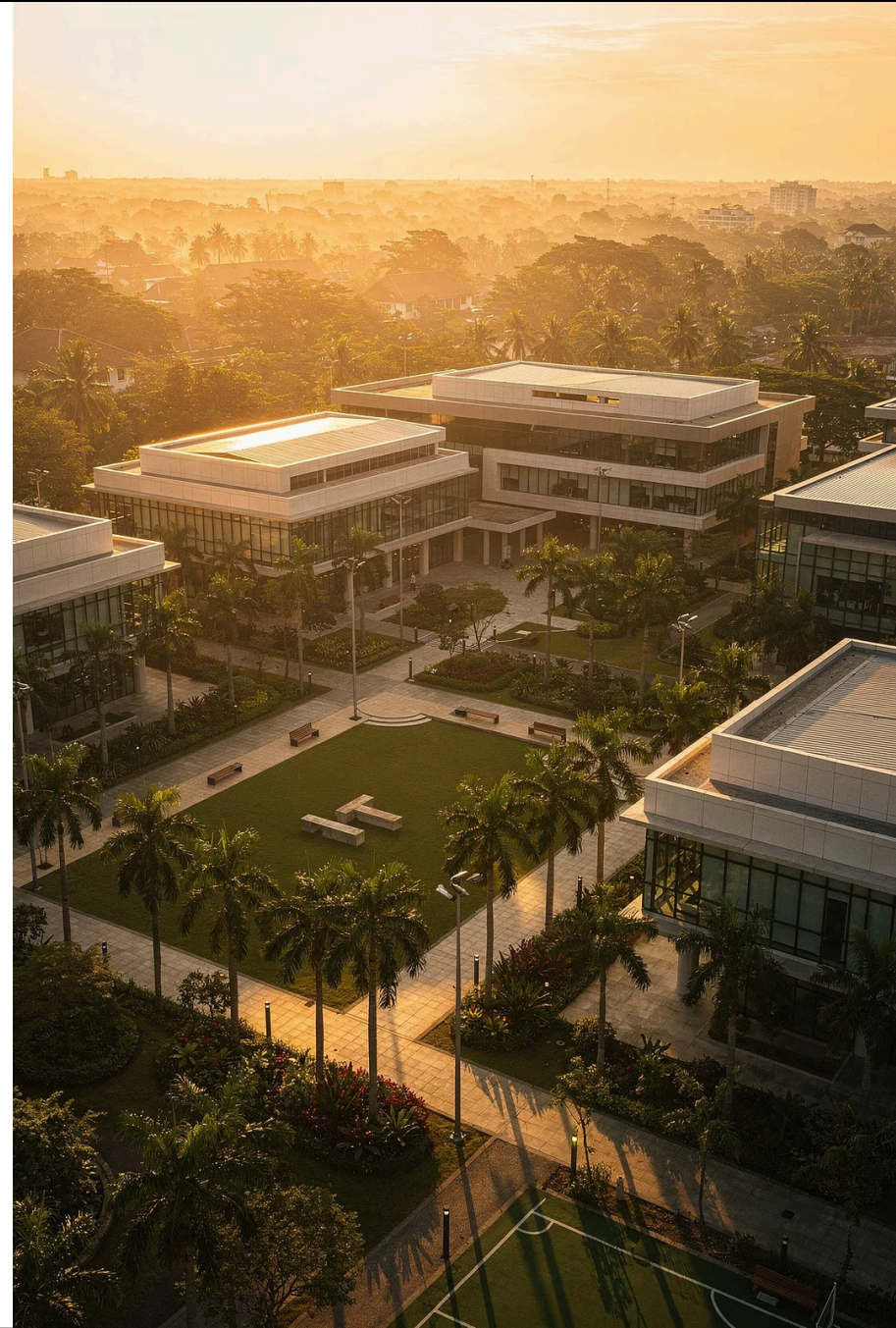


Higher Education Internationalisation Strategy for Thailand

Toward a Global, Inclusive, and Innovation-Driven System

MHESI STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



Why Internationalisation Matters

Global Competitiveness

Nations compete for talent, research excellence, and innovation leadership. Higher education is the arena where that competition is won or lost.

Economic Transformation

Internationalisation directly enables Thailand 4.0 — driving the knowledge economy, graduate employability, and long-term prosperity.

Reputation & Quality

Cross-border collaboration elevates academic standards, strengthens global reputation, and attracts high-calibre faculty and students.

📌 **Internationalisation is a national competitiveness strategy — not simply academic exchange.**



POLICY CONTEXT

Thailand's Governing Framework

Internationalisation policy is led by **MHESI** — the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation — and is structurally aligned with two overarching national commitments:

20-Year National Strategy

Long-term vision for Thailand's sustainable development and global positioning.

