019 to 27% in 2023), citations in WoS and Scopus databases (from 583 in 2019 to 1059 in 2023). These are mainly in the field of education (Module 1 & 2 results). It reports two prestigious Awards granted during the evaluation period (table 3.2.1), ten participations in editorial boards of international scientific journals (table 3.2.2), ten invited lectures (table 3.2.3) of which two persons have delivered five of them (Kalenda and Karger), ten guest lecturers (table 3.2.4) and six involvements in important national evaluation panels (Czech Science Foundation (GACR), The Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TACR) and the Council for Research, Development and Innovation (Table 3.2.5). In addition several researchers at the faculty hold positions in other professional communities of international relevance, the faculty is home of the Zlin branch of the Czech Pedagogical Society and the FHS research centre hosts the editorial office of the journal <i>Socialni pedagogica</i> / <i>Social Education</i> indexed in international databases.	
Recommendations: (1) The faculty has improved its work with recognition by the research community at both national and international levels, but has still unrealized potential with regard to bringing up more researchers to be able to achieve awards and grants, get invitations to invited lectures, to be involved in international evaluation panels and to rise the proportion of high-impact publications. (2) As is, the faculty has proportionally a low number of professors and associate professors compared to the number of assistant professors. We therefore recommend this faculty to work on structures that enable research development to distribute research competencies on multiple heads to ensure sustainable research structures and reduce dependency on few faculty members with research competency. (3) We recommend involving young researchers in research applications and intensifying the strategic partnerships for international research projects with institutions abroad.	

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

3.3 Research projects

Evaluate the most important research projects of the evaluated unit, especially regarding the results achieved and the application potential of the project, the proportionality with respect to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, the degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration with other parts of the evaluated HEI, and the consistency with the declared mission and vision of the evaluated unit. Use the data from the full list of research projects and contract research activities in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

4

Qualitative assessment:

The faculty has successfully changed and increased international activities with regard to basic applied or contract research. It has succeeded in obtaining and completing projects resulting from international, national and internal calls. Nevertheless, a majority of the research is carried out without funding, which is typical for projects within the area of educational, health and social care projects.

The most important research project with international reach is the Erasmus+ DANUIBE-project about andragogical diagnostic approaches and interventions, which stands out as the largest international research project to date. Here, the faculty's share of the total budget of €177.505- was € 30.500- over the four-year period.

Proportionally, the highlighted relevant national projects are mostly linked to education, i.e. about social excluded pupils and self-regulation, adult learning, learning at nursery schools, gifted children, gifted children, regional inequalities of Czech schools, situational analysis possibilities in school, teachers self-efficacy in the context of resilience to changes, teacher students training through exchange and experience with foreign experts and practitioners as well as research on the benefit of constructivist teaching methods. The research within the other departments is less visible.

The core funding sources of this faculty are projects supported by an impressive list of public funds (table 3.3.1) which sums up to an average of € 333.000 per year in the evaluation period. In comparison, the contract research (table 3.3.2) activities only brought a total of € 1.800 for the same period. This indicates that the efforts to do contract research and research commercialisation didn't succeed yet. The faculty's capacity for R&D&I (table 3.1.6) shows that 84% of the capacity is linked to the social sciences (62%) or medical and health sciences (22%), thus there is a potential for increasing interdisciplinary research and research collaboration both within and with other faculties and departments at the HEI.

The faculty is on the best way fulfilling its mission characterized by social relevance and connecting teaching with practice and the vision of becoming a respected, work-relevant for bringing creativity, knowledge, products and services to the society. Still, interdisciplinarity and sustainability of the faculty's research can be further improved.

Recommendations:

- (1) The high amount of teaching activities (70%) limit the personal resources and capacity for research projects. Nevertheless, teaching activities also opens up for research possibilities, i.e. research on didactics, practice, supervision or evaluation to improve the field of higher education. We recommend making use of the expertise in this field also for research, development and innovation purposes.
- (2) Another limitation for research is the majority of associate professors (69% of the regular staff), who need to be equipped with research expertise. Thus, we recommend putting an emphasis on this to equip the faculty for scaling up the external competitiveness and participate in international and EU-funded calls (Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, CERV) for research projects. It is important to advocate and apply for sustainable internal funding, but also become better equipped for orienting towards external funding in the future.

- (3) Most of the research projects at the faculty are linked to education, thus, we encourage the other departments and the language centre to be more visible within the faculty's research projects.
- (4) We also recommend to align with the mission's aims of interdisciplinarity and social relevance and aim at interdisciplinary work for identifying new research ideas and innovation projects. The lack of contract research and research commercialisation might be counteracted by intensifying cooperations with other faculties succeeding with this, such as the Faculties of Engineering, and/or Technology or Applied Informatics. Such cooperations might be fruitful for linking pedagogy and education, health care, language and ethics to technology and informatics and vice versa. This might establish new possibilities for external funding and innovation. The impression is that there is still unreleased potential for themes involving for instance AI, digital education, and health or translation technology to align with global trends and attract new funding streams.

3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society

Evaluate the research **results already applied in practice** or intended to be applied in practice. When evaluating, consider whether the results are **proportionate to the R&D&I capacities** of the evaluated unit, how they **contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and vision** of the evaluated unit and, if stated in the self-evaluation, how the results take into account the **gender dimension** and **sustainability**. Use the data from the full results summary in Table 3.4.1 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

Typical forms of societal impact—such as patents, licences, and prototypes—are rare in this field and humanities are often less visible in commercial and industrial areas. But other forms of faculty's research results are valued in the development of the Zlin region, where the faculty acts as an expert of education, and thus has an impact on society with its social relevance and relation to the practice field. This faculty plays an outstanding role for society when it comes to applied sciences and having an important regional role through partnerships.

This link to the mission and vision is clearly recognizable in the field of education, but there is a need for the other departments to become more visible in research and research dissemination for the society. Expanding these research areas is also important to secure social and institutional sustainability in the future.

Some of the research results listed in table 3.4.1, includes three international conferences aiming at (1) Family-Health-Illness, (2) Gifted Pupils and (3) University teachers, one guide aiming at communicating with parents, a software for inquiry-based Education for preschool children, and four monographs in the areas from preschool to adult education. Nevertheless, it must be considered that also other sources of disseminated research results might have an impact on society like for instance research broadcasted by radio, television, social media, podcast, practice journals etc. The gender dimension is not explicitly mentioned in the self-assessment.

Recommendations:

- (1) We encourage the continued strong collaboration with society and recommend that the departments in the faculty with less activities also enhance their societal impact through research-based initiatives.
- (2) We recommend that the faculty continue seeing its responsibility in providing society with knowledge-based research. This is perhaps more important than ever in competition with commercial firms having access to the relevant practice field.
- (3) We also suggest working on defining key performance indicators or impact metrics (number of users/participants, etc.) as a framework for tracking the reach and

effectiveness of applied results, including qualitative and quantitative indicators for better reporting annual impact to demonstrate ongoing alignment with the faculty's vision and mission and regional and national development goals.

- (4) Finally, the gender dimension could play a role in societal impact. Doing research relevant and interesting for men might attract more male students and employees to the faculty which needs a better-balanced gender status. Interdisciplinary research together with researchers of technology, informatics, logistics etc. might target the male gender group and attract interest.

TRANSFER OF RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

3.5 Transfer of results into practice

Evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of results into practice by the unit being evaluated. Pay attention to whether the composition of the stated users of the results or the way the R&D&I results are commercialised (if stated) is consistent with the R&D&I results produced and the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and how successful the evaluated unit is in its activities, such as attracting new users of the results, commercialising the R&D&I results and obtaining funding from non-public, non-grant sources.

Rating [1–5]:

4

Qualitative assessment:

The faculty's transfer of result is consistent with its mission and vision of being close to the field of practice. It has established a systematic strategy for transferring results into practice: Three pillars characterize this at the FHS: (1) Direct cooperation with partners involving students (practice, thesis, research) (2) Non-profit activities for the society (workshops, internships, conferences), (3) Commercialisation of results (implementation of contract research). Several study programs cooperate with organisations and companies about i.e. bachelor or master thesis, events and workshops are arranged for teachers and schools, or addressing taboos in society, and competitions. The commercialisation is a small part of the transfer, because little funding is available in the education and health care system. Nevertheless, the funding of non-public revenues increased from €4.600 in 2019 to €33.200 in 2023. This increase was mainly caused by a financial contract with the bank Česká spořitelna Foundation.

Recommendations:

- (1) Continue the collaboration between societal partners and students. This is also relevant for the students' future work-life and they learn research on authentic research problems of societal importance.
- (2) Continue the non-profit activities, but implement systems to evaluate the impact of them.
- (3) Consider if some of the activities (workshops, courses, training modules) can generate income in the sense of fees or honorars depending on the target group (private or international audience).
- (4) Continue exploring working with commercial partners in the private sector and, if possible, enhance the external funding for this.
- (5) Focus on acquiring resources from non-public and non-grant sources, as there is potential for further growth. A collaboration with the Technology Transfer Centre might help finding new partners, ideas, spin-offs and solutions for commercialisation.
- (6) Expand the range of commercial partnerships, where selected outputs of research projects or student work and internships could have real application as well as financial potential.
- (7) Introduce a system for evaluating the impact of transferred outputs, which would allow tracking how specific results have influenced partners' practice. Enhance mechanisms for

tracking long-term impact and explore opportunities for scalable service models in education and healthcare.

POPULARIZATION OF VAVAI

3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public

Evaluate how active and successful the evaluated unit is in the field of popularisation of R&D&I and communication with the public.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

This faculty is very good at organising conferences and professional meetings open to the wider public either together with other faculties at TBU (i.e. Night of the scientists; Junior University for children); or on its own (show off, health day, perioperative care day). It also contributes to the University Podcast Homo Academicus and the University Science Cafe Series. Ten activities illustrate the popularisation activities at the faculty and show a very good visibility in the region. The faculty has arranged Webinar on ‘free play in kindergartens and elementary schools’, lectures open for the public i.e. about ‘PC-gaming and Mathematics’ and the ‘profession of Surgeons’, a series of Interviews on EPALE platform about ‘adult education’ or accredited training programs for teachers on ‘the education of gifted students’. Thus, the faculty is lively and visible to the public in several formats and shows a strength in dissemination of knowledge.

Recommendations:

- (1) We recommend using metrics to evaluate the popularization activities, a short digital evaluation tool, number of participants, web analytics and social media metrics to track attendance, audience demographics, societal benefits and levels of engagement and interest to document effects.
- (2) The public activity could be enhanced by contributing to columns in the local newspaper or expert interviews, research highlights or event previews on radio/TV, education-focused blogs or YouTube to increase accessibility and also reach younger and international audiences.
- (3) Collaborate with regional newspapers, radio stations, and education-focused blogs to feature short expert interviews, research highlights, or event previews.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module 3

Evaluate how the evaluated unit has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the evaluated unit has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 4

Qualitative assessment:

The report now considers the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, and it is comprehensive and shows a holistic view on the faculty’s width of activities and it contains a broad range of activities and outputs which takes place in addition to classic academic activities. The action plan for project implementation and product development for practice was further developed, it has clearly been improved and now considers important innovation strategies and regulations that sets the internal direction of development and meets the need for systematisation of research areas,

work teams or further training of staff. The action plan has also helped to obtain the first contract research projects. This report also documents how the faculty transfers results into practice by initiating activities aiming at societal challenges related to education and health care, as recommended. The former evaluation recommended developing strategies for commercialisation of research results and monitoring and documenting societal impact. The action plan considers a strategy for this, and the staff has produced monographs and chapters as requested. The faculty has followed up with activities for the public space, nevertheless, its social impact assessment can be further improved with regard to documenting results and impact of the activities.

Recommendations:

- (1) The faculty has worked systematically to follow up the former evaluation. Nevertheless, the faculty's specific areas of expertise and its specific position in the university could be more strongly highlighted considering that this faculty serves other units at the university with education and language courses. Hence, its valuable contribution to the BTU as a whole made visible would better position the Faculty within the university
- (2) We also recommend keeping up the good work with the strategy and relations to society.
- (3) Regarding commercialisation, we still see a potential for improvement in reaching an international audience and to be creative with regard to how these activities can be quantified and measured.

EVALUATED UNIT RATING

Evaluation of unit

Having evaluated the individual criteria of module M3, please summarise your evaluation in the context of the module, describing and justifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit being evaluated.

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation	NOT RATED
3.2 Recognition by the research community	4
3.3 Research projects	4
3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society	5
3.5 Transfer of results into practice	5
3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public	5
3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module	4
Average rating [1–5]:	4,5
Grade [A–D]:	B

Summary assessment:

The FHS has worked strategically with improvement since the last evaluation period. With regard to recognition by the research community, it has increased its presence in strategic academic journals and expanded its recognition across Western Europe and the United States. The unit now holds key positions on national and international editorial boards and within research associations. There has been notable growth in international collaborations, as well as in publications in high-type journals, and citations indexed in Web of Science and Scopus. This is remarkable due to the high teaching load and the relatively high share of assistant professors in the staff. The reported research is primarily in the field of education and health.

Regarding research projects, the faculty has successfully increased international activities with regard to basic, applied and contract research. It has succeeded in obtaining and completing projects resulting from international, national and internal calls. Most of the research is carried out in the field of education and is carried out without funding, which is typical for projects within the

area of educational, health and social care projects. It seems that research together with departments in other faculties is still an unreleased potential.

Regarding research results with societal impact this Faculty has an outstanding strength, both with expertise but also with its well-established connections to society. Nevertheless, some parts of the faculty are more active in this regard than others. Whereas education, school and health relations are prominent, some parts of the faculty are less visible (languages, literature).

Concerning transfer of results into practice it is consistent with the faculty's mission and vision of being close to the field of practice. It has established a systematic strategy for transferring results into practice. Attempts to commercialise research have had limited success so far, thus the public field lacks these kinds of resources.

The faculty is very good at popularization of R&D&I open to the wider public. It is a central unit for dissemination of knowledge in the region through different media. It lacks a systematic way of evaluating these events, and thus the impact of the arrangements is difficult to determine for the evaluation panel.

The implementation of the recommendation has been followed up with great emphasis and it has been largely fulfilled. Nevertheless, the recommendations about commercialisation and visibility could be further developed.

Summary recommendations:

- (1) About *recognition by the research community*, the faculty can improve by enhancing the research competence in the large group of assistant professors and focus on research that involves the whole bandwidth of the faculty, also including humanities departments with language and literature. Given FHS's relatively small R&D&I workforce and high teaching load, it is important to ensure that future project ambitions are proportional to capacity.
- (2) FHS should continue focusing on expanding its involvement in international *research projects* and increasing the volume of contractual research, particularly with international partners. Strengthening commercialization efforts and diversifying funding sources beyond public grants will enhance financial sustainability.
- (3) Regarding research projects, we recommend orienting towards UN sustainability goals, thus several goals are linked to health and education, and these goals are considered in European research funding options. In particular, recent environmental changes in the world and the democratic backsliding signalize a need for knowledge and critical thinking in society.
- (4) The faculty should continue aiming at international research activities and also continue with searching for new, commercial funding options. A joint effort with other faculties might open new ways into commercialisation.
- (5) We also think it is of necessity to secure the faculty's position in the future with regard to technology, digitalization and artificial intelligence. Intensifying the focus on technology, might also attract more male staff members and contribute to a better gender balance, which again might influence student's recruitment and thesis, and thus lead to new research possibilities.
- (6) Regarding *research results with societal impact*, we recommend continuing the good collaboration with the region and the surrounding society. In addition, the less visible parts of the faculty (humanities, literature, language) might also be more recognized with regard to society, by contributing with cultural and language knowledge and understanding for foreigners or refugees.
- (7) Concerning *transfer of results into practice*, attempts to commercialise research have had limited success so far, thus the public field lacks these kinds of resources. We recommend doing research together with departments in other faculties and think there is still, in this regard, an unreleased potential for commercialising research, i.e. by developing research-based teaching and learning resources.

- (8) With regard to *popularization of R&D&I* we recommend developing systematic ways of evaluating these activities, to be able to get feedback about for instance quality, interest or number of visitors.
- (9) The *implementation of the recommendation* has been followed up with great emphasis and it has been largely fulfilled. Nevertheless, the recommendations concerning commercialisation and visibility could be further developed.

EVALUATION REPORT IN MODULE 3

NAME OF EVALUATED UNIT: Faculty of Applied Informatics

FORD: 2 - Engineering and technology

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE EVALUATED UNIT

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation

Indicator 3.1 is a non-evaluated indicator that provides basic information about the evaluated unit such as its mission and vision, organizational structure, size and staffing, or R&D&I capacities.

Commentary:

The Faculty of Applied Informatics (FAI) at Tomas Bata University in Zlín is a dynamic academic and research institution grounded in three strategic pillars:

- high quality training for professionals in IT, security, robotics, and automation,
- applied research and innovation, and
- societal benefit.

Its mission is to deliver top-tier education in information technology, automation, robotics, smart systems, and security, while fostering regional development and technological advancement through impactful research and industry collaboration.

FAI comprises seven academic departments:

- Department of Informatics and Artificial Intelligence,
- Department of Computer and Communication Systems,
- Department of Automation and Control Engineering,
- Department of Electronics and Measurements,
- Department of Security Engineering,
- Department of Mathematics, and
- Department of Process Control.

Alongside, the FAI has two key innovation units:

- Centre for Security, Information and Advanced Technologies (CEBIA – Tech) and
- ICT Technology Park

These units serve as hubs for applied research and industry engagement, reinforcing the faculty's role in the regional innovation ecosystem.

The faculty offers 11 degree programs across bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels, with instruction available in both Czech and English, and in full-time and part-time formats. Approximately 1,600 students (~1,050 bachelor, ~450 master, and ~90 PhD) are enrolled. The curriculum is aligned with the faculty's research strengths, ensuring graduate employability, indicating high relevance to the current labour market demands.

FAI employs around 105 persons (94% full-time, 99.1 FTE), with a favourable age structure—75% are under 50—and a growing number of female researchers (although still being dominated by male researchers). While the faculty has a stable and qualified teaching body, the presence of senior staff (i.e., professor) over 70 highlights suggests the need for generational renewal in the next few years. The number of assistant professors (46,4 in 2023) is significant when compared to professors (7.1) and associate professors (13,6) (Table 3.1.1) and the share of women across all positions is ca 17% in 2023.

The faculty is led by a dean and five vice-deans overseeing study programs, research, and outreach.

Research at FAI is predominantly applied, focusing on four core areas: Information Technology, Automatic Control, Security Technology, and Innovative Waste Treatment. These activities fall mainly within the Engineering and Technology domain, with additional contributions to Electrical and Information Engineering (57 % of activity lies in Engineering & Technology and 24 % in Electrical & Information Engineering on the FORD scale 2.2; FAI also has a significant share of R&D&I in FORD 1.2 Computer and Information Sciences, 18%). The faculty has achieved significant outcomes, including patents, prototypes, and certified methods, with over 100 contract projects generating more than CZK 20 million (~€800K) in value. FAI's commitment to research excellence is further recognized by its HR Excellence in Research Award.

In this context, FAI seems to play a strategic role in the Zlín region, contributing to economic growth, technological innovation, and public sector efficiency. FAI also holds an important position in the Czech Republic and its academics are respected by the international professional community. Its vision includes agile curricula, enhanced research outputs, and expanded cooperation with regional, national, and international partners. Through its integrated approach to education, research, and societal engagement, FAI exemplifies a modern faculty of applied informatics with a strong regional and international impact.

RECOGNITION BY THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

3.2 Recognition by the research community

Evaluate the position of the evaluated unit in the R&D&I research community based on the facts presented in indicator 3.2 and its annexed tables (3.2.1 to 3.2.5).

Rating [1–5]:

4

Qualitative assessment:¹

The FAI has established itself as a respected and influential institution within the national and international R&D&I research community. Its recognition is built upon a combination of individual academic achievements, institutional engagement in scholarly activities, and strategic international collaborations.

FAI's academic staff have received several prestigious awards, underscoring the faculty's research excellence. Notable recognitions include the Fray International Sustainability Award (Prof. Karel Kolomazník), the European Design Award (Dr. Štěpán Dlabaja), and a top-five placement in the Siemens Prize (Dr. Pavel Tomášek). These honours, along with good performances in international algorithm competitions such as IEEE CEC and KiTS19, reflect the faculty's contributions to applied informatics and related fields.

The faculty's academic visibility is further reinforced by its members' active roles on editorial boards of high-impact journals. At least seven staff members hold ten editorial positions, including in Q1-ranked journals such as *Swarm and Evolutionary Computation* (Elsevier) and *Engineering Applications of Artificial Intelligence* (Elsevier). In addition, there are several memberships in Q2 journals published by Frontiers Media SA and De Gruyter Open Access. These roles, along with best reviewer awards (e.g., best reviewer of the Control Theory and Technology journal), signify peer recognition. However, editorial responsibilities seem to be currently concentrated among a limited number of individuals, suggesting potential for broader staff engagement.

FAI's international integration is evident through its consistent hosting of and participation in invited lectures at prestigious institutions, including the University of York, MECHFORUM2023, University of Texas, Universität Innsbruck, and the German Aerospace Center. The faculty has also welcomed distinguished researchers from globally renowned institutions such as the University of Tokyo, Texas

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

A&M University, and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. These exchanges foster global academic collaboration and enhance the faculty's international profile.

In terms of evaluative service, FAI staff contribute to national and international research funding bodies, including the Czech Science Foundation (TAČR, GAČR, Mol, MoIT), Luxembourg National Research Fund, the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic, the Slovak Academy of Sciences, and South African National Research Foundation. Their involvement in these panels demonstrates trust in their expertise.

FAI is also actively engaged in professional societies such as IEEE, the European Council for Modelling and Simulation, and the European Association for Security. These affiliations further embed the faculty within the global research community.

The Centre for Security, Information and Advanced Technologies (CEBIA-Tech), a specialized research unit within FAI, plays a pivotal role in advancing the faculty's research agenda and contributes significantly to its international standing.

The Faculty is established as a top-level research and educational institution, fully comparable to leading scientific institutions in the field, achieving excellent results with significant international outreach.

Recommendations:

- (1) Increase International Engagement: Encourage broader staff and early-career researcher participation in international conferences, editorial boards, and evaluation panels to enhance global visibility and integration.
- (2) Broaden Editorial Participation: The current involvement of staff in editorial roles is commendable and reflects well on the Faculty's standing, however there is always room for improvement. Try to expand the number of academic staff involved in editorial roles across high-impact journals, particularly in FAI's core research areas. Also, encouraging participation across a wider range of journals, which will further strengthen FAI's foundation and help distribute responsibilities more evenly across the academic team.
- (3) Strengthen Academic and Institutional Partnerships: Formalize and deepen collaborations with internal (other TBU faculties) and international institutions, e.g., through joint research projects, co-organized events, and co-supervised academic programs (supporting structured student engagement in research with mentorship and international exposure).
- (4) Enhance Research Governance and Inclusivity: Keep developing structured internal processes to involve a wider range of staff in shaping research directions, while promoting gender diversity in recruitment and leadership roles.
- (5) Expand Participation in EU Research Programmes: Try to increase involvement in major European initiatives such as Horizon Europe to secure funding, foster collaboration, and elevate FAI's international research profile.
- (6) Award excellence in publication: Continue awarding, through transparent incentive schemes, the publishing in top-tier journals and conferences, preparation and participation in projects etc.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

3.3 Research projects

Evaluate the most important research projects of the evaluated unit, especially regarding the results achieved and the application potential of the project, the proportionality with respect to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, the degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration with other parts of the evaluated HEI, and the consistency with the declared mission and vision of the evaluated unit. Use the data from the full list of research projects and contract research activities in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

The FAI has demonstrated a strong and steadily growing capacity in research, development, and innovation (R&D&I), particularly in applied and interdisciplinary projects. Between 2019 and 2023, FAI participated in over 40 publicly funded research projects, with total funding exceeding €4.5 million—nearly triple the volume of the previous period. These projects span key areas such as automation, control systems, applied informatics, security technologies, and alternative energy, aligning closely with the faculty's mission to foster regional development through innovation.

