

ISM 2025

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**1 STEP  
AHEAD**

Challenge present.  
Inspire future.  
Empower change.

A graphic of a staircase with four steps, rendered in a light blue color. The steps are positioned on the right side of the page, extending from the bottom towards the middle of the page.



# THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITY

In today's world, more than ever, the need for scientific knowledge, education and critical thinking is growing. The leadership of helping the society to get a better access to the scientific knowledge and acquire tools needed for critical thinking should be coming from universities. Universities should play a critical role in raising social impact of leaders committed to the public good and prepared to confront the challenges of an uncertain world. Today's challenges—including inequality, climate change, and global health—demand a new approach to education – the one that is more adaptive, integrated, and human-centered.

This is the kind of leadership the society expects from universities. The leadership of our institutions and our communities is directly related to the individual leadership of each of us. Leadership, most of all, is about courage and responsibility. The courage to challenge the usual, the courage to leave the comfort zone, the courage to have a growth mindset. Courage goes hand-in-hand with responsibility. The responsibility to deliver on promises, the responsibility to take care of the team, the responsibility to contribute to the sustainable future of the society and our planet.

The primary mission of ISM is to serve as a platform dedicated to high quality education for current and future leaders. In order to fulfil this mission, the ambition of ISM has to go far beyond classroom walls and academic papers. The university has to be an active member of an international academic and business community, a respected voice in the society. In order to help leaders grow, ISM has to be a leader itself.

The biggest strength of ISM is its community: students, academic faculty and administrative team, corporate partners and alumni. During its 20 years of history, ISM has become a strong community with the unique culture based on the global worldview and common values. We are privileged to be the university of choice for so many bright students from all over the world. It is amazing how curious, ambitious and entrepreneurial they are and



how many great ideas they have. Our university is proud to have a special relationship with its corporate partners. With their support, social programmes, such as “Excellent 100” scholarship programme, were able to offer the unique opportunity to more than 300 talented students.

Finally, there are more than five thousand people around the world who have a special place for ISM in their hearts – our alumni. An engaged alumni network is giving us the opportunity to benefit from the skills and experience of our graduates, by offering their support to our students, to the institution and to each other.

ISM community is ready to take the leadership in creating a one step ahead business University of Northern Europe!

**Dr. Dalius Misiūnas**  
President of ISM



# CONTEXT

During the past 20 years, ISM has developed a well-known brand in Lithuania. Founded by BI Norwegian business school, ISM inherited a Nordic identity and culture, based on inclusivity and openness. ISM's international faculty is the key to our high standards for teaching and we are recognized for our quality. ISM Bachelor and Master programmes in economics and management are leading in Lithuania and consequently, our graduates are valued by employers and successfully start their careers after their studies. Moreover, our graduates possess a remarkable entrepreneurial spirit as around one third of them run their own businesses.

However, competition is growing from both international and local players. We witness a downward trend of school graduates who choose economics and management disciplines, and the situation is further aggravated by political decisions on the national level: an increased number of free undergraduate places at state universities. Additionally, more and more school graduates in Lithuania decide to study abroad, which leads to an overall decline in domestic demand in university studies. Unfortunately, the created gap is not automatically filled in by foreign students, as Lithuania remains a second choice for studies abroad.

Uniqueness of ISM, cultivated through a combination of international studies, individual approach, connections to business, and modern learning, is also gradually becoming a new quality benchmark among leading universities worldwide. Therefore, we see a clear need for a strategy that allows ISM to enter a new stage with a stronger position in the local market and a growing international presence. In the light of Vilnius growing and becoming more international, as well as an imminent Brexit, we find ourselves in a good position to distinguish ISM with a focus on future skills, life-long learning, academic and service excellence and thus to attract more Lithuanian and international students to come and study at ISM. Our main strength in pursuing these goals is our community - it is also the foundation of the new strategy for the period 2020-2025.

The community of ISM has developed this strategy to serve as a framework for our decision making, it is a set of guiding principles which can be applied when the situation evolves. The core of the strategy is the vision, mission and values of ISM.

## UNIQUENESS OF ISM



International studies



Individual approach



Connected to business



Modern learning



# VISION, MISSION, VALUES

## VISION - what do we want to become by 2025

### **Business University of Northern Europe recognized for one step ahead mindset**

Our vision is to be a top-tier Business University in Northern Europe recognized for thought leadership, innovative approach to research based education, focus on future competences, commitment to lifelong learning, the will to explore and to deliver excellence in all what we do.

