

Chronology of Estonian Native Crafts Department

Autumn 1952 – The predecessor of the present-day Viljandi Culture Academy – the Tallinn School of Cultural Education – is formed.

Autumn 1960 – The school is transferred to Viljandi, and it continues to operate as the Viljandi School of Cultural Education.

Autumn 1991 – The school is reorganised as the Viljandi Culture College, an institution offering higher education in several fields of culture.

September 1994 – The curriculum of Farm Design and Native Crafts is opened, offering applied higher education with a programme duration of 4 years. 6 full-time students are enrolled.

1998 – The first group of 6 students graduates; the second group of 7 students graduates in 2000, and the third group, also of 7 students, graduates in 2002.



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2003 – The name of the curriculum is changed from Farm Design and Native Crafts to Estonian Native Textile.

2003 – The Viljandi Culture College becomes the Viljandi Culture Academy.

August 2005 – The Viljandi Culture Academy enters into merger agreement with the University of Tartu; the official name of the institution will hence be the University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy.

2005 – In association with opening a new curriculum – Estonian Native Construction – the department of Estonian Native Crafts is created. Native Construction is a curriculum of applied higher education with a duration of 4 years; the first group consists of 8 students.

2008 – The curriculum of Estonian Native Textiles starts offering the session-learning option.

2009 – The first cohort of Estonian Native Construction graduates with 5 students.

2011 – The curriculum of Estonian Native Metalwork is opened. It is a curriculum of applied higher education with a duration of 4 years; the first group consists of 8 students.

2011 – The master's programme of Applied Heritage Studies is opened; the duration is 2 years, and the first group consists of 8 students.



2012 – The first fashion show, OmaMood (OwnFashion), takes place, presenting the collections of the graduates of the curriculum of Native Textiles. Subsequent fashion shows take place in 2013, 2014 and from 2016 to 2019.

2013 – The first group of 6 students graduates from the master's programme of Applied Heritage Studies.

2015 – The first group of 3 students graduates from the curriculum of Estonian Native Metalwork.

2015/16 – The three different curricula of the Native Crafts Department are merged into one curriculum of Applied Heritage Studies.

2016 – The first students of the curriculum of Applied Heritage Studies specialising in native textiles are accepted. In the same year, the full-time programme of Native Textiles is terminated.

2017 – Establishment of the English-language master's programme in Folkloristics and Applied Heritage Studies in collaboration with the UT Departments of Ethnology, and Estonian and Comparative Folklore.

2017 – The first students are accepted to the curriculum of Estonian Native Metalwork with part-time participation (session learning).

2019 – The first students are accepted to the curriculum of Estonian Native Construction with part-time participation (session learning).

The curricula were developed with the support of the project “Developing the center of applied heritage studies (PÄRTEL)” financed by the funding for initiatives directed towards cooperation with higher education institutions and enterprises within the action “Innovation and cooperation in higher education institutions” (01.09.2009–30.06.2015).

Number of graduates. By 2019, the department of Estonian Native Crafts has 189 graduates:

110 in Estonian Native Textile (including first three groups)

37 in Estonian Native Construction

14 in Estonian Native Metalwork

28 in master's programme of Applied Heritage Studies.

Heads of the department. During 1994–1997 and 1999–2001, the head of the department was Anu Raud; during 1997–1999, it was Mare Hunt. Since 2001, the head of the Estonian Native Crafts department has been Ave Matsin.

Since the founding of the department, one of its main outputs has been **exhibitions**, the largest of which was the exhibition OmaViis, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the department in 2014. Photos of this exhibition are available at: omaviis.kultuur.ut.ee.

During all of these years, many major **continuing education programmes** have been carried out: “Back to Work with Handicraft 2”, integrating older artisans with the labor market, and also several specialized education programmes for teachers in vocational schools. Since 2014, the major project of the department has been the international summer school on Estonian native crafts called Craft Camp. Since 2017, a School of Young Artesans takes place annually in the spring.

The department has initiated two **series of publications**. In the series *Rahvuslik käsitöö* (Native Crafts), publications helping to preserve the methods and skills of native crafts and to integrate them into modern life were published from 2009 to 2016. In 2008, *Studia Vernacula* was founded as a series publishing research papers that discuss native crafts and heritage technologies. Since 2013, *Studia Vernacula* has been a peer-reviewed journal issued once a year.

During the last ten years, organising **ethnographic fieldwork** has intensified, with the aim to collect material for articles, to practice specialised skills,

especially the crucial skill of copy-making, but also to find good practicing masters for learning various heritage crafts. For the majority of the students and workers, the data gathered during this fieldwork form the basis for their writing, thus helping the people of the department to be in contact with current technological and cultural changes in the field of crafts.

The committee of specialised terminologies in craft studies was founded in 2016. The results of its work, a terminological database with 2111 craft terms, is available through Termeki, a public terminological database of the Institute of Estonian Language (see: term.eki.ee).

Conferences on applied heritage studies

2013 – Päritud oskused. Visuaalse dokumenteerimise võimalused
(Inherited skills: possibilities for their visual documentation)

2014 – Käsitöö valdkonna inspiratsioonikonverents (Inspirational conference on handicraft)

2015 – Luubi all on asjad! (Focus on things!)

2016 – Pärandtehnoloogia ja käsitöö kirjeldamise keeled
(Heritage technologies and languages for describing crafts)

2017 – Pärandtenoloogia ja kohalikud loodusmaterjalid
(Heritage technologies and local natural materials)

2018 – Töökojast ja tööriistadest (Workshops and tools)

International conferences

2013 – Traditional knitted sweaters around the Baltic Sea

2018 – Nordic knitting symposium

2019 – Studying traditional crafts: Goals and methods in higher education

Autumn Schools in Applied Heritage Studies have offered a meeting place for different people interested in traditional crafts, providing a platform for interdisciplinary discussions and cooperation.

2015 – Loovast käest saab terveks vaim (Creative hand heals the spirit)

2016 – Enne ja pärast naftat (Before and after oil)

2017 – Tulest tulnud (From fire)

2018 – Pärandtehnoloogi(line) elu (Traditional technologies in life)

2019 – Ei saa me läbi Lätita... (We cannot live without Latvia...)