FAI's research portfolio is characterized by a high degree of interdisciplinarity and practical application. Flagship projects include the FLAPRIS initiative, which developed a real-time flash flood forecasting tool for regional crisis management, and the TREND-funded robotic greenhouse monitoring system, which integrated AI, robotics, and plant health analytics. These projects exemplify FAI's ability to combine informatics, engineering, and environmental sciences in collaboration with industry and public sector partners. Another notable project, TEVOGS 3.0, delivered a certified airport vehicle tracking system, showcasing the faculty's industrial relevance and technological maturity.

The faculty has also been active in international research, participating in Horizon Europe, COST, Inter Excellence, MSCA, and Digital Europe programmes. While Horizon projects remain limited, recent involvement in cybersecurity research under Horizon Europe signals growing international engagement. FAI's contract research activities are particularly robust, with over 100 projects generating approximately €790,000. These collaborations with firms such as Devro, Daikin, and Techniserv reinforce the faculty's applied focus and industry integration.

In summary, FAI's research activities are supported by a diverse range of national and international funding sources. Nationally, the Faculty has secured grants from key agencies such as the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TAČR), the Czech Science Foundation (GAČR), and various ministries including the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Internationally, FAI has participated in projects funded by Horizon Europe, the European Regional Development Fund, the Digital Europe Programme, and the EEA and Norway Grants. This balanced funding portfolio reflects both the faculty's strong domestic foundation and its growing international competitiveness.

The application potential of FAI's research is high, with outputs including certified prototypes, decision-support tools, and AI-driven systems. These results are not only technologically advanced but also socially relevant, addressing challenges in agriculture, public safety, and industrial automation.

The projects are well-proportioned to the Faculty's R&D&I capacity, which includes approximately 100 academic staff (with 57 % in the Engineering and Technology R&D&I field) and an infrastructure supported by CEBIA-Tech and the ICT Technology Park.

However, the specific contributions of these units (including clearly defined collaboration with other parts of the university) are not always clearly delineated in reporting, which may obscure their strategic value.

Recommendations:

- (1) Promote strategic research infrastructure: Keep developing and increasing the visibility of CEBIA-Tech and the ICT Technology Park as key platforms for interdisciplinary collaboration, innovation, and industry-academia partnerships.
- (2) Expand international project engagement: Seek to strength the international project pipeline by enhancing administrative support for proposal preparation and targeting broader global partnerships. This includes aligning national and European research agendas to maximize funding opportunities and impact.
- (3) Enhance commercialization pathways: Seek to develop / keep developing structured mechanisms for translating research outputs into commercial applications, including licensing, spin-offs, and business incubation.
- (4) Foster cross-faculty collaboration: Leverage FAI's experience in contract and applied research to initiate/further develop interdisciplinary projects with other TBU faculties. Sharing project management practices and supporting external funding efforts can elevate each of the faculties but also the university's overall research profile.
- (5) Stabilize contract research volume: Keep addressing the difficulties in contract research funding by diversifying industry partnerships and reinforcing the faculty's role as a reliable provider of applied R&D solutions.

3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society

Evaluate the research results already applied in practice or intended to be applied in practice. When evaluating, consider whether the results are proportionate to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, how they contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and, if stated in the self-evaluation, how the results take into account the gender dimension and sustainability. Use the data from the full results summary in Table 3.4.1 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

The FAI demonstrates a clear and commendable focus on applied research, aligning its activities directly with its strategic mission of supporting regional development, technological innovation, and societal benefit. Between 2019 and 2023, the faculty produced a diverse and impactful portfolio of research outputs that are proportionate to its R&D&I capacities, staffing (~100 FTE in 2023, with 57% capacity in Engineering & Technology), and strategic orientation. These results were frequently developed in close collaboration with commercial companies and public authorities, ensuring their practical relevance and transferability into practice.

The faculty's research portfolio includes 12 patents (at least two patents are currently in active use), one of which is European, alongside multiple utility models, prototypes, verified technologies, and certified methodologies. These outputs have generated tangible economic and non-economic societal impacts across various sectors. These outputs are not only technically innovative but also socially and economically relevant. Notable examples include:

- The patented method for sorting angiosperms, which is operational at LESCUS Cetkovice and contributes to sustainability through reforestation and climate resilience.
- The TEVOGS 3.0 navigation and security system (under OP EIC funding), a verified technology now deployed at multiple European airports, demonstrating international reach and commercial viability. This reflects tight Electronics, Automation and industry collaboration (Techniserv) and generating licensable software/hardware.
- The certified methodology for protecting soft targets in railway infrastructure, which has been adopted at the national level and aligns with public safety and resilience goals.
- The keratin waste processing technology, which supports circular economy principles and is already in use, showcasing environmental sustainability.

Sustainability is a well-integrated component of the faculty's research, evident in projects such as the technology for processing keratin waste, the flood-forecasting system (FLAPRIS) that mitigates climate-induced risks, the seedling sorting, and the smart energy grid projects aimed at reducing emissions.

While the technical nature of the research results means they do not always explicitly address a gender dimension in their content, the faculty seeks to promote gender equality within its research teams and adheres to gender-fair recruitment policies, as recognized by its HR Excellence in Research award.

The high quality of scientific outputs and active participation in both national and international projects reflect well-coordinated internal research management and the professional competence of project teams.

A minor gap identified is the lack of systematic analysis and promotion of spin-offs and start-ups in the report (although incubation is reported), which could be better leveraged through existing infrastructure like the Regional Research Centre CEBIA-Tech and the ICT Tech Park.

Recommendations:

- (1) Enhance commercialization and infrastructure use: While the report mentions the establishment of incubator companies in Section 3.5, Section 3.4 does not systematically feature spin-offs or startups as a key research result. In this context, FAI should consider the promotion of spin-offs/startups to enhance the long-term economic impact, entrepreneurial culture and advertising to the public, taking advantage of the incubation mentioned. The faculty should also consider keeping actively seeking the (incremental) use of its ICT Technology Park.
- (2) Embracing AI: the Faculty could invest on the use of AI and become an expert in the field to support the region with knowledge and information
- (3) Sustain and expand applied research excellence: The Faculty should continue to build on its strong foundation in applied research, which has yielded numerous patents, prototypes, and verified technologies. Maintaining this trajectory is essential, and further investment in interdisciplinary and high-impact projects is encouraged to deepen societal and economic contributions. The link between the department of security engineering and the faculty of Logistics and crisis management should be enforced.
- (4) Systematize impact evaluation and tracking: Implement comprehensive impact tracking systems to effectively monitor, evaluate and publicize the outcomes of the various initiatives and projects.
- (5) Increase visibility of research outcomes: Highlight and disseminate FAI's research outcomes across university channels and increase the visibility of societal benefits in national and international policy dialogues.

TRANSFER OF RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

3.5 Transfer of results into practice

Evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of results into practice by the unit being evaluated. Pay attention to whether the composition of the stated users of the results or the way the R&D&I results are commercialised (if stated) is consistent with the R&D&I results produced and the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and how successful the evaluated unit is in its activities, such as attracting new users of the results, commercialising the R&D&I results and obtaining funding from non-public, non-grant sources.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

The FAI demonstrates a highly effective and systematic approach to transferring its research and development results into practice. Its mechanisms for knowledge transfer seem robust, well-

established, and strategically aligned with its mission to deliver societal benefit through applied research. The faculty leverages a powerful ecosystem of supporting infrastructure, including the Technology Transfer Centre (TTC) for intellectual property management, an Industrial Board for strategic guidance, and the ICT Technology Park, which serves as a crucial hub for innovation and business incubation. This infrastructure has successfully supported the launch of over 20 business incubators, with some growing into significant companies of 50–100 employees.

The composition of end-users is fully consistent with FAI's research focus on automation, robotics, security, and smart systems. The faculty maintains long-term, targeted collaborations with a diverse range of partners, from industrial firms such as PROZAX, GLASS SERVICE, and CV Machining, to public bodies including the Fire Rescue Service and regional governments. This is evidenced by numerous successful applications, including the TEVOGS 3.0 navigation system (with Techniserv), a patented forest seedling sorter (with LESCUS Cetkovic), and certified security tools for government ministries. These partnerships are fostered through contract research, collaborative projects, licensing agreements, and consultancy services, demonstrating FAI's ability to attract new users and direct its research toward specific needs.

Financially, the Faculty has been successful in commercializing its R&D&I results and generating significant funding from non-public, non-grant sources. During the 2019–2023 period, FAI generated over €1.17 million in such revenues, complemented by over 100 contract research projects valued at more than €800K. This performance is commendable for a faculty of approximately 100 FTE staff members and indicates a growing demand for its expertise, particularly in R&D&I advisory services. While this income stream is strong, some assessments suggest the faculty's potential could support even higher volumes. Areas for improvement include the implementation of a more systematic portfolio for tracking transfer outcomes and the formalization of its spin-off support processes, which would enhance the visibility of its entrepreneurial impact.

Recommendations:

- (1) Maintain and expand current practices: The Faculty should continue its strong applied research and industry collaboration, which are clearly yielding impactful results and sustainable income.
- (2) Formalize and increase support for spin-offs: Formalize / increase systematic support for spin-offs and start-ups, and continue encouraging the formation of companies through the ICT Technology Park and in collaboration with the TTC to further capitalize on research outputs.
- (3) Develop a transfer portfolio: Consider creating an attractive and complete structured portfolio of successfully transferred projects, including user organizations, societal/economic impact, research infrastructure, researcher expertise etc. This would enhance visibility and facilitate new national and international partnerships.
- (4) Increase industrial Board engagement: Consider increasing the frequency of (possibly targeted) Industrial Board meetings to strengthen ties with industry and identify emerging needs and opportunities. Additionally, take a targeted approach to recruiting new members who can fill expertise gaps or enhance the board's reputation. Identify international experts to be appointed to this board.
- (5) Keep the focus on non-public funding: Keep the focus on raising funds from non-public and non-grant sources, as there is potential here for further growth.
- (6) Scale FAI's innovation model university-wide: Consider establishing a university-level mechanism for sharing FAI's start-up support model and project-to-practice pipeline, promoting cross-faculty innovation hubs. Interdisciplinary work might also detect new user groups and societal needs

POPULARIZATION OF VAVAI

3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public

Evaluate how active and successful the evaluated unit is in the field of popularisation of R&D&I and communication with the public.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

The FAI has demonstrated a sustained and strategic commitment to the popularisation of R&D&I, as well as to public engagement. Between 2019 and 2023, FAI implemented a diverse portfolio of outreach activities that effectively bridge the gap between academia and society. These initiatives are not only frequent and varied but also tailored to different audiences, including youth, educators, professionals, and the general public.

FAI's participation in high-profile national events such as the Science Fair in Prague (which attracted 46,000 visitors in 2023) and Researchers' Night underscores its visibility and influence. The faculty's own events—such as Robogames, Ghostly Faculty, and Girls' Day—are designed to be inclusive and engaging, targeting families, schoolchildren, and underrepresented groups in STEM, particularly young women. These events are complemented by school excursions and youth-focused conferences like "Young Science," which foster early interest in technology and innovation.

Public lecture series such as the Science Café (e.g., talks on tornadoes and eco-innovation) and "Have a Beer with an Expert" serve as informal yet informative platforms for discussing complex topics like artificial intelligence, robotics, cryptography, and environmental science. These events demystify technical subjects and promote scientific literacy among non-specialist audiences. The faculty's outreach is further amplified through regular media appearances, including interviews and expert commentary on cybersecurity and emerging technologies (e.g., ČT24 interview on cyber-security), contributing to national discourse.

FAI also engages in targeted regional initiatives such as "Cyber Security in the Regions" and the STEM app ROSTEM 2050, reinforcing its role as a regional innovation hub. These efforts have led to long-term partnerships, notably with the Zlín Region.

The faculty's activities are not only numerous but also strategically aligned with its mission to promote STEM education, foster innovation, and contribute to societal development. The diversity of formats and topics reflects a well-considered and long-term popularization strategy. Events seem to be well-attended and tailored to a broad audience, fostering long-term educational impact.

Recommendations:

- (1) Maintain strategic engagement: Sustain / increase the current level of public engagement and ensure alignment with long-term institutional goals.
- (2) Expand digital outreach: Building on successful in-person events, the faculty could further develop online platforms (e.g., webinars, livestreams, or a dedicated YouTube channel) to reach broader and international audiences.
- (3) Promote gender and diversity: Continue supporting inclusive initiatives, particularly those targeting underrepresented groups in STEM, such as Girls Day.
- (4) Increase student involvement: Seek to integrate students more visibly into public outreach activities to enhance engagement and skill development.
- (5) Implement feedback mechanisms: Introduce formal evaluation tools to assess the effectiveness and impact of outreach activities.
- (6) Enhance the popularization of R&D&I on a national level: Identify with PR office media outlets with nationwide impact, create a list of experts available for journalists, and promote research through press releases.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module 3

Evaluate how the evaluated unit has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the evaluated unit has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

The FAI has demonstrated a comprehensive and strategic response to the recommendations issued during the previous Institutional Evaluation Process. The faculty has implemented a robust incentive scheme governed by internal directives of the Rector and the Dean, which rewards high-impact research outputs and above-standard creative activities. This initiative has led to measurable improvements in research productivity, including a notable increase in publications, applied outputs, and participation in international projects.

FAI has made significant strides in internationalisation (Rec 1&2). It has engaged in three COST Actions, one Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) project, and contributed as a co-investigator in a Horizon Europe project. Although the volume of contract research with international partners remains limited, the faculty has provided a reasonable explanation, citing the COVID-19 pandemic as a major constraint during the 2020–2022 period.

A key achievement is the establishment of over 20 business incubators (Rec 3), primarily founded by FAI alumni. These incubators, with cases employing between 50–100 staff, collaborate closely with FAI researchers through the ICT Technology Park, facilitating knowledge transfer and joint R&D projects. This initiative contributed to regional innovation and economic development, particularly in the IT sector.

The faculty has also expanded its societal impact (Rec 4), particularly in cybersecurity and natural hazard prediction. Outputs such as certified security methods and flood forecasting tools have been adopted by public institutions, including the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of the Interior. FAI has maintained long-term cooperation with public administration and governmental institutions, which has resulted in concrete outputs. Patent filings and prototypes have surged in line with FAI's capacity (Rec 5).

Strategically, FAI has established an Industrial Board comprising over 30 external experts to guide research topic selection and foster industry collaboration (Rec 6). However, while performance incentives are well-structured, strategic planning processes seem to remain somewhat decentralised, with what seems limited staff involvement in long-term vision-setting.

FAI's researchers are increasingly active in international editorial boards and professional societies, enhancing the faculty's academic visibility and reputation (Rec 7).

FAI has also addressed recommendations related to funding diversification. It has tripled its grant income from ministries and secured funding from Norwegian Funds and the Inter Excellence programme. While foreign contract research remains an area for growth, domestic contract research has been robust. The faculty has also increased its non-grant revenue through incubator activities.

FAI has actively promoted international mobility, hosting renowned foreign scholars and participating in international academic forums such as MECHFORUM 2023 (Rec 8). These efforts have contributed to a dynamic and outward-looking research environment.

A formalised university-wide strategy for collaboration, internationalisation, and staff co-ownership of long-term goals might be lacking.

The results suggest that the faculty has responded to recommendations constructively and with a long-term perspective. These actions show strategic alignment and responsiveness to external evaluation.

Overall, the faculty has not only addressed most of the IEP's recommendations but has done so in a way that aligns with its strategic goals and enhances its academic and societal contributions.

Recommendations:

- (1) Expand international contract research: While the justification for limited foreign contract research is valid, the faculty should now try to re-establish and expand these partnerships post-pandemic.
- (2) Monitor and evaluate incentive scheme impact: The incentive scheme has shown promising results. The FAI should reflect on how to improve the mechanism guaranteeing the transparent continual growth of the R&D&I and creative activities.
- (3) Leverage incubators for broader collaboration: The success of alumni-founded incubators presents an opportunity to formalise partnerships and create a pipeline for collaborative research, internships, and technology transfer, and, therefore, should be fostered.
- (4) Involve staff in strategic development: Guaranty that faculty members are engaged in shaping strategic goals and decisions, ensuring broader ownership and alignment with institutional priorities.
- (5) Share lessons learned: FAI should continue to share its own lessons learned, while also actively seeking to learn from the experiences of other faculties. In this context, it should consider deepening and activating strategic alliances across the university, with the aim of combining complementary strengths to support broader institutional development.

EVALUATED UNIT RATING

Evaluation of unit

Having evaluated the individual criteria of module M3, please summarise your evaluation in the context of the module, describing and justifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit being evaluated.

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation	NOT RATED
3.2 Recognition by the research community	4
3.3 Research projects	5
3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society	5
3.5 Transfer of results into practice	5
3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public	5
3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module	5
Average rating [1–5]:	5
Grade [A–D]:	A

Summary assessment:

The FAI demonstrates a high level of maturity in applied research, with a strategic focus on societal impact, industry collaboration, and regional development. Between 2019 and 2023, FAI secured over €4.5 million in public research funding and approximately €790,000 from more than 100 contract research projects. Its applied research has led to 12 patents and numerous verified technologies and certified methodologies, particularly in security, forestry, and sustainability. These achievements are complemented by strong public engagement and a high graduate employability rate.

FAI has an incubator system integrated with a technology park, which appears to have strong potential for actively generating startups and spin-offs. This ecosystem is supported by an active industrial board. The faculty maintains robust interdisciplinary research outputs and long-term collaborations with both public institutions and industry. Its international profile is further

strengthened by prestigious awards, editorial roles in leading academic journals, and participation in globally competitive research projects.

Despite these strengths, as expectable, areas for improvement remain. The commercialization of research outputs appears, in some areas, to be under-documented—for instance, although the incubator is mentioned, there is limited evidence of spin-offs and start-ups directly stemming from faculty-led research activities. Additionally, while international engagement is growing commendably, there is potential to expand contract research with foreign partners and diversify non-grant funding sources.

Summary recommendations:

While numerous recommendations have been presented throughout the report, they can be broadly summarised as follows.

- (1) The FAI is encouraged to enhance its international visibility and strategic leadership by expanding participation in Horizon Europe, COST, and MSCA projects, particularly as a coordinator. Strengthening internal support for international project preparation and formalising strategies for internationalisation and research priorities are essential next steps. FAI should also try to increase contract research with foreign industrial partners and diversify its funding sources, especially from non-grant and private channels.
- (2) To improve commercialization, FAI is advised to keep developing clearer pathways for spin-offs and startups, supported by structured IP policies and a public portfolio of transferred research results. Keeping and enhancing the integration of strategic assets such as CEBIA-Tech and the ICT Technology Park is recommended to drive innovation and technology transfer. Systematising post-project exploitation and embedding impact tracking tools into research processes will help sustain long-term relevance.
- (3) Cross-faculty collaboration should be further considered, particularly in interdisciplinary areas like AI, information technology in general, automation, robotics, smart systems, and security, supported by internal incentives.
- (4) Promoting sabbatical leaves will foster academic development and innovation.
- (5) Enhancing the diversity and engagement of the Industrial Board can better align research with industry needs.
- (6) FAI is also encouraged to continue promoting gender diversity, with targeted recruitment and support for female researchers and students.
- (7) Public engagement through science popularisation and digital outreach should be kept / further developed, with increased student and community involvement.
- (8) Following emerging trends in artificial intelligence is essential and presents a significant opportunity for innovation and growth; however, it also demands time and investment to ensure that individuals are adequately prepared and trained to harness its full potential.

EVALUATION REPORT IN MODULE 3

NAME OF EVALUATED UNIT: Faculty of Management & Economics

FORD 5: Social Sciences

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE EVALUATED UNIT

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation

Indicator 3.1 is a non-evaluated indicator that provides basic information about the evaluated unit such as its mission and vision, organizational structure, size and staffing, or R&D&I capacities.

Commentary:

The Faculty of Management and Economics (FAME) has been part of the TBU since its very start and consists of 9 units: 8 departments and one research centre: The departments of (1) economics, (2) management and marketing, (3) industrial engineering (4) business administration, (5) finance and accounting (6) statistics and quantitative methods (7) regional development, public sector administration and law (8) physical training and (9) Centre for applied economic research. The mission is “Erudire et creare” and its vision aims at a leading educational position with regard to entrepreneurial thinking, business and innovations.

The number of students has increased from 2050 (2019) to 2200 (2023), with slightly more female students (62%) (Table 3.1.4). The faculty offers 25 Study programs (5 BA, 6MA, 3PhD, 11 LLC) of which 10 are offered in the English language, and 11 are professional study programs (Table 3.1.5). The staff size has decreased from 95,5 (2019) to 90.4 (2023), and shows a healthy gender balance. In 2023, it had 17 PhD-students and was dominated by a large share (48%) of assistant professors (Table 3.1.1).

FaME has a significant share of R&D&I in FORD 5.2 Economics and Business, 70%. The remaining share is evenly distributed between 3–5% among the other FORDs (1.5, 2.7, 3.3, 5.1 (Psychology and cognitive sciences), 5.4 (Sociology), 5.6 (Political science), 5.7 (Social and economic geography), 5.8 (Media and communications), 5.9 (Other social sciences). The expert panel responsible for Module 1 & 2 rated the productivity as average and issued a warning about publishing several publications in MDPI journals; this is particularly evident for FORD 5.7.

The FaME has previously been top-ranked in national rankings.

It has very detailed aims for 2030 which include plans for more students, the staff structure, scientific output and top-level ranking in the Czech Republic.

FAME’s mission, vision, priorities and strategic goals are included in a strategic document FAME TBU 21+ which is concerning education, research, development and innovation for the period 2021-2025. It also comprises target indicators the faculty should achieve by 2030. All in all, the faculty aims at a leading educational position about entrepreneurial thinking, business and innovations.

RECOGNITION BY THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

3.2 Recognition by the research community

Evaluate the position of the evaluated unit in the R&D&I research community based on the facts presented in indicator 3.2 and its annexed tables (3.2.1 to 3.2.5).

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:¹

The metrics for research indicate a substantial recognition by the research community. This includes both the number of faculty members going abroad to present research as well as the increase in acclaimed international scholars visiting FaME (Table 3.2.3 and 3.2.4). Of note is the visitation of Dr. Rick Edgeman and Jakob Kjær Eskildsen, who each hold 4,000+ and 8,000+ citations of their work respectively. Faculty output of research has steadily increased since previous evaluation and the participation in international associations and conferences indicate a growing presence by FaME's research community. FaME has their own journal and host their own international research conference - Economics Management Finance (EMF). The faculty achieved two prestigious awards during the evaluation period (Table 3.2.1), and several members are participating in editorial boards of international scientific journals (Table 3.2.2). The self-assessment highlights seven involvements in evaluations of research projects of mainly national character.

Recommendations:

- (1) Continue to incentivize international travel and research using funding model.
- (2) Focus on publication metrics of their internal publication, the Journal of Competitiveness, to increase citation metrics, rankings, etc. This will elevate the international recognition and presence of FaME
- (3) Aim to participate in the editorial boards of high-ranking journals (Q1, Q2 according to AIS)
- (4) Increase the involvement in evaluations aiming at international research projects.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

3.3 Research projects

Evaluate the most important research projects of the evaluated unit, especially regarding the results achieved and the application potential of the project, the proportionality with respect to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, the degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration with other parts of the evaluated HEI, and the consistency with the declared mission and vision of the evaluated unit. Use the data from the full list of research projects and contract research activities in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

FaME has continued to fund and publish research projects that have a regional and international impact. FaME relies heavily on the funding of the European Commission to finance these projects. These projects consist of 38 projects that totaled 246 thousand Euros, and many of them were executed through the research centres that FaME operates. These projects cover a wide breadth of interdisciplinary topics that include tourism, economics, accounting, healthcare, public governance, and human resources. Results showed meaningful outcomes for regional institutions - especially the findings of the Horizon H2020 programme.

