

Reykjavik University

2020

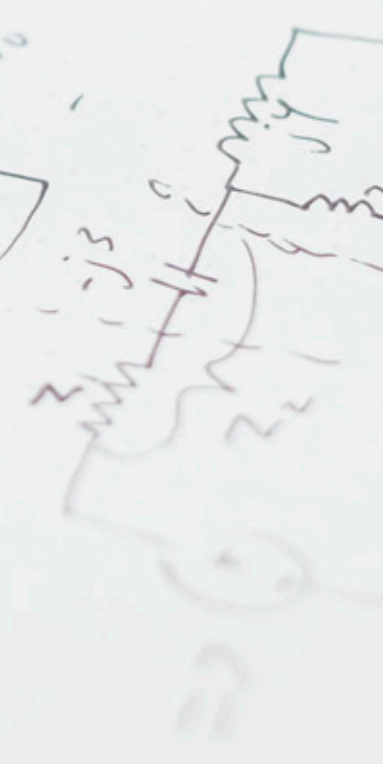
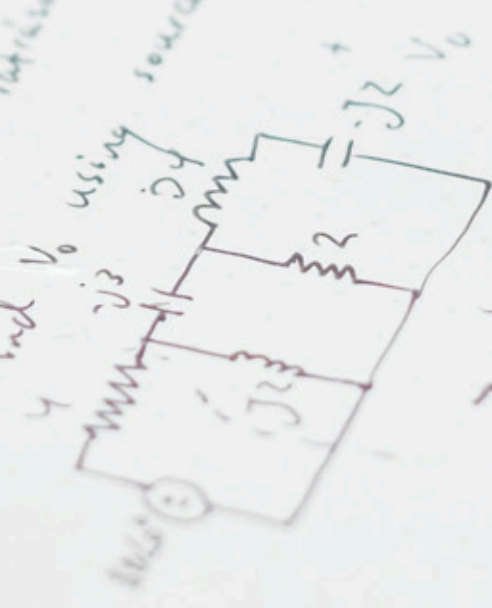
ANNUAL REPORT



ing ad sym
arheft)

10.53

Find V_0 using
Hermann's
source transformation



Index

President's Letter	4
Reykjavik University	7
2020 Highlights	8
Students	
Cooperation with Industry	
Research	
Executive Education and Continuous Learning	
International Affairs	
Environment	
Employees	
Equality	
Rankings	
Housing	
Awards	
University operations during Covid restrictions	12
Governance	14
Board of Directors	
University Council	
School of Social Sciences	16
Department of Business Administration	
Department of Law	
Department of Psychology	
Department of Sport Science	
School of Technology	21
Department of Applied Engineering	
Department of Computer Science	
Department of Engineering	
Research	26
Research groups, centres, labs and institutes at RU	27
Research Council	28
Curriculum Council	28
Events	30
Finance	34
Income Statement	35



President's Letter

Reykjavik University plays a key role in education and research for businesses and industry in Iceland. Its mission is clear – to create and disseminate knowledge to increase competitive advantage and quality of life for individuals and society. This has led to a clear focus for both education and research at the University.

When it comes to education, Reykjavik University focuses on key areas for strengthening industry and society as a whole, through programmes offered in engineering, business, computer science, law, psychology, applied engineering and sport science, as well as a number of programmes and courses that bridge between the technical and social science subjects. The focus of the University not only defines the subjects offered, it also defines the approach used. Teaching at Reykjavik University combines a strong theoretical foundation with a practical approach based on real-world problem-solving. Throughout their studies, students work on real projects arising in companies and institutions. This means that students work with experts from industry to solve these problems, which in turn prepares them exceptionally well for the workplace. The impact of this approach is demonstrated by the fact that 80–90 per cent of graduating students entering the workforce have secured jobs prior to their graduation.

Research, development, and innovation also play a key role in Reykjavik University's service to industry and society. Since 2006, research productivity at the University has grown

times over, both in terms of peer-reviewed publications and competitive research funding. Today, Reykjavik University generates more research articles per faculty member – taking into account both journals and conferences – than any other university in Iceland. This has led to the University becoming one of the top 350 universities in the world, according to Times Higher Education. The University also ranks as the 59th best university younger than 50 years old and 18th best among those with less than 5,000 students. Last, but not least, the University is tied for first place among the world's universities when it comes to citations in the Times Higher Education ranking. But the creation of new knowledge is not only about publication; it is also about creating new technologies, new solutions, and new products for industry and society. Great emphasis is thus put on transferring new knowledge and opportunities to industry and society, through start-ups and collaboration with companies.

Innovation and entrepreneurship are cornerstones in both education and research at Reykjavik University. Students take courses focused on these subjects, starting in the first year of undergraduate studies. The University encourages students to start their own companies and offers both space and support for faculty and student start-ups. Currently, the University has shares in seven spin-off companies stemming from faculty and student research. The University has also supported a number of student start-ups without taking equity shares. Looking

towards the future, there are two key drivers for Reykjavik University. One is to constantly strive to further improve the quality of education and research at the University, with a particular focus on high standards for degrees offered and student experience. The other is to advance and evolve education and research to meet the opportunities and challenges that come with changes in technology, climate, society and economy.

The year 2020 was greatly impacted by the Covid pandemic, but the University continued to grow its research output, both in magnitude and quality, while also demonstrating how agile it is when it came to adapting teaching and student services to differing levels of restrictions. Reykjavik University continues to be the highest-ranked University in Iceland according to Times Higher Education, and the University also received a record number of student applications for the autumn of 2020.

This success is first and foremost thanks to the professional and passionate work of the University's employees. Thus, on behalf of Reykjavik University, we sincerely thank all RU staff for their invaluable contributions to Reykjavik University and Icelandic society.

Dr Ari K. Jónsson, President, Reykjavik University



Reykjavik University

Role

The role of Reykjavik University (RU) is to create and disseminate knowledge in order to enhance the competitiveness and quality of life for individuals and society, guided by good ethics, sustainability, and responsibility.

Mission

The mission of Reykjavik University is to be a strong teaching and research university with an emphasis on technology, business, and law.

Core Activities

The core activities of Reykjavik University are teaching and research, with strong ties to industry and society, emphasising interdisciplinary work, international context, innovation, and service excellence. The culture of RU is shaped by personal relations and respect for society and the environment.

Teaching and Learning

Reykjavik University offers students outstanding education involving a broad knowledge of disciplines, a deep understanding of individual components, concepts and theories, the skills needed for applying methods within a discipline, and the competencies required to apply knowledge in studies and work. RU differentiates itself by offering diverse teaching and assessment methods, practical assignments, active student participation, and integration of studies into industry and society. The programmes aim to enhance students' critical thinking, creativity, and independence.

