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**The Student Union of the University of Eastern Finland
The Communication Strategy 2017-2018**

Accepted in the meeting of the Representative Council of ISYY on the 9th of December 2016

Common

Communication Strategy:

The Communication Strategy of the Student Union of the University of Eastern Finland shall direct the principals and procedures of its member and association communication, organisation communication, and media and stakeholder communication. The Communication Strategy shall operate as the basis for all communication of the ISYY's staff members and elected officials. Its bases are the Strategy of ISYY and the aims of ISYY, and it is directed for example by the position of ISYY as a public corporation and by the legislation that regulates communication.

In the Communication Strategy are defined the aims, base lines and areas of focus, and the direction, to which the communication strives at. The Communication Strategy shall be taken into practice with a separately made Communication Instructions and its implementation in the whole organisation. This Communication Strategy shall be updated at least every two years or in association with renewing the Strategy of ISYY. The aim of the Communication Strategy is to get functional communication as a part of the ISYY's activity.

STARTING POINT: GETTING OFF FROM THE "FORCED MEMBERSHIP" IMAGE

At the moment, the membership of the Student Union is mainly seen as a forced membership. ISYY is distant and unknown for its members, who do not know enough of what ISYY does and why. The interest advocacy work made by ISYY is not deemed efficient. At the moment, ISYY is a quite neutral operator and instead of interest advocacy, event organising is emphasised outwards. The responsibility for communicating is mainly on the persons appointed for it and the sector specific communication has remained more small-scaled. Communication is stiff and cannot react fast enough to current matters. Partly because of this, ISYY is not active in public discussion. Changing this image for both the members and other stakeholders shall be one of the centres of communicating.

TARGET SITUATION: ISYY ON BEHALF OF A STUDENT

The Student Union of the University of Eastern Finland is mainly a student's interest advocacy organisation. By all its actions, ISYY tries to develop the position of a student in society and operates as a bridge-builder between a student and University, and other parties. Membership of the Student Union has concrete benefits for a student, in upholding physical, mental and social wellbeing (for example FSHS and SYKETTÄ services), in the counselling related to study matters (for example through the Secretaries for Interest Advocacy), in improving the societal position of a student (influencing to a political decision-making) and in maintaining the student culture (for example organising events and cherishing academic traditions). ISYY makes it possible for the students to participate in the decision-making and form networks on many levels, all the way from Section activity to the Representative Council.

ISYY is a societal operator, which tries to influence both national and local decision-making and to influence the development of the University world in accordance with the student's benefit. Interest advocacy work is being made in cooperation with and through other student organisations and stakeholders. ISYY is an active operator, which participates in societal discussion, makes initiatives to solve problems and interferes in faults it notices. ISYY speaks out, discusses and tries to affect through a constructive, interactive dialogue. ISYY speaks with a voice of its members and hears them.

IN A NUTSHELL: The membership of ISYY is beneficial for a student and it is a seriously taken societal operator, which organises the better tomorrow for a student. ISYY wants to be an organisation that looks and sounds like its members, and into which the students want to belong. This is the basis for the communication of ISYY and for that, how the communication for different target groups is being built.

MISSION AND VISION OF THE COMMUNICATION: ISYY AT THE FRONTLINE OF INFLUENCING

WHO ARE WE AS A COMMUNICATOR?

ISYY is a voice of its members and promotes primarily the students of the Eastern Finland. ISYY is active, out speaking and courageous communicator, which has courage to participate in societal discussion, reacts quickly and works also in advance for supervising the interests of the students – not just when the matters have already happened and the decisions been made. ISYY is a communicator that looks and sounds like its members, is young, verbally swift, quick-moving, tolerant and multi-channelled, and which reaches and is reachable.

WHY DO WE COMMUNICATE?

ISYY communicates, because it believes that communication can change the world. In a large scale, the communication of ISYY promotes the students' matters on all fields of student's life. Open and direct communication connects the students and the Student Union and thus brings the Student Union closer to the everyday life of a student.

By communicating, in addition to enhancing the interest advocacy, ISYY wants to build a conversational and open community of University and students, in which every member grows to an active citizenship. Communication of ISYY builds by its own part the community of the University of Eastern Finland, in which everyone has an opportunity to hear and be heard and where the information moves freely.

