

From Response to Rethinking: the Challenge of COVID-19 to Universities and Industries in Finland

Presentation at the Global Commercialization Conference 2020 hosted by KAIST

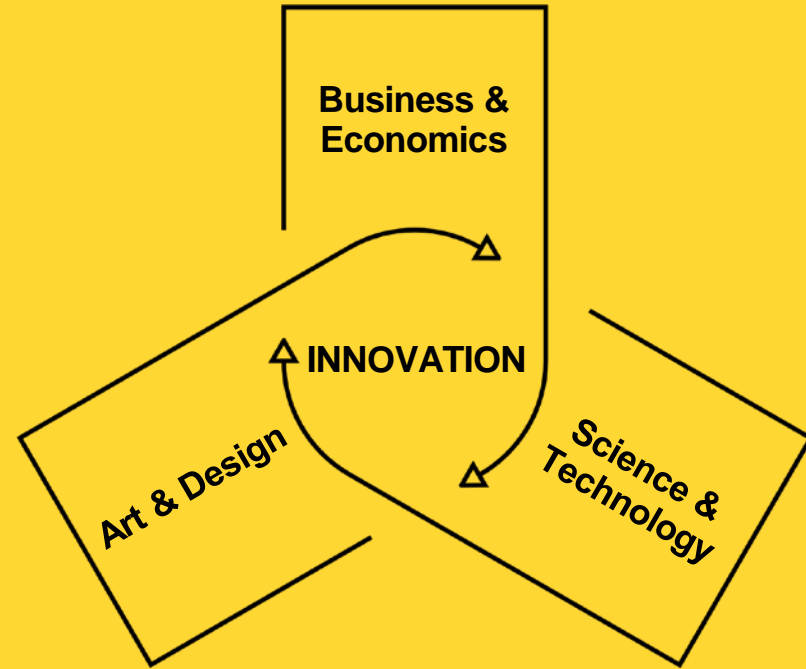
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Aalto-yliopisto
Aalto-universitetet
Aalto University

Aalto University: all for innovation

- By merging three leading universities in 2010, Aalto was founded to work as a societally embedded, innovative research university for a better world
- Aalto has a national mission to strengthen Finland's innovative capacity through first-class research and education



Integrating science, design, industry and education

The unique collaboration between arts and design and chemical engineering in order to produce new concepts for the forest industry begun with the CHEMARTS project for students. Applications vary from smart clothing to new cellulose fabrics.



The first 10 years

- We have successfully brought together science, art, technology, and business to become a forerunner in our key areas
- Our campus has rapidly grown into a world-class collaboration hub
- We have transformed into one of Europe's most international universities



Our three cross-cutting approaches

Focus of development: We help solve grand challenges in and across our key areas. We build an outstanding creative community for new thinking. We foster an inspiring entrepreneurial culture.



Solutions for sustainability

Actions: **Connecting our strengths to create solutions for grand challenges, pioneering sustainable solutions in our operations**



Radical creativity

Actions: **Empowering an experimental culture by building the spaces and practices that encourage us to break boundaries and create novel perspectives**



Entrepreneurial mindset

Actions: **Advancing entrepreneurial capabilities throughout our community, supporting student-driven activities and initiatives**

Promoting entrepreneurship

70 to 100

companies
are founded every year
in our ecosystem

50%

of Finnish start-ups
that originate from
universities come from
the Aalto community

Entrepreneurship is
a more popular career
option than ever – in
the last six years, over