Research

Ambitious research is carried out at Reykjavik University in order to foster education and create new knowledge and innovation for industry and society. The University recognises that research is a creative and entrepreneurial process, driven only by the researcher. Research is evaluated against international criteria and reflects impartiality, professionalism, and recognised scientific work ethics.

Cooperation with Industry and Society

Reykjavik University emphasises ties with national and international industry that are based on integrity, mutual respect, and benefits to society. The University is an active participant in the shaping and development of industry and society, and works towards meeting the needs of society for specialised knowledge. This is attained through education, research, innovation, development, and participation in discussions on issues arising in society. Furthermore, the University emphasises good relations with its alumni and meets the lifelong learning needs of individuals.

Highlights of 2020

Students

A total of 895 students graduated from Reykjavik University in 2020: 209 in February, 600 in June and 86 in the autumn. 603 students graduated from undergraduate studies with Bachelor's degrees or diplomas, 288 from graduate studies and four from doctoral studies. In addition to university graduates, 42 students graduated from preliminary studies.

In the autumn of 2020 RU welcomed around 1,700 new students and 105 exchange students from all over the world.

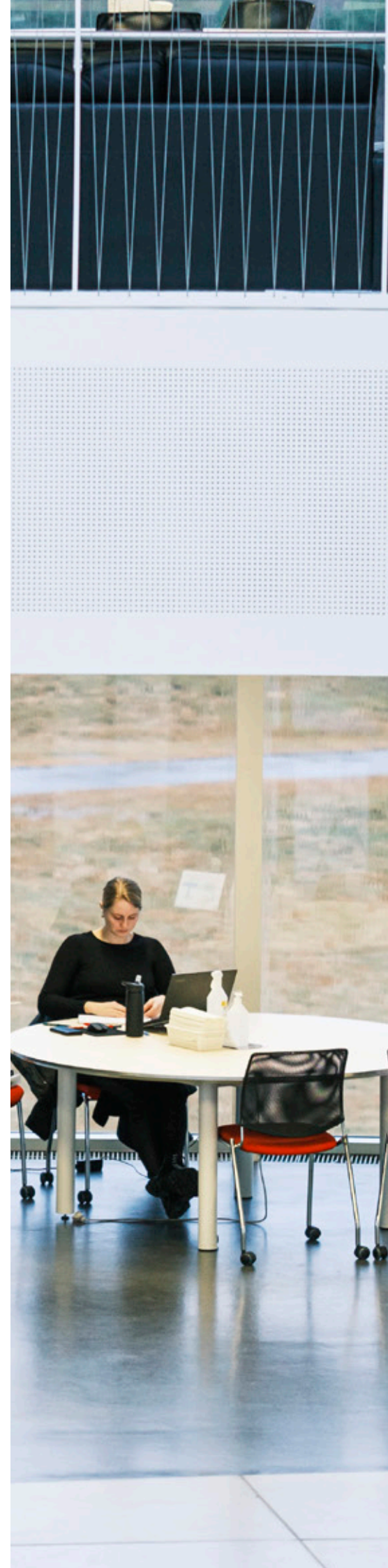
Full-time equivalent students (FTE)*

Departments	Male	Male %	Female	Female%	Total FTE
Department of Computer Science	547	76%	177	24%	724
Department of Engineering	359	56%	280	44%	638
Department of Business	301	49%	312	51%	613
Department of Law	96	31%	215	69%	311
Department of Applied Engineering	272	83%	56	17%	328
Department of Psychology	59	17%	280	83%	339
Department of Sport Science	81	51%	78	49%	159
Preliminary studies	87	65%	47	35%	134
Total FTE	1,801	55%	1,445	45%	3,246

*Number of students on 15 October 2020, the reference date of Statistics Iceland and OECD

Overview of graduates in 2020

	Male	Female	Total
Department of Applied Engineering	79	2	81
– Diploma	50	1	51
– Bachelor	29	1	30
Department of Business Administration	106	127	233
– Diploma	1	3	4
– Bachelor	49	45	94
– Master	55	79	134
– PhD	1		1
Department of Computer Science	153	49	202
– Diploma	3	2	5
– Bachelor	143	45	188
– Master	7	2	9
Department of Engineering	79	86	165
– Bachelor	48	48	96
– Master	29	38	67
– PhD	2		2
Department of Law	31	53	84
– Bachelor	16	29	45
– Master	15	24	39
Department of Psychology	20	62	82
– Bachelor	17	41	58
– Master	3	20	23
– PhD		1	1
Department of Sport Science	27	21	48
– Bachelor	18	14	32
– Master	9	7	16
Total	495	400	895
By degree	Male	Female	Total
– Diploma	54	6	60
– Bachelor	320	223	543
– Master	118	170	288
– PhD	3	1	4
Total			895
Department of Preliminary Studies	21	21	42
– Final Exam	21	21	42



Cooperation with Industry

Reykjavik University, through individual departments, has agreements with numerous companies and institutions in Iceland and abroad on internships and practical course work for students.

In 2020, Reykjavik University and Arion Bank entered into a collaboration agreement where the bank commits to fund RU's Dean's List for the following three years. The Dean's List is meant to encourage outstanding RU students and draw attention to their academic achievements. By supporting the education of excellent students, Arion Bank creates value for the University community and society as a whole.

Reykjavik University and Fisheries Iceland renewed their agreement in 2020, with the emphasis on continuing to strengthen education and development in the fisheries sector, in line with the changing needs for the future. Part of the collaboration is also to introduce to RU students the diverse activities that take place within companies in the fisheries sector and the opportunities offered there.

Reykjavik University and Pure North Recycling entered into a collaboration agreement with the aim of raising awareness of environmental issues and progress in the recycling of plastics and other recyclable materials. The two parties will work together on research and development of solutions to meet the challenges associated with waste treatment and recycling.

The University's main industrial partners in 2020 were: Arion Bank, CCP, Icelandair, Isavia, Íslandsbanki, Fisheries Iceland, Landsvirkjun, Landsnet, Marel, Nox Medical, Pure North and Síminn.

Research

The Icelandic Research Fund allocated to RU faculty 270 MISK in total in 2020. RU received 19 grants from the fund in 2020. Reykjavik University awarded ISK 80.5 million to 15 PhD students from the RU Research Fund in 2020.

A new Motion Sickness Centre for research into seasickness and other motion sickness was opened in February.

Sleep Revolution, an interdisciplinary international research and development project, received a EUR 15 million grant from the EU's Horizon 2020. The project is led by Dr Erna Sif Arnardóttir, Assistant Professor at the Department of Engineering and the Department of Computer Science.

