

Strategy for Leading Excellence in Tropical AgriSciences

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Candidate for Dean

Vision: *To position the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences – the Only Faculty of its kind in Europe – as a global leader, driving innovation, sustainable practices, and impactful research in the field.*

Mission: *Empower faculty members, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and create meaningful partnerships to address the unique challenges and opportunities in tropical agrisciences while endorsing an inclusive and nurturing work environment and friendly atmosphere.*

1. Pursue Research Excellence with Purpose

- Strive to produce impactful, high-quality research that addresses critical challenges in tropical agrisciences and contributes to global sustainability. While producing impactful outcomes, we can appropriately address the current educational needs. Support the development of specialized centres focusing on key areas in tropical agrisciences. Utilizing and enhancing the current research teams. Investment in “staff infrastructure” and advocate for strategic investments in support staff, such as laboratory technicians.

2. Foster Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- Making connections between departments, research teams, in- and off-campus facilities and disciplines, promoting collaboration to drive innovation and holistic solutions to complex problems. Which can result in more impactful outputs and projects. Being a hub of Centres of Excellence for Global Research Collaborations for innovative and collaborative research in tropical agrisciences.

3. Empower and Support Faculty (Inside & Outside)

- Invest in faculty development through training, financial resources, and financial recognition, enabling to excel in research, teaching, and leadership. Presenting a strong and united faculty to the outside stakeholders and other faculties. Being able to work on changes of relevant financial methodologies to make them more fair towards our faculty and holding our ground in university discussions.

4. Build meaningful Partnerships & Internationalisation (Local & Global partnerships)

- Forge strong relationships with industry, NGOs, government bodies, and international institutions to expand resources, knowledge, and impact. Expand the faculty's global reach through international collaborations, student exchange programs, and participation in global conferences. Utilising our networks and creating new ones which can materialise in new financial opportunities (such as postdoctoral networks).

5. Attract Multi-streamline Finances

- Consolidating and then Diversifying funding sources (including government grants, private foundations, corporate sponsorships, and international funding agencies). Promoting Public-Private Partnerships and having more strategic partnerships with relevant agencies and bodies. Promoting sources such as TropAg by having partnerships with relevant organisations which are interested in educating their employees.

6. Support and mentor Early-Career Researchers & Academic Staff – attractive for newcomers

- Enable strategic mentorship, resources, and opportunities for all stages of researchers and academic staff to thrive and develop into leaders in tropical agrisciences, to have an environment which will be attractive for newcomers generating new revenues (ERA and ERC).

7. Enhance Quality Education and Students Support

- Conduct comprehensive reviews of all study programs to ensure alignment and prevent overlaps. Hold regular meetings with study program guarantors and organise an annual meeting for all teaching staff to gather feedback and identify opportunities for improvement.

Increase scholarships to reward academic excellence and support outstanding students. Maintain regular meetings with students to gather feedback and ensure their voices are heard. Develop a student lounge as a space for students to engage in discussions, relax, and participate in extracurricular activities. Provide additional support, including financial resources, for student initiatives and encourage more student-led events and activities.

8. Prioritise Faculty and Student Well-Being

- Encourage a supportive, inclusive, and healthy environment that values the mental health and well-being of faculty, staff, and students. Considering gender balance and structural support. Having open and transparent communication with both top-down and bottom-up approaches.

9. Commit to Sustainable Practices

- Lead by example by implementing sustainable practices within the faculty's operations and ensuring that research and educational activities prioritize environmental responsibility and contribute to the CZU strategy.

10. Have Unified Faculty

- By creating more informal faculty discussions, meetings and gatherings. By being open and transparent and by listening to all the members of our community. So, we all enjoy being here and producing impactful results in an encouraging and pleasant atmosphere. Having transparent and accountable leadership with dedicated time for discussions for all staff (with Dean, Vice-deans, and Heads of Departments).

