

International Student Ambassadors of the University of Tartu

1. Overview

1.1 International Student Ambassadors (ISA) are a group of current degree students who help the International Cooperation and Protocol Office (ICO) to introduce the University of Tartu (UT) to prospective international students and to develop the international alumni community.

1.2 ISA provides first-hand information about UT and student life in Estonia to prospective students.

1.3 ISA is mostly a volunteer-based programme.

1.4 In the long run, ISA aims to develop a strong community of international alumni who represent UT abroad.

2. Main activities

2.1 Events. ISA assists ICO with organising Orientation Days, Tartu city tours, Open Doors, presentations about UT, education fairs, info sessions, guided faculty tours, visits to the university, and other events run by ISO. Organise alumni evenings, QA sessions for admitted students, info sessions for degree and exchange students, and other proposed events by ICO and by themselves.

2.2 Social media. Create content for social media (blogs, videos, and posts for other social media).

2.3 Advising prospective students. Provide useful information and share their personal experience of living in Estonia with prospective students. ISA members do not provide admission-related info.

3. Use of brand

3.1 ISA is owned and run by ISO.

3.2 The use of the ISA name and brand without the approval of ISO is not allowed.

4. Application process

4.1 Students can apply to become a member of ISA once a year, at the beginning of autumn semester, through the official recruitment process; however, membership can be granted at any time based on the additional call for applications.

4.2 Current ambassadors are encouraged to suggest new ambassadors and can be invited to participate in the selection process of new members.

4.3 An additional call for applicants can be announced by ISO if necessary.

4.4 ISO is responsible for the selection process and makes the final decisions about students that are accepted to ISA.

5. Membership

5.1 All international degree-seeking students enrolled at the university are eligible to apply to ISA.

5.2 A member is eligible to develop and participate in projects, all activities of ISA and receive all communications of ISA.

5.3 Members receive a UT T-shirt and hoodie that they should wear at events mentioned under 2.1.

5.4 Members must provide necessary info, including personal information (photo, name, programme, contact, country of origin), for the profile page on the ISA website.

5.5 It is possible to pause the membership if a student goes for an exchange semester. Upon return, the membership will be restored automatically.

5.6 ISA members are expected to perform their duties for their entire study period, but no less than one academic year.

5.7 ISA members must be present in Estonia unless agreed otherwise (see 5.5.).

5.8 In case of joint study programmes, an ISA member can keep ISA membership only if the joint programme is taking place in Estonia. If part of the programme is conducted abroad, an ISA member cannot continue being an ISA member for this period.

5.9 If an ISA member is not located in Tartu but in another place in Estonia, they are obligated to contribute to all activities of ISA online, participate online in regular meetings of ISA and if possible come to Tartu to join team-building events. Necessary trips are financed by ISO.

5.10 After successful completion of the programme (see 5.6), an ISA member receives a certificate signed by the Rector of the University of Tartu and a recommendation letter from ISO (upon request).

5.11 It is not allowed to leave ISA in the middle of the semester without a sufficient reason (e.g. leaving Estonia, quitting the university, health reasons). In such cases, a member is not considered to be a graduate of the programme and cannot be granted a certificate, recommendation letter, and listed among ISA alumni.

5.12 Once members graduate from the university or finish a nominal study period, they will be moved to the list of the Alumni ambassadors, unless they wish to remain active as a member of the ISA.

5.13 A member should notify ISO if they are going to graduate at the end of the academic year.

6. Structure

6.1 ISA consists of manager positions and regular members.

6.2 Managers comprise Facebook manager, Event manager, Blog manager, Telegram Manager and Student Advisors.

6.3 The ISA structure includes three teams: Event team, Telegram team and Facebook team. Each group is run by a corresponding manager. During the application process applicants can apply to become a part of one of the teams. A blog manager and student advisors are not required to be in any teams.

6.4 All current and prospective ISA members can apply for manager positions during the application period. ISO chooses managers for the positions. Managers receive a compensation (stipend) for performing their duties.

6.5 If the manager would like to quit, the replacement will be found among other ISA members. Thus, this person could continue being an ISA member.

6.3 Regular ISA member

Responsibilities of a regular ISA member include:

6.3.1 Attend monthly ISA meetings. ISA members can be absent for max. 3 meetings per academic year;

6.3.2 Take part in the mandatory training at the beginning of the autumn semester and team-building events (not required but strongly recommended);

6.3.3 Complete at least 30 hours of volunteer work performing duties in the autumn semester and 36 hours in the spring semester;

6.3.4 Reply to enquiries from potential students (related to student life and, personal study experience), forward admission related inquiries to ISO or Admission office;

6.3.5 Contribute to the ISA team they belong to (Facebook, Telegram, Event) with posts for social media and the organisation of the events according to the schedule. Every member of ISA must contribute with an ISA blog according to the schedule (it can be substituted with long-read texts for the Telegram).