Executive Education and Continuous Learning

The Open University at RU is a non-academic department of Reykjavik University that annually provides around 150 courses for executives, specialists, and managers from industry who aim to improve their work performance and strengthen their skills. About 1,700 people attended Executive Education and Continuous Learning at RU in 2020. There has been a great increase in courses delivered digitally and that has been the main focus area for the Open University in 2020.

In the summer of 2020, Open University at RU offered various short courses in collaboration with the Icelandic government aimed at individuals that wanted to strengthen their profile in the labour market and those that had lost their jobs due to the Covid pandemic.

Skema is a project run by the Open University at RU dedicated to allowing children to learn essential skills in programming and information technology regardless of class, gender or other factors. Skema also trains teachers in elementary schools in how to teach programming. In 2020, around 2,200 students from all over the country attended Skema's programmes, at almost 100 courses and events.

International Affairs

During 2020, 41 RU students went on exchange/internship programs to study at partner universities, while 147 international exchange students came to study at RU.

Reykjavik University was awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) for the period of 2021–27. Therefore, the University will participate in the new Erasmus+ programme for the next seven years.

The University has continued to prepare for the digitalisation of Erasmus+. The project is co-funded by the European Commission and aims to unite all universities holding the Erasmus Charter within a public infrastructure that facilitates a digital administrative workflow. The milestone so far is the implementation of the use of the online resources such as OLA (Online Learning Agreement) for exchange students.

Environment

The University has embarked on a digital journey and processes are being re-evaluated to avoid printouts on paper and to increase efficiency. Examples include electronic signature processes, electronic contract forms, online teaching and exam methods, electronic approval processes, electronic registration forms, etc.

A bicycle shelter was built outside RU in 2020 to encourage students to use environmentally friendly transport.

Employees

There were 269 permanent employees working at the University (251 full-time equivalents) at the end of 2020. 60% of the University's employees have a teaching and/or research obligation. RU has 103 faculty members in the posts of assistant professor (40), associate professor (26) and professor (37).

Equality

The Gender Equality Committee participated in a working group of the Prime Minister's Office, to review the Gender Equality Act in Iceland, on behalf of the university community, together with the Gender Equality Committee of the University of Iceland.

Research regarding status of immigrants in Icelandic universities was carried out by the equality representatives of Reykjavik University and the University of Iceland in the years 2018-2020 and presented at Menntakvika in 2020.

In 2020, a 10% position of a Gender Equality Officer was created. The role of the Gender Equality Officer is to better implement the Gender Equality Committee's emphases, and work closely with the Gender Equality Committee, its Chairman and the Director of Human Resources in implementing RU's gender equality plan and assisting in encouraging RU management to consider gender equality issues.

Rankings

On the 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) list of the best universities in the world, announced in 2020, RU is ranked in 301st–350th place among the best universities in the world and is Iceland's highest-ranking university. RU has moved significantly up the ranks from 401st–500th place in 2017, when RU first appeared on the list. The overall list is based on teaching, research, citations, international output and industry income. In terms of scientific citations, RU was ranked first in the world for the second consecutive year, along with six other universities. The citations indicator is an estimate of how often other scientists cite the publications of RU scientists in peer-reviewed outlets.

In 2020, THE published a ranking list of young universities where RU was placed 59th out of universities established less than 50 years ago. Among universities that have fewer than 5,000 students, RU was in 18th place.

Housing

In the autumn of 2020, 122 student apartments and three apartments for teachers were taken into use at Nauthólsvegur 83. There was great demand for the student apartments. In August 2021, another 130 student apartments and three teacher apartments will be put into use at Nauthólsvegur 85.

A new, lockable and monitored bicycle shed for 80 bicycles was opened next to the university building.

Awards

Dr Jack James, professor at the Department of Psychology, received the RU 2020 Research Award. The service-award went to Stefánía Guðný Rafnsdóttir, Account Receivable Representative in Finance and the recipient of the 2020 Teaching Award was Dr Steinunn Gróa Sigurðardóttir, Lecturer at the Department of Computer Science.



University operations during Covid restrictions

The global Covid pandemic had significant impact on how Reykjavik University operated during 2020. This was primarily due to official restrictions placed on universities, travel and other aspects of life. In all its responses to Covid and government restrictions, the University, according to its policy, prioritises the well-being and safety of its students and employees, while minimising the impact on studies and other University operations.

The first cases of Covid were diagnosed in Iceland in late February and the University responded immediately by starting to prepare for online teaching and increasing cleaning and disinfecting on site.

On 16 March, the government ordered the closure of universities, so all teaching was moved online and employees were asked to work from home. This closure lasted until May, when universities were allowed to open with restrictions, but the employees and students at RU worked closely together to minimise the impact on the quality of the education, often by adopting innovative solutions, especially with practical projects.

The primary impact of Covid on the spring semester came from issues arising outside of the University. Primary schools and preschools were mostly closed for extended periods

of time, and the spread of Covid had personal impact on a large number of students. This created a challenging environment for the students and therefore the University decided, like many universities around the world, to allow students to choose pass/fail in individual courses and skip final tests, if grades from other evaluations were sufficiently high. For students with large projects or theses, additional leeway and support was provided, e.g. by offering additional graduations in September and October.

As summer approached, restrictions were gradually lifted and this enabled the University to have a proper graduation ceremony, albeit in two parts, to the great joy of the hundreds of students completing their studies.

When the autumn semester started, new restrictions were being put in place due to the number of Covid cases rising again. The University responded by finding solutions, in good collaboration with students, to maximise access to university facilities and services while ensuring safety and abiding fully with regulations.

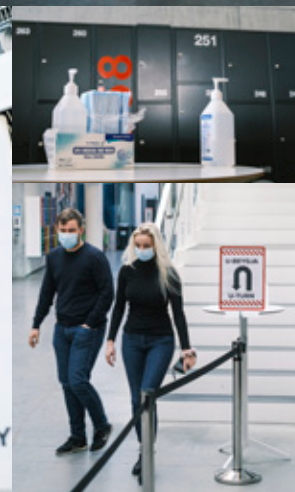
The rest of the autumn semester was characterized by frequent changes in restrictions, most of which entailed changes to teaching and other operations, as well as student access to facilities and services. However, the University never had to

close completely. Employees and students were nonetheless given the option to work from home and many chose to do so.

Throughout the entire Covid period in 2020, the University conducted regular surveys among students and employees, to see how work was going, what issues were arising and how their mental and physical well-being was holding up. This helped guide the University's responses, concerning how to prioritise access to the University buildings, how to best communicate, how to provide the best support and service, and so forth. Furthermore, the University tracked how active students were compared to the previous year, so as to minimise dropout rates. The results showed that the teachers and staff managed to keep students engaged and active, so participation levels were higher than before and dropout rate was quite low. Surveys and interactions with student representatives also showed that students were for the most part very happy with how the University had responded.

