

Higher education accessible in Tallinn

Former students with disabilities are working at the Tallinn University of Technology (TUT) as counsellors for freshmen and other students. They also give advice to the university on accessible, universally designed environments in order to provide higher education irrespective of disabilities.

«TUT envisions accessibility for every member of society to be a crucial factor of wellness and progress in a contemporary knowledge-based and open world.» (Kalle TAMMEMÄE)

Accessible TUT

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| Organisation: | Tallinn University of Technology |
| Country/region of origin: | Estonia |
| Beneficiaries targeted: | Students with physical disabilities |
| Approach/model/solution: | Consultancy and counselling for students with disabilities |

FACTS & FIGURES

- Number of students with disabilities increased over 300% in three years
- One full-time peer-counsellor
- Awarded 'Act of the year' (2011) by Estonian Union of Persons with Mobility Impairment
- In 2013 gained further acknowledgement for the 'Universal Design - Barrier Free Environments' project
- Since 2011 more than 1,600 students have participated in games to challenge their senses and raise awareness

PROBLEMS TARGETED

In addition to their need for individual-level support, students with disabilities are also dependent on the physical, cultural and learning environment at universities in order to engage and study accordingly.

PROJECT

Former students of Tallinn University of Technology with disabilities are employed as counsellors at the university. They provide assistance for and support to students, university staff and key decision makers. Thanks to the advice of the counsellors, accessible toilets were built - there is now one on every floor - and elevators are installed in every major building, including those under heritage protection.

CURRENT SITUATION & OUTLOOK

Rapid improvements were made regarding the accessibility of study buildings, dormitories and study materials for both blind and deaf persons. As the accessibility conditions for study improve, the number of students increases. Access to sporting activities, library materials (audio scanner for blind persons) as well as digital materials (video subtitles for deaf students) has also been improved at the suggestions of counsellors with special needs. In December 2013, all main entrances of the university were motorised to open automatically and many footpath curb stones have been lowered to ease access.



Students of TUT, Christel Sogenbits and Sven Kõllamets, with the apple of wisdom, and guide-dog Rooski heading down to university hall after lecture.v

CONTACT Mr. Kalle TAMMEMÄE
 Tallinn University of Technology
 Address Ehitajate tee 5, 19086 Tallinn, Estonia
 Telephone +372 6202006
 kalle.tammemae@ttu.ee
 www.tut.ee

EXPERT VOTING



Top marks from:

- all voters

Top marks for:

- Targeting all persons with disabilities

Nominated by: Sven Kõllamets, NGO Händikäpp