

# Strategic Framework Contract 2022-2025

The University of Southern Denmark (SDU) has entered into a new strategic framework contract with the Minister for Higher Education and Science.

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Odense, 4 April 2022

Copenhagen, 19 May 2022

Chairman of the Board  
Niels Thorborg

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Minister for Higher Education and  
Science Jesper Petersen

A blue ink signature of Jesper Petersen, featuring a prominent, stylized 'J' and 'P' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.



# Strategic Framework Contract 2022-2025

The Strategic Framework Contract sets out strategic objectives for SDU's core tasks.

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## **Status and duration**

The Strategic Framework Contract is valid from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025.

Both the institution and the Minister can initiate renegotiation of the strategic objectives if, for example, the economic conditions of the institution have significantly changed from those presupposed or if new challenges mean that it would be appropriate to change the strategic objectives of the contract. Changes to the contract require agreement between the Board and the Minister.

## **Reporting and follow-up on achievement of objectives**

The institution delivers an annual status account of work relating to the objectives of the framework contract. The status account should contain an overall assessment of the perspectives for achievement of objectives with evidence of the development of the set indicators. Furthermore, the status account should also include a description of implemented supporting initiatives for achieving objectives, which will make visible the institution's basis for achieving the objectives.

Indicators with accompanying specific data sources are specified for each strategic objective. If during the contract period new relevant data sources that can demonstrate the development of a concrete indicator are identified, these may replace or supplement data sources in the contract. The use of new data sources in the framework contract requires consensus.

When the contract ends, the institution assesses the final achievement for each of the strategic objectives. This is based on an account of developments in each of the specified indicators set out in the Strategic Framework Contract, including a description of the supporting initiatives during the contract period.

Based on the institution's account, the Ministry carries out an assessment of the framework contract's overall achievement of objectives.

### **Strategic objectives in the Framework Contract**

The University of Southern Denmark (SDU) is a classic multi-faculty university of scientific international class with a strong regional anchorage and with a strategic focus on delivering knowledge, competencies and solutions for the benefit of society.

SDU's fundamental task is to conduct research and provide research-based education at the highest international level within its subject areas. The university has a considerable scientific range, which is brought together in five faculties of humanistic sciences, social sciences, natural Sciences, health sciences and technical sciences. At SDU, there are very strong core disciplines of international class, which will always be the basis and starting point for SDU to maintain a strong research position in the interdisciplinary field. SDU has a strong tradition for interdisciplinary thinking. The University considers this to be an essential prerequisite for delivering research results that contribute to solving societal challenges.

As a classic Western university, SDU is characterised by the academic freedoms: freedom of research, freedom of teaching and freedom of debate. The University upholds these academic values and is also focused on creating a tolerant and inclusive university for staff and students alike.

SDU was established in 1998 through a merger between Odense University (established in 1966), Southern Denmark Business School (Kolding), Southern Denmark School of Engineering (Sønderborg) and South Jutland University Centre (Esbjerg). The University has since been expanded through further mergers, including in 2006 with the School of Engineering Odense Technical College (Odense) and in 2007 with the Business School Centre Slagelse (Slagelse) as well as the National Institute of Public Health (Copenhagen). Ever since 1998, SDU has thus conducted regionally anchored education and research activities at several locations: Sønderborg, Esbjerg, Kolding, Odense, Slagelse and Copenhagen. In addition, SDU has a great deal of experience in working with local and regional actors in the form of municipalities, regions, hospitals, educational institutions, businesses, foundations, NGOs and more.

Creating value with and for the community has been a strategic ambition for SDU for a number of years. With its second positive institutional accreditation from 2021, SDU emphasises a strong focus on meeting society's needs for skilled graduates through its well-functioning and well-anchored educational quality system. This also involves a focus on students experiencing student-centred learning and a good study environment that contributes to an increased intensity of study, as well as graduates quickly finding employment after graduation. In the coming years, the ambition is to further maintain and strengthen these efforts, and SDU will use its regional presence to support society's need for placing education programmes outside the four largest cities in Denmark. Working closely with local actors, SDU will help create attractive local and regional study environments so that it is possible to attract students and retain graduates locally.