Covid also impacted other operations, including research, innovation, international collaborations, industry relations and much more. In some cases, objectives had to be pushed into the future, especially issues involving travel, events or gatherings. Despite all of this, evaluation of research output showed an increase in 2020 compared to previous years, ensuring that the University maintains its leading position in research in Iceland.

Throughout the year, all Reykjavik University employees were involved in responding to the pandemic, with most of the effort focused on providing students with the best teaching, facilities and service possible, while ensuring safety and well-being for everyone. A Covid response group coordinated immediate responses to regulatory changes and communication with employees and students. Another group, consisting of academic leadership and teaching experts, made decisions regarding how teaching, projects, examinations and other aspects of student education would be handled. Many others were involved in critical decisions within their departments and units. Throughout the entire year, the attitude was always to find the best solution for students and employees, with safety and quality as guiding lights.



Governance

The President represents the University, is in charge of its day-to-day activities and is responsible for its operations to the Board of Directors. The President is responsible for the quality of RU's operations and the execution of internal assessment. The President appoints School Deans, Executive Directors and other University personnel who report directly to the President, but the President consults with the Board as regards their selection and primary tasks.

The Executive Committee of Reykjavik University is composed of the President, who is also the chair, School Deans, Department Chairs, Executive Directors, chairs of the Curriculum Council and Research Council and other key personnel as decided by the President. The Executive Council approves rules of the University and other strategic documents. The Executive Council also discusses the annual operating plan of the University, operating results and internal and external assessment results.

The Dean of a School is appointed by the President in consultation with the Board, following an evaluation committee

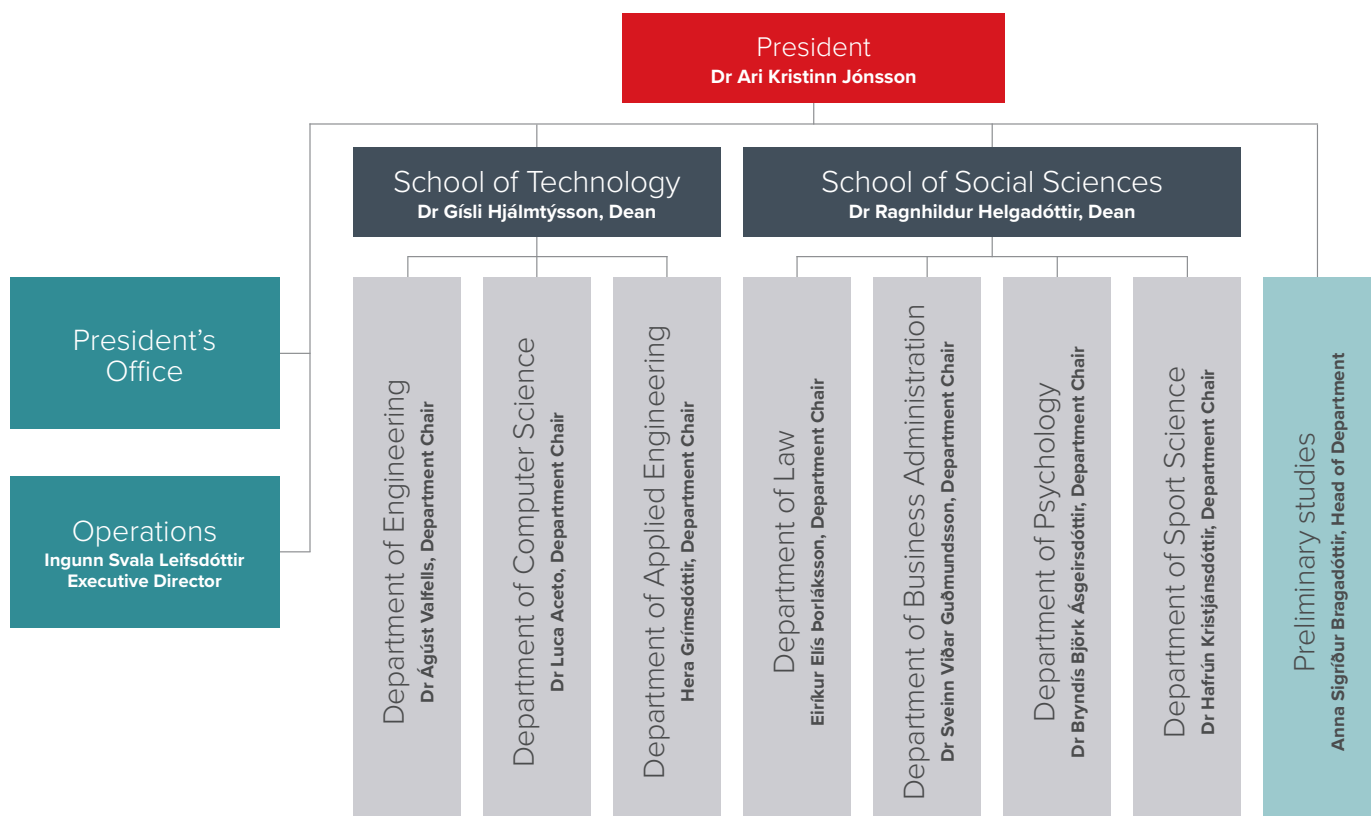
report. Schools Deans and the President initiate strategic planning for the University and supervise strategy implementation. Schools Deans, in consultation with the President, represent the University internally and externally to parties outside RU. The Schools Deans acts as a substitute for the President.

A Department Chairs are hired by School Deans, following an evaluation committee report.

Department Chairs are responsible for academic management and shall initiate strategic planning for their Department. Department Chairs carry an operational and financial responsibility for their Department towards the School Dean.

The Executive Directors of RU are appointed by the President. Executive Directors are responsible for the organisation and operations of RU's support services and serve in defined roles according to a decision by the President. The President defines the roles and tasks of support services in accordance with the needs of the University at any given time

Organization Chart of Reykjavik University 2020



Board of Directors

Reykjavik University's Board of Directors is made up of five full members and one alternate member, each elected at RU's annual general meeting. The Board of Directors is responsible for planning, administration, finance, determining tuition fees, and general operations. The President of RU attends meetings of the Board of Directors.

Members:

- **Hjörleifur Pálsson, Chairman**, Business Administrator
- **Ásta Sigríður Fjeldsted**, CEO of Krónan
- **Frosti Ólafsson**, Advisor
- **Guðrún Hafsteinsdóttir**, Marketing Director of Kjörís
- **Halldór Benjamín Þorbergsson**, Managing Director, SA-Business Iceland

University Council

The University Council of Reykjavik University operates as a forum for discussions regarding academic policy, teaching and research, and collaboration with industry. The Council has ten members representing industry, academia and government.