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Action Plan: Leading Excellence in Tropical AgriSciences

Transparency in Leadership and Budgeting

1. **Having Clear Communication Channels** with updates from the management, summarizing key decisions, initiatives and achievements. Having regular open meetings where faculty, staff and students can be heard and discuss. Having transparent meeting minutes. Having dedicated time for discussion with the Dean, Vice-deans, and Heads of departments.
2. **Having Transparent Decision-Making Processes** with decisions being made with the involvement of various faculty levels.
3. **Implement a Transparent Budgeting Process** by discussing in advance the faculty's budget, including revenue sources, expenses, and fund allocation for research, infrastructure, teaching, and other activities. Having a Budget Committee established and involved.
4. **Having a Culture of Openness and Trust** by discussing issues openly and clearly while introducing more predictability and stability.

Education, Quality and Students

1. **Development of a Student Lounge** to have an area for students to conduct collaborative work, discuss, relax and engage in further extra-curricular activities. Provide more support, including financial support for student activities. Promote more student-led events by encouraging students (student organizations) to host workshops, debates, and seminars (in the lounge or elsewhere), creating a dynamic environment and study groups that nurture learning beyond the classroom.
2. **Regular Meetings with Students** to maintain and receive relevant feedback and make them heard. Organise "Coffee with your Dean" to allow informal space for discussion and questions from students. Hold regular meetings

with student representatives to keep abreast of student concerns and emerging issues.

3. **Focus on Increasing Accessibility** from Bachelor to Master level by engaging students more and clearly explaining to them the benefits of continuing into Master or Doctoral studies with our faculty. Making annual master's program open days targeted at final-year bachelor's students.
4. **Increase Scholarships** for excellent students. As while expecting excellence, we should reward it.
5. **Review all Study Programs** to ensure they are all aligned and we do not have overlaps.
6. **Have Regular Meetings** on the level of Study Program Guarantors. But also organise at least once a year a meeting among all teaching staff involved (to receive feedback, make sure there is no repletion among subjects and look for ways to improve). Such a yearly meeting involving all faculty members who teach within the programs to review teaching methodologies, avoid content overlaps, and seek opportunities for innovation and collaboration.
7. **Ensuring the Availability of Study Materials** by making sure that all materials are available to the students via Moodle in a timely manner.
8. **Study Café** by having a volunteering tutoring program for study groups.
9. **Collect Anonymous Feedback Surveys** bi-annually with the exclusive purpose to obtain feedback on improvement of student life and their needs. The outcomes of these surveys will be compiled and dully addressed during the meeting with the Dean and student program guarantors.
10. **Encourage and Enable Research Topics Continuity** by endorsing students to pursue a research topic with continuity that will have a lasting life span through their research life cycle and will enable their specialization and expertise and support the progression of each subsequent academic stage. Provide a list of relevant yet continuous research topics for students in every study program. Implement an in class exercise where students can map out their studies and future research trajectories in order to select a research topic of interest both to the student and faculty.

Science and Research

1. **Ensure Stable Production of High-Quality Scientific Articles** by a structured system of support and incentives for faculty members to encourage consistent publication of high-quality research articles. Promote interdisciplinary research projects to expand publication opportunities. Organize regular workshops focused on academic writing, publishing strategies, and navigating high-impact journals
2. **Promote and Support Applied Research Outcomes** by encouraging researchers to focus on applied research that leads to tangible results, such as patents, technologies, or practical solutions. Provide resources and guidance for patent application processes and promote the commercial potential of innovative research. Host faculty-wide events and conferences to highlight successful applied research, patents, and their impact on industry and society.
3. **Create a Supportive Research Environment** by facilitating access to internal and external funding opportunities to support ongoing research activities. Implement mentorship programs to guide young researchers in publishing and pursuing applied research projects.
4. **Expand Visibility** by using the faculty's website, social media, and academic networks to showcase impactful publications and applied outcomes

Attracting Funds

1. **Diversify Funding Sources** to explore a diverse range of funding sources, including government grants, private foundations, corporate sponsorships, and international funding agencies. This reduces dependence on a single source and enhances the financial stability of the faculty.
2. **Grant-Writing Workshops and Support** to offer regular workshops and training sessions on effective grant writing. Provide dedicated support staff or resources to assist faculty members in preparing compelling grant proposals, increasing the success rate in securing funds. With the project centre being able to manage the whole administrative aspect of the proposals.