Thailand 4.0 Model

Value-based economic model integrating higher education, research, and the innovation ecosystem.



National Strategy Framework 2023–2027

Four interconnected goals anchor Thailand's higher education internationalisation agenda over this strategic horizon.



Global-Quality Education

Raise standards to meet and exceed international benchmarks across disciplines.



Innovation-Driven Economy

Translate research and academic excellence into tangible economic value.



High-Skilled Workforce

Develop graduates equipped for complex, globalised labour markets.



Strong International Partnerships

Build outcome-based alliances with leading institutions and industries worldwide.

Core Pillars of Internationalisation

The MHESI strategy is built on five interdependent pillars that together form Thailand's comprehensive internationalisation model.



Global Cooperation Networks

Multi-lateral and bilateral linkages with leading universities and research institutions worldwide.



Internationalisation at Home (IaH)

Bringing international learning experiences directly to students on Thai campuses.



Strategic Partnerships

Outcome-driven collaborations with industry, governments, and global institutions.



Thailand Branding

Positioning Thailand as a distinctive and compelling destination for global education.



Agile IZN System

A dedicated internationalisation team enabling responsive, adaptive policy implementation.

Strategic Vision: Thailand as a Regional Education Hub

The Ambition

Position Thailand as the premier education destination across ASEAN and beyond — fostering ASEAN–Japan collaboration, engineering talent, and STEM excellence.

What This Enables

- **Academic mobility** — seamless cross-border student and faculty movement
- **Brain circulation** — attracting and retaining global intellectual capital
- **Innovation ecosystems** — co-creating solutions across borders



STRATEGY 1

Global Partnerships

Moving beyond symbolic MoUs toward **strategic, outcome-based collaborations** that generate measurable academic, research, and economic value.



ASEAN University Network (AUN)

Regional academic quality assurance and mobility framework.

AUN/SEED-Net

Engineering and technology network linking ASEAN and Japanese universities.

Joint Programmes

Dual degrees, joint research, and co-supervised postgraduate study.

Internationalisation at Home (IaH)



English-Taught Programmes

Expanding EMI courses across disciplines to raise language competency and global readiness.



International Curriculum

Embedding global perspectives, case studies, and cross-cultural content into degree programmes.



Virtual Exchange / COIL

Collaborative Online International Learning connecting Thai students with global peers digitally.



Multicultural Campus

Creating inclusive environments that build intercultural competence without requiring physical mobility.

IaH expands access beyond physical mobility — building global citizens locally.





STRATEGY 3

Talent Mobility

Thailand's mobility strategy spans students, academics, and researchers — creating a dynamic, multi-directional flow of knowledge and expertise.

→ Student Exchange

Structured inbound and outbound programmes with partner universities globally.

→ Academic & Researcher Mobility

Visiting scholar programmes, joint supervision, and research secondments.

→ Growing International Cohort

Over **22,000+** international students currently enrolled, with strategic focus on ASEAN and China markets.

Strategy 4: Research & Innovation Internationalisation

Connecting Thai universities to global knowledge networks and co-creating solutions in sectors critical to Thailand's future economy.



Biotechnology

Joint research centres advancing life sciences, medical innovation, and agricultural biotech.



Green Economy (BCG)

Bio-Circular-Green model driving sustainable development through international research collaboration.



Advanced Electronics

Industry–university partnerships positioning Thailand as a high-value manufacturing knowledge hub.



Future Mobility

Cross-border R&D in EV, autonomous systems, and smart infrastructure with global industry partners.

STRATEGY 5

Global Benchmarking & Reputation

Thai universities are systematically building world-class credentials through rigorous, data-driven evaluation aligned with international standards.

📄 **Goal: World-class standards with local relevance.**



Global Ranking Partnerships

Active collaboration with bodies such as Times Higher Education (THE) to improve visibility and performance metrics.

National Evaluation Framework (NEF)

A standardised Thai framework ensuring consistency, accountability, and evidence-based improvement.

Data-Driven Benchmarking

Performance analytics guiding strategic decisions at both institutional and national levels.



Institutional Strategies: University Level

International Colleges & Programmes

Dedicated units offering globally competitive curricula attracting both local and international enrolment.

Double & Joint Degrees

Credentials co-awarded with partner institutions, enhancing graduate value on the global job market.