6.3.6 Provide support in organising ISA and ISO events;

6.3.7 Actively participate in ISA activities (events, general meetings etc.);

6.3.8 Create a positive image of the University of Tartu, Estonia and its own country.

6.4 Facebook Manager

6.4.1 Facebook Manager is responsible for the ISA Facebook page.

6.4.2 Facebook Manager must consult ISO about strategies for creating a positive image of UT on Facebook.

6.4.3 Facebook Manager should encourage other members to be active on Facebook and share ISA posts.

6.4.4 Facebook Manager must check Facebook page daily.

Duties of Facebook Manager include:

6.4.2. Creating a content plan and a post schedule for the FB page involving all members of the Facebook team;

6.4.3. Organising additional Facebook team meetings once per month to share ideas and preparing a schedule (if needed);

6.4.3 Keeping members of the Facebook team updated about the schedule by publishing it on ISA internal communication channels (private ISA Facebook group, Slack, Noten, etc.);

6.4.4 Publishing 3 to 5 posts per week depending on the schedule;

6.4.5 Moderating and curating all posts before publishing;

6.4.6 Handling all communication on Facebook page (messages, comments); if needed, share relevant contacts of other ambassadors or UT staff;

6.4.7 FB manager works all months of the year.

6.4.8 Report during ISA regular meetings and exchange ideas with other members of ISA. Providing feedback to another ISA team (e.g Event or telegram team).

6.5 Blog Manager

6.5.1 The Blog Manager is responsible for the ISA blog.

6.5.2 Blog Manager has strong English language writing skills and a desire to work as an editor.

Duties include:

6.5.3 Publishing no less than 18 blog posts during the fall semester and 13 blog posts during the spring semester (1 blog post per week from September-May);

6.5.4 Developing a content plan and post schedule involving all ISA members;

6.5.5 Announcing the blog schedule on ISA internal communication channels (private ISA Facebook group, Slack, Noten etc.) at the beginning of every month;

6.5.6 Motivate and help ambassadors to develop their ideas into blog posts, suggest improvements to posts according to ISA publishing guidelines; if needed additional monthly meetings can be separately organised with ambassadors whose turn is coming to write in the upcoming month;

6.5.7 Correct grammar mistakes and suggest linguistic changes of the blog posts.

6.5.8 Report during ISA regular meetings.

6.6 Telegram Manager

6.6.1 Telegram Manager is responsible for the UT Telegram channel.

6.6.2 Telegram Manager must consult ISO about strategies for creating a positive image of UT in Telegram.

6.6.3 Telegram Manager should encourage other members to share ideas for posts or share Telegram posts.

6.6.4 Telegram Manager must check the Telegram channel daily.

Duties of Telegram Manager include:

6.6.5. Creating a content plan and a post schedule for the Telegram involving all members of Telegram team;

6.6.6. Organising additional Telegram team meetings once per month to share ideas and preparing a schedule (if needed).

6.6.7 Keeping members of the Telegramteam updated about the schedule by publishing it on ISA internal communication channels (private ISA Facebook group, Telegram, Slack, Noten, etc.);

6.6.8 Involving members of the Telegram team to keep communication in Toloka (UT Telegram forum) and answer comments under the post in the main Telegram channel.

6.6.9 Publishing 3 to 5 posts per week depending on the schedule;

6.6.10 Moderating and curating all posts before publishing;

6.6.11 Handling all communication on Telegram channel (comments, chabot, Toloka-forum); if needed, share relevant contacts of other ambassadors or UT staff;

6.6.12 Develop a marketing campaign with the help of all members of the team to receive more followers.

6.6.13 Telegram manager works all months of the year.

6.6.14 Report during ISA regular meetings and exchange ideas with other members of ISA. Providing feedback to another ISA team (e.g. Event or Telegram team).

6.6 Student Advisors

6.6.1 Student Advisors are responsible for advising prospective students via two channels: official ISO email: studyinfo@ut.ee and ISA Facebook group for prospective students.

6.6.2 Student Advisors should be able to check the ISA Facebook group several times a day and the e-mail at least once a day.

6.6.3 Student Advisors should be motivated to support and help prospective international students.

6.6.4 Student Advisors will receive advanced admission-related training by ISO and constant support with the questions throughout their work as Student Advisors.