3. **Establish Industry Partnerships** by cultivating strong partnerships with agricultural industries, agribusinesses, and related sectors. Collaborate on joint projects, research initiatives, and technology transfer programs. Industry partnerships can lead to financial support as well as in-kind contributions, including more actively using the “tax deductions” for industry partners.
4. **Research Commercialization** in order to facilitate the commercialization of research outcomes and innovations. Establish mechanisms to identify patentable inventions and technologies developed by faculty members and explore partnerships with industry for licensing or joint ventures, generating revenue for the faculty.
5. **Collaborative Consortia and Networks** by participating in collaborative consortia and networks that offer funding opportunities. By joining forces with other institutions and organizations, the faculty can access larger grant programs and research initiatives. Introducing more faculty members into the consortia and networks we have.
6. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** by exploring the potential for public-private partnerships where the faculty collaborates with private companies or government agencies on research projects. PPPs can bring in significant funding while addressing real-world challenges.
7. **Philanthropic Engagement** by cultivating relationships with philanthropic individuals and foundations passionate about agricultural research and sustainable practices. Develop personalized proposals highlighting the impact of faculty research and seeking financial support for specific initiatives.
8. **Strategic Partnerships with Funding Agencies** by developing more strategic partnerships with governmental and non-governmental funding agencies. Regularly engage with these agencies, attend networking events, and align faculty research priorities with the strategic goals of funding organizations.

Developing a Strong Project Centre

1. **Establishing a Clear Mission Statement and Goals of the Project Centre** to have a mission statement that outlines the purpose of the project centre, focusing on its role in supporting research, fostering collaboration, and enhancing funding opportunities. Going forward with the strategy of a “robust project centre”, which will provide more proactive support in project writing of administrative parts of the project and cover the project management administration and financial management. And having a proactive Project centre, which will be reaching out directly to the research teams with respective relevant project calls and guiding them through the application process.
2. **Build a Skilled and Dedicated Team** by having experienced staff with expertise in project management, grant writing, and funding acquisition to form a capable team within the project centre. **Provide Training and Development** to offer ongoing training and professional development opportunities for staff to stay updated on best practices in project management and funding acquisition. Linking them also with the relevant structures (especially in the EU) and then making sure that the Project centre is creating trainings and development for our staff.
3. **Establish Robust Administrative Processes** by creating **Standard Operating Procedures** by having clear guidelines and processes for project initiation, administration, monitoring, and reporting to ensure consistency and efficiency. **Implement Project Management Tools** as these can utilize project management software to track project timelines, budgets, and deliverables, enhancing coordination and communication among team members. And having it applied more commonly across the faculty.
4. **Foster Interdisciplinary Collaboration** by actively involving faculty members from various departments in project planning and execution, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. **Facilitate Cross-Departmental Meetings** by organising regular meetings and brainstorming sessions to discuss potential projects and funding opportunities, encouraging knowledge sharing and collaboration, such as “Academic Rooftop Café” and so on.
5. **Develop a Strong Funding Strategy to Identify Funding Sources** by having compiled a comprehensive list of potential funding sources, including

government grants, private foundations, and international funding organizations relevant to tropical agrisciences. Also, developing a clear timeline of upcoming calls of at least 12 months (more likely 24 months). **Create a Grant Writing Resource “Library”** by developing a virtual library of resources, including templates, guidelines, and successful grant proposals, to support faculty in preparing competitive applications.

6. **Implement a Project Proposal Development System** by establishing proposal review processes by creating a structured review system for project proposals, involving faculty peers and project centre staff to provide constructive feedback and ensure high-quality submissions. **Provide Grant Writing Workshops** by offering workshops and training sessions on effective grant writing, focusing on key components such as budget development, project design, and articulation of impact.
7. **Enhance Communication and Outreach** by showcasing **Success Stories** by highlighting successful projects and funding outcomes through newsletters, social media, and faculty meetings to inspire engagement and collaboration.
8. **Establish Partnerships and Networks by Building Relationships with Funding Agencies** and cultivating relationships with representatives from funding agencies and organizations to gain insights into their priorities and funding criteria. **Collaborate with External Organizations** and seek partnerships with NGOs, industry stakeholders, and other research institutions to leverage resources, expertise, and additional funding opportunities. Building more solid “institutional knowledge.”
9. **Monitor and Evaluate Project Performance** by **Implementing Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks** to have clear metrics for assessing project outcomes, including impact assessments and progress reports, to evaluate the effectiveness of funded projects. And ensuring that all the projects are being used in line with the donor's requirements. **Conduct Regular Feedback Sessions** to organize debriefing post-project completion to gather feedback from participants and stakeholders, using insights to improve future project development and management.
10. **Foster a Culture of Innovation and Support** by **Encouraging Idea Generation** and creating platforms for faculty and researchers to propose innovative project ideas and collaborate on research initiatives, fostering a culture of creativity and problem-solving. **Provide Administrative Support** by offering dedicated administrative assistance for project proposal