Table 3.3.1 shows an increase in the acquisition of public funds in the 'role of beneficiary' from €113.400 in 2019 to €199.900 in 2023. The number of funded projects reported was 21 and the average amount of funding in this period was €214.200. The faculty in 'the role of another participant' is limited to one project, and the funding is comparably low and at an average of € 8.980 in the evaluation period. The faculty is also involved in contract research (table 3.3.2) with an average funding of € 8.180 from 2019 to 2023.

Recommendations:

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

- (1) To advance these meaningful projects, FaME should continue relying on the European Commission, however to grow them, FaME should search for alternative sourcing beyond the EC.
- (2) Consider research aiming at UN-sustainability goals.
- (3) Provide structured support for early-career researchers to enter EU-level funding schemes
- (4) We recommend this faculty to do more interdisciplinary research and also include the department of physical training in research to explore new potential for research projects. There seems to be potential for doing more contract research.

3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society

Evaluate the research results already applied in practice or intended to be applied in practice. When evaluating, consider whether the results are proportionate to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, how they contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and, if stated in the self-evaluation, how the results take into account the gender dimension and sustainability. Use the data from the full results summary in Table 3.4.1 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

FAME participated in several international research collaborations that were funded by the European Commission. Most impactful of these projects was Sustainable Horizons, which focuses on sustainable solutions to many global challenges. Other projects included application of energy management, youth sports, factors driving Czech economy, and metropolitan design and management. These projects provided meaningful guidance for the practice of their field. This falls in line with the mission of Educate and Create as many of these projects included student participation, a formative part of their education as they participated. The research is not aiming at gender-specific results or sustainability in particular. Table 3.4.1 highlights the faculty's research results relevant for society, which includes the following categories: industrial design, utility model, concept, functional sample, internet portal about investments, software and certified methodology.

Recommendations:

- (1) It is commendable that FaME collaborated on regional projects that produced meaningful outcomes for practice. Recommendation is to expand regional focus to include beyond Zlin region and Eastern Czechia.
- (2) Develop structured tools to track and report societal impact across all research domains.
- (3) Consider the potential of analyzing gender issues and the UN-sustainability goals in research.

TRANSFER OF RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

3.5 Transfer of results into practice

Evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of results into practice by the unit being evaluated. Pay attention to whether the composition of the stated users of the results or the way the R&D&I results are commercialised (if stated) is consistent with the R&D&I results produced and the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and how successful the evaluated unit is in its activities, such as attracting new users of the results, commercialising the R&D&I results and obtaining funding from non-public, non-grant sources.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

The most impactful projects engaged in by FaME are leading to results based in practice. For example, the Sustainable Horizons project focused primarily on solving many of Europe's pressing

issues in the area of sustainability. This project is evaluated on how impactful the results are on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This project strengthened partnerships between TBU and non-academic partners to craft real solutions to problems.

Table 3.5.1 shows that non-public revenues received mainly are caused by economic activity (average: €23.880) and conferences (average: €10.900). Rental of premises, licensing and gifts are less prominent.

Recommendations:

- (1) FaME should seek alternative funding sources which are non-public so that they can diversify their risk of funding being cut by a single source going forward.
- (2) As FaME is contributing to society with relevant software, licenses and internet activities, we recommend to explore the potential for commercial funding as well.

POPULARIZATION OF VAVAI

3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public

Evaluate how active and successful the evaluated unit is in the field of popularisation of R&D&I and communication with the public.

Rating [1–5]:

4

Qualitative assessment:

FaME's popularization of R&D&I has grown as the presence in international research community has grown. These efforts seem to be secondary, and less intentional than explicitly communication strategy.

The self-assessment shows engagement in Researchers' Night, involvement in the Science Café lecture series, media cooperation with the local radio Zlín. It also cooperates with secondary schools in the sense of "TBU on demand" but also with companies and organisations, i.e. The Bata management school, conferences and tours.

Recommendations:

- (1) FaME needs to craft a publication strategy to let the international research community know about securing of funding, publication
- (2) It might be interesting to address even younger people as future citizens to the target group of communication.
- (3) Show involvement in UN-sustainability goals like green economy, justice, gender equality, poverty or the sustainability of cities

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module 3

Evaluate how the evaluated unit has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the evaluated unit has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

FAME reports to have used the previous report as a basis for their strategic planning process in 2021. They began this process through an internal audit of the key indicators and then strategically implemented the recommendations. FAME reallocated 51 million Czech Koruna's to fund internal research projects in response to IEP recommendations. FAME strengthened regional partnerships

through contract research and educational conferences and expanded international collaborations on research. It has intensified activities to enhance the reputation and is now heavily involved in activities of editorial boards.

Recommendations:

- (1) Utilize the recommendations from the 2025 IEP report to focus on another 5 years of improvement.

EVALUATED UNIT RATING

Evaluation of unit

Having evaluated the individual criteria of module M3, please summarise your evaluation in the context of the module, describing and justifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit being evaluated.

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation	NOT RATED
3.2 Recognition by the research community	5
3.3 Research projects	5
3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society	5
3.5 Transfer of results into practice	5
3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public	4
3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module	5
Average rating [1–5]:	5
Grade [A–D]:	Choose an option

Summary assessment:

The Faculty of Management and Economics (FaME) at TBU has steadily strengthened its academic and research profile. Since its founding, FaME has expanded to nine departments and a research centre, offering 25 degree programs—including ten in English—and growing its student body from 2,050 in 2019 to 2,200 in 2023, with women accounting for 62 percent. Although staff numbers have edged down slightly, gender balance and PhD supervision remain robust. FaME's research output is concentrated in Economics and Business but spans multiple social science fields; while external reviewers noted average productivity and some lower-tier journal publications, the faculty retains top national rankings and has set ambitious 2030 targets in its strategic plan.

Internationally, FaME has significant recognition: the faculty present research abroad, renowned scholars visit, and the faculty runs its own journal and annual EMF conference. Participation on editorial boards and awards further affirm its standing. Over the past five years, FaME has led 38 EU-funded interdisciplinary projects totaling €246 000 and engaged in contract research, demonstrating both regional impact and alignment with its mission. High-profile collaborations—such as the Sustainable Horizons project—translate research into practice and involve students directly, while non-public revenues from economic activity and conferences reflect successful technology transfer. Outreach efforts through public events, media partnerships, and school programs are growing, though still informal. Finally, FaME has effectively implemented past IEP recommendations by reallocating substantial internal funds, deepening regional and international partnerships, and enhancing its research infrastructure, earning top marks for responsiveness and strategic execution.

Summary recommendations:

- (1) Continue to incentivize and fund international research travel and collaboration to strengthen FaME's global presence.
- (2) Enhance the impact and visibility of the Journal of Competitiveness by improving citation metrics and rankings.

- (3) Target membership on editorial boards of high-ranking (Q1/Q2) journals and increase participation in international project evaluations.
- (4) While maintaining strong European Commission partnerships, diversify funding by pursuing alternative public and commercial sources.
- (5) Provide structured support and mentorship for early-career researchers to secure EU-level grants.
- (6) Expand interdisciplinary research—especially by integrating the Department of Physical Training—and pursue projects aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- (7) Broaden the regional focus of applied research beyond Zlín and Eastern Czechia to maximize societal benefit.
- (8) Develop and implement tools to systematically track, report, and communicate the societal, gender, and sustainability impacts of FaME's research.
- (9) Formalize a communication and publication strategy that reaches both international peers and younger audiences, highlighting FaME's alignment with sustainability and development agendas.
- (10) Leverage the 2025 IEP recommendations as the foundation for FaME's strategic roadmap over the next five years.

EVALUATION REPORT IN MODULE 3

NAME OF EVALUATED UNIT: Faculty of Logistics and Crisis Management

FORD: 5. Social Sciences

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE EVALUATED UNIT

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation

Indicator 3.1 is a non-evaluated indicator that provides basic information about the evaluated unit such as its mission and vision, organizational structure, size and staffing, or R&D&I capacities.

Commentary:

The FLCM faculty is the youngest faculty and is located in Uherské Hradiště, a 30 min drive away from Zlín and the main campus of TBU. Its strategy is aligned with the TBU-mission 'Erudiere et creare' and aims at being a strong professional faculty with excellent scientific and research potential. The vision towards 2030 is to become a strategic partner in the region in the field of population protection, crisis and risk management, logistics and environmental safety.

The organizational structure of the faculty consists of Faculty Bodies, Academic Officials, 4 departments of (1) Crisis management, (2) Logistics, (3) Population Protection and (4) Environmental Security as well as the Faculty offices, the Advisory Council and Other bodies appointed by the Dean (website information).

The number of study programs and students indicates the size of the faculty: It has increased in number of students from 1049 in 2019 to 1406 (45% female students) in 2023 (Table 3.1.4). It has increased the number of study programs from 5 (4BA, 1MA) in 2019 to 8 (6BA, 1MA, 1 LLC) in 2023, and now has study programs at all levels, except PhD-level, which is currently under construction. All study programs are in the Czech language (Table 3.1.5), one program in English 'Risk Management' is in planning (on-site-information).

In 2019, the staffing of the faculty comprised 36,5 members. In 2023, that number increased to 41,6, of which 14,7 are women, representing 35% of the total (Table 3.1.1). The largest group of personnel is the group of assistant professors with 25,5 members (Table 3.1.1). The faculty is heavily involved in teaching activities, and the staff has a very high teaching load (1:37) (HEI-average: 1: 20).

The R&D&I capacities (table 3.1.6) show a substantial share of mainly basic research in industry groups related to Social sciences (63%), Natural sciences (20%), Engineering and Technology (12%), a smaller degree of relations to Agriculture and veterinary sciences (5%). There are no relations at all to Medical and Health Sciences (0%) and Humanities and the Arts (0%).

The department has grown since the last evaluation, both regarding students and staff. Its study programs are highly relevant with regard to the internationally uncertain current times, characterized by wars and conflicts. It provides the region with expertise about the global environment. The faculty have relatively little cooperation with other faculties, which might partly be explained with the location.

RECOGNITION BY THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

3.2 Recognition by the research community

Evaluate the position of the evaluated unit in the R&D&I research community based on the facts presented in indicator 3.2 and its annexed tables (3.2.1 to 3.2.5).

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 3

Qualitative assessment:¹

The self-assessment does not report any publications in JIMP-journals or citations in WoS and Scopus databases. It reports one prestigious award (Werner von Siemens) granted during the evaluation period (table 3.2.1), two participations in editorial boards of international scientific journals (same person in both, journals without ISSN) (table 3.2.2), ten invited lectures provided by six staff members (table 3.2.3), ten international guest lecturers from neighbouring countries (table 3.2.4) and ten involvements in important national evaluations (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Czech Invest, and the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic) (Table 3.2.5). This is an increase in activities since the last evaluation. In addition, the FLCM is represented in 13 national and international associations, which indicate an increased involvement and attention nationally and internationally. The faculty reports three project cooperations with foreign research institutions (on-site information) Nevertheless, the faculty is still in its infancy when it comes to building up international research structures and competence.

Recommendations:

- (1) The faculty has shown meaningful progress in research, but it still lacks a publication profile in high-impact journals and its presence in international research boards and editorial roles is modest. The foundation is solid, and the direction is promising, but further development is needed to position FLCM as a fully competitive player in the international research landscape. Thus, a stronger participation in international networks, evaluation panels and conferences, is needed, aiming for a broader catchment area of research.
- (2) The high teaching load and the relatively large number of assistant professors counteract the possibilities for high quality research activities. The lack of a PhD program also makes it difficult to foster research careers. Thus, we recommend reducing the teaching load for promising, upcoming researchers, exploring possibilities for fostering researcher's careers, establishing mentoring possibilities, actively and strategically encouraging and supporting award and fellowship applications, research projects and elevating the research competence in the faculty.
- (3) We also recommend cooperating with other faculties on joint research projects, which could accelerate the process of enhancing research competencies and production at the faculty.

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

3.3 Research projects

Evaluate the most important research projects of the evaluated unit, especially regarding the results achieved and the application potential of the project, the proportionality with respect to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, the degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration with other parts of the evaluated HEI, and the consistency with the declared mission and vision of the evaluated unit. Use the data from the full list of research projects and contract research activities in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 3

Qualitative assessment:

Although the FLCM has a high teaching load and relatively scarce resources for R&D&I-projects, the FLCM has increased its external funding to a large degree since the last evaluation. The most important research is mirrored in the table 3.3.1 where it becomes visible that the public funding of projects has varied in the evaluation period, from €72.870 - in 2021 to €19.250 - in 2023, with an average of €46.495,80 in the role of 'a recipient'. Two examples of projects where FLCM was recipient were the "Crisis logistics information platform" financed by the Ministry of Interior, and the project "Strengthening of rural resilience through activation of local entities and owners of the land" (2021-2022) financed by the Technology Agency for the period 2020-2023. In the role 'as another participant', the funding has varied from €134.793 in 2019 to €24.925 in 2022, with an average of €62.092,80. Example is the project "Biologically active glass matrix for effective water sanitization" financed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade (2019-2020). Since 2021 the faculty also gained funding from contract research € 6.312 in 2021 to 24.458 in 2023, which is an average of 18.541 per year in this period. One example is the "Risk analysis of the soft target of the Roznov pod Radhostem National Open-Air Museum" (2021), for prediction of extraordinary events financed by the Ministry of the interior (2023), or for consulting and expert services in the MIPEXA company (2023). Some research is carried out without funding, i.e. "Citizen Science to promote creativity, science, literacy, and innovation throughout Europe".

In the evaluation period, the faculty also has received an internal (TBU) subsidy and grants of € 97.120 (in total) to develop and strengthen the research and development, in particular in the areas of logistics, crisis management, population protection and environmental safety.

The faculty's capacity for R&D&I (table 3.1.6) shows that the capacity is mainly linked to the social sciences (63%) or natural sciences (20%), as well as Engineering and technology (12%) thus there is a potential for increasing interdisciplinary research and research collaboration both within and with other faculties and departments at the TBU, for instance with Medical and Health Sciences (0%).

The faculty is on its way to fulfil its mission and vision but still needs to increase its research competence to become a valuable research partner. Nevertheless, it is known for bringing creativity, knowledge, products and services to the society and is particularly visible in the region. Still, internationality, interdisciplinarity and sustainability of the faculty's research must be further improved.

Recommendations:

- (1) The faculty should aim at applying for further international projects and strive for international cooperations.
- (2) In addition, it should reach out to other faculties at TBU for interdisciplinary research and initiate joint research aiming at increasing external fundings. There is still unreleased potential there.
- (3) It is important to link research to the funded projects in a way that can lead to publications, thereby it can be necessary to strengthen the internal project support system to help staff prepare competitive research proposals, or start with journals aiming at the practice field, before scaling up and aiming at the more prestigious JIMP-journals.

- (4) In the longer run, the faculty should focus on actively forming international research consortia and become more involved in the preparation and submission of high-value international projects. Some innovations are unique; efforts should be made to publish outcomes in high-impact journals and participate in EU innovation showcases.
- (5) We also recommend leveraging regional partnerships to expand contract research with public and private sector clients and to encourage and foster submissions to competitive international calls and strengthen project leadership capabilities.
- (6) Finally, we recommend the initiation of a PhD- program, which will corroborate the faculty's R&D&I activities.

3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society

Evaluate the research results already applied in practice or intended to be applied in practice. When evaluating, consider whether the results are proportionate to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, how they contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and, if stated in the self-evaluation, how the results take into account the gender dimension and sustainability. Use the data from the full results summary in Table 3.4.1 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 4

Qualitative assessment:

Its output of applied research is of great significance for innovation and practical applicability and has a direct impact on society. About the high teaching load of the faculty, the achieved results of this faculty are considerable and more than one could expect.

The faculty has an impact on the Zlín Region by arranging a Safety Week, the Toughest Firefighter Alive competition, and arranging AMOK emergency drills which makes the faculty visible in the region and visible for the public directly. This is in line with the vision of the faculty. The results have no particular emphasis on the gender dimension, but both sustainability and relevance for society is targeted in several research outputs. The faculty's research has both economic and non-economic impact on society, providing it with patents, utility models and software for logistics information and predicting crisis situations and extraordinary events (Table 3.4.1).

Recommendations:

- (1) We recommend the faculty to continue to develop research activities with impact on society and at the same time strengthen the presentation of these results in a national and international context. Successful prototypes can be scaled on a broader national level or even internationally level.
- (2) We recommend improving the systematic documentation of research results with real-world impact, including qualitative evidence from beneficiaries and stakeholders and continue advancing prototypes to fully commercialized solutions, especially where regional cooperation is already in place (e.g., Zlín Region).
- (3) We recommend cooperating with other faculties - especially Applied Informatics and Technology—for broader applications (e.g., digital crisis management, AI in logistics) and strengthening cross-institutional collaboration on f.ex. green technologies and aligning further with EU Green Deal. A cooperation with FHS could be interesting with regard to links to education and health also for bringing knowledge to society and schools.
- (4) We recommend involving metrics and evaluations to get indicators that measure the impact on society and to expand the dissemination of the outputs, licenses, the software tools or the platform across municipalities or internationally.

TRANSFER OF RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

3.5 Transfer of results into practice

Evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of results into practice by the unit being evaluated. Pay attention to whether the composition of the stated users of the results or the way the R&D&I results are commercialised (if stated) is consistent with the R&D&I results produced and the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and how successful the evaluated unit is in its activities, such as attracting new users of the results, commercialising the R&D&I results and obtaining funding from non-public, non-grant sources.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 4

Qualitative assessment:

This faculty works on transferring research results to practice in collaboration with the Technology Transfer Centre at TBU, in particular concerning research with impact on society. Table 3.5.1 shows revenues from non-public sources which funding in total has increased continuously since 2019. The sources are contract research, donations, economic activity, space rental, licensing revenues and conference. In particular, prominent are projects financed in the GAMA program, the licenses and the CRISCON conference. These outcomes have the potential to attract new users nationally and internationally. The commercialisation has contributed to practical application of scientific knowledge, increased safety, and effective risk management in the national and regional context.

Recommendations:

- (1) The faculty could systematize user-feedback loops, expand its licensing portfolio beyond regional pilots, and formalize partnerships with industry to attract larger contracts.
- (2) It is also of use to focus on sourcing from non-public and non-grant sources, there is potential for further growth. Such steps would enhance the sustainability of its transfer activities and deepen impact in line with its mission.
- (3) We also recommend developing Spin-off potential by identifying research outputs with commercial viability and exploring pathways for spin-off creation, supported by the Technology Transfer Centre (TTC).
- (4) We recommend diversifying the user base and actively seek partnerships with private sector entities to reduce reliance on public institutions and broaden application domains.
- (5) We recommend seeking opportunities for commercialisation of results in scientific, technological and application partnerships with foreign entities and to strengthen institutional mechanisms for long-term collaboration with external stakeholders and expand applied research and commercialization opportunities.
- (6) In addition it is important to build on current and new partnerships to deepen and broaden recurring national collaboration with both public institutions and private sector actors.

POPULARIZATION OF VAVAI

3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public

Evaluate how active and successful the evaluated unit is in the field of popularisation of R&D&I and communication with the public.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 4

Qualitative assessment:

The department disseminates its results at conferences like CRISCON or Disaster Medicine. Further dissemination sources used are workshops (eg. city nature challenge) or announcements of popularization events on social media like Facebook and Instagram, or the faculty website. Events like “Open day” or safety week provides the public with science knowledge. The faculty also cooperates with companies in the regions like “Business for breakfast” arrangements. It also provides the region with specialised conferences and seminars, like “how to protect your company from cyber-attacks.”, and workshops and educational programs like AMOK. FLCM excels regionally and nationally in popularising its R&D&I, it has not yet leveraged international media or large-scale digital campaigns

Recommendations:

- (1) We recommend engaging master students, alumni and industry in popularization activities, and consider creating webinars, podcasts, or virtual exhibitions to engage broader audiences beyond the region. Alumni and industry partners can be utilized in outreach events to diversify perspectives and attract new audiences.
- (2) It could help to develop a media engagement plan to increase coverage of events in national and international outlets which considers how to approach and invest in expanding digital and international communication.
- (3) We recommend systematically registering, monitoring and evaluating popularization events for evaluation purposes.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module 3

Evaluate how the evaluated unit has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the evaluated unit has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 4

Qualitative assessment:

The faculty has done a lot to follow up the recommendations from the past evaluation. It has succeeded in increasing funding for applied research activities and it also started doing contract research. It has also improved with regard to international activities. Nevertheless, the potential of recommendations like for instance cooperating with other departments and doing joint research applications, or being visible in TV-media are hardly used.

Recommendations:

- (1) Our impression is that this department has worked well with the recommendations from the former evaluation, but that the faculty still has room for improvement about internal cooperation with other departments at the university, establishing international contacts and applying for international research, focus on marketing of results and involvement in editorial boards.
- (2) It is important to maintain and expand these strategic initiatives through structured internal evaluation processes.
- (3) We recommend developing a long-term implementation plan with clear milestones and feedback mechanisms to track progress and adjust priorities effectively.

EVALUATED UNIT RATING

Evaluation of unit	
Having evaluated the individual criteria of module M3, please summarise your evaluation in the context of the module, describing and justifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit being evaluated.	
3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation	NOT RATED
3.2 Recognition by the research community	3
3.3 Research projects	3
3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society	4
3.5 Transfer of results into practice	4
3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public	4
3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module	4
Average rating [1–5]:	4,33
Grade [A–D]:	B
Summary assessment: The FLCM provides the region with knowledge and measures related to population protection, crisis and risk management, logistics and environmental safety. It has increased impressively in the numbers of students and employees and has developed significantly along the lines of the former evaluation. Nevertheless, FLCM is the youngest faculty at TBU and its research structures are thus not fully developed. It is, for instance, still aiming at an own PhD-program, which is important to ensure competence development and the scientific future of the faculty, bearing in mind the age structure in the staff. The faculty deals with a combination of high teaching load and relatively high share of assistant professors, which make the frame conditions for research not optimal. This faculty has improved its recognition by the research community since the last evaluation. It has succeeded in the acquisition of funding and completing several projects resulting in output relevant for society. There are no metrics that visualize the social impact of events in the region, and it reports no published research results in journals or books. The faculty has initiated cooperating with other TBU-Units as requested in the former evaluation, to some degree. Above all it has built a good connection to the region and organizes events for the public. Its international connections need to be improved. The faculty's research relevance for society is obvious and it has started attempting to be commercialized in some areas. The faculty's research has economic potential with, for instance, regard to patents, utility models and software for logistics information and predicting crisis situations and extraordinary events. FLCM has established itself in the region, nevertheless it still makes an impression of being a satellite of the core TBU. This comes with a potential but also limitations regarding cooperation structures within the TBU.	
Summary recommendations: The FLCM has improved its recognition by the research community since the last evaluation. It has succeeded in the acquisition of funding and completing several projects resulting in output relevant for society. Nevertheless, it still has a way to go to strategically develop international publication visibility and memberships in professional bodies. There is a need for publishing research results in journals or books and elevating the output of research activities for being competitive on higher levels (EU-projects etc.). Its international connections, and visibility need to be improved, for instance joint projects with other universities, memberships in editorial boards and in conference scientific committees. Aiming at publications in high-ranking international journals (WoS/Scopus – Q1/Q2) would significantly contribute to its international reputation.	