3 000

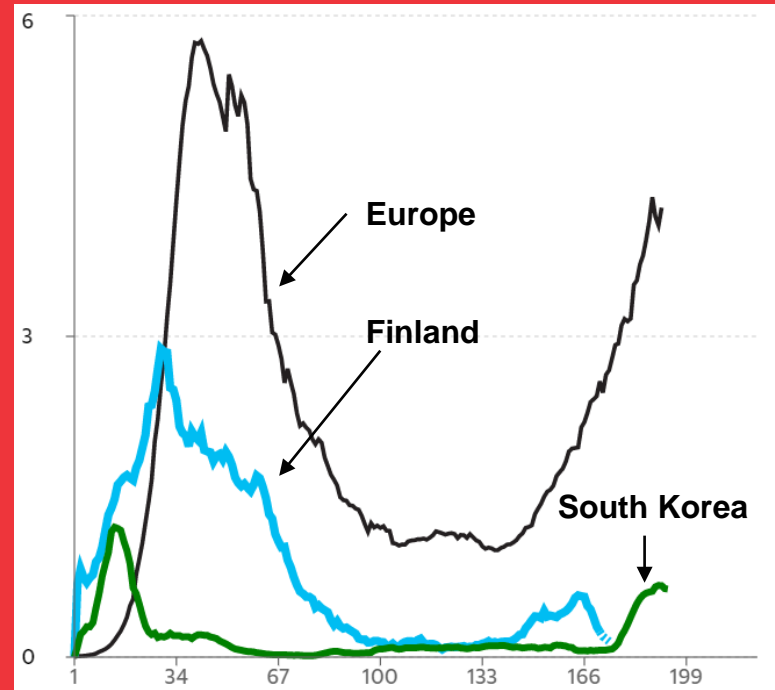
students have studied
through the Aalto
Ventures Program



COVID-19 in Finland

- Confirmed cases: **8,042**
- Cases per 100,000 in population (5.5 M): **145**
- Confirmed deaths: **335**
- Estimated amount of recoveries: **7,200**

As of August 31, 2020. Source: Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare.



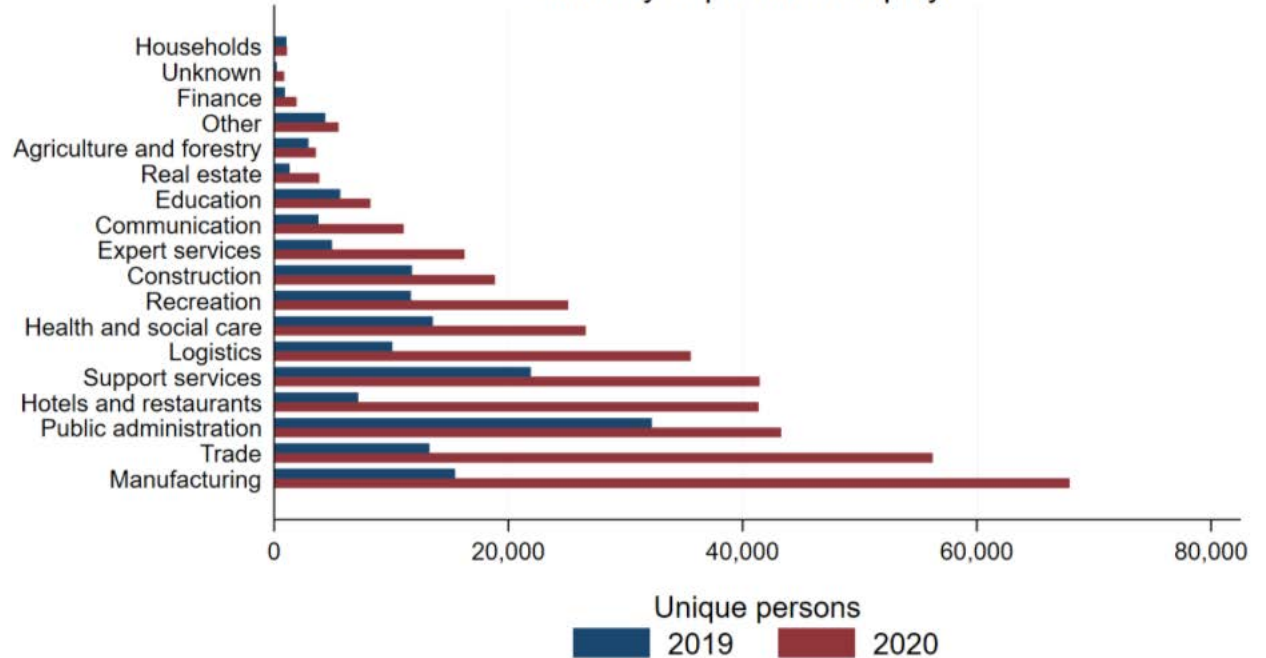
Number of cases per 100,000 per day since first day of 100 confirmed cases. Source: Helsingin Sanomat, August 31, 2020.