development, budget preparation, and compliance with funding requirements, ensuring that academic staff can focus on their research. As well as offering project administration.

11. **Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation by Establishing a system** for continuous monitoring and evaluation of ongoing projects. Demonstrate the impact and outcomes of funded projects, showcasing accountability to donors and increasing the faculty's credibility for future funding opportunities.

Career Development

1. Have Clear Career Tracks

Have well defined career tracks that align with the institution's mission and key research areas (while following the new Career Plan of CZU):

- **Academic Track** for academics focused on both scientific work and teaching.
- **Lecturer Track** for those who want to focus more specifically on teaching.
- **Research Track** for researchers focused on advancing scientific work, with progression levels from junior researcher to senior researcher, principal investigator, and research director.
- **Technical Track** for specialized technical staff (e.g., lab technicians, data analysts), with growth opportunities based on skill development and innovation contributions.
- **Administrative and Support Track** for roles supporting scientific work (e.g., project management, administration), with pathways to higher levels based on leadership, efficiency, and support impact.
- **Opening new positions of Associate professors and Professors** for those successfully habilitated.

2. Have Structured Promotion Criteria

To ensure transparency, establish criteria for promotion at each level within a track:

- **Research/Academic Track Criteria** by publication records, research impact (citations, patents, industry impact), grants acquired, and contributions to institutional goals.
- **Lecturer Track Criteria** by Teaching records and contributions to institutional goals.
- **Technical Track Criteria** by Advanced certifications, process improvements, and innovative technical solutions that advance institutional objectives.
- **Administrative Track Criteria** by Efficiency improvements, successful project completions, leadership in institutional operations, and demonstrated support for scientific programs.

3. Implement a Mentorship Program

Create a mentorship system that supports professional development and builds a collaborative culture:

- **Junior-to-Senior Pairing** to enable researchers or technical staff being paired with experienced scientists or senior staff to gain insight into research, career planning, and institution-specific best practices.
- **Cross-Disciplinary Mentorship** by encouraging cross-discipline mentoring, helping researchers and support staff expand their knowledge and network within the institution.

4. Encourage Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Foster career growth through interdisciplinary work, allowing researchers to gain broad experience and apply innovative solutions:

- **Cross-Project Roles** by allowing interested researchers and staff across projects to build diverse skills and encourage a holistic understanding of institutional goals.

5. Establish Performance and Development Reviews

Implement regular performance evaluations with a focus on career development:

- **Annual and 5 Year Reviews** to assess individual progress toward career goals, including accomplishments, challenges, and future opportunities.
- **Development Plans** by tailored development plans based on each person's track, addressing skill gaps, career aspirations, and institutional needs.

- **Feedback Mechanisms** by providing a structured feedback system, helping staff understand their strengths and areas for improvement and fostering a culture of continuous learning. With the feedback system going both ways – towards the superiors as well.

6. Support Pathways for Advanced Roles

To retain talent and motivate growth, create opportunities for advanced roles:

- **Joint Appointments and Adjunct Roles** by exploring joint appointments or adjunct positions with other institutions, allowing experienced staff to gain broader exposure and create bridges between institutions.
- **Research Leadership Opportunities** for senior researchers, develop positions focused on directing research initiatives, mentoring junior staff, leading interdisciplinary projects and providing them with a supporting environment where they will want to bring their projects.

12. Align Career Progression with Institutional Goals

Finally, ensure that career advancement contributes to the institution's vision:

- **Mission-Driven Metrics** to tie career development to contributions toward the institution's mission, such as successful project completions, high-impact publications, or innovative research.
- **Institutional Awards and Recognition** by recognizing individuals or teams that make significant contributions, fostering a sense of accomplishment and connection to the institution's success.
- **Human Resources Section** for staff and students (working also as a conflict resolution committee). A non-biased evaluation committee headed by the dean and other members for progression evaluation and metrics evaluation.