The faculty must deal with a combination of high teaching load and relatively high share of assistant professors, which make the frame conditions for research not optimal. There is a need for a strategy on how to better the situation for research at the faculty, which must imply allocation of funding but also responsibility and support from other faculties and the TBU-leadership. There is still room for expanding the intern collaboration at the TBU, in particular cooperation on technology transfer, research applications and projects might accelerate research quality and output at the faculty. An expedited accreditation and launch of a PhD program to enhance the possibilities for career-paths and new expertise in the faculty's research areas would support the make-up of a research career path at the faculty. Promising researchers could be fostered by implementing possibilities for sabbaticals, enhanced research time etc, to deepen their expertise, pursue innovative research, and align with emerging trends such as artificial intelligence, ultimately enriching the institution's knowledge base and strategic development. A mentoring program for preparing international projects might be helpful to further increase the success rate in obtaining international grants and to establish formal strategic partnerships – with the aim of creating joint research teams, engaging in bilateral grants, and co-authoring publications. The strategy must also consider how to handle the high teaching load and a plan for structuring and restructuring time resources to allocate resources for research.

Faculty's research relevance for society is obvious and it has a potential to commercialise output to some degree. The faculty's research has unreleased economic potential regarding patents, utility models and software for logistics information and predicting crisis situations and extraordinary events. There is a need for structures that support commercialisation, that helps opt for spin-offs, start-ups, and broader licensing of applied research outputs, particularly in crisis management and public safety. We recommend the faculty allocate research time and resources to follow up trends in artificial intelligence. We recommend broadening interdisciplinary research in general, but particularly see strong advantages in cooperations with technology and informatics faculties.

The faculty shows work of high societal impact. We recommend applying a system for evaluating the impact of diverse public events. We also recommend exploring the potential of working with regional schools.

We recommend the TBU to evaluate advantages and disadvantages of the faculty's location for research collaboration, international recognition and availability, as well as internationalization by being a campus outside of Zlin. It will be important to evaluate if the location limits the potential for further development or if there are specific advantages that come with this unique position. An evaluation of pros and cons about the location, especially regarding cooperation with other faculties and international recognition and availability.

EVALUATION REPORT IN MODULE 3

NAME OF EVALUATED UNIT: Faculty of Multimedia and Communication (FMC)

FORD: 6 - Humanities and the arts

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE EVALUATED UNIT

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation

Indicator 3.1 is a non-evaluated indicator that provides basic information about the evaluated unit such as its mission and vision, organizational structure, size and staffing, or R&D&I capacities.

FMC specializes in design, audiovisual production, multimedia, arts management and marketing communications education. FMC is divided into the Dean's Office, including all offices, divisions and units and 14 studios, the Department of Marketing Communications and the Department of Theoretical Studies. FMC provides a unique education within the Czech Republic (CZ) (and broader) in the fields of creative industries and other areas which are defined also in the strategies of the CZ for the development of cultural and creative industries and aligned with different EU documents.

FMC differs from faculties within TBU, as an arts-oriented Faculty with focus on creative artistic activity – evaluated through the Register of Artistic Outputs (RUV), rather than traditional research results (RIV). FMC's academic and creative agenda is primarily in the FORD 6 (Humanities and the Arts – 75%) and FORD 5 (Social Sciences – 25%) - balanced basic and applied research, reflecting its dual emphasis on artistic and applied social research. The faculty has increased its artistic research outputs – with 95% growth in top-rated works (RUV AKX-BLY) and an increase in internationally recognized results. FMC developed active partnerships with cultural institutions, non-profits, and industry partners, ensuring research projects remain socially relevant and practically grounded.

In 2023 a total of 1174 students were enrolled in the 47 degree programs (14BA, 19MA, 8PhD, 6 LLS). The number of PhD-students has decreased from 72 (2019) to 32 (2023), however this decline is due to the introduction of stricter admission criteria, which resulted in an increase in the quality of PhD candidates. Challenges remain in gender representation at senior academic levels.

These results underline FMC's strong potential for further development and even higher international competitiveness, as highlighted in recommendations across the evaluation chapters.

RECOGNITION BY THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

3.2 Recognition by the research community

Evaluate the position of the evaluated unit in the R&D&I research community based on the facts presented in indicator 3.2 and its annexed tables (3.2.1 to 3.2.5).

Rating [1–5]:

4

Qualitative assessment:¹

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

FMC is gaining national and international recognition in research and the creative industries. As an arts-focused institution, its outcomes are systematically documented in the Register of Artistic Outputs (RUV), confirming the certified quality and relevance of the faculty's creative research. While editorial board roles and traditional publication metrics are less central (as is typical for arts faculties), the faculty's active engagement in applied research, artistic leadership, and international collaboration clearly establishes its relevance and visibility within the broader R&D&I landscape – and is evaluated as such.^a

- Staff and students have received major national and international awards in design, film, animation, and game development (e.g. Red Dot Awards, CILECT global top 5 in 2021), and regularly participate in leading festivals and exhibitions.
- Faculty members serve on national evaluation and policy bodies (e.g. Ministry of Industry and Trade, Czech Audiovisual Fund, Zlín Region), shaping cultural funding and research agendas.
- FMC hosts international experts and delivers invited lectures at institutions such as Bezalel Academy, University of Algarve, Haute École des Arts du Rhin, and the University of Applied Arts Vienna. These exchanges strengthen professional development and artistic research (e.g. exhibitions like Made in Paper, Identita, Long Life).
- FMC is active in international networks ECBN, ELIA, CILECT, the New European Bauhaus, and Pact 4 Skills.
- FMC is the most active Faculty at TBU in terms of academic mobility.

Recommendations:

1. Define a clear vision, **high-impact long-term goals and topics, and targeted activities advancing FMC research excellence and international recognition** (e.g., identifying key high-impact partners, networks, awards, guest lecturers, relevant scientific and artistic topics, and journals that will enhance both artistic and scientific research outputs). Support faculty, staff and students in achieving these goals.
2. Strive to develop more **co-authored research projects and joint scientific publications** with international partners (e.g., CILECT, ELIA members, ECBN and others) to diversify the Faculty's scholarly footprint.
3. Strategically **support staff in joining editorial boards of international journals** (particularly those indexed in Scopus or Web of Science), to increase institutional influence and to enhance academic visibility and balance the arts-focused recognition with traditional research metrics.
4. Define and strengthen active **participation of staff in most relevant international research projects through active memberships** in projects where similar or other research and education institutions are present (e.g., EIT Culture and Creativity, New European Bauhaus community, ECBN and others).
5. Establish clear objectives, streamline activities that support objectives, and empower staff to **build partnerships with leading European and global artistic and creative institutions**. Collaborations should be focused on the opportunities that could lead to (new) joint research projects, artist residencies, co-productions, workshops, international exhibitions, guest lectures and others.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

3.3 Research projects

Evaluate the most important research projects of the evaluated unit, especially regarding the results achieved and the application potential of the project, the proportionality with respect to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, the degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration with other parts of the evaluated HEI, and the consistency with the declared mission and vision of the evaluated unit. Use the data from the full list of research projects and contract research activities in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

4

Qualitative assessment:

In comparison to the previous cycle FMC has demonstrated that the number, scope, and financial volume of both publicly funded and contract-based projects increased substantially, illustrating greater R&D&I capacity, institutional maturity, and external trust.

- FMC has significantly strengthened its position in the cultural and creative industries at the local, national, and international levels. This progress is reflected in the growing number of research projects, contract research, and innovation vouchers. From 2 applied research projects with a budget of €40,000 in the previous cycle, in 2019–2023 FMC implemented 17 applied research projects worth over €1.4 million (Table 3.3.1).
- Contract research and innovation vouchers increased— from 4 to 14 companies, and from €33,530 to €138,000 (400% growth; Table 3.3.2). The use of innovation vouchers in collaboration with 14 companies and growing contract research volumes confirm practical impact and industry integration.
- FMC has demonstrated a high level of development and innovation capacity, evidenced not only by the increasing number of international projects but a significant progress has been made in interdisciplinary cooperation, which brings innovative solutions with greater societal impact. Key projects exemplify high levels of interdisciplinarity, integrating design, history, education, and technology to address cultural heritage and inclusivity.
- All major projects demonstrate appropriate proportionality to FMC's size and R&D&I capacity and make effective use of the Faculty's artistic studios and partnerships with other TBU units and external stakeholders (e.g., National Technical Museum).

These projects are consistent with FMC's declared vision and also leverage its strengths in applied artistic research, advancing the faculty's social contribution and visibility in the cultural and creative industries.

Recommendations:

1. Identify and prioritize **high-impact national and international partnerships, (research) projects and initiatives** that align closely with Faculties strategic goals and leverage highest impact in different areas of Faculty's work. Support faculty, staff and students in achieving these goals.
2. Encourage inclusion of basic or **theoretical research alongside applied projects** to strengthen academic depth and long-term innovation capacity.
3. **Increase participation and institutional support for international project** acquisition, particularly within Horizon and Creative Europe programmes. Leverage success in Erasmus Mundus and use actively other **international networks to expand participation in Horizon Europe, EIT Culture & Creativity, NEB, Creative Europe** and other EU programmes that supports cross-sectorial collaborations between creative industries, research institutions, academia and companies - enhancing research networks, scale and visibility.
4. Use **other Faculties diverse competencies and further enhance cross-sectoral connections** within the UTB university and Zlin region to expand **strategic interdisciplinary collaborations and projects**.

5. Systematize **outcomes and impact monitoring and dissemination**.
6. Efforts should be made to **halt the decline** in the volume of **public funded projects and contracted financial resources** (Table 3.3.1. from 427.620 EUR in 2021 to 285.910 EUR in 2023 and table 3.3.2. 41.140 in 2021 to 21.670 EUR in 2023).

3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society

Evaluate the research results already applied in practice or intended to be applied in practice. When evaluating, consider whether the results are proportionate to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, how they contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and, if stated in the self-evaluation, how the results take into account the gender dimension and sustainability. Use the data from the full results summary in Table 3.4.1 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

FMC has demonstrated the capacity to produce research results with tangible societal impact, and to foster socially responsible creative professionals through interdisciplinary, practice-based research. Its outputs are application-oriented, addressing challenges in healthcare, education, cultural heritage, social inclusion, while contributing to the development of cultural and creative industries nationally and internationally.

- Examples include the animated short – used in oncology clinics to reduce anxiety in pediatric patients; a photography-based autism awareness project; and fashion event, which supports breast cancer survivors through a charity fashion show.
- Projects such as Museums Without Barriers and the Universal Design initiative further demonstrate the faculty's commitment to accessibility and inclusive design. These results illustrate FMC's ability to embed social impact within artistic research.
- FMC's research is distinguished by its effective interdisciplinary collaboration with hospitals, NGOs, educational institutions, and cultural partners. Outputs frequently take the form of educational tools, apps, games, exhibitions, and communication materials. Projects like Don't Forget to Care for Your Feet and others exemplify the faculty's contribution to public health education and commercial innovation.
- The faculty's societal relevance is reinforced by its strong knowledge transfer record: 17 sold licenses, 37 licensing contracts, 47 student-applied results, and one Czech patent—figures well-matched to its R&D&I capacity.
- FMC has expanded thematic areas to include sustainability, digital innovation, and civic engagement. While gender aspects are often addressed implicitly, more explicit monitoring would further enhance strategic alignment.
- International collaborations – The House (part of the University of Cambridge-led DIALLS initiative) and FMC's Erasmus Mundus engagement confirm the global relevance and scalability of its work.

Recommendations:

1. Encourage **publication of project outcomes in peer-reviewed journals, international conferences** to complement **societal impact with academic recognition**. Use international networks for this.
2. Systematise the **collection, measurement and dissemination of impact results and output case studies** and integrate them into teaching and policy outreach. Connect if necessary with other faculties.

3. Translate and **present successful projects** (e.g., “I See the World Differently”) for broader **international dissemination and policy influence.**

TRANSFER OF RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

3.5 Transfer of results into practice

Evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of results into practice by the unit being evaluated. Pay attention to whether the composition of the stated users of the results or the way the R&D&I results are commercialised (if stated) is consistent with the R&D&I results produced and the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and how successful the evaluated unit is in its activities, such as attracting new users of the results, commercialising the R&D&I results and obtaining funding from non-public, non-grant sources.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

FMC has demonstrated an improving approach to transferring research and creative outputs into practice. Practice-based learning is central to FMC’s strategy, with students routinely working on real-world assignments that result in transferable outputs such as visual identities, product designs, educational games, and exhibitions.

- These results are formalized through contracts with licensing agreements. Between 2022 and 2023, 97 cooperation agreements were signed, with a financial volume exceeding EUR 142,000, doubling from the previous evaluation period.
- Commercialization is evident through 17 sold licenses, 37 licensing contracts, 47 student-applied outputs, and one Czech licensed patent. These demonstrate a robust knowledge transfer system that is proportionate to the faculty’s R&D&I capacity.
- FMC's transfer system is targeting users across the corporate, public, non-profit, and academic sectors. 5 examples include - Centre UPPER, linking academia to business and hosting the ROBOTA prototyping space; FMC Talent and TBU Ideathon competitions, connecting students with industry; G18 Gallery, facilitating international recognition and exhibition of student research; NGO collaborations, such as Paraparáda and Skrz Prsty Festival, integrating social impact into creative practice; International university partnerships, enabling joint exhibitions and applied research outputs.
- To support visibility and new user acquisition, FMC launched a collaboration portal, offering clear guidance on IP, project engagement, and partnership models.
- Financial results confirm effectiveness: revenue from non-public, non-grant sources grew from EUR 335,306 to EUR 540,434, marking a 61% increase. This reflects FMC’s growing success in applying and commercializing its R&D&I results.

Recommendations:

1. Encourage **entrepreneurial initiatives** by students and academic staff through **creative incubator programs** or partnerships with innovation hubs.
2. Explore **creation of spin-offs/startups** to diversify commercialization of creative ideas.
3. **Develop Metrics for societal and commercial impact** (e.g., a database of impact results, stories and create feedback loops with the industry for co-creative project evolution), which can help in securing further funding and demonstrating the faculty's contributions to society..
4. Continue the current trend in acquiring **resources from non-public and non-grant sources** and **explore additional non-public funding opportunities**, such as partnerships, sponsorships with companies (and public) sectors, to support ongoing and future projects.

5. Continue to **expand high-impact partnerships** with **influential national and international organizations** to increase visibility and collaboration opportunities, especially in the creative industries.

POPULARIZATION OF VAVAI

3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public

Evaluate how active and successful the evaluated unit is in the field of popularisation of R&D&I and communication with the public.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

FMC demonstrates a well-structured and dynamic approach to R&D&I popularization. Its activities effectively communicate artistic research and creative outputs to diverse audiences, integrating students, educators, and external stakeholders in formats that are both educational and publicly engaging.

- Zlín Design Week is FMC's flagship public outreach event, attracting up to 12,000 visitors annually. It features exhibitions, conferences, and the Best in Design competition, co-organized by students. It is financially backed by the Municipality of Zlín, Regional Authority, and Ministry of Culture.
- G18 Gallery hosted 30+ events and 7 exhibitions in 2023, linking artistic research with public discourse and international partners. ROBOTA, launched in 2023, offers creative workshops for nursery to secondary schools, including day camps and open days.
- FMC reaches younger audiences through animation workshops at the Zlín Film Festival, student-led roadshows to high schools, and the TBU Lecture E-shop initiative.
- The FMC Communication Agency organizes culturally impactful events like Busfest, Culturea, and the Skrz Prsty Festival, addressing contemporary and taboo topics through creative public programming.
- Online platforms such as FMC Showcase and the spoluprace.fmk.utb.cz portal enhance the visibility of research outputs and streamline cooperation with external partners.
- The Arts Management Studio leads projects on inclusion, sustainability, and digitalization via public events, international summer schools, and Lifelong Learning courses, boosting FMC's role in cultural innovation nationally and internationally.

Overall, FMC's popularization strategy is deeply embedded in its teaching and research missions. Activities are diverse, frequent, and well-supported, ensuring accessibility and impact across educational, cultural, and civic domains.

Recommendations:

1. **Develop and implement metrics for societal and other impact** (as everywhere with this kind of public events) feedback channels to gather public insights and preferences, which can inform future outreach strategies and improve engagement efforts.
2. **Introduce Citizen Science Elements:** Incorporate participatory research approaches to deepen public engagement and co-creation in R&D&I and feedback mechanisms for public engagement activities.
3. Sustain **institutional support for outreach centres** and **scale up international dissemination** of public engagement formats.

4. **Diverse audiences beyond the local community** (e.g., foster relationships with local and international media, VIPs, influencers to promote research achievements and public initiatives more effectively).
5. **Connect the initiatives listed above among themselves and with other faculties** for social innovation development, wider impact and outreach.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module 3

Evaluate how the evaluated unit has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the evaluated unit has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

5

Qualitative assessment:

FMC has systematically fulfilled prior recommendations, significantly strengthening its applied research infrastructure, output quality, and public visibility. Key improvement confirms its evolving role as a leading actor both nationally and internationally:

- **Cooperation with Business and Industry:** FMC established a dedicated manager in 2021 to coordinate external cooperation and introduced a centralized system for licensing and IP management, alongside a public-facing web portal. These led to 97 contractual projects in 2022–2023, generating over EUR 142,000. This represents a 400% increase in external contracts and innovation voucher volume (EUR 138,067 vs. EUR 33,530), with the number of cooperating companies rising from 4 to 14. 17 applied research projects were implemented (vs. 2 previously), with a total exceeding EUR 1.42 million. Revenue from non-public sources rose from EUR 335,305 to EUR 540,434, reflecting enhanced corporate engagement and real-world application of FMC's research.
- **Creative and Artistic Research Activity:** FMC developed a faculty-wide strategy for artistic research in cultural and creative industries, reinforced by research seminars and doctoral programme reforms. New principles were adopted across studios, leading to a fourfold increase in internationally impactful outputs (2019 vs. 2023), a 95% rise in top-rated RAO entries (AKX–BLY), and a 30% increase in total artistic output.
- **G18 Gallery Development:** Previously highlighted for development, the G18 Gallery has grown into a key dissemination hub. Since 2019, it expanded international collaborations and, in 2023, hosted 33 public events and 7 exhibitions, confirming its importance in FMC's cultural and academic outreach.

Recommendations:

- Introduce regular **evaluation mechanisms** (e.g., KPIs, feedback loops) to track impact and adjust strategies.
- Consolidate reforms through **systematic self-assessment and long-term capacity planning**.
- Further **develop excellence in internationalization and interdisciplinary collaborations**.
- Define emerging **topics/areas of national, regional and international relevance and support strategic training in emerging areas** (e.g., AI, creative technologies, futures ...).

EVALUATED UNIT RATING

Evaluation of unit	
Having evaluated the individual criteria of module M3, please summarise your evaluation in the context of the module, describing and justifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit being evaluated.	
3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation	NOT RATED
3.2 Recognition by the research community	4
3.3 Research projects	4
3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society	5
3.5 Transfer of results into practice	5
3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public	5
3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module	5
Average rating [1–5]:	5
Grade [A–D]:	A

Summary assessment:

Across all indicators, FMC has shown great progress, both in terms of quantity and quality of outputs, confirming its evolving role as a prominent institution within the Czech and broader European cultural and creative industries.

- **Recognition within the research community (3.2):** is increasing through its participation in artistic and professional networks (e.g., ELIA, CILECT, ECBN) and through staff involvement in evaluation bodies and international partnerships.
- Traditional publishing remains limited due to the artistic orientation, while the volume and visibility of certified creative outputs (RUV) have grown.
- **Research projects (3.3):** FMC has expanded its applied research portfolio, aligning closely with societal needs and institutional goals. With 17 applied research projects (EUR 1.4 million), compared to 2 in the previous period—the faculty has scaled its research activity.
- The **societal impact of research (3.4):** is evident in projects which blend artistic research with healthcare, education, and social inclusion. FMC's ability to translate creative work into socially impactful outcomes is a distinctive strength, with knowledge transfer well-proportioned to its R&D&I capacity.
- **Practical transfer (3.5):** FMC has institutionalized its support infrastructure by appointing a dedicated manager, launching a collaboration portal, and developing a licensing framework. Outputs are commercialized across sectors: 17 sold licenses, 47 student-applied results, 61% increase in revenues from non-public.
- **Public communication and popularization (3.6):** through events like Zlín Design Week, gallery, workshop programming (G18, ROBOTA), and diverse outreach initiatives (schools, NGOs, broader public) FMC ensures wide societal reach and visibility for research outputs.
- **Recommendations from the previous evaluation (3.7):** FMC has strengthen applied research, enhancing the G18 Gallery, and formalizing industry collaboration.

Therefore, the faculty has a strong potential for further development and even higher international competitiveness, as highlighted in recommendations bellow.

Summary recommendations:

Strategic Vision and Excellence:

- FMC could articulate even clearer and unified long-term research vision (communicated and co-created with staff) and goals that further supports both artistic and scientific excellence of the Faculty and staff within national and international expert community.
- This includes defining key research areas and topics, preferred high impact partners and international networks with high impact outputs, defining strategic goals—aligned across all departments and TBU – and selectively focusing actively in achieving those goals.
- FMC could define emerging research and other topics/areas of national, regional and international relevance and support strategic training in emerging areas (e.g., AI, creative technologies, futures ...).
- FMC could enhance excellence in the field of internationalization.

Recognition by the Research Community:

- FMC could develop a clear long-term research vision with defined strategic goals, preferred partners, and focus areas.
- Foster more even more international co-authored projects and joint publications to broaden FMC's scholarly reach.
- Support staff in joining editorial boards and publishing in indexed journals to increase visibility and institutional credibility.
- Strengthen active participation in international research initiatives (e.g., EIT Culture & Creativity, NEB).
- Actively build partnerships with top global institutions and experts for joint projects and mobility schemes.

Research Projects

- Prioritize high-impact and strategically aligned research projects.
- Promote inclusion of basic/theoretical research alongside applied projects for greater academic depth.
- Actively build on success in EU and international networks and Erasmus Mundus to expand presence in Horizon Europe and similar programs that are supporting cooperation among research and academic organisations, creative industries and companies.
- Enhance strategic interdisciplinary collaborations within TBU and the regional ecosystem.
- Strengthen internal support structures for acquiring and managing international projects.
- Improve project outcome monitoring, dissemination, and documentation.
- Stabilize and increase contracted and public financial resources.

Research Results with Societal Impact

- Create systems to collect, measure, and share case studies of societal impact.
- Publish project outcomes in academic, peer-reviewed journals to balance societal relevance with academic recognition.
- Internationalize and present successful projects for broader replication and policy relevance.

Transfer of Results into Practice

- Support student entrepreneurship through incubators and innovation hubs.
- Explore and encourage spin-offs and start-ups to boost creative commercialization.
- Develop metrics and feedback loops to track social and economic impact.
- Seek additional non-public and non-grant funding (e.g., private sponsorships, industry partnerships).
- Grow and formalize high-impact collaborations with national and international stakeholders.

Popularization and Public Engagement

- Introduce citizen science and co-creative approaches to deepen public involvement in R&D&I.
- Target broader, more diverse audiences using media and influencer strategies.
- Implement consistent feedback and evaluation tools to measure societal impact of outreach activities.
- Continue institutional support for outreach centers and events, while scaling internationally.

Implementation of Previous Recommendations

- Introduce regular strategic evaluation frameworks (e.g., KPIs, feedback loops).
- Consolidate recent improvements via self-assessment and structured capacity planning.
- Further develop internationalization and interdisciplinary approaches.