In recognition that the major global societal challenges require new knowledge and competencies, in 2019 SDU decided to place a strategic focus on emphasising the University's duty to ensure a sustainable development of society. Against the

background of free, critical and independent research and education, the UN's 17 World Sustainable Development Goals function as a strategic frame of reference within which SDU carries out prioritisations. A position of strength for SDU is precisely that the University's researchers and students are best able to collaborate across scientific disciplines. The major societal challenges for sustainable development require particular insights, knowledge and solutions that are created across scientific fields. During the upcoming contract period, SDU will have particular focus on contributing to society's green transition, digitalisation, learning throughout life and strong innovation collaboration with business.

As an international class regional university, internationalisation is a major focus area for SDU. Internationalisation is manifested, among other things, by the fact that a large proportion of SDU staff and students have international backgrounds and views. At the same time, SDU collaborates extensively on development agreements and research production with other universities in the world. In 2021, SDU joined the European University Alliance EPICUR, which besides SDU consists of eight other strong universities (including University of Amsterdam, University of Strasbourg, Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology). SDU's extensive collaboration with the business community also underlines the need for a high degree of internationalisation at SDU, as many companies in Odense, Sønderborg, Kolding, Esbjerg and Slagelse act on the global market and require graduates with academic competences at a high international level.

As a regionally anchored international class university that prioritises interdisciplinary collaboration for the benefit of society, during the 2022-2025 contract period SDU will work with strategic objectives that support the University's core tasks: research, research-based education and collaboration with the surrounding community.

Therefore, during the 2022-2025 contract period, SDU will work with the following five strategic objectives for the University's core tasks:

1. SDU will increase the level of research
2. SDU will promote core competency, interdisciplinarity and sustainable transition
3. SDU will offer high-quality research-based education with relevance to society
4. SDU will offer regional education programmes, lifelong learning and a good study environment
5. SDU will strengthen innovation for the benefit of society

## **Strategic objective 1**

### **SDU will develop the level of research**

SDU will increase the University's level of research through continued development of excellent research, by recruiting and retaining talent with diversity in mind and by enhancing the University's research ability through increased research funding.

#### **Motivation and ambition for the objective**

As a classic multi-faculty university, SDU is driven by free, independent and critical research and education. In several research fields, SDU is an international leader, and the University contributes with research excellence and knowledge through collaborations internally at SDU as well as collaborating with other national and international research environments.

For example, SDU has established the elite interdisciplinary research centre Danish Institute of Advanced Studies (D-IAS), which provides a framework for research talent across SDU's faculties to inspire each other to produce excellent research. Furthermore, SDU has established the Interdisciplinary Research Centre on Population Dynamics (CPop), which conducts innovative international class research on demographic challenges relating to ageing as well as the political, economic and cultural implications of demographics for different communities. In addition, SDU's focus on innovative research within Industry 4.0 Lab (14.0) supports the continued digital transition of society with a particular focus on using robots in automated manufacturing.

SDU thus has a strong foundation for conducting excellent research. During the contract period, it is SDU's ambition to further strengthen the University's excellence as well as research based on international collaborations to promote research breakthroughs for the benefit of society. It is SDU's ambition and expectation that the University's excellent research output will increase during the contract period.

A crucial prerequisite for promoting excellence is the University's ability to recruit and retain research talent. SDU is the only Danish university to have established a Gender Equality Team (GET), which supports a diverse workplace with an innovative and creative research environment and an inclusive work environment. GET has already garnered wide national and international recognition, including from the EU Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, which highlights GET as 'dedicated gender equality resources' that support the development of Gender Equality Plans in Horizon Europe. During the contract period, GET will assist in developing and implementing gender equality initiatives and will implement Gender Equality Plans across all five faculties. The initiatives are intended to ensure that SDU to an even greater extent recruits and maintains a diversity of talent.