TARGET GROUPS OF THE COMMUNICATION

Internal communication:

Representative Council

Executive Board

Staff

Campus Boards

Sections

Student organisations

Clubs

Campus organisations

Members

Student representatives of administration

External communication:

University

Stakeholders related to the student services (for example FSHS, student housing foundations, Kela, Nyyti ry)

National Union of University Students in Finland, other Student Unions

Other student associations of the campus cities

Decision-makers (local and national, political)

Cooperation partners (city specific, shared)

Media

TASKS OF THE COMMUNICATION

1. Implementation of the action plans and the aims of the ISYY's Strategy
2. Supporting the interest advocacy work and making it well-known
3. Enhancing the wellbeing of the students
4. Increasing the Student Union awareness amongst the members
5. Activating the members
6. Enhancing the influencing possibilities of the members

7. Sharing and transmitting information for both internal and external stakeholders
8. Maintaining, building and growing the community image of ISYY, and establishing the visual image and making it well-known
9. Supporting the internationalisation of the Student Union's organs

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES OF COMMUNICATION

The communication of ISYY shall be open, quick, clear, reaching and targeted. It shall be active, conversational and multi-channelled, and formed in accordance with the target group and channel. In its communication, ISYY shall strive away from focusing on the organisation and speaking out, and invest in dialogue.

1. Openness and courage

- Problematic matters shall also be communicated of openly and honestly.
- By openness shall be tried to increase the awareness of the members, media and other parties from the Student Union and its activity, and increase the confidence towards the Student Union.
- Conversations shall be participated into courageously and even into difficult matters shall be taken a stand on.
- Feedback shall be given and received openly and constructively in internal communication.

2. Activeness

- ISYY shall be up to date on matters related to the students' interest advocacy, everyday life and University world, and communicate actively on these fields.
- All communicating channels shall be kept active.
- Internal communicating shall invest in enhancing the communication happening between campuses, thus everyone shall be aware of what happens and where.

3. Speed and quality

- The quality of communicating shall be essential in all, also in urgent, communicating situations.
- The events shall be informed about the members, target group and if necessary, the media, at the appropriate time before the event.

- Public information belonging to the activity and work of the Student Union shall be easily available for all essential operators (the Representative Council, Executive Board, staff members and members).

4. Reliability

- Communication shall be reliable and truthful, and respond to the possible need of information.
- Processes of communicating, such as publishing statements or crisis communication, shall be implemented in accordance with the valid Rules and Communication Instructions.

5. Equality

- An equal opportunity for receiving equal information about a matter being informed on shall be given for all stakeholders.
- When informing the media, it shall be strived for simultaneousness.
- For the members at different campuses shall be tried to inform simultaneously, however before the media and other stakeholders.
- Internal communication shall reach the required operators.
- Clear, systematic and open communication is a responsibility of every operator of ISYY.

6. Intelligibility and own voice

- In communication shall be strived for clearness and avoided the vocabulary of specific fields.
- Messages shall be formed target group oriented.
- In the communication shall be spoken with the voice of ISYY.
- Communication and information materials shall be made as similar from their appearance as possible.

7. Interactivity

- ISYY shall listen to its members and other stakeholders and discuss with them.
- Communication needs and development ideas of members and other parties shall be taken into account.

8. Internationality

- Communication of ISYY shall be bilingual. Matters shall be tried to inform on also in English, as inclusive as possible.
- Continuous internationalisation of the University and the Student Union shall be taken into account in communication.
- The same principal of bilingualism shall be obeyed in internal communication, as there are international students operating in positions of trust.

9. Anticipation and orderliness

- Communicating shall be taken into account far-reaching, in decision-making, making of statements and in participating otherwise in public discussion. Planning of communication shall be begun as early as possible and if required, the persons responsible for the communication of ISYY shall be consulted.
- For possible problem situations shall be tried to be prepared on in advance.

Aims of communicating: A happy member of ISYY

The communicating of ISYY has the following concrete aims:

- **Aware activity:** The internal organs and operators of the Student Union know the activity of the organisation, the documents and principles directing it, and the decision-making processes. The operators follow and participate actively into the communication of the Student Union.
- **A happy member of ISYY:** The membership is deemed as a good and useful thing, and ISYY as a student's supporting network, which helps in everyday matters, enhances the position of a student and offers channels of influencing for its members and a community, which has something for everyone.
- **Active members:** Members activate into influencing and the Student Union work, as well as into the club and organisation operation. The members are being committed more tightly to the activity of the Student Union with the communication.
- **Visible interest advocacy:** Interest advocacy becomes as a visible part of the ISYY's activity and the everyday life of the members.
- **Wanted cooperation partner:** The position of ISYY as a wanted cooperation partner takes roots.
- **Asked expert:** ISYY's position grows as an expert, the opinion of which is being asked and listened to, locally and nationally.
- **Influencing social media present:** Members, stakeholders and cooperation parties follows the social media communication of ISYY actively and reciprocally. ISYY is a visible conversationalist and opener of conversations in social media.
- **Extensive media coverage:** ISYY appears in local media in all campus cities.