Interdisciplinary and Cross-Faculties collaboration with(in) TBU:

- **Connect the initiatives like Zlin Design Week, UPPER ... among themselves and with other faculties** for social innovation development, wider impact and outreach.
- **Create new Interdisciplinary and Cross-Faculties** collaborations – with other faculties within TBU. TBU has a strategic advantage of having FMC as more applicative research focus-based faculty with strong public visibility and reach and this should be use as an advantage on the University level.

1. EVALUATION REPORT IN MODULE 3

NAME OF EVALUATED UNIT: Faculty of Technology

FORD: 1- Natural sciences

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE EVALUATED UNIT

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation

Indicator 3.1 is a non-evaluated indicator that provides basic information about the evaluated unit such as its mission and vision, organizational structure, size and staffing, or R&D&I capacities.

Commentary:

The Faculty of Technology (FT) at Tomas Bata University in Zlín, established in 1969 and part of TBU since 2001, comprises a Dean's Office, eight academic departments: (1) food analysis and chemistry, (2) Physics and Material Engineering, (3) chemistry (4) environmental protection engineering, (5) polymer engineering (6) food technology (7) fat, surfactant and cosmetics technology, (8) production engineering. FT and offers 4 bachelor's, 9 master's, and 5 doctoral programmes across three core areas of Materials & Polymer Science, Food Technology, and Environmental Protection. In 2023, a total 1405 students (732 female students) are enrolled in the 18 degree programs (4BA, 9MA, 5PhD) at this faculty. The faculty has no LLL courses. With a stable staff-to-student ratio, the faculty appointed 15 new professors and 15 associate professors between 2019 and 2023 (including a rise in female professors from 2 to 7) and sustains strong industry ties through 145 contract-research projects and over €3 million in R&D funding. Guided by a mission to deliver outstanding, practice-oriented education, generate new knowledge, and respond flexibly to labor-market needs, FT pursues a vision of deepening industrial collaborations, streamlining workloads, expanding international exchange, and accelerating the commercialization and societal impact of its research. Research at FT is predominantly balanced basic and applied, focusing on four core FORDS: Chemical sciences (FORD 1.4, 32%), Materials engineering (FORD 2.5, 12%), Other engineering and technologies (FORD 2.11, 11%) and Other agricultural sciences (FORD 4.4, 14%).

A high level of expertise in chemical sciences and materials engineering makes TBU a leader in Polymer Science in the Czech Republic in terms of outputs 20.5% indexed in the WOS Core Collection, thanks in part to the FT. FT presents a synergistic partnership with the Centre of Polymer Systems (CPS), with FT providing academic and educational foundations and CPS contributing advanced infrastructure, contract research capacity, and applied research excellence. Together, they form a key driver of Tomas Bata University's innovation ecosystem.

RECOGNITION BY THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

3.2 Recognition by the research community

Evaluate the position of the evaluated unit in the R&D&I research community based on the facts presented in indicator 3.2 and its annexed tables (3.2.1 to 3.2.5).

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:¹

The Faculty of Technology occupies a rapidly rising position within the international R&D&I community: its senior staff hold elected memberships in leading professional societies (e.g. the Czech Chemical Society, Society of Plastics Engineers, Czech Academy of Agricultural Sciences), sit on editorial boards of high-impact Q1 journals (including Composites Part B and Food Microbiology, both Elsevier), and have gathered prestigious awards such as the Bruce Maddock Prize for polymer extrusion research and an Alexander von Humboldt short-term grant for biomaterials collaboration with the University of Bayreuth. Between 2014–2018 and 2019–2023, invited lectures by FT researchers at top foreign universities doubled (from 11 to 22), while lectures delivered by world-renowned international experts at Zlín increased from 9 to over 40 (with visiting H-indices up to 88). These trends, together with international contract projects and growing editorial and society roles, underline FT's rise as a globally recognized centre for materials, food and environmental science.

Recommendations:

- (1) target leadership roles in large international research consortia (e.g., ERC panels, EU Horizon clusters);
- (2) increase the number of led special issues in Q1 journals
- (3) Formalize international partnerships
- (4) Seek involvement in the assessment of European research project/programme calls

RESEARCH PROJECTS

3.3 Research projects

Evaluate the most important research projects of the evaluated unit, especially regarding the results achieved and the application potential of the project, the proportionality with respect to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, the degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration with other parts of the evaluated HEI, and the consistency with the declared mission and vision of the evaluated unit. Use the data from the full list of research projects and contract research activities in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option: 5

Qualitative assessment:

The Faculty of Technology's flagship research projects demonstrate a proportional and strategic deployment of its R&D&I capacities, aligning tightly with its mission to generate new knowledge, foster industry partnerships, and enhance societal impact. In advanced biomaterials (NU23-08-00243), polymer chemists and Masaryk University's engineers co-developed 3D-printed nerve-regeneration scaffolds—patented and spin-out-ready—leveraging FT's core extrusion and biocompatibility expertise. The developed tire-pressure carrier for Continental exemplifies applied polymer rheology potential, yielding a patent and direct industrial adoption, while the meat-cooking-loss and “dual-quality” food studies united FT's food-chemistry labs with management experts to inform processing guidelines and EU legislation. Participation in the €30 M SEALIVE Horizon 2020 consortium broadened FT's bioplastic life-cycle assessment and environmental-engineering collaborations; the polysaccharide-nanocomposite sensors project delivered heavy-metal detection tools for real-world watersheds by partnering with TBU's biology and chemistry faculties. Compared with the previous period, in 2019–2023 contract research nearly doubled (80→145 projects) and R&D funding rose from €1.8 M to €3.1 M, reflecting growing interdisciplinarity and internal synergies—from medical to management faculties—and robust technology transfer (multi-patent licenses for rheometers, bio-drink models, biodegradable polymers). Collectively, these efforts integrate theory with practice, train students in hands-on

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

innovation, and translate discoveries into patents, policy reforms, and commercial products, underscoring FT's vision of responsive education, deepened industry ties, and global prestige.

Recommendations:

- (1) pursue larger-scale, multi-partner EU Horizon or ERC grants to amplify impact and resource leverage and involve as many as possible staff members in these projects;
- (2) increase integration with neighbouring faculties (e.g., Applied Informatics, Management & Economics and Humanities) for broader interdisciplinary synergies and more creative ideas.
- (3) Publish an annual R&D&I "impact report" benchmarking FT's outputs (papers, patents, spin-outs, policy inputs) against a peer group of leading European technical faculties.

3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society

Evaluate the research results already applied in practice or intended to be applied in practice. When evaluating, consider whether the results are proportionate to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, how they contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and, if stated in the self-evaluation, how the results take into account the gender dimension and sustainability. Use the data from the full results summary in Table 3.4.1 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

The FT's applied research portfolio demonstrates a clear alignment with its R&D&I capacities, mission to foster basic, applied and contract research, and vision of deepening industry cooperation and sustainability.

In 2019 FT sold a Czech utility model for a natural grape-wine drink to JT Accounting & Consulting for €2 000, showcasing its ability to commercialize even modest developments in the food-chemistry sector. This outcome is proportionate to FT's food-sector capacity and supports its mission of contract research delivery.

Under a multi-license agreement with Netzsch, FT granted four patents covering novel extrusion heads for unbiased, high-speed polymer melt flow measurements. These high-value outputs translate fundamental rheological modelling into industry-ready instrumentation, fitting FT's materials-engineering strengths and its vision for technology transfer.

A Czech patent for bio-degradable materials with adjustable decomposition rates is in negotiation for licensing to FYSCON s.r.o., underlining FT's environmental-engineering focus. Together with EU-funded SEALIVE knowledge bases on circular-economy solutions, these results epitomize FT's commitment to sustainability and its strategic goal of balancing basic and applied research.

Long-term contract work for Everris International B.V. on gradual-release fertilizers—fully biodegradable in soil—directly benefits agricultural and ornamental plant sectors. This gender-neutral outcome emphasizes sustainability and matches FT's capacity in polymer-based biomaterials.

Across these examples, FT's transfer of results into practice is balanced against its staffing and thematic areas. The portfolio spans food, materials and environmental engineering; reflects interdisciplinary collaboration (e.g., chemistry with mechanical and life sciences); and embeds sustainability at its core. Gender-dimension considerations are institutionally addressed—evidenced by a rising share of female professors and study programs that attract female students. The research results aims at universal aspects and does not address the gender-dimension explicitly. The overall suite of applied results underpins FT's mission and vision by delivering societal value, strengthening industrial partnerships, and fostering sustainable innovation.

Recommendations:

- (1) Incorporate more quantitative evidence of impact where feasible.
- (2) Explore policy linkages and public communication for consumer-facing results.

- (3) Link projects and research more with other faculties, i.e. Faculty of Humanities and Faculty of Multimedia and Communication
- (4) Strengthen spin-off creation and demonstrator prototypes

TRANSFER OF RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

3.5 Transfer of results into practice

Evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of results into practice by the unit being evaluated. Pay attention to whether the composition of the stated users of the results or the way the R&D&I results are commercialised (if stated) is consistent with the R&D&I results produced and the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and how successful the evaluated unit is in its activities, such as attracting new users of the results, commercialising the R&D&I results and obtaining funding from non-public, non-grant sources.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

The Faculty of Technology's portfolio of applied research results—ranging from advanced polymer seals for nuclear-power hermetic systems and tire-pressure carriers to novel cheese-quality assays, dual-quality food assessments, bio-based plastics (SEALIVE) and biodegradable fertilizers—maps neatly onto its core R&D&I capacities in polymer science, food technology and environmental engineering. Each outcome leverages existing lab infrastructures (e.g. rheometers, extrusion lines, sensory suites, electrochemical sensors) without overstretching resources, and collectively they illustrate a proportional return on the Faculty's €3.1 M funding (2019–2023) and its expanded contract-research base (80 → 145 projects).

These results directly advance FT's mission to “deliver outstanding, practice-oriented education” (students participate in real-world trials), “acquire new knowledge” (patents filed, novel methods validated) and “develop company cooperation” (Continental, ITENE, Everris, dairy associations). They also reinforce the unit's vision by deepening industrial ties, accelerating commercialization (multi-patent licensing deals) and boosting international prestige through EU-wide policy impact (dual-quality food legislation) and Horizon 2020 leadership. While the self-evaluation does not explicitly address gender dimensions in these specific outcomes, FT's broader staffing strategy suggests growing inclusivity in project teams. Sustainability is embedded throughout: biodegradable polymer solutions and circular-economy bioplastics directly support environmental stewardship, aligning with the Faculty's commitment to societal impact and global scientific leadership.

Recommendations:

- (1) Implement incentives for staff to engage in commercialization
- (2) Establish a dedicated industrial liaison office aiming at establishing interdisciplinary projects to attract new user groups

POPULARIZATION OF VAVAI

3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public

Evaluate how active and successful the evaluated unit is in the field of popularisation of R&D&I and communication with the public.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

The FT has built a remarkably diverse and impactful popularisation ecosystem, consistently engaging thousands of people each year. Its “Science on Demand” lectures alone delivered over forty free workshops in secondary schools nationwide in both 2022 and 2023, demonstrating a swift

post-COVID recovery. The annual “Experience Science” festival welcomed some 750 students and nearly 200 members of the public in 2023, while the Czech-wide Researchers’ Night drew over 3 000 visitors each autumn and the “Mystery Lab” at the Zlín Film Festival attracted about 6 000 attendees. On-campus activities—monthly Science Café talks, ten themed lab excursions, and 56 laboratory workshops—further reinforce outreach to schools and the general public.

Digital channels amplify these efforts: the FT’s coordinated social-media presence (Facebook, Instagram) shares authentic “behind-the-scenes” stories, boosting word-of-mouth reputation; and two podcast series (“Science Wine” with 21 episodes and “Humans of FT” with 23) offer deep dives into research and researchers’ careers. Supported by a dedicated Marketing Office, these activities are systematically planned, monitored and refreshed annually, ensuring both breadth and depth of engagement. Overall, FT’s popularisation initiatives are not only extensive but also growing in scale and sophistication, fully consonant with its mission to bring technology and science closer to society. These activities are highly strategic toward the goal of increasing the number of students

Recommendations:

- (1) FT should implement metrics to track long-term impact (also in cooperation with other faculties or on UTB level)
- (2) Enhance cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional collaboration for popularization
- (3) Expand public outreach and diversify target audiences, ensuring digital content accessibility
- (4) Increase students’ and alumni’s involvement in the popularization activities
- (5) Identify media outlets with nationwide impact, create a list of experts available for journalists, and promote research through press releases.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module 3

Evaluate how the evaluated unit has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the evaluated unit has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

Since the last IEP review, the Faculty of Technology has systematically turned recommendations into action: it adopted a comprehensive Research & Commercialisation Strategy (2023–2026) plus cooperation and patent-support methodologies, driving contract-research projects from 80 to 145 and elevating main-beneficiary projects from 1 to 5; it prioritized societal-impact R&D—from biodegradable polymers and nuclear seals to food-safety assays and nerve-regeneration scaffolds—aligning with its mission beyond pure economics; it revised its Organisational Rules, revamped its Project Management Office and launched semester-mobility windows and a Marketing Office to better identify and engage industrial and international stakeholders; it introduced reward and funding schemes for Q1–Q2 publications, open-access fees, editorial-board membership and prestigious lectures, contributing to 15 new professors (including female representation rising from 2 to 7) and Humboldt grants; and it expanded its outreach portfolio—Researchers’ Night, Science Café, podcasts, school excursions, Mystery Lab and workshops—maintaining and growing public engagement across metrics. The FT has also developed a strategy for supporting outstanding individuals and attract researchers as recommended.

Recommendations:

- (1) benchmark commercialisation processes against peer institutions to identify further efficiencies and best practices

- (2) Formalize internal monitoring of strategic initiatives and ensure regular feedback loops between leadership, departments, and project teams
- (3) Monitor the number of PhD students, which recently underwent a reduction

EVALUATED UNIT RATING

Evaluation of unit	
Having evaluated the individual criteria of module M3, please summarise your evaluation in the context of the module, describing and justifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit being evaluated.	
3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation	NOT RATED
3.2 Recognition by the research community	5
3.3 Research projects	5
3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society	5
3.5 Transfer of results into practice	5
3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public	5
3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module	5
Average rating [1–5]:	5
Grade [A–D]:	A
Summary assessment: Overall, the Faculty of Technology demonstrates a strong and improving operational profile. For all the indicators evaluated, FT demonstrated to be internationally competitive, in both quality and quantity, backed by excellent policies/procedures and mission alignment, and with strong potential for further development.	
Summary recommendations: (1) Strengthen systematic connections with other faculties at the university to boost interdisciplinary collaboration and visibility (2) target leadership roles in large international research consortia (e.g., ERC panels, EU Horizon clusters) and in Q1 journals and involve in the evaluation of European research project/programme calls (3) Incorporate more quantitative evidence of impact especially for popularization and communication	

1. EVALUATION REPORT IN MODULE 3

NAME OF EVALUATED UNIT: University Institute

FORD: 1 - Natural sciences

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE EVALUATED UNIT

3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation

Indicator 3.1 is a non-evaluated indicator that provides basic information about the evaluated unit such as its mission and vision, organizational structure, size and staffing, or R&D&I capacities.

Commentary:

The University Institute (UNI) of Tomas Bata University in Zlín, is a university research center established in 2003, with a modern facility completed in 2015. Its mission is “to promote research and its connection with practice,” focusing on technology transfer, innovation, and collaboration with industry and public authorities. The vision of UNI is to be an excellent, internationally recognized research institute advancing innovative polymer materials, composites, sustainable technologies, and strategic industry cooperation.

UNI’s organizational structure includes the Director’s Office, Centre of Polymer Systems (CPS), Technology Transfer Centre (TTC), Footwear Research Centre (FRC), and newly established Centre of Energy Materials and Devices (CEMAD). CPS is the largest sub-unit, responsible for most teaching and research activities across six areas including Biomaterials, Rubber Technologies, and Nanomaterials. TTC manages commercialization, intellectual property, and supports innovation across TBU. UNI does not offer study programs and has no students, except for PhD.

As of 2023, UNI had 95.7 full-time equivalent staff, with over 40% women and more than half under the age of 40. The number of assistant professors (2023: 29,9) is relatively high when compared to the number of professors and associate professors (2023: 3,4). It also runs two accredited doctoral programs in Czech and English, with increasing student interest (52 Ph.D. students in 2023, nearly 40% international). In R&D&I, UNI concentrates primarily on Natural Sciences (53%, especially chemical sciences - FORD 1.4) and Engineering & Technology (45%, particularly materials engineering - FORD 2.5), combining both basic and applied research efforts.

RECOGNITION BY THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

3.2 Recognition by the research community

Evaluate the position of the evaluated unit in the R&D&I research community based on the facts presented in indicator 3.2 and its annexed tables (3.2.1 to 3.2.5).

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:¹

UNI has strengthened its standing in the R&D&I community through prestigious awards that underscore its leadership in research and academia. Its Director, Prof. Sáha, received the 2019 Werner von Siemens Award for bridging industry and universities, and later an Honorary Doctorate

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

from the University of Pardubice in 2022; meanwhile, Prof. Sedlařík was twice recognized by CzechInno's "Visionaries" awards (2021 and 2023) for his innovative contributions in polymer science. Such high-profile honours are in line with the vision of placing UNI among leading European centres for materials and polymer research.

Academic staff participation in editorial activities further helps UNI's influence. Several faculties serve on the boards of top-quartile journals like Materials & Design (Q1, ELSEVIER) and Materials Science in Semiconductor Processing (Q2, ELSEVIER). This participation both reflects and amplifies UNI's role in shaping international research agendas in natural sciences and materials engineering. Active engagement in knowledge exchange—through invited lectures and peer-review roles—demonstrates UNI's integration into global networks. Faculty delivered plenary and keynote talks at major conferences (e.g., Prof. Sedlařík at the European Conference on Silicon Materials in Hungary, Dr. Yadav at MSM22 in Germany) and hosted luminaries such as Prof. Matyjaszewski (Carnegie Mellon) on ATRP-enabled macromolecular materials. Simultaneously, UNI experts serve on evaluation panels for national and European funding (e.g., GA ČR, OP EIC, NCN Poland, UEFISCDI Romania), evidencing peer recognition of their judgement in materials and engineering calls. Collectively, these achievements underscore UNI's growing position within the international R&D&I community.

Recommendations:

- (1) the leadership in international research consortia and the participation to more Editorial Board in Q1/D1 journals should be pursued
- (2) mentoring/succession plans to sustain leadership beyond senior figures should be implemented
- (3) pursue ERC-level individual excellence grants to strengthen international visibility.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

3.3 Research projects

Evaluate the most important research projects of the evaluated unit, especially regarding the results achieved and the application potential of the project, the proportionality with respect to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, the degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration with other parts of the evaluated HEI, and the consistency with the declared mission and vision of the evaluated unit. Use the data from the full list of research projects and contract research activities in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

UNI has implemented a strong portfolio of impactful research projects between 2019–2023, aligning closely with its mission of connecting research with practice and its vision of international excellence in polymer materials, sustainability, and advanced technologies.

Among the most significant projects is PolyEnvi21, the largest applied polymer research initiative in the Czech Republic. Coordinated by UNI with 23 partners and €16M total funding (€2.1M for UNI), it advances circular economy solutions in polymer recycling. The scale, strategic relevance, and industrial involvement demonstrate excellent proportionality with UNI's R&D&I capacity and fulfil its societal mission.

Another standout is the NextGen Batteries project (approx. €1M), which supports the development of all-solid-state lithium batteries, including the construction of a battery assembly line. This effort supports UNI's growing focus on energy materials and shows strong interdisciplinary integration between polymer chemistry, engineering, and applied physics.

In Green3SPCM, UNI developed energy-saving materials from plastic waste for greenhouses in Qatar. With five international partners and strong environmental potential, this project illustrates the institute's global collaboration and sustainability goals.

Projects like Biomimetic Materials and ANTIKOR pigments (biocompatible scaffolds and green anticorrosive paints, respectively) show deep links to real-world health and industrial challenges, leading to patents and market-ready technologies. Both projects blend basic and applied research and engage students, advancing UNI's educational mission.

Contract research projects—especially those with Continental AG (on rubber emissions) and the Plastics Cluster (31 subprojects)—confirm UNI's credibility of applied research. These partnerships are well-integrated with internal research and reinforce the institute's role in regional innovation.

Overall, these projects are well-aligned with UNI's strategic priorities, leverage its interdisciplinary strengths, and demonstrate scalability and practical relevance. Recommendations include formalizing internal interdisciplinary collaboration across more TBU faculties and investing in broader international co-funding frameworks to amplify reach.

Recommendations:

- 1) pursue larger-scale, multi-partner EU Horizon or ERC grants to amplify impact and resource leverage
- (2) increase integration with other faculties for broader interdisciplinary synergies

3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society

Evaluate the research results already applied in practice or intended to be applied in practice. When evaluating, consider whether the results are proportionate to the R&D&I capacities of the evaluated unit, how they contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and, if stated in the self-evaluation, how the results take into account the gender dimension and sustainability. Use the data from the full results summary in Table 3.4.1 to supplement the evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

UNI demonstrates a highly productive and application-oriented research environment, with strong alignment to its mission of connecting research with practice and promoting sustainable, innovative technologies. According to the self-evaluation report and on-site visit presentation, the institute achieved a substantial number of applied results between 2019–2023. These outputs are significant relative to UNI's size (approx. 96 FTEs), evidencing an efficient use of R&D&I capacities.

Key innovations such as the ANTIKOR anticorrosive pigment line, FRC's hi-tech footwear for health applications, and recycling technologies under PolyEnvi21 have already been adopted by industry (e.g., Rokospol, Baťa), proving the practical relevance of UNI's research. The institute's Technology Transfer Centre also successfully commercialized these results, with multiple licensing agreements and national awards (e.g., Transfera.cz 3rd prize for agrohydrogels).

The gender and sustainability dimensions are explicitly integrated. Over 40% of R&D staff are women, approximately half of doctoral students are female, indicating attention to gender inclusion. Many projects focus on sustainability—developing biodegradable polymers, green batteries, and circular solutions for plastic waste—directly fulfilling UNI's vision of societal impact through environmental responsibility.

Overall, the volume and scope of applied results are excellent, with clear evidence of industry uptake, proportional investment of resources, and alignment with the research unit's long-term strategic and ethical goals.

Recommendations:

- (1) Continued tracking of long-term impacts and a clearer internal strategy for fostering cross-sector collaboration could enhance future application potential

- (2) Metrics other than financial, such as social return, United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals alignment should be showcased.
- (3) Formalize cross-faculty interdisciplinary grant support and spin-off pathways.

TRANSFER OF RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

3.5 Transfer of results into practice

Evaluate the effectiveness of the transfer of results into practice by the unit being evaluated. Pay attention to whether the composition of the stated users of the results or the way the R&D&I results are commercialised (if stated) is consistent with the R&D&I results produced and the mission and vision of the evaluated unit and how successful the evaluated unit is in its activities, such as attracting new users of the results, commercialising the R&D&I results and obtaining funding from non-public, non-grant sources.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

UNI has demonstrated a highly effective and mission-aligned approach to the transfer of R&D&I results into practice. Its dedicated Technology Transfer Centre (TTC) plays a central role in commercialising outputs and supporting innovation across Tomas Bata University (TBU), with a focus on sustainability, advanced materials, and practical industrial applications—all core to UNI's vision.

Between 2019–2023, UNI achieved notable commercialization success, including several licence agreements, applied results such as ANTIKOR anticorrosive pigments, health-oriented footwear designs (with Bata), and recycling technologies integrated into industrial processes.

These demonstrate not only technological maturity but also relevance to regional and international industry partners.