Another prerequisite for promoting excellence is the University's ability to increase its research capacity by procuring additional research funding from external sources (public funds, private foundations, EU, international foundations and collaboration with regions, municipalities and businesses). During the contract period, it is SDU's ambition to strengthen the University's research profile. At the same time, SDU will work to attract more external research funding which can help

to attract and retain research talent at the University, thus increasing SDU's research capacity and potential to conduct excellent research.

*During the contract period, SDU's objectives are:*

- to further strengthen the University's research excellence
- to develop the talent pool with diversity in mind
- to increase the University's research funding from external sources.

*During the contract period, SDU will implement several initiatives:*

- support excellent research environments
- implement Gender Equality Plans at SDU's faculties
- implement a funding strategy for external sources.

### **Basis for achievement of objectives**

Achievement of objectives will be based on an overall assessment of the achieved effect at the end of the contract period. The assessment of achievement of objectives will include the final status account, which, cf. above, will include evidence of development in the specified indicators as well as an account of implemented supporting activities.

#### Increase excellent research output

Share of SDU publications in the top 10 per cent highest ranked journals.

(Baseline 2020: 36.0 per cent; Source: Scival; calculated annually).

Portion of SDU publications based on international collaboration. (Baseline

2020: 62.6 per cent; Source: Scival; calculated annually).

Field Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) measured at SDU level. (Baseline

2020: 1.69.; Source: Scival; calculated annually).

#### Increase research funding from external sources

Annual turnover as revenue generated in SDU's accounts (revenue

generation in line with consumption). (Baseline 2020: DKK 828.6 million;

Source: SDU's Annual Accounts; calculated annually).

## **Strategic objective 2**

### **SDU will promote core competency, interdisciplinarity and sustainable transition**

SDU supports breakthroughs in research by inspiring and developing deep core competencies in the main areas and by promoting interdisciplinary research collaborations. SDU will establish the SDU Climate Cluster as a national interdisciplinary cluster supporting the sustainable transition of society.

#### **Motivation and ambition for the objective**

Research at SDU has a considerable range and is driven by excellent, deep core competencies in the University's five faculties. As a classic multi-faculty university, SDU accommodates the scientific disciplines of social sciences and humanistic sciences (SSH) as well as the natural sciences, health sciences and technical sciences (STEM). Being an academically broad-based university containing all main areas is a distinctive feature and strength of SDU, and it is important for SDU to continue to prioritise core disciplines. Deep academic competence is essential for SDU to deliver knowledge to society and train graduates with relevant academic competencies for the benefit of society. However, not all core disciplines at the University have the same conditions, and during the contract period it is SDU's ambition to evaluate the conditions of the core disciplines and implement initiatives to strengthen the core disciplines.

SDU's campus in Odense provides good opportunities for collaboration between the University's five faculties. These opportunities will be further strengthened during the contract period, as in 2023 the Faculty of Health Sciences will move into a new building (Nyt SUND) at Campusvej in Odense, and when SDU in 2023-2024 will be connected with Odense University Hospital (OUH). SDU expects that the unique placement of the entire university and OUH at the same campus location during the contract period will open up the possibility of further interdisciplinary collaboration across faculties and towards new external collaborators. SDU's campus structure in Sønderborg, Esbjerg, Kolding and Slagelse opens up unique opportunities for research across the five faculties to engage in close interaction with local and regional actors. Through public and private collaboration, SDU has established major research and educational initiatives, such as in Sønderborg with the establishment of the Centre for Industrial Electronics and the Centre for Industrial Mechanics and in Esbjerg through collaboration with the region, hospital and municipality to offer a master's education programme in medicine from 2022. With an increased societal need for regionalisation, it is SDU's expectation that SDU's campus structure can act as a physical framework for interdisciplinary collaboration with local actors. During the contract period, it is SDU's ambition for interdisciplinary collaboration to become a special position of strength for the University.