The President of RU arranges and attends the meetings of the Council. Deans of RU Schools and the President of the Student Union also attend.

Members:

- **Hjörleifur Pálsson, Chairman**, Business Administrator
- **Árni Sigurjónsson**, General Counsel at Marel and President of The Federation of Icelandic Industries
- **Ari Fenger**, Chairman of the Iceland Chamber of Commerce and CEO of 1912
- **Arndís Kristjánsdóttir**, Lawyer
- **Brynja Baldursdóttir**, CEO of Creditinfo Iceland
- **Eyjólfur Árni Rafnsson**, Chairman of SA-Business Iceland
- **Hjálmar Gíslason**, CEO and founder of GRID
- **Katrín Olga Jóhannesdóttir**, former Chairman of the Iceland Chamber of Commerce
- **Margrét Ormslev Ásgeirsdóttir**, Brunnur Ventures
- **Stefanía Guðrún Halldórsdóttir**, Eyrir Invest

School of Social Sciences

Reykjavik University's School of Social Sciences provides students with a solid foundation in methodology, as well as hands-on learning that prepares students for the challenges they face after graduation.

The School offers study programmes in law, business administration, economics, psychology, and sport science, in four departments. Courses are at BSc and MSc level, as well as PhD. Most MSc programmes are taught in English.

Researchers at the School of Social Sciences have a strong track record in research and, in some fields, they have considerable global impact, such as through PlanetYouth, an international effort focusing on substance abuse prevention. The main areas of research within the School are business, finance, economics, management, innovation and entrepreneurship, health psychology, development psychology, clinical psychology, cognitive and neuropsychology, domestic and international law, performance analysis and evaluation of sports and psychological and sociological factors in sport. Researchers and educators at the School of Social Sciences cooperate with researchers at a large number of international and domestic universities, including, of course, the RU School of Technology, as evidenced by e.g. Sleep Research.

Researchers at the School are often engaged in public discussion and policymaking in Icelandic society and frequently make their expertise available to the media and the general public, in accordance with the strategy of the University.

Dr Ragnhildur Helgadóttir is Dean of the School of Social Sciences.



Department of **Business Administration**

Department Chair: **Dr Sveinn Viðar Guðmundsson**

In the activities of the Department of Business Administration, emphasis is placed on excellent teaching, varied teaching methods, student participation, high-quality research and publication in accredited, international science journals, good connections with industry and society through practical projects, internships and the involvement of part-time teachers from industry, caring for the well-being of the students, co-workers and society.

The Department has been a member of the United Nations Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) network since 2012. The MBA programme has AMBA accreditation and the BSc programme has EFMD accreditation.

Undergraduate programmes

- Business Administration, BSc
- Business Administration with Computer Science minor, BSc
- Business Administration with Law minor, BSc
- Economics and Finance, BSc
- Economics and Management, BSc

Graduate programmes

- Accounting and Auditing, MACC
- Business Management, MSc/MBM
- Corporate Finance, MSc/MCF
- Executive MBA
- Human Resource Management and Organizational Psychology, MSc/MHRM
- Information Management, MSc/MIM
- Innovation Management, MSc/MINN
- Marketing, MSc/MM
- Tourism and Hospitality Management, MSc/MTHM
- Business Administration, PhD





Department of Law

Department Chair: **Eiríkur Elís Þorláksson**

The Department of Law provides students with a solid theoretical foundation, extensive knowledge of key subjects, and the possibility of studying individual fields in considerable depth. Teaching is in the form of lectures, practical projects, and discussion sessions.

The Department offers law studies at undergraduate, graduate, and PhD levels. Undergraduate courses are taught in Icelandic, but many courses at graduate level are available in English.

Undergraduate programmes

- Law, BA
- Law with Business minor, BA

Graduate programmes

- Law, ML
- Law, PhD

Department of Psychology

Department Chair: **Dr Bryndís Björk Ásgeirsdóttir**

The Department of Psychology aims to deliver undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of learning that meet the highest academic standards, satisfy the requirements of statutory and professional regulations, are well-received by students, attractive to prospective students, and relevant to the needs of the community.

The Department offers students a BSc programme in psychology and two MSc programmes, one in Applied Behaviour Analysis and one in Clinical Psychology, for those students that wish to become certified psychologists.

The course sequence in the MSc psychology programme is approved by the Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (BACB).

The PhD programme in the Department was introduced in 2014. Since then, a steady stream of applications has been received from prospective doctoral candidates with diverse academic backgrounds, from domestic and international universities. Currently, 16 students are registered in the PhD programme.

Undergraduate programmes

- Psychology, BSc

Graduate programmes

- Applied Behaviour Analysis, MSc
- Clinical Psychology, MSc
- Psychology, PhD





Department of **Sport Science**

Department Chair: **Dr Hafrún Kristjánsdóttir**

The Department of Sport Science offers ambitious undergraduate and graduate studies which provide students with a fundamental knowledge of sports and sport science and the roles and activities undertaken by sports scientists, e.g. as physical education teachers, and directors of sports. The master's programmes are intended for leaders, coaches, teachers and other professionals who seek in-depth knowledge in the field of sports coaching, teaching, sports/PE teaching in schools and fitness centres.

Undergraduate programmes

- Sport Science, BSc

Graduate programmes

- Exercise Science and Coaching, MSc
- Exercise Science, Coaching and Sport Management, MSc, with Molde University College
- Sports Health Education, Med



School of Technology

The School of Technology spans the range from theoretical computer science and physics, to artificial intelligence and mechatronics, to applied engineering and web-programming.

The school uses project-based learning to train students in applying the underlying theories to real-world problems. Excellence in research both drives the pursuit of knowledge and provides training to students at all levels.

Motivated in part by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the School of Technology has defined four major themes – Sustainability, Data-Driven Healthcare, Traceability, and Language Technologies – to drive research, teaching and external partnerships.

The School offers study programmes in computer science and engineering in three different departments. Courses are at BSc and MSc levels, complementing a research-oriented PhD programme. Graduate programmes and a large proportion of undergraduate courses are offered in English.

Research is carried out in increasingly interdisciplinary centres that focus on a wide range of societal goals such as biomechanics, applied neuroscience, tissue engineering, structural and earthquake engineering, rheology, microwave engineering, optimisation, language technology, electrical power engineering, turbulence, sustainability, nanotechnology, risk and decision analysis, project management, sleep, artificial intelligence, virtual environments, software engineering, databases, voice and natural language processing, human-computer interaction, financial technologies and theoretical computer science.