The user base is broad and well-matched to UNI's areas of expertise, including large firms like Continental (rubber/tire abrasion), Rokospol (coatings), and the Plastics Cluster (60-member industrial consortium). This reflects a solid industrial ecosystem built around materials science, rubber technologies, and energy solutions—fully aligned with UNI's declared research focus.

In terms of non-public, non-grant funding, UNI has generated significant contract research revenue—close to €1.7M in 2019–2023—despite pandemic-related constraints. Importantly, these partnerships are long-term, indicating not only repeat value but also trust in the institute's R&D capabilities.

UNI also actively seeks new users, notably through technology fairs, awards, and the national Transfera.cz competition (e.g. 3rd prize in 2022 for agrohydrogels). Furthermore, it supports applied research for broader public benefit, e.g., during COVID-19, through filtration device development in collaboration with SPUR a.s..

Recommendations:

- (1) Explore different transfer models (joint ventures, technology alliances).
- (2) Develop structured support for spin-off creation and entrepreneurial training.
- (3) Systematize evaluation of adoption and longer-term market impact.

POPULARIZATION OF VAVAI

3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public

Evaluate how active and successful the evaluated unit is in the field of popularisation of R&D&I and communication with the public.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

UNI demonstrates a solid and growing commitment to the popularisation of R&D&I and public communication, though there is room for further strategic development.

UNI actively engages in outreach through the organisation of recurring scientific and professional events. Notably, it hosts the biennial Plastko and Gumference conferences, which bring together experts from academia and industry, fostering knowledge exchange and raising the institute's visibility among both professional audiences and the broader public.

In addition, UNI's collaboration with industry on socially relevant challenges—such as the development of filtration devices with SPUR a.s. during the COVID-19 pandemic or footwear for medical use in partnership with Baťa—demonstrates research that resonates with public needs and showcases tangible benefits of science in everyday life. These examples contribute indirectly to science communication by making R&D&I outcomes visible and relatable to the wider community. UNI also highlights the achievements of its staff and students through media coverage and participation in innovation competitions, such as Transfera Technology Day, where its project on agrohydrogels received public recognition. The institute's visibility is further supported by awards like the "Visionaries" prizes, which gained attention beyond academic circles.

Recommendations:

- (1) Define and monitor KPIs for outreach and engagement (polls, analytics).
- (2) Invest in dedicated communications staff and multimedia content, possibly taking advantage of university's faculty of multimedia communication.
- (3) Expand international/multilingual science-communication efforts (subtitles, partner channels).

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module 3

Evaluate how the evaluated unit has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the evaluated unit has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

Choose an option 5

Qualitative assessment:

Since the last evaluation, UNI has significantly increased its international project participation, especially under Horizon Europe and M-ERA.Net, and developed collaborations with top institutions such as MIT and Qatar University. It has hosted globally recognized scientists and presented work at major international conferences. These actions address common IEP recommendations regarding the need for greater global integration and research visibility.

The expansion of the Technology Transfer Centre (TTC) and the measurable increase in licensing activity, patents, prototypes, and utility models (e.g. 6 license agreements and 75+ functional samples between 2019–2023), demonstrate that the unit has acted effectively on any prior suggestions to enhance the application of research outcomes.

UNI has realigned its activities to more clearly focus on sustainability, energy materials, and circular economy—all fields of major societal interest. The establishment of new units like CEMAD (Centre of Energy Materials and Devices) illustrates strategic responsiveness to evolving challenges, likely in line with previous IEP feedback on relevance and adaptability.

Recommendations:

- (1) Institutionalize periodic strategic audits and progress reviews.
- (2) Engage researchers directly in strategy creation and monitoring.

(3) Maintain momentum in high-risk funding pursuits and spin-off pilots.

EVALUATED UNIT RATING

Evaluation of unit	
Having evaluated the individual criteria of module M3, please summarise your evaluation in the context of the module, describing and justifying the strengths and weaknesses of the unit being evaluated.	
3.1 Introductory information about the unit under evaluation	NOT RATED
3.2 Recognition by the research community	A
3.3 Research projects	A
3.4 Research results with existing or prospective impact on society	A
3.5 Transfer of results into practice	A
3.6 The most important activities in the field of popularization of R&D&I and communication with the public	A
3.7 Implementation of the recommendations in Module	A
Average rating [1–5]:	A
Grade [A–D]:	A
Summary assessment: The University Institute demonstrably meets internationally competitive standards, as evidenced by its robust EU funding (€4–4.5 M/year) and global recognition in polymer and materials science. It delivers high-quality and high-quantity outputs—from top-tier publications and Q1 editorial roles to a steady stream of patents, licences and real-world applications—placing its performance firmly among leading global peers. Its well-structured governance, via dedicated centres (CPS, TTC, CEMAD) and rigorously implemented policies, shows it excels in fulfilling its mission of linking research with practice. Finally, with clear plans for spin-off growth, deeper interdisciplinary collaboration and expanded global outreach, the Institute exhibits strong potential for further development on the world stage.	
Summary recommendations: The Institute should build on its success by targeting flagship EU and ERC grants, strengthening its editorial and evaluation roles, and formalizing cross-faculty interdisciplinary teams; it must also expand technology-transfer pathways—especially spin-off support and creative partnerships—while embedding robust impact metrics and UN-SDG alignment into every project, enhancing multilingual communication and outreach, and institutionalizing regular strategic audits with active researcher involvement to sustain excellence and further global growth. To increase the number of excellent international projects, it could be beneficial to establish an international advisory board and include experts from leading international institutions.	

EVALUATION REPORT FOR MODULES 4 & 5

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION NAME:

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER (CRN):

MODULE 4 – VIABILITY

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF R&D&I

4.1 Organisation and management of R&D&I

Evaluate the organizational structure and setup of the R&D&I management system in relation to the size and type of the university and its mission and vision. Also consider comparisons with foreign universities of similar size and focus.

Rating [1–5]:

4 - very good

Qualitative assessment:¹

Tomas Bata University (TBU) is a medium-sized, multidisciplinary university (~10,000 students) with a strong regional innovation mandate and a growing emphasis on applied, interdisciplinary, and creative research. TBU's mission is to generate and transfer knowledge that contributes to the development of society and to prepare graduates for successful professional and personal lives. Its vision is to be an internationally recognized institution known for creativity, entrepreneurship, and strong integration of research, education, and innovation. The current R&D&I organisational setup supports this by encouraging applied, industry-linked, and socially relevant research, which aligns closely with TBU's vision of being both regionally anchored and globally competitive.

TBU operates a decentralised governance model, supported by an effective R&D&I management structure and robust infrastructure:

1. TBU Distributed but Aligned Governance, is shared between executive bodies (Vice-Rectors, Deans, Vice-Deans) and self-governing supervisory bodies (Academic Senate, Scientific Board, Internal Evaluation Board). This setup ensures flexibility across a diverse scientific ecosystem — from technical sciences and informatics to humanities and creative arts. Institutional accreditation mechanisms and active supervisory boards provide quality assurance and transparency.
2. Effective R&D&I Management Structure, where the Vice-Rector for Research, Development and Creative Activities provide central strategic leadership, while Vice-Deans for R&D&I oversee faculty-level implementation. These roles are connected to university-wide strategy through institutional boards. Strategic alignment is maintained via central planning documents (e.g., Strategic Plan, Budget Rules, Quality Systems), with major decisions approved by bodies such as the Academic Senate and Board of Governors.
3. Strong Support Infrastructure, with well-developed technical, administrative, and legal support system, including offices for project management, finance, IT, procurement, and technology transfer (TTC). Specialized roles such as Data Protection Officer and Cyber Security Manager support compliance and operational resilience. The TBU Library plays a key role in R&D&I, offering services such as publication support, ethics guidance, open science tools, and access to the institutional repository.
4. Specialised Centres to Support TBU's Development Potential, were established, most notably the University Institute (UNI), which brings together high-capacity research units (Centre of

¹ Provide verbal assessment of the indicator and briefly comment on the reasons for awarding the specific rating. Follow a similar procedure for the other indicators.

Polymer Systems, Footwear Research Centre) to serve as a cross-disciplinary hub for applied research, enhancing TBU's ability to achieve societal impact and attract external funding. In addition, the Research Centre at FHS, the Centre for Applied Economic Research at FAME, and the Centre for Security, Information and Advanced Technologies (CEBIA-Tech), part of the Faculty of Applied Informatics (FAI), were also established.

TBU's current system is stable and well-established, although efforts appear sometimes scattered and project based. To remain competitive TBU activities must become more integrated, data-driven, and agile in its support of R&D&I. The following recommendations outline possible pathways to achieve this — without compromising the autonomy or diversity of TBU's academic environment. Considering the well-established policies and procedures, and the nationally competitive level, the evaluation on organisation and management of R&D&I is very good.

Recommendations:

- (1) Establish an R&D&I Coordinating Council including the Vice-Rector, Vice-Deans, and heads of R&D/innovation units to facilitate rapid decisions on multidisciplinary funding and collaboration opportunities, enhance horizontal communication, and unify monitoring, quality, and impact strategies.
- (2) Implement a performance-based monitoring framework with transparent R&D&I indicators (e.g., funding volume, publication quality, doctoral output), benchmarked annually across faculties. This is essential to address inconsistencies that may arise from TBU's decentralised structure.
- (3) TBU could benchmark against comparable institutions such as the University of Aveiro (Portugal), which successfully integrate applied research, regional innovation, and industry links. Larger models like the University of Trento (Italy) show how mid-sized universities can expand doctoral training and internationalisation while keeping an applied focus. As an aspirational reference, Aalto University (Finland) highlights the potential of combining design, business, and technology into a global innovation ecosystem. Benchmarking with this cluster would help TBU leverage strengths in creative industries and materials research while addressing gaps in doctoral capacity and international R&D networks. Formal international peer benchmarking (or global advisory councils) with regular external reviews, could be introduced, as it seems that TBU currently does not conduct systematic comparison with similar institutions abroad.
- (4) Develop interdisciplinary thematic research platforms or innovation hubs to structurally support collaboration across faculties. These should align with regional, national, or EU missions (e.g., Horizon Europe) and be supported by scientific leads, cross-faculty staff, cross faculties collaboration, seed funding, and shared infrastructure.
- (6) Strengthen gender equality in R&D&I governance by ensuring balanced representation in leadership, monitoring gender balance in structures, and integrating gender-sensitive approaches into evaluation, in line with European (Horizon Europe) standards.

R&D&I QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT SYSTEM

4.2 System of support for a quality R&D&I environment and incentive measures for quality science

Evaluate the systems/measures/tools described to stimulate high-quality science at the HEI being evaluated. In your evaluation, consider the documented effectiveness of the measures described their impact on achieving the mission and vision of the HEI being evaluated, the realization of excellent science and the possible absence of key systems/measures/tools.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

The mission of TBU in Zlín, *Erudire et Create*, emphasizes a strong focus on engineering sciences and playing a significant role not only in the development of the Region Zlín but also in the advancement of the Czech Republic and the global transfer of knowledge.

Building on this mission, the vision of TBU includes the goal of becoming “A university that conducts research at an excellent level, thereby contributing to the long-term sustainable development and competitiveness of both the region and the Czech Republic.”

To fulfil this vision, systems, measures, and tools have been adapted to support a high-quality R&D&I environment, along with incentive mechanisms that promote excellence in research. The primary tools supporting excellent research and researchers include a centralized support system for project preparation, administrative assistance, consulting, training, and support for international networking. Additional tools involve internal subsidies, among other things, for mobility aid, technology transfer support, co-financing, and forming new research teams, including international ones. The main measures and motivation mechanisms are integrated into the career plan and assessment system, as well as the staff performance evaluation system. Motivation tools include, for example, substantial financial rewards for publications in Q1 journals. A special reward system has also been established for researchers involved in applied research. Over the past five years, the number of publications in Q1 and Q2 journals has grown, while publications in Q3 journals have decreased, and Q4 journals have nearly no publications at all. All these tools and measurement methods are included in the 21+ Strategic Plan of Tomas Bata University in Zlín, and each year, a current implementation plan is prepared to support their ongoing use and the achievement of the goals.

The system for supporting project acquisition is coordinated by the Vice-Rector for Research, Development, and Creative Activities and their office, in collaboration with the respective vice-deans at TBU’s constituent units. TBU uses a centralized system for project preparation and submission to minimize administrative burden while ensuring proper oversight, transparency, efficiency, and effective reporting. In addition, TBU places strong emphasis on the training of project and financial managers to provide researchers with highly competent and professional support.

TBU has established a robust and integrated support system for researchers, encompassing both project proposal preparation and submission, as well as the management of intellectual property and technology transfer. This support is provided at both the university and constituent units levels, depending on whether researchers are applying for centralized, national, or international projects. Across all types of projects, TBU provides centralized human resources support to ensure consistency and efficiency.

To stimulate high-quality research, TBU annually utilizes an internal fund derived from the Strategic Development Fund to promote excellence in science and international collaboration. In parallel, TBU promotes long-term internships at prestigious institutions and provides support for incoming mobility to strengthen global collaboration and knowledge exchange.

The fulfilment of TBU’s mission and vision is also supported by aligning the university's strategy with the Regional Innovation Strategy. This alignment facilitates participation in external project calls, potentially leading to the creation of new research teams. Such cooperation can also be supported by internal funding, confirming the strong mutual interest in excellent collaboration with industry in the Zlín region. In 2024, both sides agreed on clearly defined new six research domains (aerospace & defence, semiconductors & microelectronics, engineering, intelligent IT systems, advanced polymers & composites and creative industries).

TBU has already established grant competitions at the master’s level and supports interdisciplinary projects led by PhD students. For both groups, the university organizes scientific conferences to promote research engagement and presentation skills. Special attention is also given to supporting postdoctoral researchers.

TBU has developed effective tools to stimulate high-quality research. These are embedded in the university’s career planning and evaluation system, as well as its staff performance assessment

system. All academic staff are familiar with these documents, which were confirmed through interviews with participants during the onsite visit.

The impact of these tools is also evident in the significant improvement in research quality compared to the previous period.

The results obtained are internationally competitive and fulfil TBU's mission, therefore the evaluation concerning this point is outstanding. The recommendations in the following must be considered as suggestions to keep the outstanding level and to obtain further development

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

1. Extend regular external evaluations — such as through a scientific advisory board or benchmarking with leading European universities — to systematically assess and enhance the performance of R&D&I support mechanisms.
2. Establish a university-wide TBU Innovation Lab or Accelerator offering design-thinking spaces, IP support, market training, and microgrants (€3–10k per project). This would boost applied research, engage PhD students and early-career researchers, and strengthen collaboration with regional industry.
3. **Strengthen international visibility and reputation** - Define clear strategic objectives and measurable indicators for international research excellence and implement targeted measures to strengthen TBU's presence in global research networks and rankings.

4.3 Quality control system for R&D&I environment

Evaluate the described internal and external evaluation system in terms of its quality, effectiveness and suitability for the HEI.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

The TBU's quality control system for R&D&I is comprehensive and regularly controlled by the authorities in line with Czech and European quality criteria and standards. In particular, the self-assessment refers to the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. Eight instances ensure the *external perspective*: (1) Membership in the European University Association, (2) HR Excellence in Research Award (CPS and FAI only), (3) Monitoring Internationalization of Czech Higher Education, (4) COARA principles (since 2025), (5) Independent evaluations by the International Board and the Board of Governors, (6) Accreditation by the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education, (7) Annual evaluations by the R&D&I council and MEYS, (8) Regular evaluations by alumni and employers. The *internal perspective* on the quality system is ensured by the (1) Internal Evaluation board, (2) Scientific Board, and the (3) Academic Senate, and its output is included in annual Quality Assessment Reports. Evaluation processes are connected to incentives like grant competitions, budgets, and individual careers and thus have motivational impact.

The quality system is illustrated by examples referring to recommendations of the previous IEP evaluation (Example no 1), the recommendation of the international board (Example no 2) and the Internal evaluation system of R&D&I (Example no 5) were taken further to improve TBUs quality system. The self-assessment also reveals that TBU adheres to *ethical principles* and is orienting

towards European norms for research ethics. Examples illustrate how the principles are followed are described in the cases of Education in Research Ethics (Example no 3), and Ombudsman (Example no 4). In particular four aspects are mentioned: (1) Avoiding risks in research ethics, (2) Code of Ethics Violations, (3) Ombudsman, and (4) Whistleblowing. The self-evaluation highlights actual challenges when it comes to ethics. For instance, the TBU Library has organised education in research ethics for students and academic staff. Also, the use of AI has been addressed in a document 'Recommendations for using AI-Tools'. TBU has also acquired a blacklist for authors to avoid predatory journals.

All in all, the TBU shows an outstanding evaluation system, internationally competitive and excellent in fulfilling the mission.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- (1) Extend the HR Excellence Award for the whole TBU.
- (2) Follow up the new commitment to the COARA coalition, which might cause changes related to how R&D&I should be intensified and guide research careers in the future.
- (3) Expand and systematize review processes in internal evaluations, for instance by inviting experts (e.g. reviewers from other HEIs or international partners) or by implementing a cross-faculty structure that allows for the view of mutual 'critical friends' on R&D&I activities.
- (4) Consider establishing an (anonymous) quality system for supporting PhD-students to trace severe general challenges, i.e. discrimination and harassment, in the R&D&I-environment at an early stage.
- (5) Interim (Annual or Biennial) R&D&I Performance Monitoring (e.g. grant success, publication quality, doctoral output, ethics cases reported/resolved) could be useful to track short-term progress

4.4 Sustainability and resilience of R&D&I

Evaluate the described system of measures for sustainability and resilience of R&D&I in terms of their quality, effectiveness or possible absence of key measures.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

The TBU has several measures to guarantee *sustainability and resilience*. Although the EU sustainability goals are not directly mentioned in the self-evaluation, the measures definitely target many of the goals. In particular nine measures are mentioned: (1) A sustainability concept covered in a comprehensive action plan for the period 2025-2026 21+ targeting education, creative activities, infrastructure, energy and climate change, water and circular economy, transport, catering, partnerships, well-being and social issues. (2) A social responsibility strategy, targeting education and research, sustainability and ecology, health and well-being, (3) Third role; transfer of R&D&I results to civil society and interaction with local actors (4) Research data management concept, (5)

Ethics and data protection, (6) Ensuring institutional resilience, (7) Digitization and the use of smart technologies, (8) Strategy for open science 2.0/open access, (9) A knowledge transfer system. The Technology Transfer Centre (TTC) provides all TBU components not only with knowledge transfer services, but also with support in the protection of intellectual property. This includes training for students and staff in the areas of intellectual property protection and technology transfer. The TTC is a well-established and robust unit, firmly embedded in the university's organizational structure and governed by internal regulations. It also guarantees institutional resilience towards foreign influences, cyber security, risk prevention, misuse of R&D&I and eventual negative impact of measures. TBU also has established a Cybersecurity Management Committee and appointed a Cybersecurity Manager in accordance with the Cybersecurity Act and relevant Czech regulations. TBU actively collaborates with other public higher education institutions and is a member of the CESNET-CERTS security team, as well as a participant in the NUCIB Portal. TBU places strong emphasis on regular testing and cybersecurity training. The newly implemented TBU Rector's Directive No. 11/2025 addresses the systemic setup of the university's resilience against illegitimate influence. It covers, among other areas, the review of both new and existing international contacts and partnership agreements, with an assessment of the associated risk level. If a risk is identified, specific cooperation rules are established, including potential restrictions on access to TBU's cyberspace and physical premises.

In summary, the measures of TBU are diverse, impressive, comprehensive and indicate a high-level quality system and a high-level cyber security system. Therefore, a grade of outstanding is assigned.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- (1) It is recommended that future research initiatives place greater emphasis on objectives that have so far received limited attention in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, areas such as gender equality, peace, justice, and strong institutions should be more actively targeted, as they represent critical dimensions of sustainable development that remain underexplored.
- (2) We also recommend taking advantage of the new alliance partnership with regard to developing sustainable research projects.
- (3) Develop indicators that better allow for evaluating quality and/or effects of measures

PERSONNEL POLICY

4.5 Structure of human resources

Evaluate the described structure of human resources at the evaluated HEI in terms of age composition, degree of internationalization, distribution by job classification, and gender balance. For the assessment, use the data from the annexed tables 4.5.1 and 4.5.2; it is also possible to draw on the more detailed staffing data presented in indicator 3.1 of the self-evaluation reports for the evaluated units.

Rating [1–5]:

4 - very good

Qualitative assessment:

Between 2020 and 2024, TBU's human resources composition in R&D&I has remained structurally sound, with a growing base of early- and mid-career academics and slight gains in gender balance.

However, challenges persist in succession planning, promotion bottlenecks, underrepresentation of youth, and gender inequality at the highest levels. The data underline the need for targeted and proactive workforce strategies to ensure long-term institutional resilience and inclusivity.

(1) Age

- Across both 2020 and 2024, numbers indicate a strong base of mid-career academics.
- Staff under 30 remain less presented, pointing to limited early-career entry pathways.
- Among Associate Professors in 2024, the largest group was aged 40–49, followed by 50–59 and 60–69. Among Professors, the majority were in the 50–59 and 60–69 age groups, suggesting reliance on senior staff and the likelihood of significant retirements in the near future.

(2) Job Classification

- The staffing structure (when it comes to Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor) retains a pyramidal form, with a growing number of Assistant Professors and a steady base of researchers, supporting academic sustainability.
- Senior ranks (Associate Professors and Professors) show limited growth, which may indicate either a stable senior core or a bottleneck in career advancement.
- Technical and economic staff are primarily concentrated in the mid-career age groups, with few young professionals entering these roles. This trend suggests a risk of skill gaps in support positions if renewal efforts are not undertaken.

(3) Gender Balance

- Women increasingly hold senior/managerial positions, but still lack in Scientific/Artistic/Academic Council and in Academic Senate, which however is elective and therefore beyond the control of University Management.
- There is notable improvement in gender parity at early and mid-career levels—especially among Assistants (56%), Assistant Professors (45%), Associate Professors (43%), but the senior academic ranks remain male-dominated, as women represent only 23% of professors in 2024.
- This reveals persistent barriers to women’s progression into full professorships. The slow rate of change over four years suggests a need for targeted interventions to support women's advancement to top academic positions.

(4) Cross-Faculty and Internationalization Insights (Indicator 3.1)

- The consistently high share of Assistant Professors across faculties indicates a strong presence of junior and mid-career staff. While this may align with institutional needs, it is not entirely clear whether it results from a deliberate strategic focus or rather from structural and contextual factors such as the university’s relatively young age, its development trajectory, and patterns of staff turnover.
- Internationalization remains concentrated in research roles, with limited diversity in teaching and technical/economic positions.
- Differences in research intensity and gender distribution across faculties underscore the importance of faculty-specific HR planning.

The overall evaluation concerning this point is very good: concerning the structure of human resources, TBU achieves a balanced quality and has the potential for further development. The recommendations reported below aim at helping to improve.

TBU’s implemented well established policies and procedures concerning the structure of human resources, but improvements need to be done to reach an outstanding level in international comparison. Therefore, the evaluation on structure of human resources is very good.

Recommendations:

- (1) Age Composition
 - A. Strengthen recruitment of early-career researchers (under 30) via PhD, postdoc, and internship programs.
 - B. Implement succession plans in units with many staff aged 50+.
 - C. Use mentoring to support knowledge transfer and junior leadership development.
- (2) Internationalization
 - A. Progress is strongest in research roles, while teaching, technical, and leadership positions remain less internationalized, likely due to structural factors rather than strategy.
 - B. Expand international recruitment to teaching, technical, and leadership roles with supportive conditions such as bilingual ads, relocation aid, joint appointments and visiting scholar, expansion of immigration process support, and emphasis of regional and cultural appeal of Zlin.
 - C. Promote international collaborations and exchanges, especially for early-career staff.
 - D. Define and monitor goals to increase internationalization where it is currently low (e.g. professors, teaching staff, technical and leadership positions).
- (3) Job Classification
 - A. Maintain a strong base of Assistant Professors with transparent promotion pathways.
 - B. Monitor and address promotion barriers, especially in slow-moving faculties.
 - C. Offer tailored career plans, mentoring, and training for advancement readiness.
- (4) Gender Balance
 - A. Prioritize the fair advancement of women to Professorships.
 - B. Apply targeted support (leadership training, unbiased criteria, progress monitoring).
 - C. Establish and review benchmarks for gender equity across academic levels.
- (5) Faculty Workforce Planning
 - A. Encourage tailored data planning and HR strategies per faculty based on their challenges.
 - B. Align staffing and resource allocation with academic output and institutional goals.