Many of the complex challenges ('wicked problems') require collaboration rather than silo thinking. During the contract period, SDU will continue this work. The SDU will place particular emphasis on supporting society's need for green transition. SDU has decided to invest in SDU Climate Cluster, which through interdisciplinary research will support the University's research on global climate change and the transition to climate neutrality in society. SDU Climate Cluster is being established in 2022 and will, through various means, promote the start-up of interdisciplinary climate research as well as become an increasingly stronger platform for disseminating climate knowledge

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to society.

*During the contract period, SDU's objectives are:*

- to support the core disciplines as a foundation for the University's interdisciplinary research collaborations
- to make interdisciplinary collaboration a position of strength
- to support sustainable transition by delivering excellent climate research through interdisciplinary collaboration.

*During the contract period, SDU will implement several initiatives:*

- strengthen and prioritise core disciplines as a prerequisite for interdisciplinary collaboration. Therefore, through broad involvement of the organisation SDU will evaluate the conditions of the University's core disciplines and launch initiatives to ensure continued strong core competencies
- promote interdisciplinary research and innovation collaboration at SDU's geographical locations
- establish and strengthen SDU Climate Cluster as a unique national venture that will generate research at the highest international level, a clear interdisciplinary focus and the delivery of interdisciplinary solutions to society's climate challenges.

### **Basis for achievement of objectives**

Achievement of objectives will be based on an overall assessment of the achieved effect at the end of the contract period. The assessment of achievement of objectives will include the final status account, which, cf. above, will include evidence of development in the specified indicators as well as an account of implemented supporting activities.

#### Increased interdisciplinary collaboration

Number and proportion of inter-faculty co-publications in the form of peer reviewed journal articles at faculty and departmental level. (Baseline 2020: Multiple Faculties Output: 113 articles (2.6 per cent) and Multiple Departments Output: 728 articles (17.0 per cent) out of 4,271 articles overall for SDU; Source: Pure/SDU's own systems; calculated annually).

Number and proportion of inter-faculty co-publications in the form of published book chapters at faculty and departmental level. (Baseline 2020: Multiple Faculties Output: 17 chapters (3.8 per cent) and Multiple Departments Output: 30 chapters (6.6 per cent) out of 453 chapters overall for SDU; Source: Pure/SDU's own systems; calculated annually).

#### Establish and strengthen SDU's Climate Cluster (SCC)

- Number of publications under the auspices of SDU Climate Cluster. (Baseline: To be determined in 2022; Source: Pure/SDU's own systems; calculated annually).



### **Strategic objective 3**

#### **SDU will offer high-quality research-based education with relevance to society**

SDU will provide high-quality research-based education with a high learning outcome, increase study intensity and train graduates with relevant skills who are in demand from employers.

#### **Motivation and ambition for the objective**

SDU provides high-quality research-based education, which is supported by a well-functioning quality system and a strong quality culture. In the first quarter of 2021, SDU gained its second positive institutional accreditation. SDU's educational environments are driven by ensuring high learning outcomes for students through research-based education programmes. Since 2017, SDU has been conducting test-based admission in Quota 2 to create the best match between the individual applicant and the education programme. SDU's work with student admission is widely acclaimed and has provided inspiration to decision makers for rethinking the national admissions system.

During the contract period, SDU will have a special focus on the University's students having a satisfactory and high level of study intensity. Currently, several education programmes already have adequate study intensity levels, but there are also education programmes at SDU in which the intensity of study can beneficially be strengthened to ensure an active and fruitful learning environment. In order to maintain focus, all of SDU's education programmes in 2021 have developed action plans to ensure a high level of study intensity. The action plans vary in ambition level and methods, as the University's education programmes have different points of departure. The methods could affect study start elements, organisation of the education programme, teaching and examination forms and assessment. During the contract period, SDU will work to implement the action plans, which are managerially anchored in faculty management. There is still some uncertainty regarding the measurement of students' experienced study intensity, which is why during the contract period SDU will assess the need for additional measurements.