Enhancing Visibility

1. **Strategic Branding** by strengthening our distinctive and cohesive brand identity for the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences. Ensure consistent use of logos, colours, and messaging across all communication channels to create a recognizable and memorable brand.

2. **Optimize Website and Online Presence** by revamping the faculty's website to be more visually appealing, user-friendly, and informative. Regularly update content, including faculty achievements, research highlights, and student success stories. Utilize search engine optimization (SEO) techniques to enhance online visibility. Incorporating more faculty faces and highlighting their achievements.
3. **Active Social Media Engagement** by using more social media platforms to engage with the community actively. Share research findings, faculty accomplishments, and upcoming events. Bringing forward and more popularising of our research outputs. Encourage faculty members and students to contribute to social media content, creating a more dynamic online presence.
4. **Showcase Research and Publications** to highlight faculty research through press releases, blog posts, and articles in both academic and mainstream media. Actively promote faculty publications, ensuring that research achievements are visible to a wider audience. While also using local TV screens to promote our activities.
5. **Participation in Conferences and Exhibitions** by encourage faculty members to participate in national and international conferences, exhibitions, and trade shows. Present research findings, organize workshops, and actively network with peers to enhance the faculty's reputation on a global scale. Including preparation of more faculty materials, which could be shared at such events.
6. **Collaborate with Industry Events** to forge partnerships with industry events and trade associations related to tropical agrisciences. Sponsorship and participation in relevant conferences and exhibitions can significantly enhance the faculty's visibility among professionals and potential collaborators.
7. **Public Lectures and Webinars** to organize more public lectures and webinars featuring faculty experts. Address current issues in tropical agrisciences, showcasing the faculty's thought leadership and expertise. Open these events to the public to attract a diverse audience. Starting "Tropical Talks" series.
8. **Collaborate with Media Outlets** to establish more relationships with local and national media outlets. Pitch faculty research and expertise to journalists

and contribute articles to popular science publications. Regularly feature faculty members in interviews on radio and television programs.

9. **Highlight Student Achievements** by showcasing the achievements of students through newsletters, social media, and press releases. Celebrate academic accomplishments, research projects, and extracurricular activities to demonstrate the vibrant and successful student community.
10. **Community Engagement Programs** by actively participating in community engagement programs. Collaborate with local organizations, schools, and community groups. Share knowledge through workshops, seminars, and outreach initiatives, reinforcing the faculty's commitment to community development. Including **high school** reach out programs to attract more Czech students.
11. **Regular Newsletters and Publications** by publishing regular newsletters highlighting faculty achievements, upcoming events, and important announcements. Distribute newsletters to current students, employees, alumni, industry partners, and stakeholders to keep them informed about the latest developments at the faculty.

Promoting the Online Master's Program in Tropical Agroecology

1. **Define Target Audience** by **Identifying Key Demographics** to really target potential students such as recent graduates, working professionals, and individuals interested in sustainable agriculture, environmental science, and related fields. **Create Student Personas** by developing detailed personas representing different segments of the target audience, including their motivations, challenges, and preferred communication channels.
2. **Develop Compelling Program Messaging** by **Highlighting Unique Selling Points** and emphasizing the program's strengths, such as its focus on sustainability, the expertise of faculty members, practical applications of knowledge, and the flexibility of online learning. **Showcase Career Opportunities** by providing information on career paths and job prospects for graduates in tropical agroecology, highlighting successful alumni and their achievements.