## MISSION - why we exist

### **Challenge present. Inspire future. Empower change.**

Our mission is to serve as a platform dedicated to high quality business education for students, current and future leaders, executives, entrepreneurs, and experts. Together with business and societal partners we co-create knowledge for critical thinking to challenge the status quo, inspire to make an impact and empower a sustainable change. Our community - students, faculty, staff, alumni, businesses partners - are contributing to the society by taking leadership in shaping our shared future.

## VALUES

The main principles that we would like to commit to in our behaviors and decisions.

### **Community built on trust and collaboration.**

We consider our community – students, faculty, staff, partners, alumni - to be the most important asset in achieving university's strategic goals. We believe in personal and shared responsibility: we hold ourselves personally accountable to deliver on the commitments we have made and to extend help and support to whoever in need: a colleague, a student, or an alumni. We treat each other with respect, keep open minds and value diverse opinions as they provide opportunities for learning and growth.

### **Excellence in all what we do.**

Excellence means that we pursue individual, communal, and societal development, and strive for continual improvement in the process of lifelong learning. We set high standards for ourselves, as well as for others with a commitment to become better in everything we do. For us, excellence represents a journey to mastery – a mindset that we have ourselves and inspire in others.

### **Courage to challenge status quo and think one step ahead.**

A courageous community is not afraid to criticize constructively, and not afraid to tell an authority figure they are wrong. We desire to create a safe environment for dissent. This includes fostering a culture of risk taking and learning to be comfortable with failing. We strive to reduce the risk of innovating by giving more leeway to courageous actors.

### **Responsibility to respect and deliver.**

Responsibility means taking care of our students from the minute they enroll until they graduate, and guiding them on their journey of lifelong learning. We advocate for equal opportunities for growth regardless the social, demographic, or economic backgrounds. We feel responsible for financially challenged and motivated students and provide support in financing their studies. We respect our community by openly sharing information, asking for feedback and reacting quickly. Our rules apply to everybody – from a student to the president. We respect the environment and have an ambition to reduce waste, energy, CO2 emissions, and commit to educate students and society about sustainability and social responsibility.

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# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

We have developed five strategic directions that reflect our main priorities for the strategic period 2020-2025:

## 1. Strategic direction – Offering internationally-renowned high quality business education

### Objective.

The main purpose of ISM is to serve as an education platform that provides students and businesses with knowledge, skills and inspiration that would give them freedom to create a successful future. Therefore, we will focus on the future competences that create value for graduates in building their careers and growing businesses. Our portfolio will offer unique opportunities for lifelong learning for our clients. We will strive for excellence in quality through continuous improvement. We want ISM to be a truly international business university, both in terms of students and faculty. We will strengthen our leadership in executive education locally and explore opportunities to expand it across other markets.

### Initiatives:

- 1.1 Build an international brand, network and organization to attract more international students, increase student mobility and enable international career.
- 1.2. Attract and retain world-class faculty with excellent teaching, research skills and practical experience.
- 1.3. Implement a portfolio management system that would include quality assurance and continuous updating to meet future needs.
- 1.4. Create a platform for communication and cooperation with schools and 10-12 graders individually.
- 1.5. Ensure high quality of education by obtaining international accreditation.



### OUR PORTFOLIO STRATEGY

#### Advancing undergraduate programmes one step ahead

- Continue to revitalize undergraduate programmes according to the needs of the job market, top universities and relevant future career skills.

#### Making MSc programmes more international:

- To give MSc programmes more international basis through strengthening international faculty from outstanding business schools.

#### Updating Executive education offers:

- To launch new products or topics for emerging trends (e.g. fintech, AI, digital transformation, etc.) that would allow to claim “novelty, following or setting the trend” via content and/or format.
- To offer short executive courses for individuals across all stages of their career.
- To expand customised Executive Education programmes (co-designed with clients).

#### Enhancing the value of PhD for ISM:

- To ensure that PhD research is focused on relevant thematic areas for ISM and business.
- To enhance the possibility for PhD students to participate in ISM community activities by attracting external funding to study full-time.

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## 2. Strategic direction – Becoming a first-line personal coach on the journey of lifelong learning

### Objective.

ISM will keep on providing the service that delights by building personal and professional relationships with our clients to support them on their growth journey. Starting from the first encounter, ISM will be an agent of success for each student and professional throughout their careers by providing individual career service. The university will approach future students while they are still in the classroom by creating partnerships with schools. A special attention will be paid to the facilities and infrastructure that contribute to the service quality.