During the upcoming contract period, SDU will also continue to have a separate focus on the University's graduates entering employment after completing their studies. The employment of graduates is to a great extent dependent on the state of the market, but there remains a need to focus on initiatives that can reduce graduate unemployment. Some of SDU's education programmes have low or no graduate unemployment, while other SDU education programmes have a higher level of graduate unemployment. In 2021, all of SDU's education programmes drew up action plans to ensure high graduate employment. To promote employability and rapid transition from student life to the labour market, SDU will use methods such as project-oriented courses, graduate surveys and collaborations with employers.

*During the contract period, SDU's objectives are:*

- to maintain and strengthen study intensity levels in order to promote an active learning environment
- to educate graduates with relevant academic competencies who quickly come into employment.

*During the contract period, SDU will implement several initiatives:*

- implement action plans to promote study intensity
- implement action plans to promote employment.

### **Basis for assessment of achievement of objectives**

Achievement of objectives will be based on an overall assessment of the achieved effect at the end of the contract period. The assessment of achievement of objectives will include the final status account, which, cf. above, will include evidence of development in the specified indicators as well as an account of implemented supporting activities.

Strengthen students' assessment of study intensity on relevant education programmes

"How many hours do you spend on lectures, self-study and internships in a typical week this semester?" (Baseline 2021: 36 hours (average); Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Danish Study Survey; calculated in odd-numbered years).

- Student's indication of hours for preparation/self-study (average). (Baseline: 18 hours).
- Student's indication of hours for internship/project (average). (Baseline: 14 hours).
- Student's indication of hours for attending lectures (average). (Baseline: 15 hours).

Reduction of SDU's graduate unemployment

Graduate unemployment in 4th to 7th quarter after graduation. (Baseline 2019: 14.6 per cent; Source: Data warehouse of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science; calculated annually).

Graduate unemployment in 4th to 7th quarter after graduation, master's graduates. (Baseline 2019: 15.3 per cent; Source: Data warehouse of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science; calculated annually).

Graduate unemployment in 4th to 7th quarter after graduation, professional bachelor's degree graduates. (Baseline 2019: 7.9 per cent; Source: Data warehouse of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science; calculated annually).

#### **Strategic objective 4**

##### **SDU will offer regional education programmes, good study environments and lifelong learning**

SDU will contribute to a better distribution of study places in Denmark by strengthening the University's offering of regional education programmes. SDU will ensure a good study environment in all campus towns to attract and retain students. SDU will utilise good experiences from the project "Education Programmes of the Future" to strengthen the University's supply of lifelong learning.

#### **Motivation and ambition for the objective**

SDU is the only Danish university that provides research-based education in five cities: Odense, Esbjerg, Kolding, Sønderborg and Slagelse.

The political agreement More and Better Education Opportunities across Denmark from June 2021 will lead to a reduction in admissions in the country's four largest cities, as well as the building and relocation of education programmes outside the four largest cities. At the same time, it is clear that demographic developments in the coming years will result in fewer younger year groups in SDU's geographical admission areas, which is highly likely to affect the search patterns for SDU's education programmes. Going forward, when the academic and economic prerequisites are in place SDU will also create and offer research-based education programmes regionally, such as the law education programme in Esbjerg, the psychology-technology education programme in Sønderborg and International Business Communication in Slagelse. The focus during the contract period will be to ensure good and attractive study environments in all of SDU's campus towns. Creating attractive study environments requires a close partnership with local actors – municipalities, educational institutions, businesses, etc. – for instance, to provide student housing and student jobs to recruit and retain students.