3. **Leverage Digital Marketing Channels** as we already have an Engaging Website for TropAg. Still, we need to **Utilize Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** to optimize the program webpage for relevant keywords related to tropical agroecology and online education to improve visibility in search engine results. **Implement Social Media Marketing** by using platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram to share content related to the program, including student experiences, faculty insights, and relevant industry trends.
4. **Engage in Content Marketing** by **Developing Informative Content** by creating blog posts, articles, and videos on topics related to tropical agroecology, sustainable practices, and the importance of the field. This content can position the program as a thought leader. It is also a way for the program to be found more easily online. **Host Webinars and Workshops** - online webinars or workshops led by faculty members or industry experts, offering valuable insights and showcasing the program's academic rigor and relevance.
5. **Leverage Alumni Networks** by **encouraging alumni Referrals** and creating a referral program where alumni can share the program with their networks, offering incentives for successful referrals.
6. **Partner with Relevant Organizations** by **Collaborating with Industry Associations** and partnering with agricultural, environmental, and sustainability organizations to promote the program through their networks and channels. Offering directly to organisations, which can have it as benefit for their employees (especially interesting for international NGOs and international companies). Offering also specific incentives for such organisations.
7. **Implement Targeted Advertising** by **Use Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising** by investing in PPC campaigns on platforms like Google Ads and social media to target potential students actively searching for related programs. Utilize Retargeting Ads by implementing retargeting strategies to reach individuals who have visited the program webpage but did not apply, reminding them of the opportunity.
8. **Enhance Program Accessibility and Support** by **Offer Financial Aid and Scholarships** by promoting financial assistance options, scholarships, and payment plans to make the program more accessible to a wider audience. Provide Clear Application Guidance by developing a more user-friendly application process with clear instructions and support for prospective

students, including virtual Q&A sessions or one-on-one consultations. Introducing “how to apply” video tutorials.

9. **Measure and Adapt Marketing Efforts by Tracking Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** through monitoring metrics such as website traffic, conversion rates, and engagement levels to assess the effectiveness of marketing strategies.
10. **Foster Community and Engagement by Creating an Online Community** by establishing a dedicated online platform (e.g., a LinkedIn) where current and prospective students can connect, share experiences, and engage with faculty.

Alumni club

1. **Establish a Strong Alumni Club Structure** by **Appointing an Alumni Relations Coordinator** as a designated faculty member to Alumni Relations to manage alumni engagement, communication, and events. **Form an Alumni Advisory Board** by creating a board of influential alumni who will serve as ambassadors, advocates, and advisers to the faculty. They can help with fundraising efforts and act as mentors to students. Segment the Alumni Network in order to group alumni based on their location, industry, or expertise to create targeted engagement strategies and tailored activities.
2. **Develop Meaningful Engagement Programs** by having **Networking Events** and **Reunions** by hosting annual alumni gathering, both on-campus and virtual, to strengthen connections and provide networking opportunities. In the future, organising such events abroad in partnership with our Embassies (already discussed with 5 Embassies). **Alumni Mentorship Program** by establishing a program where alumni mentor current students, fostering a culture of giving back. This engagement can increase alumni loyalty and make them more likely to contribute financially. **Career Development Support** by inviting alumni to participate in career development workshops, guest lectures, or as panellists in faculty events. Alumni who feel valued and connected are more likely to support the faculty.
3. **Create a Fundraising Program with Specific Goals** by **Setting Clear Fundraising Goals**, for example a specific goal for alumni contributions (e.g., "Raise EUR10,000 to support some specific activity"). Make it clear where the

money will go and what impact it will have. Creating a “Adopt Your Plant” to support Botanical Garden, or “Support Common Eland” in Lány and so on. **Launch an Annual Giving Campaign** by organising an annual giving campaign that targets alumni donations. Use themes such as “Giving Back to Give Forward,” with the focus on supporting current students and faculty research. **Major Gifts Program** by partnering with high-net-worth alumni who can contribute larger gifts, and develop personalized proposals that align their interests with faculty needs (e.g., named scholarships). **Crowdfunding for Special Projects** by actively setting up crowdfunding campaigns for specific projects (e.g., supporting the Tropical Botanical Garden, supporting activities in Lány, supporting student research projects and so on). Encourage alumni to share the campaign within their networks.