4.6 Academic and Research Careers

Evaluate the described system for the recruitment and career development of academic and research staff. Evaluate the system in terms of its quality and effectiveness, as well as the potential absence of key elements.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

The system for career development and employee evaluation at TBU is well-structured, regularly updated, and aligned with European standards such as OTMR and HR Award principles. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative criteria ensures a balanced and transparent evaluation process. The use of the IS HAP system enhances efficiency and accountability. Overall, the approach is comprehensive and supports fair and merit-based career progression.

The recruitment process for international tenders is clearly defined, transparent, and aligned with best practices for academic hiring. The use of both formal and informal international channels enhances the visibility of vacancies and supports the attraction of qualified candidates from abroad. The structured selection procedure, including a committee vote, ensures fairness and merit-based hiring. Overall, the system effectively promotes openness and internationalisation. The process has yielded meaningful results in terms of staff representation, as faculty and staff represent various

regions of Eastern and Western Europe, as well as Africa and Southeast Asia. The results are admirable and reflect the stability and strength of the established recruiting processes.

TBU has implemented a well-rounded adaptation system for new employees, combining structured induction tools with personalised support from HR and supervisors. Materials like the welcome guide, adaptation questionnaire, and induction training ensure a smooth integration into the university environment. The planned mentoring initiative, especially the Doctoral Academy, reflects a forward-looking approach to supporting early-career researchers. Overall, the system fosters a supportive and inclusive onboarding experience.

TBU demonstrates a proactive approach to ensuring transparent distribution of institutional time and preventing duplication of activities, as confirmed by its internal audit. The upcoming MoLSA-funded project reflects a strong commitment to fostering a diverse and flexible work culture through evidence-based process optimisation. These efforts support sustainable staffing practices and responsiveness to labour market trends.

Clear and inclusive rules for filling senior R&D&I positions have been established at TBU, grounded in principles of equal opportunity and gender balance. The implementation of the Gender Equality Plan, HR Award standards, and open recruitment processes ensures fairness, transparency, and diversity. The involvement of the Ethics Committee further reinforces a culture of accountability. Overall, TBU's approach supports ethical, merit-based appointments and long-term institutional excellence.

TBU has a supportive and structured system for sabbaticals, with a strong emphasis on international mobility and research development. Funded projects under the Operational Programme for Science, Research, and Education have effectively enabled staff to gain experience abroad and enhance their research competencies. The internal funding mechanisms for international placements further demonstrate TBU's commitment to academic growth. Overall, the sabbatical system promotes professional development and international collaboration.

TBU ensures a clear and structured approach for staff returning from external or international workplaces by maintaining a unified employment framework without contract chaining. Workload and remuneration are transparently managed through time allocation and salary bonuses linked to project involvement or management roles.

TBU provides a comprehensive support system for employees returning from maternity, parental leave, or other career breaks, with measures that promote flexibility and work-life balance. These are in line with not only legal requirements for Czechia, but also reflect industry best practice. These policies contribute to the overall success of the recruitment and retention efforts of TBU. These include part-time options, flexible hours, remote work policies, and access to an on-campus kindergarten with ample capacity—an exceptional benefit in the national context. The upcoming OP Employment+ project further demonstrates TBU's commitment to diversity and inclusive HR practices. Overall, these arrangements effectively facilitate smooth reintegration and long-term employee retention.

Considering the high international level of TBU concerning academic and research Careers, the evaluation concerning this point is outstanding.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful

responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- 1) Consider expanding diversity and inclusion efforts beyond gender equality to include other underrepresented groups, and reflect this in internal policies, training, and recruitment practices.

4.7 Gender equality measures

Evaluate the gender equality measures described in self-evaluation. Evaluate the measures in terms of their quality and effectiveness, as well as the potential absence of key measures.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

Tomas Bata University in Zlín (TBU) has integrated the principles of gender equality in recruitment and career development into its strategic documents, specifically within the Strategy for Human Resources Development. Among the six strategic objectives TBU aims to achieve by 2030 is the following: “Integration of the principles of gender equality in rights, responsibilities, and opportunities into the university’s personnel policy.” One of the five core institutional values of TBU states: “Responsibility for all employees of TBU in Zlín, ensuring support throughout their professional lives, the promotion of equal opportunities, the reconciliation of work and family life, and the development of a stable and adaptable long-term human resources structure.”

Gender equality is also addressed as a distinct strategic objective: Strategic Goal 6: “To create conditions for a fair and equitable working environment and to ensure a balanced reconciliation of professional and family life (work–life balance),” which is supported by two specific sub-goals. TBU has established clearly defined tools and procedures for implementing and achieving these sub-goals. This strategic objective is operationalised through its incorporation into the university’s internal environment via the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of TBU in Zlín, which includes a detailed Action Plan for implementation within the university for the period 2022–2025.

The GEP identifies four strategic goals to be achieved by 2030, including GEP staffing with its competencies and responsibilities. The GEP at TBU incorporates recommendations from the external evaluation carried out by the Institutional Evaluation Programme of the European University Association. Part of the GEP also includes education and awareness-raising on gender equality issues, with clearly defined goals and tools to achieve them. The same approach is applied to reconciling family and working life, as well as to the representation of women in leadership positions. Special attention is given to equal opportunities in science and research. The action plan for the GEP 2022–2025 is very well developed, with clearly defined goals, measurements, indicators, and designated responsibilities for fulfilling each goal.

The university ensures that remuneration practices are objective and gender-neutral, a fact corroborated during on-site interviews with academic staff. Of particular note is the university’s commitment to establishing a centralised and professionalised Human Resources Management service, which is positively evaluated as a key step in eliminating inconsistencies in the implementation of gender equality policies. Furthermore, TBU has established appropriate mechanisms for addressing potential concerns regarding non-compliance with the Gender Equality Plan. These include access to a Human Resources Development Specialist as well as to advisory bodies such as the Ethics Committee and the Ombudsman.

The initial results of implementing the GEP Action Plan are evident in the increased representation of women across all academic positions between 2020 and 2024, including assistants (from 45% to 56%), assistant professors (from 43% to 45%), associate professors (from 37% to 43%), and professors (from 18% to 23%).

Overall, the measures applied by TBU to face some shortcomings in gender equality (also outlined in section 4.5) are excellent in fulfilling the mission. The evaluation is therefore outstanding.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- 1) Strive to obtain the HR Award certificate at the university level.
- 2) Evaluate the Action Plan for the GEP 2022–2025 and prepare an action plan for the next period.

4.8 Mobility of academic and research staff (including sectoral and inter-sectoral mobility)

Evaluate the described mobility of academic and researcher staff. Pay attention to whether the evaluated HEI achieves the set objectives, whether the mobility objectives are appropriately set for the HEI and whether the strategies in place lead to their achievement or help remove existing barriers to mobility.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

TBU has set meaningful goals in the area of staff mobility, placing a heavy emphasis on research opportunities and quality improvement, as well as fostering long-term international partnerships. The quality of these partnerships is reflected in their global network reach - namely that almost every unit had an incoming or outgoing Fulbright scholar. This reflects the global mobility of staff and faculty. The IKAROS, COST, or the Erasmus+ and CEEPUS mobility programmes were also heavily used which fostered mobility across Europe. These programmes contribute both to TBU's global standing and contribute significantly to the professional development and research output of faculty and staff.

To achieve these goals, TBU has developed a multifaceted strategy. At the institutional level, TBU's success can be attributed in large part to coordination efforts of the International Office. This office coordinates across faculties to ensure fairness and maximization of internationalization efforts. Important to note is that TBU complements these initiatives with its own funding through internal competitions, enabling staff and doctoral candidates to undertake prestigious mobility outside standard programs at world-leading institutions such as MIT, Essex Business School, Wichita State University, and the University of California.

TBU's participation in the European University Initiative (PIONEER) and in international research groups allows staff to widen their academic research networks, while the Welcome Center and Human Resources Department provide strong administrative and social support to incoming researchers, thereby helping to remove barriers to mobility.

TBU continues to reduce the barriers to mobility and to develop faculty and staff through mobility programming. The current level is internationally competitive and thus the evaluation is outstanding. TBU should utilize the current structure to expand and deepen these opportunities, as suggested in the recommendations below.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment

throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- 1) Broaden partnerships: Build ties beyond Europe and grow partnerships with tier 2 institutions. Opportunities are more robust beyond the top tier institutions they currently have
- 2) Link mobility to careers: Tie international experience to promotion and leadership opportunities.
- 3) Knowledge sharing: Create programs for sharing knowledge gained abroad, this was not explicitly addressed in the self-evaluation, but returning faculty should have the opportunity to share experiences, and fellow faculty can learn about research findings and experience for their own benefit and future mobility.
- 4) Online exchanges: Use the established digital infrastructure to widen access and sustain collaboration in markets not otherwise possible.

RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

4.9 Research infrastructure

Evaluate the system described for the acquisition/optimisation of core facilities and other equipment and their renewal. Evaluate the system in terms of its effectiveness and suitability for the HEI. Also consider the system for sharing instruments and equipment, including core facilities and equipment of evaluated units. Use the data in Annex Table 4.9.1 to support your evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

4 - very good

Qualitative assessment:

At Tomas Bata University (TBU), the acquisition of high-value equipment is managed by the Investment Committee, which oversees strategic purchases. Other equipment acquisitions fall under the full responsibility of individual faculties and university institute. Funding is typically provided through faculty budgets, externally funded research projects, and entrepreneurial activities, with equipment needs collected continuously throughout the year. When infrastructure is purchased as part of a project, it is coordinated by the TBU Project Management Department. All procurement follows internal regulations and public tender rules and also a network of support units assists in the procurement process. Equipment renewal is supported through the Fund for Maintenance of Investment Property. However, there is currently no comprehensive internal directive or unified system governing acquisition and optimisation across TBU.

To ensure the effectiveness and suitability of the acquisition system, a university should have clearly defined internal guidelines, including transparent evaluation criteria, measurable indicators, and priority-setting rules. There should be a formal decision-making framework that aligns acquisitions with strategic goals, research needs, and budget constraints. While the Investment Committee ensures centralized oversight, the process itself would benefit if all the above attributes were explicitly developed and included. A centralized oversight must be balanced with a certain autonomy of the faculties and consider their individual characteristics.

Regarding the sharing of research infrastructure, equipment sharing happens informally, mainly between the Faculty of Technology and the University Institute, due to similar research focuses.

However, the diversity of research areas and the specific nature of instruments across faculties make broader sharing difficult. This limits opportunities for cross-faculty collaboration and may reduce overall equipment utilization.

Between 2019 and 2023, TBU invested approximately €5.7M into research infrastructure and equipment (Table 4.9.1). The majority of these funds (€3.3M) were allocated to machinery, apparatus, and similar assets, while €2.2M supported investments into land, buildings, and structures. Annual infrastructure spending peaked in 2021 at €1.73M and steadily declined to €305K in 2024. Software acquisition accounted for €128K over the five-year period. This trend indicates an initial strong investment phase followed by a gradual decline, underlining the importance of long-term planning and reinvestment to ensure the sustainability and competitiveness of the university's research infrastructure.

The examples mentioned in the self-evaluation show a substantial investment primarily in the area of technology. A directive to guide acquisition of equipment could also help making a "fair" distribution of resources considering other units that need other kinds of research infrastructure.

Overall, in the evaluated indicator, TBU achieves a balanced quality, has well established policies and procedures but has the potential for further development to fulfil its mission. The evaluation is therefore very good. While the current system allows for flexible and faculty-driven acquisition, TBU would benefit from the recommendations reported below

Recommendations:

- 1) Developing a comprehensive internal directive to guide the acquisition, evaluation, and renewal of equipment across all units. Thereby involve all TBU faculties.
- 2) Establishing formal evaluation criteria and indicators to support the decision-making process of the Investment Committee.
- 3) Exploring the creation of a centralized equipment registry or infrastructure-sharing platform to improve utilization and foster cross-faculty cooperation, as well as with industry.

FINANCES

4.10 Budget and structure of financial resources

Evaluate the budget and financial resource structure of the evaluated HEI in terms of its suitability for the HEI, i.e. whether the financial resource structure is appropriate for the size and type of the evaluated HEI. You should also pay attention to the ability of the evaluated HEI to attract prestigious research projects. Use the data in the annexed tables 4.10.1 to 4.10.5 to support your evaluation.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment: During the evaluation period, TBU's budget grew from €51.87 million in 2019 to €63.35 million in 2023. This growth reflects financial stability and an ability to support both teaching and research, which are critical to the mission of TBU and each of the faculty units. The financial structure is built on three pillars: (1) institutional contributions for education, (2) subsidies for research, and (3) complementary activities such as contract research. This framework seems appropriate for an Eastern European, medium-sized applied university. The funding model allows for faculty to develop and research which plays back into their teaching ability, again contributing to the motto of "ERUDIRE ET CREARE." In short, the financial model strongly supports the mission of TBU.

Of note, the UNI Institute, which draws nearly half of its resources from foreign public funding, while CEBIA-TECH and CPS are funded by some non-public income through stronger links with industry. Contract research declined from €789,000 in 2019 to €592,000 in 2023 (Justified by HEI mainly due

to the COVID pandemic and the energy crisis). This reality exposes a vulnerability to external funding, in such cases as public policy changes, increased competition for funding, or social, political and economic factors which contribute to the decline of public funding.

Basic research accounted for 41% of the budget in 2020, dropped to 20% in 2024, while applied research remained the dominant category, averaging nearly half of all funding. At the same time, experimental development and innovation increased 7%. This transition reflects both national and EU policy priorities and corresponds to TBU's profile as a practice-oriented institution. TBU continued to develop and grow opportunities for applied research Through industry collaboration and praxis outcome.

TBU has continued to attract projects with prestigious international universities and partners. This includes Horizon Europe initiatives such as TwinVECTOR, PATTERN, PARASOL, and CELISE, and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Collaboration with industry is also evident in projects with Continental Reifen Deutschland GmbH, leading to applied patents. National funding from the Czech Science Foundation (GAČR) and the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TAČR) has further supported strong research activities, particularly in polymers, materials, and applied engineering.

Overall, the financial resource structure of TBU is well-suited to the university's size and applied research mission. The growing budget, strong national support, and ability to secure prestigious international projects indicate resilience and competitiveness. Therefore, a grade of Outstanding is proposed. Some suggestions are given below to keep the level also in the future

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- 1) Diversify funding sources by increasing non-public income and contract research to reduce reliance on Czech public funding.
- 2) Strengthen international engagement by expanding foreign-funded projects beyond a few units to ensure balanced institutional participation.
- 3) Reinforce basic research capacity to maintain long-term scientific competitiveness alongside the strong emphasis on applied research.
- 4) Develop industry partnerships further to enhance innovation outcomes and generate sustainable external funding streams.

4.11 Rules for the use of institutional support for the LCDRO

Evaluate the strategy described and the rules for the use of institutional support for the LCDRO. In your evaluation, consider the effectiveness of the implemented strategy and policies and whether they contribute to the mission and vision of the HEI.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

TBU demonstrates a well-structured and strategically coherent approach to the use of institutional support for the Long-term Conceptual Development of Research Organization (LCDRO). The

university has implemented a performance-based allocation model that redistributes LCDRO funding to its component parts based on their R&D&I outputs. This merit-based system reinforces institutional accountability and incentivizes excellence across faculties and research centres.

A key strength of the strategy is the mandatory requirement that at least 40% of the allocated LCDRO funding is being used to support internal competitive projects. These projects must align with TBU's strategic goals and are subject to approval by the Rector (in accordance with the opinion of the committee), ensuring both quality control and strategic coherence. The remaining 60% of the funding is used to support broader R&D&I activities, allowing faculties to address specific developmental needs. This dual approach balances top-down strategic direction with bottom-up responsiveness to local research priorities.

The strategy is supported by a set of rules and procedures, including multi-year project eligibility and reallocation mechanisms for unspent funds. The June 30 deadline ensures timely use of LCDRO funds and reinforces strategic discipline. While effective in preventing underutilisation, it may limit flexibility for faculties facing delays, developing complex projects or emergent research opportunities. A secondary submission window could improve responsiveness without compromising accountability.

The effectiveness of the strategy is evidenced by concrete outcomes. Significant investments in research infrastructure have been made (e.g., €1.3M at FT, €788K at UNI, €564K at FAI/CEBIA-Tech), and internal projects have supported high-impact publications, international mobility, and the development of strategic research areas

TBU's LCDRO funding strategy seems well articulated, well implemented, and well-aligned with institutional goals. The structured allocation model, mandatory excellence funding, and evidence of tangible outcomes (e.g., infrastructure investment and research outputs) demonstrate an impactful approach to institutional research development. A grade of Outstanding is therefore warranted in recognition of the strategy's coherence, transparency, international competitiveness and contribution to TBU's mission.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

1. **Introduce Flexible Faculty-Level Autonomy** > Consider allowing limited discretionary use of LCDRO funds at the faculty level within the centralised framework to support innovation and responsiveness to emerging research opportunities.
2. **Promote Interdisciplinary Collaboration** > Expand support for cross-faculty and interdisciplinary initiatives through targeted internal calls, seed funding, or incentive schemes
3. **Enhance Agility in Funding Allocation** > Streamline the approval process for smaller or time-sensitive internal projects to enable quicker responses to emerging opportunities.
4. **Establish a Formal Evaluation Mechanism for Internal Projects** > Establish a structured monitoring and evaluation system for internal projects to ensure effective use of LCDRO funding, alignment with strategic goals and to provide valuable feedback for future funding decisions.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

4.12 Significant collaborations in R&D

Evaluate listed examples of significant R&D&I collaborations with respect to the effectiveness of the collaborations established, their proportionality and appropriateness to the type of HEI and its mission and vision.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

TBU presents a robust and diverse portfolio of R&D&I collaborations that are well-aligned with its mission as a regionally embedded, innovation-oriented institution. The university demonstrates **effective engagement at both national and international levels**, with partnerships that span **academia, industry, and public institutions**. Nationally, collaborations with Masaryk University and the Masaryk Memorial Cancer Institute reflect **integration into the Czech research ecosystem**, particularly in health and materials science. Internationally, TBU's participation in relevant projects such as SOLiD, SURF2GREEN, SEALIVE, and SUSTAINABLE HORIZONS showcases its growing presence in European research networks and its responsiveness to global challenges in sustainability, digitalisation, and advanced materials. Many of these partnerships, such as the collaboration with Chalmers University in SURF2GREEN, build on long-term relationships, demonstrate strategic continuity and trust.

The examples provided are not only thematically diverse (ranging from polymer science and regenerative medicine to design and cybersecurity) but also demonstrate tangible outcomes such as patents, publications, infrastructure development, and policy influence. Several collaborations also generate educational and capacity-building outcomes, including joint degree programmes, doctoral training networks, and initiatives such as "My sustainable future," which directly link research with skills development and teaching excellence. In addition, TBU leverages unique infrastructure and specialist know-how through the Centre of Polymer Systems, which enhances its value and visibility in international consortia.

While the university's role is often that of a contributing partner, there is clear potential for TBU to take on more leadership roles in future consortia. Overall, the breadth, strategic alignment, and impact of these partnerships are commendable and appropriate to TBU's institutional context.

TBU's collaborations are impactful, well-aligned with its strategic goals, and appropriate to its institutional profile, with strong evidence of outcomes and growing international engagement. A grade of Outstanding is therefore proposed.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- 1) **Promote Leadership in Research Consortia** > Encourage TBU to take on coordinating roles in international projects to enhance its strategic influence and visibility.
- 2) **Expand Structured Doctoral Collaboration** > Leverage existing partnerships to develop joint doctoral programmes and cotutelle arrangements, strengthening academic integration.

STUDIES

4.13 Doctoral studies

Evaluate the described organisation of doctoral studies. Pay attention to the setup and quality of the processes, as well as their effectiveness through basic statistics, such as drop-out rate or data on the future career of graduates.

Rating [1–5]:

4 - Very good

Qualitative assessment:

The organisation of doctoral studies at Tomas Bata University in Zlín (TBU) appears to be well-structured and strategically aligned with the institution's research and educational missions.

Doctoral studies are organised within the faculties, each maintaining control over its own PhD programmes. Two university-wide doctoral programs are present at the Centre of Polymer Systems. Only the Faculty of Logistics and Crisis Management does not present a doctoral program, although the accreditation is expected in 2026. The number of PhD students ranges from 9 (FHS) to 112 (FT). Each faculty outlines a mission and vision tied closely to industry needs, societal challenges, and international collaboration. Shared access to top research centres (e.g., CPS, CEBIA-Tech) boosts the research environment for PhD candidates. Modern laboratories and cross-faculty cooperation are considered as strengths, particularly in polymer sciences, informatics, and creative industries.

Each PhD candidate follows an Individual Curriculum — co-designed by student and supervisor and ratified by the Doctoral Programme Board and Dean — which specifies research activities, coursework, pedagogical duties and publication targets, with annual progress reviews.

Supervision is governed by the Study and Examination Regulations, ensuring supervisors meet high integrity and qualification standards. Relationships begin pre-admission via interviews and evolve through regular meetings; conflict resolution is supported by Programme Coordinators, Vice-Deans and an independent Ombudsman. In general, during the on-site visit, the students declared to be fully satisfied with the system.

In 2024, 324 PhD students were enrolled, and this seems to be a minimum over the last five years, according to the published annual reports. The reasons for the fluctuation of number are ascribed to market demand, university scholarships, participation in grants, and an incentive-based scholarship tied to academic performance and publication. Funding dependency on public grants is sometimes cited as a threat. Recruitment leverages Master's talent pipelines, national fairs (Gaudeamus), Studyin.cz, Euraxess and LinkedIn. TBU's central fund underwrites joint/double degrees (e.g., with Bratislava STU) and "cotutelle" schemes.

Career outcomes are tracked through a Job Centre-linked Alumni Club (5,500 members), two-year post-graduation career support and mentoring. This robust infrastructure underpins high employability but would benefit from formalised completion-rate monitoring. Some faculties (FT and FAME) report rapid and successful employment of PhD graduates, but specific numbers are not reported.

Concerning the doctoral studies, the results produced by TBU are nationally competitive, but still need improvements for reaching outstanding results in international comparison. The evaluation is therefore very good.