SDU generally has a good study environment in all campus towns. However, the study environment survey from spring 2021 shows signs of failure to thrive among some students during the Covid-19 pandemic. SDU has launched an action plan, which follows up with initiatives to strengthen the study environment. For example, the strengthening of academic and social communities as a response to the loneliness experienced. At the same time, SDU will work with clearer communication to students and improve the physical framework to create a vibrant and attractive study environment. Continued strengthening of the study environment at SDU is expected to help recruit and retain students in the education programmes, thereby reducing student dropout.

During the last contract period, in the strategic project "Education Programmes of the Future" SDU gained many good experiences with flexible educational organisation that can also include students who are in employment concurrent with their studies. Society is being transformed at great speed by global changes, which is not adequately reflected in traditional academic education provision. Lessons learned from "Education Programmes of the Future" show that there is potential in experimenting with lifelong learning in formats other than those currently offered by universities. During the contract period, SDU will disseminate the experiences gained with short learning elements, such as micro-credentials, in order to provide lifelong learning that can meet the needs of potential participants and employers. As a result of the University's local

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campuses, SDU has good geographical opportunities to offer lifelong learning.

*During the contract period, SDU's objectives are:*

- to strengthen the good academic and social study environment and ensure attractive study environments in all of SDU's campus towns, with a view to reducing the first-year dropout rate among students
- to create opportunities for more flexible forms of education and education programme provision that are relevant to potential participants and employers.

*During the contract period, SDU will implement several initiatives:*

- implement action plans to maintain students' high assessment of the study and teaching environments
- disseminate educational elements in the form of short learning elements.

### **Basis for assessment of achievement of objectives**

Achievement of objectives will be based on an overall assessment of the achieved effect at the end of the contract period. The assessment of achievement of objectives will include the final status account, which, cf. above, will include evidence of development in the specified indicators as well as an account of implemented supporting activities

Maintaining the students' high level of assessment of their study and teaching environments

Students' assessment of "There is a good social environment", divided into campus level and SDU overall. (Baseline 2021: Percentage of students who answer 1. "Strongly agree" or 2. "Agree" on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "Strongly agree" and 5 is "Strongly disagree"):

o Esbjerg	70%
o Kolding	58%
o Odense	71%
o Slagelse	54%
o Sønderborg	84%
o SDU overall	70%

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Danish Study Survey; calculated in odd-numbered years).

Students' assessment of "There is a good academic environment", divided into campus level and SDU overall. (Baseline 2021: Percentage of students who answer 1. "Strongly agree" or 2. "Agree" on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "Strongly agree" and 5 is "Strongly disagree"):

o Esbjerg	82%
o Kolding	73%
o Odense	82%
o Slagelse	65%
o Sønderborg	89%
o SDU overall	81%

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Danish Study Survey; calculated in odd-numbered years).

Reducing student dropout

Dropout in first year of study. (Baseline 2019: 19 per cent for bachelor students and 7 per cent for master's students; Source: The Ministry of Higher Education and Science data warehouse).

## **Strategic goal 5**

### **SDU will strengthen innovation for the benefit of society**

SDU will contribute to knowledge-based innovation through the spin-out of research and by being part of the national cluster programme, which promotes the innovation height in companies.

#### **Motivation and ambition for the objective**

In recent years, SDU has successfully contributed research and innovation to society. The University's perspective on innovation is broad. SDU today (2022) supports highly successful entrepreneurial environments for the University's students in Cortex Lab (Odense) and Pakhuset (Kolding), which are effective incubation environments to promote students' aspirations to start their own businesses based on their studies. Furthermore, SDU is actively working with spin-out from research in the form of increased commercialisation and patenting, as well as the establishment of companies through Science Venture Denmark. Finally, the SDU generally has a very strong collaboration with businesses and industry on innovation. A special position of strength is SDU's commitment to the new national robotics cluster, Odense Robotics. A very close interaction between the University's researchers and students, the authorities and the 100+ companies in the robotic environment in and around Odense has created an industrial, business and global success with a leading and strong innovation force in robots, drones and automation. Another position of strength is the Centre for Industrial Electronics and the Centre for Industrial Mechanics in Sønderborg, which have arisen from a close partnership between SDU, companies, foundations, municipality and region.