International Student Recruitment

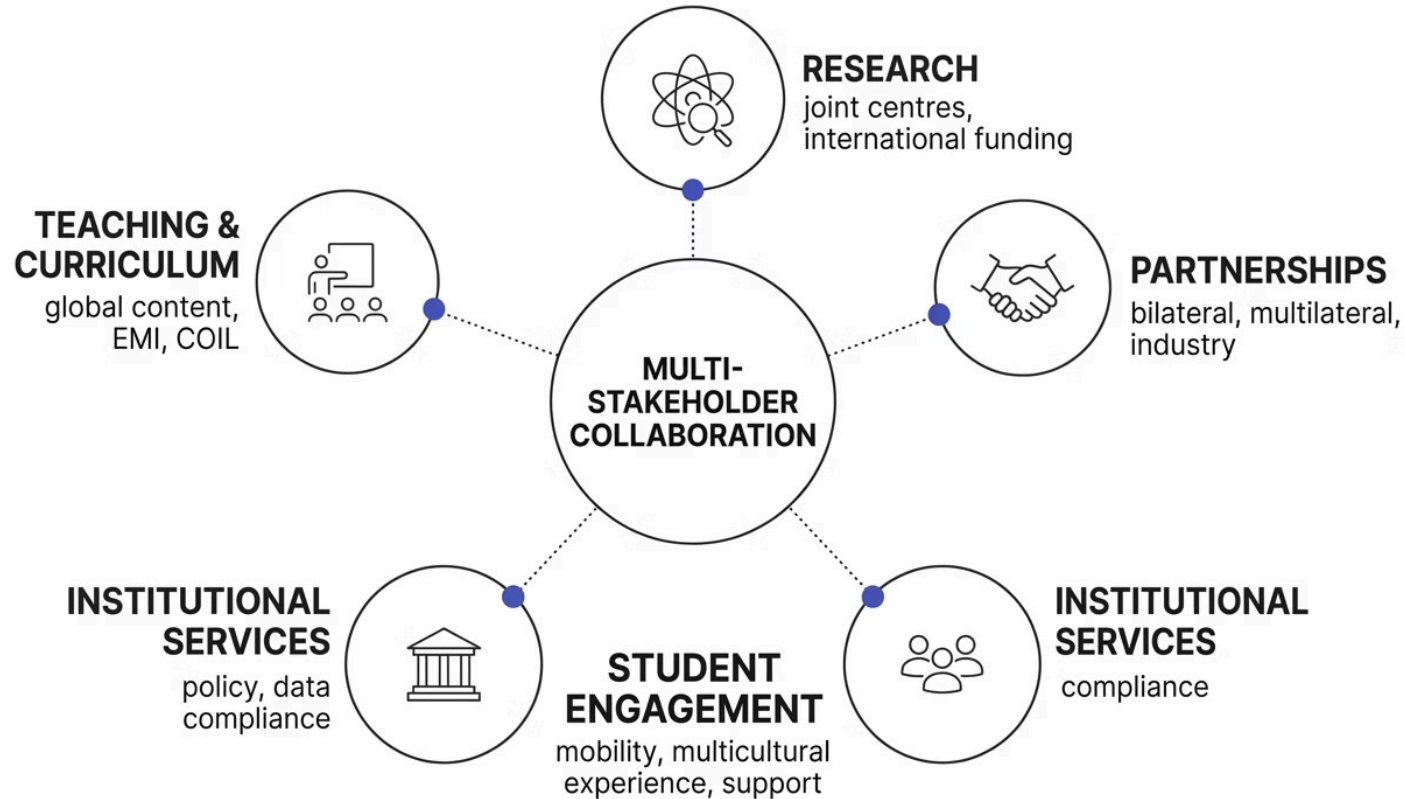
Targeted campaigns across ASEAN, China, South Asia, and beyond to diversify campus communities.

Global Research Collaboration

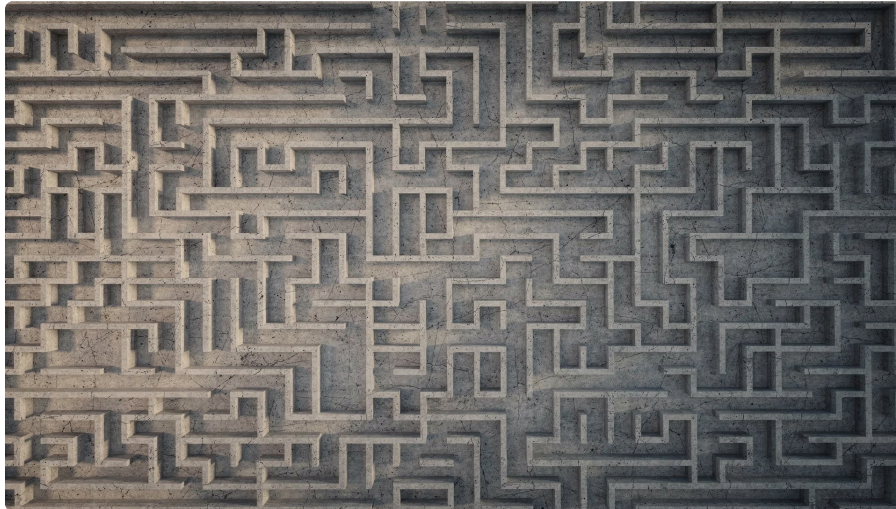
Co-authorship, joint funding applications, and shared laboratory infrastructure with world-leading partners.