Recommendations:

1. Introduce systematic tracking of doctoral candidates (drop-out, graduation rates, time to degree).
2. Enhance alumni career data collection for evidence-based policy and improvement.
3. Some faculties report that high teaching loads for academic staff hinder research and student supervision. Strengthen project management support for faculty to free up supervisors' time
4. Expand doctoral programme promotion to attract more international PhD candidates.
5. Pursue other funding schemes for recruiting PhD students (private fundings, European projects) to dampen the dependency on public grants
6. Provide training for doctoral candidates and supervisors on ethical and effective use of AI.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

4.14 Implementation of recommendations in Module 4	
Evaluate how the HEI has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable. If the HEI has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.	
Rating [1–5]:	5 - Outstanding
Qualitative assessment: Some points were marked as Average or below during the previous evaluation period, and specifically: 4.2 Data Management strategy (Below average) 4.11 Significant cooperation in R&D&I at the international level (Average) 4.20 Support for obtaining foreign research project (Average) 4.23 External advisory bodies for R&D&I, independent feedback for R&D&I (Average) Concerning the Data Management strategy (the only point below average), the actions taken are effective. The TBU issued a Rector's Directive on Secure Research Data Management (2020–2023), providing formal institutional policy; implemented a mandatory Data Management Plan (DMP) approval system for all research projects, ensuring compliance and risk assessment; appointed a university-wide Data Steward to oversee methodology and represent TBU in national forums (e.g., EOSC). On the same line, practical Infrastructure & Tools were provided: TBU offers multiple FAIR-aligned storage solutions: institutional space in Zenodo for large datasets, integration with CESNET (national research data infrastructure); TBU Repository of Publications for small datasets (attached to publications). The active participation in the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) project, demonstrates commitment to interoperability and collaborative infrastructure. DMPs trigger Research Ethics Committee (REC) reviews for high-risk projects, with embedded GDPR adherence. Concerning the Cooperation at international level (points 4.11 and 4.20), the actions are adequate. TBU's international strategy rests on a dedicated Institutional Framework - an International Office under the Vice-Rector for International Relations and integration of global activities into staff evaluations - and robust participation in Horizon Europe, COST, Erasmus+, CEEPUS and Fulbright (three fellowships in 2022/23). Strategic alliances include PIONEER (€14 M) and the European University Association. Targeted funding (117 mobilities, 2019–24; project LUAUS23085) and comprehensive support for incoming researchers underpin rising outcomes: submissions grew from 22 (2015) to 53 (2024); doctoral, programme and network expansions (MIT, Marymount University, ERASMUS MUNDUS) highlight impact-driven, EU-aligned cooperation. Regarding the external advisory bodies for R&D&I (point 4.23) the actions are very good. An International Board was appointed in 2019 (renewed in 2024); this body of global experts provides strategic recommendations (e.g., expanding English-language bachelor programs, refining publication incentives). An EUA Institutional Evaluation assessment was conducted in 2020: Conducted by the European University Association, this external audit assessed governance, research management, and internationalization. Recommendations were integrated into TBU's 2021–2025 strategic plan, enhancing R&D alignment with regional/national needs. Overall, the TBU has systematically addressed the Institution Evaluation Programme's 2019 recommendations by embedding them into its governance, processes and support structures. Therefore, a grade of Outstanding is proposed.	
Recommendations: A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment	

throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

1. Introducing thematic “Strategic Mission Calls” aligned with EU Green Deal and Digital Transition priorities to focus consortium building at international level.
2. working on a matchmaking platform that pairs TBU teams with relevant Horizon Europe and COST networks, reducing time to proposal.
3. increasing Q1/Q2 journal submissions by introducing in-house mentoring on open-peer-review writing.
4. piloting a micro-mobility fund or intensifying using EU-Erasmus for employees for short, intensive visits (1–2 weeks) to emerging research hubs outside current alliances, fostering new ties

MODULE 4 RATING

MODULE 4 – SUMMARY EVALUATION

After evaluating each indicator, please provide an overall evaluation of Module 4. Assess the overall state of the research and institutional environment and the quality of the internal processes of the HEI. Consider whether and how the set processes contribute to the fulfilment of the HEI's mission and vision.

The aggregate grade is determined in accordance with the rules of the Methodology HEI2025+ as a simple average of the scores for each indicator.

INDICATOR	RATING [1–5]
4.1 Organisation and management of R&D&I	4
4.2 System of support for a quality R&D&I environment and incentive measures for quality science	5
4.3 Quality control system for R&D&I environment	5
4.4 Sustainability and resilience of R&D&I	5
4.5 Structure of human resources	4
4.6 Academic and Research Careers	5
4.7 Gender equality measures	5
4.8 Mobility of academic and research staff (including sectoral and inter-sectoral mobility)	5
4.9 Research infrastructure	4
4.10 Budget and structure of financial resources	5
4.11 Rules for the use of institutional support for the LCDRO	5
4.12 Important collaborations in R&D&I	5
4.13 Doctoral studies	4
4.14 Implementation of recommendations in Module 4	5
AVERAGE RATING	4.7
GRADE [A–D]	A

Summary assessment:

Tomas Bata University demonstrates a strong and well-operating R&D&I environment with clear institutional strengths in research support systems, quality assurance, sustainability/resilience, career development, gender equality, staff mobility, funding and external collaborations. Many indicators received the highest rating (5) reflecting outstanding practice in support, quality control, finances (LCDRO), and international cooperation; these strengths are well aligned with TBU's mission to deliver applied, societally relevant research and regional innovation. At the same time, the evaluation identifies a set of targeted improvements — notably the need for tighter institutional integration and coordination of R&D&I activities, more systematic equipment/infrastructure governance and sharing, stronger succession planning and promotion pipelines in HR and women's progression to full professorship, and better systematic monitoring of doctoral completion and career outcomes. These areas do not compromise the overall outstanding quality of the R&D&I environment but should be addressed to increase agility, cross-faculty synergy and long-term resilience.

Summary recommendations:

The EIP reported a series of recommendations, which should be considered for the following period. A summary is reported below:

- Create an R&D&I Coordinating Council to improve horizontal coordination, speed decision-making on multidisciplinary calls and unify monitoring/impact indicators. (addresses 4.1 recommendations).
- Introduce a university-level directive for equipment acquisition and a centralized equipment/infrastructure registry or sharing platform to improve utilization and cross-faculty access (4.9).
- Implement performance-based, transparent R&D&I KPIs and interim monitoring (annual/biennial) to track grant success, publication quality, doctoral output and other short-term progress (recommended in 4.1 / 4.3 / 4.4).
- Strengthen HR succession and promotion measures: targeted programs to support early-career recruitment, mentoring, and concrete actions to accelerate women's promotion to full professorships (4.5 / 4.7).
- Formalise doctoral monitoring and alumni tracking (drop-out, time-to-degree, career destinations) so policy can be evidence-based and completion rates improved (4.13).
- Enhance infrastructure reinvestment planning (multi-year equipment renewal budgeting) to avoid the observed decline in annual infrastructure spend and ensure competitiveness (4.9 / 4.10).
- Encourage more leadership roles in international consortia and expand thematic strategic calls (e.g., Green Deal, Digital Transition) to boost institutional visibility and coordinate Horizon-level bidding (4.12 / 4.14).
- Introduce a micro-grant / accelerator (innovation lab) for applied projects and seed interdisciplinary cooperation (aligns with several recommendations in 4.1 / 4.2).

MODULE 5 – STRATEGY AND POLICIES

5.1 Mission and vision of the evaluated institution in R&D&I

Evaluate the described vision and general mission of the university emphasizing R&D&I (in context of its educational function and the educational policy strategy of the state or the relevant ministry for higher education. Compare the defined mission with reality. The evaluation should consider how the mission and vision of the HEI has been fulfilled in the past five-year period and whether the vision for the next five-year period is adequately set and realistically achievable.

Rating [1–5]:

4 - very good

Qualitative

assessment:

TBU's mission ("ERUDIRE et CREARE") places a deliberate emphasis on tight coupling of education with R&D&I, social usefulness, and regional/national impact. The Module 5 self-assessment restates this clearly and links it to Industry 4.0, digitalisation, and societal challenges, with all faculties and research centres engaged. The 21+ Strategic Plan operationalises this across five pillars—Education (A), R&D & Creative Activities (B), Internationalisation (C), Third Role of TBU in Zlin (D), and Human resources, funding, internal environment of TBU in Zlín and strategic management (E)—and explicitly maps them to the Ministry's 2021+ strategic priorities (objectives 1–6), the national RDI policy, internationalisation strategy, and the Gender Equality Strategy, with sub-goals and indicators. This demonstrates strong congruence with state policy architecture. Declared disciplinary capacity shows a coherent research profile, and the five-year target mix is evolutionary, consistent with the mission and regional smart-specialisation without risking mission drift.

Implementation (2020–2024):

The report claims a shift towards higher-prestige journals, more national/international projects, and active contract research; institutional accreditations in Chemistry, Economics, Food Processing Technology, and Arts support quality claims; CPS/CEBIA-Tech remain anchor infrastructures. These

are mission-consistent signals, though the narrative would benefit from compact baseline→target→actual KPIs.

Participation in the European Universities initiative via the PIONEER alliance is a tangible step toward the “internationally renowned” vision and deeper R&D cooperation.

The university adopted Open Access/FAIR practices (data-steward network), created research ethics committees, and strengthened project-support roles—core enablers for quality and integrity aligned with national OS policy.

A dedicated HR unit supports staff skills, PhD→postdoc transitions, wellbeing/return from parental leave, and inclusive culture; these match Pillar E and national GE priorities.

The Region’s unprecedented co-funding for a new Faculty of Technology building (~€7.8m) and a structured collaboration with the regional hospital (TBRH) to build an Institute of Health Studies indicate strong alignment with labour-market and societal needs and underpin the planned expansion in non-medical health sciences.

Through the UPPER centre and recurring platforms like Zlín Design Week, TBU maintains an outsized role in creative industries, with student/graduate recognition (e.g., Red Dot). This is a distinctive, mission-congruent edge where education, research, and entrepreneurship intersect.

Vision for the next five years (to 2030):

The update foresees TBU as an R&D&I hub in RIS cross-cutting domains (product design; circular-economy materials; industrial automation/digitalisation) and sectoral domains (creative products for society, intelligent IT/cybersecurity, precision engineering, semiconductors/microelectronics, advanced polymers/composites), plus building non-medical health sciences and stronger international integration. Given current capacities, centres, regional partnerships, and maturing systems, these aims are ambitious yet credible, provided prioritisation and resourcing remain focused.

According to the evaluation criteria, TBU’s mission and vision have been successfully fulfilled over the past five years. Furthermore, the vision for the next five-year period is considered adequate and realistic. Therefore, the institution’s mission and vision in the area of R&D&I are evaluated as very good.

Recommendations:

1. Expand the focus from STEM to STEAM by embedding arts and design into technology programmes and using creative industries as an interdisciplinary connector to foster innovation, cross-sector collaboration, and enhance TBU’s competitive profile.
2. Define and concentrate resources on flagship interdisciplinary hubs (e.g., creative circular polymers and advanced materials, trustworthy IT & cybersecurity, creative health technologies) to achieve visibility and impact.
3. Introduce international joint supervision, establish structured PhD cohorts with shared training in flagship hubs, ensure competitive stipends/contracts to attract talent, and track PhD graduate careers to demonstrate outcomes.
4. Professionalise translation and IP by creating a “Bridge Fund” offering specific milestone-based micro-grants, in-residence mentoring, and IP/legal fast-tracks for selected high-potential projects.
5. TBU could strengthen the way it provides evidence on access and data policies across faculties. Define specific targets for women and international staff by academic rank,

strengthen dual-career and return-from-parental-leave pathways, introduce leadership training for under-represented groups, and publish annual progress reports.

6. Strengthen applied R&D&I co-designed with both industry and healthcare partners. In health sciences, align the new Institute of Health Studies with workforce shortages and integrate practice-based doctoral training and shared labs. In parallel, deepen partnerships with industrial sectors (advanced materials, ICT/cybersecurity, creative industries) to maintain TBU's role as a regional innovation hub.

5.2 Research and development objectives

Evaluate the set goals of the HEI in both the area of R&D&I and the development of the HEI as an institution. Consider whether the goals are adequately established in relation to the size and type of the HEI, as well as its mission and vision, and whether they are achievable within the proposed timeframe.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - Outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

Research and development objectives are clearly established in the key strategic document, the 21+ Strategic Plan of Tomas Bata University in Zlin, which specifies the mission, vision, priorities, and strategic goals of its development until 2030. In the framework of this document, TBU presents its mission, vision, core values, but also target indicators for fulfilling them in 2030. In the mission "ERUDIRE et CREARE" TBU emphasizes its multidisciplinary approach with a strong focus on the field of engineering sciences in accordance with Industry 4.0, state digitization, technological trends, and societal challenges. Through their innovative and transfer activities, they aim to significantly participate in the development of the Zlin Region/the Czech Republic in the global context. Within the visions, the TBU wants to research at an excellent level, thus co-participating in a long-term sustainable development and competitiveness of both the region and the Czech Republic. In the 21+ Strategic plan, Research and development has its own Pillar B with four strategic goals, with a total of eleven sub-goals. Part of this section is a proposal of six key measures, describing very precisely how the goals should be fulfilled.

In fulfilling its R&D-related objectives, TBU proceeds in a manner that has set goals for the 2021–2025 period and now has goals prepared for the subsequent period, 2026-2030, based on proposals in response to development and recommendations from external advisory bodies. These goals are described in detail in the document "Self-evaluation report for evaluation of research organizations in the segment of higher education institutions in 2025," as the updated document is currently under TBU approval process.

TBU considers the focus of individual components in its R&D goals for 2026 and beyond, emphasizing an increase in publications in journals categorized as D1 and Q1 according to AIS. Additionally, it aims to improve the quality of results from artistic activities. The organization consistently seeks to increase outputs through collaboration with international partners.

The goals are set rationally and in a feasible manner, primarily because the university management are working diligently on infrastructure and providing support to scientists to create the best possible conditions for them to fully devote themselves to R&D, thereby achieving the set goals. Care is given to PhD students and their development. Further the management focuses on strengthening the professional capacity in counselling and supporting services of the Technology Transfer Centre, Human Resources, Funding, Internal Environment, and Strategic Management.

In conclusion, the TBU carefully concentrates on establishing clear goals in research and development, emphasizing collaboration with international partners, businesses, and industries. It highlights the importance of both basic and applied research, innovations, and knowledge transfer.

The university's top management works diligently to motivate scientists and provide full support to achieve these goals which are in line with the university's mission and vision and make it internationally competitive. The evaluation is therefore outstanding.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- 1) To further improve international cooperation, focus on collaboration within the PIONEER alliance and offer maximum financial support to joint research with its members.

- 2) Accelerate the digitalization and streamlining of administrative processes, reducing the administrative burden on academics and allowing them to focus more on research and leading PhD students.

5.3 Institutional instruments and measures for the implementation of the research and development strategy

Evaluate the described institutional and strategic instruments for the fulfilment of the research and development objectives regarding how they will contribute to the fulfilment of these objectives. In your evaluation, also pay attention to the possible absence of key instruments or measures.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

The TBU has presented a forward-looking framework of institutional and strategic tools designed to fulfil its research and development objectives over the next five years. Strategic management instruments will be applied to set priorities, monitor progress, and ensure alignment with long-term goals. Legal and organizational norms are planned to strengthen governance structures and provide clear procedures for R&D&I support. The strategy emphasizes fostering excellent science by building an innovative environment, enhancing international cooperation, and increasing disciplinary competitiveness. Development of human potential will be advanced through new career pathways, training programs, and researcher mobility initiatives. Ethical principles, scientific integrity, and good practices in R&D will remain central, ensuring a responsible and sustainable research ecosystem.

The Research Council plays a pivotal role in strategic direction, while the Research Centre ensures administrative and project management capacity. These instruments directly enhance efficiency and consistency across research activities. Doctoral School and the Human Resources Development Strategy strengthen human capital. Their contribution lies in improving doctoral training quality, increasing international mobility, and making research careers more attractive, which directly supports long-term competitiveness. The Technology Transfer Centre (TTC) represents a key interface with industry. By promoting intellectual property protection, proof-of-concept projects, and commercialization, it ensures societal and economic valorisation of research outputs. The institutional ethics committee, together with the Open Access Policy and Gender Equality Plan, provide safeguards for research integrity, inclusiveness, and transparency. These measures contribute indirectly but substantially to credibility and international standing.

Despite these strengths, there is also some space for minor improvements. One improvement could be creating a research centre capable of solving large-scale interdisciplinary projects.

Overall, the institutional framework provides high quality, solid and resilient instruments for fulfilling R&D objectives in governance, capacity building, and knowledge transfer, in line with the university's mission. The evaluation is therefore outstanding.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

- 1) Strengthen a system of measurable indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the effectiveness of R&D-related measures - define specific quantitative and qualitative indicators (e.g. number of high-impact publications, success in grant applications, interdisciplinary outputs, PhD student involvement in projects, ...) to enable ongoing performance evaluation and strategic adjustments.

5.4 Implementation of recommendations in Module 5

Evaluate how the HEI has reflected the recommendations from the previous evaluation of the IEP, if applicable.

If the HEI has not been evaluated before, the indicator will be marked as N/A – Not Applicable.

Rating [1–5]:

5 - outstanding

Qualitative assessment:

In its self-evaluation report, Tomas Bata University (TBU) has demonstrated a successful and strategic approach to implementing the recommendations from its previous evaluation.

In general, TBU has shown success in implementing key recommendations, primarily through the development and execution of its Strategic Plan 2021-2030. This plan is a cornerstone of the university's approach, serving as a dynamic document that is updated annually, and is complemented by the "Strategic Plans of the individual component parts, which further developed and specified the aims." As stated in the text, this strategic framework "defines the mission, vision, priorities and strategic aims of the University until 2030." This proactive planning ensures that the university's long-term goals are consistently aligned with both its internal objectives and national strategic goals. The implementation of this plan has successfully led to the strengthening of R&D&I, reported as improvements in the "qualitative parameters of research and development of project activities" and, in most cases, an increase in the "volume of R&D&I activities."

Furthermore, the university has translated its strategic goals into tangible progress across multiple areas. In response to recommendations for improving sustainability, TBU has implemented a "number of activities... both at the level of degree programmes (e.g., accreditation in the field of footwear, introduction of sustainability-related course units in the curricula)" and in its R&D&I. The university has also addressed recommendations related to lifelong learning by implementing a system of micro credentials and offering a variety of courses in fields ranging from cybersecurity to plastics technology. Progress in internationalization is also noted, with TBU having "expanded its international activities, internships abroad and cooperation with industrial partners and municipalities." The report also notes cooperation with the Zlín municipality and region as a success, with the support provided by the Zlín Regional Authority for prospective scientists and experts involved in the university's activities. This reliance on "political" support, however, suggests a potential threat: a change in this external funding could negatively impact the university's ability to expand its human resources and research capacity, or the need to look for alternative support.

Finally, the report highlights the commitment to human resources development, evidenced by the creation of a "dedicated Human Resources Development Office" and the pursuit of HR Awards, showcasing a focused effort to improve its internal environment. A rating of 5-outstanding, is fully justified.

Recommendations:

A rating of outstanding indicates that TBU is sustaining high levels of performance. The following recommendations are mere suggestions for navigating the dynamic and changing environment throughout the next evaluation period. TBU has demonstrated an ability to create meaningful responses to external demands. Because markets and conditions are unpredictable, the panel

would find it commendable for TBU to craft alternative or additional strategies, based on their tacit understanding of institutional needs and resources, as well as opportunistic pivoting. We offer these as a starting point for consideration.

1. **Diversify Funding Sources** > Try to further develop partnerships with private sector sponsors, EU research grants, alumni networks, and philanthropic foundations to ensure financial resilience.
2. **Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation** > Consider further complementing the Strategic Plan with a transparent dashboard of KPIs to track progress and inform stakeholders.
3. **Enhance Lifelong Learning Accessibility** > Consider developing online platforms for microlearning, offer stackable credentials, and partner with industry to co-design flexible learning pathways. Focus on TBU's strongest subjects, such as footwear.

MODULE 5 RATING

MODULE 5 – SUMMARY EVALUATION

After evaluating each indicator, please provide an overall evaluation of Module 5. Evaluate the overall setting of the HEI's strategic objectives and development plan.

The aggregate grade is determined in accordance with the rules of the Methodology HEI2025+ as a simple average of the scores for each indicator.

INDICATOR	RATING [1–5]
5.1 Mission and vision of the evaluated institution in R&D&I	4
5.2 Research and development objectives	5
5.3 Institutional instruments and measures for the implementation of the research and development strategy	5
5.4 Implementation of recommendations in Module 5	5
AVERAGE RATING	4.75
GRADE [A–D]	A

Summary assessment:

Tomas Bata University (TBU) presents a coherent, mission-driven R&D&I strategy anchored in its motto “ERUDIRE et CREARE” and operationalised through the 21+ Strategic Plan. The mission is well-aligned with national priorities (Industry 4.0, digitisation, Open Science, gender equality) and regionally relevant smart-specialisation domains. The strategic plan's five pillars — Education, R&D & Creative Activities, Internationalisation, Third Role in Zlín, and Human Resources/Funding/Management — map sensibly to ministry objectives and provide a clear institutional framing for the coming decade.

The overall view is that research and development objectives are ambitious yet realistic given TBU's size and profile: Pillar B sets concrete goals to raise outputs (D1/Q1 publications, artistic excellence, international projects), and the university has invested in enabling infrastructure—doctoral school, Research Council, Research Centre (project support), Technology Transfer Centre, HR development unit, ethics committees, and OA/FAIR practices. Participation in the PIONEER European Universities initiative, accreditations in several fields, anchor research infrastructures (CPS/CEBIA-Tech), strengthened project-support roles, and regional co-funding for new facilities (notably a Faculty of Technology building and plans for an Institute of Health Studies in partnership with the regional hospital) are cited as tangible evidence of progress.

Key strengths highlighted include: a coherent research profile tied to regional needs; growing contract research and international project activity; active translational structures (TTC); emerging

Open Science and data stewardship practices; focused HR measures for doctoral-to-postdoc transitions and inclusive policies; and a distinctive creative-industries edge (UPPER centre, Zlín Design Week, Red Dot recognition) that supports a STEAM-oriented agenda.

In sum, TBU's strategic orientation, instruments and recent actions position it well to meet its R&D&I ambitions to be an internationally recognized HEI. The main recommendations aim at keeping the outstanding level for the next period and improving some specific points which still have potential for development.

Summary recommendations:

1. Publish a transparent annual Results & KPI Dashboard

Provide an annual, public dashboard aligned to the Ministry's 2021+ objectives that aggregates research, education, OA/FAIR and equity metrics. This should include department-level trackers (Open Access / FAIR, PhD flows, gender/international staff) and machine-readable data for audits.

2. Build 2–3 high-visibility flagship interdisciplinary hubs that embed STEAM

Select and brand 2–3 hubs (e.g., circular polymers & advanced materials; trustworthy IT & cybersecurity; creative health tech) that intentionally integrate arts/design into tech programmes. Concentrate seed funding, shared labs and cross-faculty governance to generate critical mass and stronger external visibility. Use hubs as focal points for interdisciplinary grants, PIONEER alliance work, industry partnerships and regional innovation leadership.

3. Strengthen the talent & PhD ecosystem (recruitment, training, career tracking, inclusion)

Establish structured PhD cohorts with international joint supervision, competitive stipends, and hub-based shared training to raise quality and attractiveness. Introduce career-tracking for PhD alumni, leadership development, dual-career and return-from-parental-leave measures to improve diversity and retention. Reduce administrative load on academics through streamlined processes and dedicated research admin so supervisors can focus on mentoring.

4. Professionalise translation & diversify funding with a Bridge Fund and IP fast-track

Create a milestone-based Bridge Fund offering micro-grants, in-residence mentoring and rapid IP/legal support to move selected projects toward prototypes or spinouts. Implement a clear commercialization pipeline to shorten time-to-market.

Combine Bridge Fund outputs with active fundraising (industry sponsors, alumni, foundations, EU instruments) to broaden income sources.

5. Scale digital learning, micro credentials and operational efficiency

Launch online microlearning and stackable credentials in TBU's strengths (industry-co-designed) to expand lifelong learning and alternative revenue streams. Accelerate digitalisation of administrative workflows (grant admin, HR, PhD processes) to cut academic paperwork and speed service delivery. Use shared labs and practice-based doctoral tracks (especially in health) to align training with regional workforce needs and industry demand.