Economical implications

GDP contracted

- by **4.5 %** in Q2 compared to Q1 in 2020
- by **6.4 %** in Q2 compared to Q2 in 2019

Newly unemployed and furloughed between 15.3.-17.8.
Industry of previous employer



GSE Tilannehuone: 2020-08-18

Source: Helsinki Graduate School of Economics

Responses to COVID-19

Governmental

- State of emergency (now over)
- Lockdowns (now over)
- Travel restrictions
- Remote work recommendation
- Aid packages for companies
- Mobile application (launched August 31)

Companies

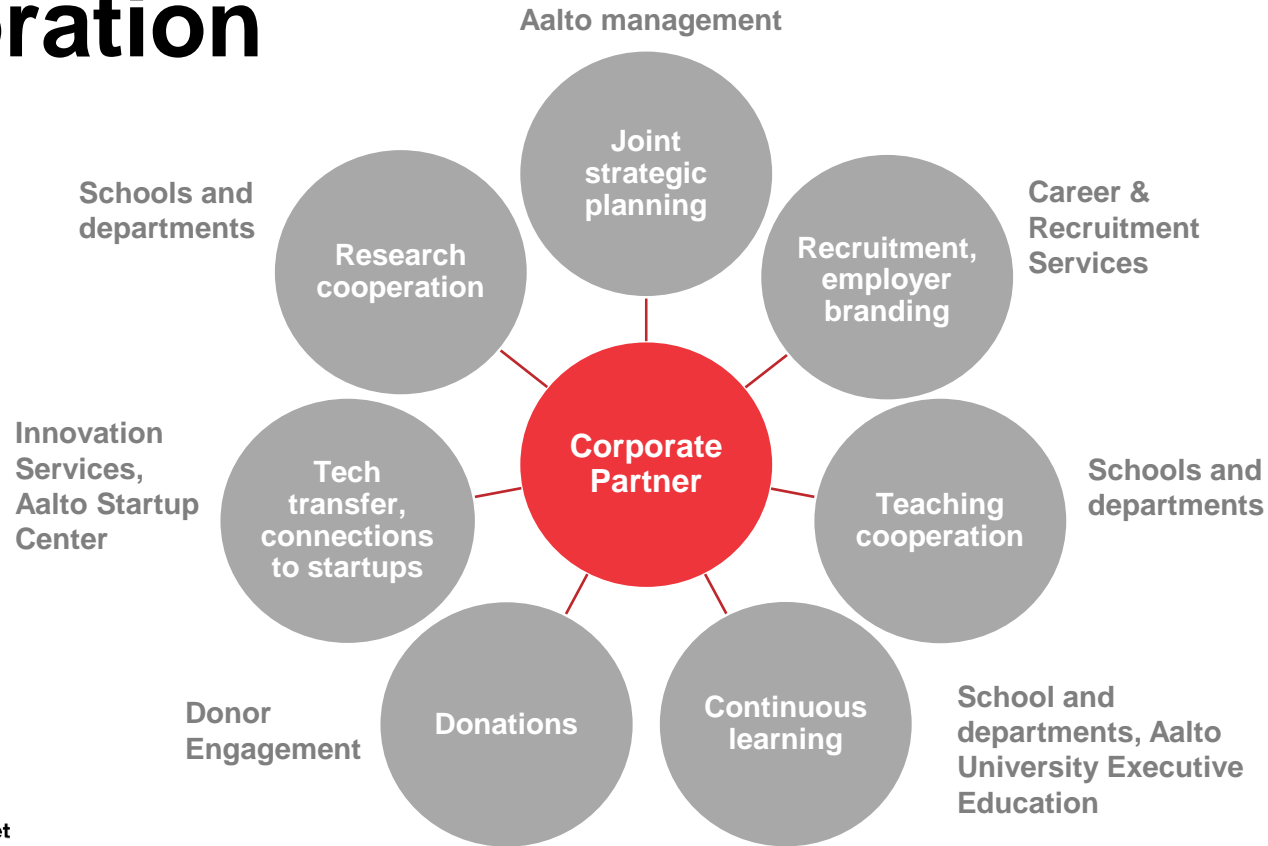
- Industries not shut down
- Remote work when possible
- Recruitments stalled
- Temporary layoffs
- Startups challenged by lack of access to sponsors
- Possibilities for new innovations and business models