### Initiatives:

- 2.1. Deliver excellent service quality as a unique competitive advantage of ISM.
- 2.2. Provide an individual career service to all students throughout their journey with ISM.
- 2.3. Develop a framework for onboarding of new students and integration of international students.
- 2.4. Maintain and create new partnerships with best business universities to enrich ISM students' study /internship portfolio.
- 2.5. Build and maintain a network of professionals (executives, entrepreneurs and experts) to monitor their learning needs.



## 3. Strategic direction – Promoting opinion leadership and enduring partnerships with business and society

### Objective.

ISM will take on leadership in making scientific knowledge available to the society. We will be directing our research towards the areas that have the highest impact on business and society. We will foster a long-term partnership with the business community to support companies in their search for talent as well as in challenges of business and organizational development.

### Initiatives:

- 3.1. Use opinion leadership to build up reputation in business community and increase public visibility.
- 3.2. Promote cooperation with business community in the form of joint research, consulting and corporate training programmes.
- 3.3. Initiate and support social initiatives, leading by example and cooperating with business community.
- 3.4. Connect with alumni community for a mutually beneficial partnership and promotion of ISM brand.
- 3.5. Create additional funding opportunities for scholarships, chaired academics, social initiatives with the support of business community and alumni network.



# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## 4. Strategic direction - Fostering academic excellence and educational innovation

### Objective.

Academic excellence and thought leadership depend on multiple factors, such as the will and orientation towards high-quality research output, competences of the team, solid and sound management systems in place. ISM's main goals are to strengthen -excellence in research output, to ensure sustainable funding for research, to constantly develop faculty and PhDs competences, to create scientific knowledge meeting the demands of the business and society, and to become a trusted partner internationally. We will seek to achieve these goals by adopting innovative management practices, revising and adopting better systems, training and individually supporting our team, using state-of-the-art knowledge, methods and strengthening our infrastructure. ISM's size provides us with important advantages – flexibility and speed. Therefore, we will focus on developing a “one step ahead” mindset to research, teaching and learning.

### Initiatives:

- 4.1. Strive for excellence in research, focusing on social and economic relevance, innovativeness and international dimension.
- 4.2. Diversify funding sources to assure sustainable growth of research portfolio.
- 4.3. Implement innovative teaching and learning practices by increasing the extent of research-driven teaching, and measuring learning outcomes.
- 4.4. Utilize advanced education infrastructure and technology to enhance physical and digital learning environment.
- 4.5. Develop a unique teaching and learning framework based on ISM teaching and learning philosophy.



### Our teaching and learning philosophy:

- To provide student-centred learning to support individual learning preferences and qualification.
- To develop opportunities for experiential learning on campus, in the community, and in businesses and other organisations, nationally and internationally.
- To enhance the opportunity for all students to have an international learning experience (e.g. mobility windows, exchange, internship abroad)
- To develop constructive and supportive dialogue between students and faculty (e.g., feedback, assessment methods)
- To develop a system to identify the students who have high risk to drop out and to provide personalized support.



# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## 5. Strategic direction – Developing brand, organization and operational excellence

### Objective.

Brand and community are the key strengths of ISM, therefore one of the main goals is to build an open and united organization with a strong culture of innovation and continuous improvement, based on trust, cooperation, diversity and inclusiveness.

### Initiatives:

- 5.1. Build ISM brand, focusing on international visibility, opinion leadership and community engagement.
- 5.2. Unite and strengthen organization by re-inventing identity, enhancing communication and introducing state-of-the-art HR practice.
- 5.3. Enable the whole community to be active ISM ambassadors and a promotion channel.
- 5.4. Implement a quality assurance and continuous improvement framework based on clear standards, lean processes and feedback.
- 5.5. Create a modern digital environment for learning and services.







# HOW DO WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

SIX MAIN KPIS THAT ILLUSTRATE THE SUCCESS OF OUR STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION:

- Sustainable growth – 5% Growth Revenue CAGR
- International recognition and quality assurance – AACSB accreditation by the end of 2023, later – Financial Times ranking of at least one program; Unconditional national accreditation.
- Quality perception of students – Net Promoter Score (NPS) 75+ with 70 % response rate
- Career satisfaction of graduates – 60+ % of graduates satisfied with their career within 5 years from graduation
- Employer and corporate partner evaluation – Net Promoter Score (NPS) 50+ with 70 % response rate
- Employee engagement – Employee Engagement Index (EEI) 2 % increase year-over-year.

The Employee Engagement Index is a survey in which employees assess their own engagement at work. ISM considers employee engagement as one of the key prerequisites to improving employees' performance. The survey focuses on factors that indicate good working relationships and strengthen leadership and collaboration. The Employee Engagement Index is conducted annually to ensure its effectiveness.