6.6.5 Student Advisors develop a schedule and divide responsibilities between themselves.

6.6.6 Two people will be appointed to the position.

Duties include:

6.6.7 Answering student enquiries that come through ISO official email: studyinfo@ut.ee

6.6.8 Managing Future Students of the University of Tartu Facebook group discussions, answering enquiries, providing admission-related information for prospective students;

6.6.9 Promoting the group via other ISA channels and FB groups;

6.6.10 Monitoring the content posted in the group, deleting all negative and spam posts, remove authors of this posts from the group;

6.6.11 Outline the group rules about posts that are not tolerated;

6.6.12 Post some useful information related to admissions and life in Estonia e.g. FAQ for new students, reposting blog posts, etc. (at least two posts per week).

6.8 Event Manager

6.8.1 The Event Manager is responsible for ISA events and the participation of ISA in ISO events.

6.8.2 The target audience of such events is current and potential students and visitors of the university.

6.8.3 List of mandatory projects:

6.8.3.1 City tours. Organise and lead city tours for newcomers at the Orientation Days twice a year (autumn and spring semesters);

6.8.3.2 Open Doors Day. Organise ISA participation and representation of international students at the Open Doors Day in spring semester;

6.8.3.3 Alumni event. Organise and lead UT alumni discussion event (once per semester);

6.8.3.4 Other events, such as QA with ISA for admitted students, info session with degree and exchange students, etc. Assist ISO with organising other promotional events.

6.8.4 The Event Manager leads an Event team of ambassadors to successfully perform projects and is responsible for outcomes.

Duties include:

6.8.5 Organising no less than 3 events during the fall semester and 4 events during the spring semester (1 event per month);

6.8.6 Creating a content plan involving ISA team members; asking ideas from other ISA members during regular meetings;

6.8.7. Organising additional Event team meetings once per month to share ideas and preparing a schedule (if needed).

6.8.8 Distribute responsibilities in the Event team and provide a timeline for every responsibility to organise each separate event.

6.8.9 Organising training sessions for the hosts of the event before the actual event to assure a smooth conduction of the event.

6.8.10 Report about the events at the regular meetings.

6.8.11 Keep all ISA members updated about the events via Slack internal communication channels. After each event a short report should be posted to the Slack channel.

6.8.12 After every event the Event manager is obligated to submit a report to ISO in written form using the ISO template.

6.8.13 All suggested events must be approved by ISO.

6.9 Manager requirements

6.9.1 Managers are elected for a period of one year but can extend the period of their duties upon agreement with ISO.

6.9.2 Can hold a separate monthly or weekly meeting to adjust their work schedules, develop and discuss development plans and other occurring issues.

6.9.3 In case of problems or conflicts between members, refer to ISO.

6.9.4 Inform ISO at least 30 days prior at the end of the semester in case of leaving the position. The minimum term of all manager tenures is one semester.

6.9.5 Must be present in Estonia unless agreed otherwise (see 5.5); attend ISA monthly meetings and mandatory training.

6.9.6 Make reports on ISA monthly meetings and provide a final report in the form of an overview with the slides during the last meeting of the semester. Upon requests, managers could meet the representatives of ISO to discuss strategies and plans for the upcoming month. The report has to be performed in a form of presentation and in written form when necessary.

7. Revoking membership

7.1 Membership can be revoked upon failure to fulfil membership duties.

7.2 Suspension of membership can occur with a decision by ISO.

7.3 Possible reasons for the suspension of membership can include one or more of the following:

7.3.1 inability to meet membership requirements;

7.3.2 inability to perform duties regularly or with sufficient quality;

7.3.3 inadequate behaviour causing complaints from other ISA members or the ISO;

7.3.4 missing 3 or more monthly meetings, including motivational events; not attending or supporting ISA projects; passiveness and lack of interest in group discussions;

7.3.5 use of derogatory language or physical violence on another member or student;

7.3.6 inappropriate behaviour at events (e.g. excessive drinking, fighting, etc.).

7.4 A personal meeting should be held with the member prior to the suspension.

7.5 Suspended former member will not receive an ISA certificate, nor will he/she be considered as an alumni student ambassador of UT.

8. Why join ISA?

8.1 It looks good on your CV and demonstrates your advanced organisational skills;

8.2 Giving advice to prospective students and sharing your experience is a good way of helping people;

8.3 Gain valuable practical skills e.g. public speaking, writing, presentation skills;

8.4. Be the face of the university and represent the whole international student body of UT;

8.5 Opportunity to lead projects and gain valuable project management and team leading experience;

8.6 Opportunity to build your network - meet new people from Estonia and abroad;

8.7 Receive a recommendation letter from ISO and a certificate signed by the Rector;

8.8 Freebies – team-building events, Christmas and graduation dinners, gift cards, UT memorabilia (T-shirt; hoodie, etc.).