During the contract period, it is SDU's ambition to further expand innovation collaboration with companies and other relevant actors.

A focus area for SDU will be Spin-outs Denmark. In 2021, the eight Danish universities under the management and coordination of SDU received a grant of DKK 75 million from the Villum Foundation for Spin-outs Denmark. Spin-outs Denmark aims to create more research and technology-based companies that originate from the research environments of all universities in order to create more jobs for the highly educated as well as a national ecosystem for academic entrepreneurs. The project aims to increase the capacity and competencies of universities for technology transfer, to increase the number of researchers who become entrepreneurs and to build a well-functioning entrepreneurial community.

Another focus area is to be an active university in the new national cluster programme, which was devised by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science and Denmark's Erhvervsfremmebestyrelse (Board of Business Development) and which supports knowledge-based and vocational activities in 14 clusters to lift the innovation height in Danish business. SDU already holds board positions in four clusters: CLEAN — Danish environmental technology cluster (Sønderborg), Life Science Cluster Denmark (Odense), MADE — The national Cluster for Advanced Manufacturing (Odense), the emerging cluster Odense Robotics — Denmark's cluster for robotics and drone technology (Odense), as well as a substitute position on the Board of DigitalLead — Denmark's digitalisation cluster. In addition to board work, SDU is also actively involved

in working groups in several of the other clusters: Energy Cluster Denmark (Sønderborg), Food & Bio Cluster Denmark (Odense), MARLOG — Denmark's national cluster organisation for the maritime industry and logistics.

In 2022, within Odense Robotics, SDU and its partners received a large grant (DKK 108.5 million) from the Board of Business Development (Erhvervsfremmebestyrelsen) for the Funen beacon project NextGen Robotics covering both Large Structure Production and drones. The majority of the grant (DKK 87 million) has been allotted to the Centre for Large Structure Production, and during the contract period SDU will establish the Centre, where robotic solutions and new automation solutions will be developed for the production of large and heavy elements for the energy sector, construction, offshore, etc. In addition, within Energy Cluster Denmark SDU will participate in the Southern Jutland beacon project Centre for Green Energy and Sector Coupling, to which a total grant of DKK 105.3 million has been pledged.

*During the contract period, SDU's objectives are:*

- to strengthen the University's cooperation in the innovation system (ecosystem between businesses, organisations and higher education institutions) in order to help create new jobs and investment in companies that can collaborate with and contribute to the further development of SDU's academic environments.

During the contract period, SDU will implement several initiatives:

- implement the Spin-outs Denmark project
- participate in concrete development projects in the national cluster programme "Innovation Power: Danish clusters for knowledge and industry 2021–2024"
- establish the Center for Large Structure Production (part of NextGen Robotics)
- contribute to the establishment of the Center for Green Energy and Sector Coupling in Southern Jutland.

### **Basis for assessment of achievement of objectives**

Achievement of objectives will be based on an overall assessment of the achieved effect at the end of the contract period. The assessment of achievement of objectives will include the final status account, which, cf. above, will include evidence of developments in the specified indicators and an account of the implemented supporting activities.

Strengthen the commercialisation of research, e.g. through Spin-outs Denmark

Increase the number of commercial agreements. (Baseline 2021: 13 agreements; Source: SDU's own systems that use the definitions of Danish Universities and approx. every three years; calculated annually for a rolling 3-year period).

Increase the number of spin-outs. (Baseline 2021: 3 spin-outs; Source: SDU's own systems, calculated on the basis of the definitions of Danish Universities and approx. every three years; calculated annually for a rolling 3-year period).

Maintain SDU's engagement in national cluster collaborations and to specifically ensure SDU's participation in the establishment of and participation in two major regional beacon projects.

SDU's participation in regional beacon projects. (Baseline 2020: 0 projects; Source: SDU's own systems; calculated annually).