4. **Strengthen Alumni Communication Channels** by **Regular Alumni Newsletters** by sending quarterly newsletter, which will be highlighting faculty achievements, alumni success stories, upcoming events, and ways to give back. And making sure, that we have an **extensive mailing list**. **Dedicated Alumni Portal** with a dedicated section on the faculty website for alumni, including resources, event calendars, donation links, and an alumni directory. Alternatively, working with the CZU alumni site to incorporate our needs. **Social Media Engagement** by using LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram to build a strong online community. Share updates on faculty research, alumni achievements, and donation opportunities to keep alumni engaged and informed. And not mixing all social media into one.
5. **Implement Recognition and Appreciation Programs** by **Donor Recognition Wall or Plaques** to acknowledge major donors by adding their names to a donor wall or plaques in visible areas at the faculty. Alumni Awards Program by creating an annual awards program to recognize alumni for their contributions to the field, their community, and the faculty. This can inspire others to give back.
6. **Engage Alumni in Faculty Initiatives** such as **Alumni Ambassadors Program** to offer to alumni to serve as ambassadors, promoting the faculty at conferences, recruiting events, and within their networks. **Alumni Involvement in Research and Projects** by inviting alumni to collaborate on research projects, serve as advisors on special initiatives, or participate in joint research with faculty members. Alumni engagement in research fosters a sense of pride and connection to the faculty. Leverage Alumni for Industry Partnerships, as we have many alumni working in industry, so to establish

corporate partnerships, internship programs, and sponsorships, which can also generate revenue for the faculty.

7. **Develop Giving Options and Flexible Donation Methods** by **Recurring Monthly Donation Subscription** by making it easy for alumni to set up small, recurring donations. Even small contributions add up over time and create a reliable revenue stream. **Legacy Giving and Bequests** to offer alumni the option to leave a legacy gift, such as including the faculty in their wills or creating endowed funds. **Employer Matching Programs** by encouraging alumni to inquire about employer matching gift programs, doubling the impact of their donations, which can be for the employers also tax deductible. **In-Kind Contributions** to proactively allow alumni to support the faculty through in-kind donations, such as equipment, software, or other resources that can be used in research and teaching.
8. **Measure Impact and Share Success Stories** by **Reporting on Fund Usage and Impact** to transparently share with alumni how their donations are used and the tangible impact they've made, whether it's through an annual report, newsletter, or special "Thank You" video. **Highlight Success Stories** in order to showcase projects, scholarships, or facilities that have been funded by alumni donations. Sharing success stories reinforces the importance of alumni support and motivates future contributions. **Feedback Loop** by making sure we regularly gather feedback from alumni on engagement activities and donation processes to improve the alumni experience and strengthen the relationship with the faculty.

Motivation

I have been a part of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ; former Institute of Tropics and Subtropics) for almost 15 years, during which I have held various roles within the academic environment – from a student to the head of a research team and Vice-Dean for Science, Research and Doctoral Studies. I have had the opportunity to develop not only my academic and scientific skills but also to collaborate with colleagues from diverse fields, bringing an international perspective and implementing global projects that enriched our faculty.

From the beginning of my career at FTZ, I perceived the faculty as a place that fosters innovation, open dialogue, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Together, we have created an environment that promotes scientific growth while providing space for both students and academics to thrive. Over the years, I have built strong relationships not only with my colleagues but also with talented students who represent the future of our field.

My dedication to education is at the forefront of my passion for FTZ, having successfully mentored over 25 students at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels at our faculty, all of whom have successfully defended their theses. I have also mentored/co-supervised an extensive list of doctoral students and mentored early-career researchers at various international institutions. This is something I would like to build upon.

My decision to run for the position of Dean comes from my desire to further elevate FTZ to the status of a global leader in tropical agrisciences, aligning with my strategic plan "**Leading Excellence in Tropical AgriSciences.**" Especially now, as we are in the critical times of transformation (of our faculty, current research and educational area of the Czech Republic, financial changes, and implementations of new laws).

Throughout the years, I have gained expertise in project management, establishing international partnerships, promoting applied research, and promoting the faculty at various national and international platforms. I aim to leverage these experiences to strengthen the scientific excellence of the faculty, support innovation in teaching, and build meaningful partnerships.

With my experience in the academic and research environment, I believe I have the necessary qualifications to effectively lead the faculty and realize an ambitious vision that will propel FTZ to achieve outstanding results and prestige on an international scale.

I am confident that, together, we can create an even better professional environment that inspires students and researchers to achieve exceptional success and contribute to sustainable development in tropical agrisciences while having a friendly atmosphere where we can all thrive.

With best regards,

Hynek Roubík