Dr Gísli Hjálmtýsson is Dean of the School of Technology.



Department of **Applied Engineering**

Department Chair: **Hera Grímsdóttir**

The Department of Applied Engineering offers vocational education at university level, with an emphasis on the practical applications of engineering theories. This emphasis attracts students with vocational training, as well as with traditional matriculation examination.

The Department emphasises extensive collaboration with the industry and integrates professional teamwork in numerous projects that include design, construction, and testing. The Department is a member of the CDIO Initiative.

The Department is undergoing significant growth, in large part because of a strategic effort to attract students with vocational training. The effort is driven by four objectives: facilitating the transition from vocational training to academia, increasing access to and visibility of the study programmes, and ensuring teaching quality while maintaining fiscal viability. The Department was founded in March 2019 and the enrolment has increased from around 95 students in the autumn of 2018 to around 220 students in the autumn of 2020.

Courses offered within the Department are for Bachelor's degrees in Applied Engineering and Construction Architecture as well as several part-time diplomas. All courses are taught in Icelandic.

Undergraduate programmes

- Applied Civil Engineering, BSc
- Applied Electrical Engineering, BSc
- Applied Mechanical/Energy Engineering, BSc
- Construction Architecture, BSc
- Construction Technology, Diploma
- Electrical Technology, Diploma
- Mechanical Technology, Diploma
- Business Administration, Diploma
- Building Information Modeling, Diploma





Department of **Computer Science**

Department Chair: **Dr Luca Aceto**

All study programmes within the Department of Computer Science emphasise quality of teaching and balance a strong theoretical foundation with knowledge of up-to-date practical technologies and methods. The Department encourages interdisciplinary study paths, with minors or second majors, across all departments at RU.

Three of the Department's study programmes, Computer Science (BSc and MSc) and Discrete Mathematics and Computer Science (BSc), have received international accreditation through the European Quality Assurance Network for Informatics Education (EQANIE). Those are the only internationally accredited study programmes of their kind in Iceland.

Undergraduate programmes

- Applied Computing, Diploma
- Computer Science, BSc
- Computer Science, research-based, BSc
- Software Engineering, BSc
- Discrete Mathematics and Computer Science, BSc

Graduate programmes

- Computer Science, MSc
- Software Engineering, MSc
- Computer Science, Double Degree Programme UNICAM, MSc
- Data Science, MSc
- Applied Data Science, MSc
- Artificial Intelligence and Language Technology, MSc
- Nordic Master in Intelligent Software Systems, MSc
- Computer Science, PhD

Department of Engineering

Department Chair: **Dr Ágúst Valfells**

The Department of Engineering offers study programmes in engineering at all levels, with additional graduate programmes in project management, energy science, and the operation of electrical grid/systems.

The Department offers programmes where technical courses, emphasising engineering methodology and project-based learning, are based on a broad theoretical foundation. The Department is an active member of the CDIO Initiative, which is an international cooperative effort with a focus on the quality of engineering and technology studies. The engineering curriculum is regularly evaluated and has been undergoing restructuring to ensure continuity between BSc and MSc studies, increase flexibility, and ensure that all students apply their technical skills to comprehensive real-world engineering projects in a team setting. The Department now offers all undergraduates in Engineering a double major in Computer Science.

Undergraduate programmes

- Biomedical Engineering, BSc
- Electric Power Engineering, BSc
- Energy Engineering, BSc
- Engineering Management, BSc
- Financial Engineering, BSc
- Mechanical Engineering, BSc
- Mechatronics Engineering, BSc
- Engineering, BSc

Graduate programmes

- Biomedical Engineering, MSc
- Electric Power Engineering, MSc
- Energy Engineering, MSc
- Engineering Management, MSc
- Financial Engineering, MSc
- Mechanical Engineering, MSc
- Mechatronics Engineering, MSc
- Engineering, BSc
- Sustainable Energy Science, MSc
- Electric Power Management, MSc



Research

Reykjavik University (RU) has a clear and progressive research strategy and stands first among equals in Iceland when it comes to research in its academic fields. Overall research activity is continually rising. The number of publications in peer-reviewed outlets 2020 is 431 or 3.5 publications per faculty, and the total allocation to the University from the Icelandic Research Fund has tripled since 2012.

In 2020, approximately 59% of RU publications in peer-reviewed outlets were in peer-reviewed scholarly journals, 30% at peer-reviewed conferences/in conference proceedings, and 9% were peer-reviewed books and book chapters. Not only has the number of articles in peer-reviewed scholarly journals been increasing gradually, but the proportion of articles published in high-quality journals has also increased markedly. In 2020, 90% of journal publications were in high-quality journals.

External financing of research at RU has been strengthened significantly with increasing efforts to obtain research support from domestic and international sources. Allocation to RU-affiliated scientists from Icelandic research funds in 2020 was around ISK 341 million.

Research activity of RU faculty, with research duties, is assessed every other year by a panel of international experts. The main objective of the research assessment is to examine the quality of the research and research activity at RU. The RU Research Council is responsible for, and in charge of the assessment, and the process is operationally coordinated by RU Research Services.

In 2020, 122 researchers were assessed.

Allocation to RU from the Icelandic Research Fund 2012–2020 in thousand ISK

Year	Grant amount
2020	270,190
2019	231,637
2018	271,275
2017	246,493
2016	204,326
2015	169,392
2014	148,741
2013	133,822
2012	110,896

Research groups, centres, labs and institutes at RU

Department of Business Administration

- RU Centre for Research on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CRIE)
- RU Institute for Research in Finance and Economics
- The Research Centre on HRM
- Centre for Research in Marketing and Consumer Psychology (CRMC)

Department of Computer Science

- Centre for Research on Engineering Software Systems (CRESS)
- Centre for Analysis and Design of Intelligent Agents (CADIA)
- Icelandic Centre of Excellence in Theoretical Computer Science (ICE-TCS)
- RU Centre of Financial Technology (FINTECH)
- The Icelandic Centre for Language Technology (ICLT)
- Language and Voice Lab

Department of Engineering

- Engineering Optimization & Modeling Centre (EOMC)
- RU Neurolab
- Structural Engineering and Composites Laboratory (SEL)
- The EHG Group (Electro Hystero Gram)
- The Nanophysics Center
- Centre of Risk and Decision Analysis (CORDA)
- Institute of Biomedical Engineering (IBNE)
- Sustainability Institute and Forum (SIF)
- Reykjavík University Sleep Institute (RUSI)

Department of Law

- RU Institute of International and European Law (IIEL)
- Institute of Procedural Law

Department of Sport Science

- Physical Activity, Physical Education, Health and Sport (PAPESH) Research Centre
- RU Institute of Educational Research

Department of Psychology

- The Icelandic Centre for Social Research and Analysis (ICSRA)
- Icelandic Centre for Trauma Research (ICE-TRE)
- RU Centre for Research Training in Clinical Psychology

Research Council

The Research Council of Reykjavik University has the role of implementing the research policy of the University, and establishing and maintaining a strong research culture within the University.