Universities

- Remote study and work
- Rapid focus on pandemic-related research
- Fundraising retargeted to support pandemic-related research
- Annual entrance exams became a challenge
- Rethinking alongside companies and startups

Implications for university – industry collaboration

The various ways of cooperation are ongoing, but in danger of slowing down.



Looking for solutions

Invention by a Finnish start-up speeds up coronavirus testing

Xfold Imaging Oy, founded by researchers from Aalto University and the University of Helsinki, has developed a nanocoated glass slide that makes microscopes dozens of times more accurate. It enables the identifying of coronavirus from a sample up to one day earlier compared to current technology.

29-May-2020 6:25 AM EDT, by [Aalto University](#)

www.newswise.com



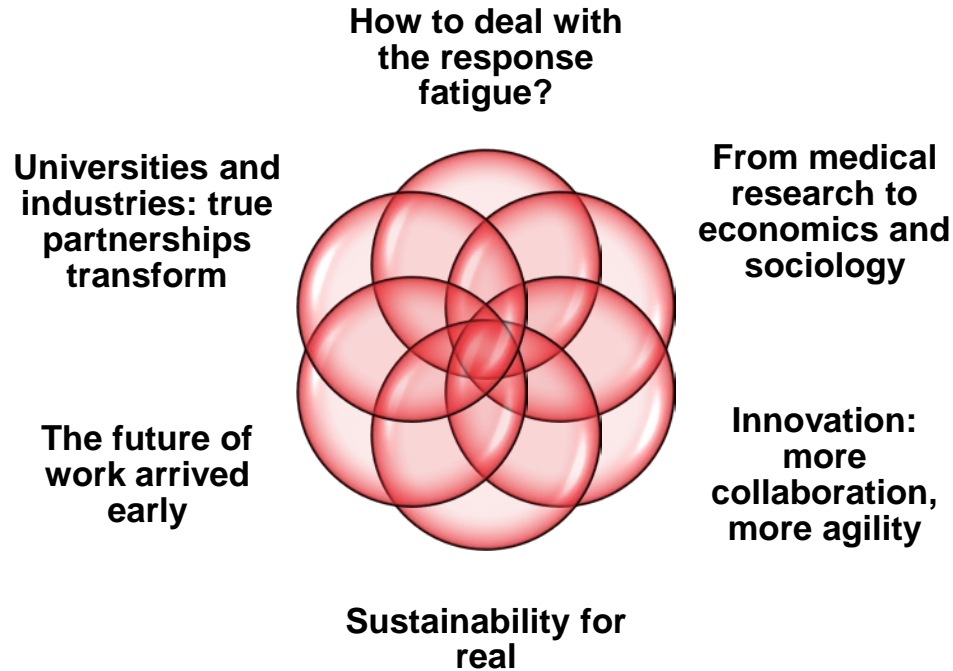
Researchers modelling the spread of the coronavirus emphasise the importance of avoiding busy indoor spaces

A joint project carried out by four Finnish research

6.4.2020 | News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZSKoNGTR6Q&feature=youtu.be>

Rethinking uncertainty...



... into radical creativity?

A photograph of a blue microchip on a wooden surface with a pencil and a ruler.

Shaping a Sustainable Future.