Strategic Model: An Integrated Approach

Effective internationalisation demands alignment across every dimension of university life — no single element succeeds in isolation.



Key Barriers to Overcome



Fragmented Implementation

Inconsistent execution across institutions undermines the coherence of national strategy.

Limited Global Visibility

Thai universities remain under-represented in global rankings and international research networks.

Language Barriers

English proficiency gaps among faculty and students constrain international engagement and research output.

Regional Competition

Singapore and Malaysia present well-funded, well-branded alternatives for international students.

Funding Constraints

Limited public investment restricts the scale and pace of internationalisation initiatives.

❑ **System-level coordination is the essential missing link.**



Emerging Trends Shaping the Future



Hybrid & Virtual Internationalisation

Blended models combining in-person and online international experiences are redefining what mobility means.



Transnational Education (TNE)

Foreign programmes delivered on Thai soil — branch campuses, franchise degrees, and online TNE — are expanding rapidly.



Micro-Credentials & Credit Banks

Stackable, flexible qualifications are disrupting traditional degree models and opening new pathways for learners.



AI & Digital Learning Globalisation

AI-powered platforms are enabling personalised, scalable international learning experiences across borders.

Strategic Opportunities for Thailand



ASEAN Leadership

Thailand's geography, diplomatic networks, and educational heritage position it naturally as the region's academic anchor.



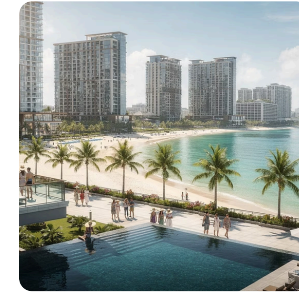
Cost Competitiveness

Significantly lower tuition and living costs compared to Western destinations make Thailand a compelling proposition for global students.



Cultural Soft Power

"Thainess" — rich heritage, cuisine, arts, and hospitality — is a genuine differentiator that no competitor can replicate.



Tourism & Lifestyle Appeal

World-class infrastructure, safety, and quality of life strengthen Thailand's attractiveness as a long-term study destination.

Strategic Recommendations

01

Quality Over Quantity in Partnerships

Prioritise deep, outcome-driven alliances over a proliferation of symbolic agreements.

02

Strengthen Research Internationalisation

Increase funding for joint research centres and international publication incentives.

03

Develop Global Talent Pipelines

Create structured pathways to attract and retain international scholars, researchers, and students.

04

Invest in English & Digital Competencies

Systemic capacity building for faculty and students to engage confidently on the global stage.

05

Position Thailand as ASEAN Education Hub

A coordinated national branding campaign, supported by policy incentives and infrastructure investment.

Recommendations for Institutions



- **Signature Global Programmes**
Develop internationally distinctive degrees that attract enrolment and elevate institutional profile.
- **Industry-Linked International Curriculum**
Co-design programmes with global employers to ensure graduate relevance and employability.
- **Joint Research Laboratories**
Shared infrastructure with international partners accelerates discovery and strengthens grant competitiveness.
- **AI & EdTech for Global Classrooms**
Deploy technology to scale international learning and overcome physical mobility constraints.
- **International Student Experience**
Invest in pastoral, cultural, and career support to improve retention and institutional reputation.

Future Vision

"Global Thai Universities with Local Impact"

Globally Competitive

Ranked, recognised, and respected by the world's leading institutions, industries, and governments.

Regionally Connected

The natural academic anchor of ASEAN — deeply networked, mutually beneficial, and strategically positioned.

Locally Relevant

Grounded in Thai values, culture, and community — producing graduates who serve both nation and world.



"Internationalisation is not an option — it is the core strategy for Thailand's higher education transformation."

Act Now

The window of opportunity to establish regional leadership is open — but competitive pressure is growing rapidly.

Collaborate Systemically

Policymakers, university leaders, and international partners must align around a shared, coordinated agenda.

Lead with Purpose

Thailand's unique strengths — cultural, geographical, and academic — are the foundation of a world-class future.