Members:

- **Dr Bjarni Már Magnússon, chair,**
Department of Law
- **Dr Marta Kristín Lárusdóttir,**
Department of Computer Science
- **Dr Jónas Þór Snæbjörnsson,**
Department of Engineering
- **Dr María Kristín Jónsdóttir,**
Department of Psychology
- **Dr Marina Candi,**
Department of Business Administration
- **Margrét Vala Kristjánsdóttir,**
Department of Law
- **Dr Jose Miguel Saavedra Garcia,**
Department of Sport Science
- **Baldur Þorgilsson,**
Department of Applied Engineering
- **Hlín Kristbergisdóttir,**
Student representative

Curriculum Council

The Curriculum Council of Reykjavik University has the role of considering issues that regard teaching and learning at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Members:

- **Ingunn Gunnarsdóttir, chair,**
Department of Engineering
- **Dr Ingi Þór Einarsson,**
Department of Sport Science
- **Þóra Hallgrímsdóttir,**
Department of Law
- **Dr Kamilla Rún Jóhannsdóttir,**
Department of Psychology
- **Hrefna Sigríður Briem,**
Department of Business Administration
- **Eypór Rafn Þórhallsson,**
Department of Applied Engineering
- **Dr Kári Halldórsson,**
Department of Computer Science
- **Dr Haraldur Auðunsson,**
Department of Engineering
- **Þorgerður Jónsdóttir,**
Department of Preliminary Studies
- **Sólrun Ásta Björnsdóttir,**
Student representative



Events

In 2020, the University hosted far fewer events than in a normal year, due to the Covid epidemic. However, a number of events were moved online and some new online events were created. More than 100 events were held online in 2020.

Below is a list of some of the more prominent events that took place in spite of the pandemic.

Vitinn - The Fisheries Challenge

23-25 January

In partnership with Fisheries Iceland, RU organised an event called Vitinn (The Lighthouse – formerly known as Hnakka-thon) for the fifth year in a row. Vitinn is a three-day event where RU students team up and compete to demonstrate their skills in developing and implementing ideas and solutions for businesses in the fishing industry.

In 2020, the case students got to work on came from Brim, which produces high-value products from fish harvested in Icelandic waters and sells its products world wide. The winning team suggested that Brim should emphasise health, easy cooking, Icelandic origin and sustainability in its marketing of cod in the US. The winning team was made of Anton Björn Sigmarsson, Vala Sands, Brynja Dagmar Jakobsdóttir and Kristín Sóley K. Ingvarsdóttir.

International Day

16 January

RU celebrates International Day every semester. The event focuses on international experiences and exchange opportunities for students. RU's international students offer dishes from their home countries and provide information on their home institutions, which are part of the University's extensive exchange network. Between 500 and 1,000 students attend this event.

RU Mental Health Awareness Week

31 January

The Mental Health Awareness Week at RU is organised by Student Counselling and the Department of Psychology. This year, a seminar was held on how to deal with trauma, defeat and problems.

RU Graduation

1 February

208 students graduated from RU at a graduation ceremony held in the Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Centre in February. Heiðrún Lind Marteinsdóttir, Managing Director of the Association of Fisheries Companies, spoke on behalf of alumni and Eðvarð Þór Eypórsson spoke on behalf of graduates. Ásta Fjeldsted, Executive Director of the Icelandic Chamber of Commerce, delivered awards for exceptional results in undergraduate studies, on behalf of the Chamber. Dr Ari Kristinn Jónsson, President of RU, closed the event with an address to the graduates.

The Icelandic Chamber of Commerce's awards for outstanding academic achievement in undergraduate studies went to: Elín Lára Reynisdóttir - BSc in Sport Science, Valgarður Ragnheiðar Ívarsson - BSc in Computer Science, Jónína Sigrún Birgisdóttir - BSc in Psychology, Porri Geir Rúnarsson - BSc in Business Administration, Björgvin Grétarsson - BSc in Applied Civil Engineering, Hannes Rannversson - BSc in Financial Engineering and Sonja L. Estrajher Eyglóardóttir - BA in Law.

UTmessan

7-8 February

UTmessan is one of the most significant IT events in Iceland. Students and employees of Reykjavik University showcase a wide variety of technological research projects at the event.

Opening of Motion Sickness Centre

11 February

A new and state-of-the-art equipment for research into sea-sickness and other motion sickness was formally opened on February 11th. The development of the facility is a collaborative project between the Institute of Biomedical Engineering at Reykjavik University, the BioMedical Centre at the University of Iceland, and the University of Akureyri.

AIESEC Career Days

30 January

Career Days are held annually by the International Association of University Students (AIESEC), in cooperation with Reykjavik University. Thousands of university students and more than 80 companies and institutions participated in the event.

Seminar on a Special Court for Re-opening of Court Cases

2 February

RU's new Institute of Procedural Law hosted a seminar on a bill from the Minister of Justice on the establishment of a Special Court for Re-opening of Court Cases.

Open University Day

29 February

All universities in Iceland work together on the annual Open University Day to present their educational programmes and services to prospective undergraduate students. Thousands of students from secondary schools attend, making this the single most important event for reaching potential RU students.

WiDS

2 March

Women in Data Science is an annual symposium held by Stanford University in the US with the aim of supporting women in computer science and related subjects. More than 50 satellite symposia are organised the same day, around the world, and one such symposium was hosted by Reykjavik University.

Tax-day of Lögrétta - Free assistance in preparing tax returns

7 March

Each year, RU's Law Students' Legal Services, in collaboration with KPMG, offer individuals free assistance in preparing tax returns.



The Programming Competition

21 March

The Reykjavík University Secondary School Programming Competition has taken place for many years. The competition is open to secondary school students who are interested in programming, irrespective of whether they have an education or experience in the field or not. Prizes are given to the best team in each league. The competition was held online in 2020 and the winners of the top division were Giovanni Gaio from Fjölbrautarskóli Snæfellinga and Benedikt Vilji Magnússon from Hagaskóli.