WAYS OF COMMUNICATING

Member and association communication:

Member communication is communicating and informing the members by the Student Union. The purpose of the communication targeted for the members is to share information of the Student Union and inform what the Student Union does. The interest advocacy is tried to make visible with the member communication and thus commit the members into the community. The member communication shall be implemented by taking into account the needs of the international students.

Openness of the activity is one of the member communication's corner stones along with the communication. Information of ISYY's decision-making shall be easy to find and available as soon as possible after making a decision. It shall also be easy for the members to become clear, which is responsible for the preparation of which matter, so the members can influence the decision-making also during the process, if wanting to.

Two-way communication shall be part of the member communication. The organs of the Student Union shall listen to their members, by for example offering channels for giving feedback, so the activity can be developed into the direction the members want to.

Organisation communication:

Internal communication of the organisation is the communication happening between the different operators of ISYY. These operators are the Representative Council, Executive Board, Campus Boards, staff, sectors, Sections and clubs. The communication shall always be interactive and the information shall proceed between ISYY's different organs and members without problems.

Also the student and campus organisations belong under the organisation communication. More specifically about the communication customs shall be agreed on organisation specific.

Media and stakeholder communication:

Informing the external stakeholders of the Student Union belongs to the external communication of ISYY. The target groups of the media and stakeholder communication are the University of Eastern Finland, campus cities and the other local and regional decision-making organs operating in the Student Union's operating area, the National Union of University Students in Finland, other Student Unions and interest groups.

ISYY is an active societal operator and the guardian of the student's interests. Purpose of the stakeholder and media communication shall be to strengthen the recognition and effectiveness of ISYY. The most important stakeholders of ISYY shall know, what the Student Union does and what is its opinion in matters concerning the students.

ISYY shall uphold close relationships with the medias operating at the areas of the campuses, which makes the Student Union approachable partner, the opinions of which are asked in questions related to the students. Media communication shall be taken care of

mainly with announcements and by responding to interviews. Press briefings shall be organised if required.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Website

Newsletters

Social media (for example Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

Email lists

Face-to-face (for example student organisation godparent activity)

Events and info

Trainings and briefings

Email

Student magazine Uljas

Academic year calendar

Bulletin boards

INDICATORS OF COMMUNICATION

Fulfilment of the Communication Strategy's shall be followed and documented annually from the following parts:

Media coverage

Success of the ISYY's media and stakeholder communication shall be followed from the following parts:

- Getting the statements through to the media
- Getting the story tips through to the media
- The number of interview and commenting requests
- Raising the other activity

Social media coverage

Coverage of ISYY in social media shall be followed from the following parts:

- Development of the follower numbers
- Numbers of liking, commenting and sharing, and the reach

Coverage of the other activity

The reach of other communication of ISYY and the activeness of the members shall be followed from the following parts:

- Number of the active readers of the newsletters
- Numbers of visitors on the website
- Numbers of participants in the events and trainings
- The voter turnout and the percentage of running candidates in the elections and positions of trust
- Number of applicants in recruitments

- Percentages of answering to enquiries
- Number and quality of feedbacks
- Number of watchers of the live streams

Organisation and responsibility of the communication

The communication of the Student Union of the University of Eastern Finland (ISYY) shall be taken care of by the Student Union's Executive Board members, staff members and the Chairperson of the Representative Council, each from their own sector. The Secretary for Communications and the Secretary for Recreation shall take the main responsibility of the daily communication targeted for the members. The Secretary General shall take care of the internal and external communication's functionality. The Chairperson of the Executive Board and the Secretary General shall be mainly responsible for informing the media. The Executive Board's Responsible for the Communications shall supervise the implementation of the Communications Strategy and informing about the Communications Instructions, and participate in the daily communication.

A working group consisting of the Student Union's staff members and the Executive Board's Responsible for the Communications shall mainly take care of designing and developing the communication. The ones operating among the communication tasks of ISYY shall convene to trainings and meetings, when needed. In the meetings shall be gone through the current situation of the Student Union's communication and development needs. A Committee defined by the Representative Council shall take care of developing the communication in the Representative Council, if the Representative Council wants to.

Human and financial resources of the communication shall be inspected annually. The Communication Strategy and Instructions shall be inspected, and updated if required, every two (2) years or in association with renewing the Strategy.