Management Competition

11 March

The management competition for upper secondary schools, which is held by Reykjavík University Department of Business Administration, is part of awakening the interest of young people in good and responsible management. Teams consisting of three to four individuals manage a company for a certain period of time and compete with each other to achieve the best possible results. The game is based on the popular Edumundo management game and was held online. The winning team came from Menntaskólinn í Reykjavík, Menntaskólinn við Hamrahlíð and Menntaskólinn við Sund and was made up of: Björgvin Viðar Þórðarsson, Haukur Methúsaleim Óskarsson, Magnús Baldvin Friðriksson, and Oddur Stefánsson.

Graduate Study Week

23 – 27 March

RU introduces its graduate programmes at introduction meetings in Graduate Study Week. In 2020, all the meetings were held online.

Tuesday Popular Science Lectures with visir.is

March – June

RU's researchers held weekly online lectures in the spring of 2020 in collaboration with visir.is, which streamed the lectures live on their news site.

Girls in Technology

20 May

Girls in Technology (Stelpur og tækni) 2020 was held online, which opened the opportunity to invite 9th grade girls from all over the country to participate. About 40 primary schools participated. Girls in Technology introduces various possibilities in technical studies to girls in 9th grade of primary school to open their eyes to the future possibilities that technical subjects offer.

Online introduction for upper secondary school graduation students

27 May

The pandemic prevented graduating students from upper secondary schools from being able to visit RU, but in order to introduce the University to students, RU students, teachers and staff held live, online presentations in collaboration with Radio 101.

Preliminary Studies Graduation

12 June

Forty-two students graduated from Preliminary Studies in 2018, in addition to thirteen students who finished courses in Chemistry, Mathematics or Physics, to qualify for particular higher education programmes.

RU Graduation

16 June

600 students graduated from RU in two graduation ceremonies in Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Centre in June. Due to Covid, there were separate ceremonies for the School of Technology and the School of Social Sciences. Eygló María Björnsdóttir and Þórður Atlason spoke on behalf of graduating students. The Icelandic Chamber of Commerce's awards for outstanding academic achievement in undergraduate studies went to: Hákon Ingi Stefánsson - diploma in Electrical Engineering, Kristjana Ósk Kristinsdóttir - BSc in Bioengineering, Gunnar Guðmundsson - BSc in Sport Science, Íris Þóra Júlíusdóttir - BA in Law, Jóhanna Margrét Gunnarsdóttir - BSc in Psychology, Hávar Snær Gunnarsson - BSc in Economics and Finance, and Þórður Friðriksson - BSc in Software Engineering.

Orientation days

13 – 14 August

In 2020, students were given a mini orientation, since a 20-person limit on gatherings was in effect at the time of the event. Students were divided into groups of 20 and attended a twenty-minute orientation from their Department Chair, teachers and President Ari Kristinn Jónsson, while standing two meters apart in the Sun.

Seminar on sustainability research

11 September

The Sustainability Institute and Forum (SIF) hosted an online seminar on sustainability research at Reykjavik University. SIF members presented ongoing research promoting sustainable development in Iceland and abroad.

Study and Career Counselling Educational Week

1-4 September

During Study and Career Counselling week, online mini-lectures were aimed at improving students' mental health and learning skills. The lectures covered various methods to maximise success and well-being in learning.

The Sleep Revolution: The Road to Horizon 2020 European Strength

3 November

Dr Erna Sif Arnardóttir, lecturer at the Departments of Engineering and Computer Science at Reykjavik University and Director of the RU Sleep Centre, gave a lecture on the journey to the coveted grant from the EU's Horizon 2020. Erna is responsible for the project, The Sleep Revolution, which received a grant of EUR 15 million or 2.5 billion ISK, for four years.

Seminar on the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights

3 December

The Institute of Procedural Law hosted an online seminar on the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights regarding the appointment of judges at the Court of Appeal (Landsréttur).

Seminar on the EU Green Deal

7 December

The Delegation of the European Union to Iceland, the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources, and the Sustainability Institute and Forum (SIF) hosted an online seminar on the EU Green Deal and the Icelandic Climate Action Plan.

Spreading the Computer Science gospel

The Department of Computer Science organised a series of online TED-like talks, spread over the year, computer science topics.



Finance

Reykjavik University is a non-profit corporation, owned by the private non-profit institution of the Iceland Chamber of Commerce for business education (Sjálfseignarstofnun Viðskiptaráðs um viðskiptamenntun, SVÍV), the Federation of Icelandic Industries (Samtök iðnaðarins, SI), and Business Iceland (Samtök atvinnulífsins, SA). The University is run as a private non-profit institution, therefore its owners do not profit financially from the University's activities. All financial contributions and profits from the University's activities are spent on furthering the operations of RU.

A positive turnaround has occurred in the operations of the parent company of Reykjavik University in recent years. The primary aspects of that success have been higher revenue due to an increase in student numbers and, at the same time, considerable restraint in spending. Furthermore, the government has been increasing allocations to universities, with the aim of reaching average funding of universities in OECD countries and, later, the average of other Nordic countries. Despite the increased contributions of the government, the per student allocation of funding is still low and amounts to a little more than half of what other Nordic countries allocate per-student. This inevitably has a negative impact on the work of the universities and Iceland's competitive position for the future.

The higher revenue of Reykjavik University is used to reinforce the operations and especially teaching quality and professional strength of the University. Results for the year 2020, before subsidiaries, were better than predicted. This is primarily due to Covid, as certain projects could not be undertaken due to restrictions in society. Nevertheless, the University's activities were unusually high during the summer months, as the government temporarily increased funding to enable the University to offer summer studies and summer jobs for students. This was particularly well received and close to 150 people were hired by the University during the summer months for the various research and teaching-related projects. In addition, summer courses were held that nearly 700 people attended during the summer months.

The total revenue of Reykjavik University amounted to ISK 6,816 million in 2020 but ISK 6,409 million in 2019. The year's earnings were negative in the amount of ISK 166 million but were negative by ISK 195 million in the previous year. The book value of equity at year's end was ISK 7,117 million, but amounted to ISK 1,561 million in the previous year. The equity ratio at the end of 2020 was 80%.

Income statement for the year ended 31 December 2020

Numbers in thousands of Icelandic krona (ISK)

	2020	2019
Operating income		
Treasury contribution	3,814,050	3,571,700
Tuition and other income	2,261,193	2,146,511
Grants	740,296	691,082
	6,815,539	6,409,293
Operating expenses		
Salaries and related expenses	4,301,829	4,054,897
Housing expenses	1,209,614	1,166,335
Other operating expenses	938,198	1,046,284
Depreciation	158,652	161,945
	6,608,293	6,429,461
Operating result	207,246	(20,168)
Financial income (expenses)		
Net financial income	24,355	53,026
Result before share of loss of subsidiaries	231,601	32,858
Share of loss of subsidiaries	(397,247)	(227,607)
Result for the year	(165,646)	(194,749)

