

European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions

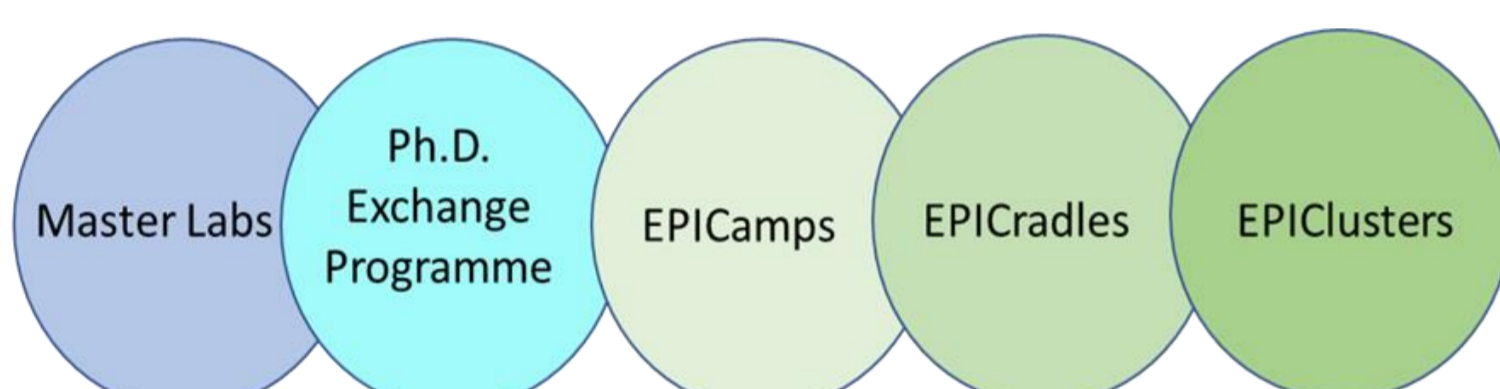
EPiCUR Research Agenda

Shaping European Society in Transition

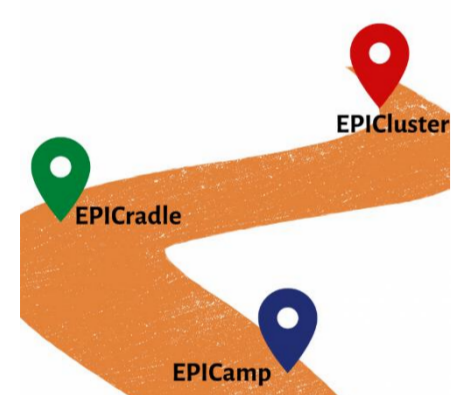
1. Summary

This Common Research Agenda is created as a 'living document', initial scrutiny and basis on which a more substantial research agenda for the alliance in the following years can be developed. It represents a first analysis of the status quo of EPiCUR partners, which can evolve and adapt in the following years to mirror changes within the European Research Ecosystem, the EPiCUR Alliance and Society in general. Our EPiCUR-Research project is laying down the foundations of a possible future common research agenda by identifying research strengths of the EPiCUR universities, defining EPiChallenges, scoping future ones, and identifying appropriate resources, incentives and research infrastructures to support the growing common research ecosystem.

2. EPiCUR Pathway to Research



The alliance places a strong emphasis on empowering future and early career researchers to engage in international, trans-/interdisciplinary collaboration, tackle current societal challenges and develop the skills and competencies necessary for pursuing a successful career in research across a variety of sectors. Both EPiCUR-Research and WP6 of EPiCUR SHAPE-IT endeavour to further these goals.



This pathway originally included three seed money formats (EPiCamps, EPiCradles, and EPiClusters), which were then extended to include the Master Labs and PhD Exchange Programme developed during the first phase of EPiCUR (Education). The EPiClusters serve

as testbeds for collaborative research, networking, and innovation. Most significantly, they are funded by a lump-sum financing plan, including external stakeholders from the regions surrounding EPiCUR partners.

EPiCUR recognises early career researchers as a particularly crucial target group, emphasising the alliance's belief that the new generation of European research leaders will be instrumental in driving institutional transformation.

In the pilot projects, the EPiCUR Alliance is developing, implementing, and testing a bottom-up process for master students strongly interested in the research career pathway and for groups of early career researchers. The new collaborative formats are supporting different aspects of this process and are placed along a pathway from Master Labs to EPiClusters. The EPiCUR Pathway to Research aims to promote challenge-based research and build interdisciplinary research communities and projects from the ground-up.

EPiClusters selected and funded so far:

- Seeking a new language: Narratives on home, (forced) migration and identity of newcomers Ukrainian youth to European cities
- A sustainable and just renewable energy transition for Europe: exploring multidimensional barriers and potentials
- Co-Constructed early warning system against Tomato leafminer (CoCon Tomato)
- ePiCNutrients – extracting nutrients from sewage deposits

3. EPiChallenges

EPiChallenges

SUSTAINABILITY: with a particular focus on climate change, energy and materials, contributions to this EPiChallenge should aim at finding solutions and roadmaps towards clean and affordable energy systems, sustainable ecosystem engagement, circular economies with reduced industrial pollution, smart building and transportation systems and more.

MOBILITY, MIGRATION, IDENTITY: Understanding that mobility and migration – forced and voluntary – are changing our societies as much as our collective / individual identities, this EPiChallenge invites research on such topics as refugee movements, poverty, disparity of economic and social status, virtual life, cultural change, interculturality, and multilingualism.

PUBLIC HEALTH: as both health systems and human behaviour undergo significant transformation as a response to Covid19, climate change induced diseases and other epidemics which cause financial and economic losses, interdisciplinary research must aid in developing resilient health sectors, societies, communities and even individuals.

EPiChallenges are inspired by the "Six Transformations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals" as well as the Green Deal, "Missions of Horizon Europe", and forthcoming update of the EU "Skills Agenda". The EPiChallenges are an invitation to understand and address the root causes and perpetuating forces of the problems we face as an European community. At the same time, we must recognise that the EPiCUR research community is deeply embedded in global networks and engaged in the dynamics emerging from historical and current crises all over the world. Ideally, the idea of EPiChallenges engenders both applied and basic research inviting a multitude of researchers and including a wide range of disciplines.



4. Future Research Agenda

This analysis for the future Common Research Agenda of EPiCUR

- offers a broad overview of current research foci (information)
- offers some preliminary recommendations for potential future research (recommendations)
- offers new EPiChallenges and
- serves as a point of reference for the development of new joint research projects (monitoring and evaluation).

By pursuing three actions, the Common Research Agenda will help us to encourage as many of our researchers as possible to team-up and partake in joint ventures. These actions are:

1. Identifying potential areas of research which will be clustered in the form of EPiChallenges
2. Creating new formats that incentivize, encourage and enhance collaborative research
3. Regularly assessing whether the topics and the formats contribute to achieving EPiCUR's goals of creating more inclusive, collaborative and challenge-based research with inter- and / or transdisciplinary perspectives

5. Conclusion

- To prepare the ground for the EPiCUR Common Research Agenda, we have conducted an analysis of research strengths of the EPiCUR universities with a focus on the three current EPiChallenges and the goal of identifying potential synergies at the level of the alliance.
- Using an overarching "Top-Down-Bottom-Up Metrics" approach, six 'Key performance indicators' were identified and analyzed for suggesting future EPiChallenges.
- With our Common Research Agenda we have set a frame, how to strategically achieve our objectives:
 - by providing thriving frameworks for research activities, enabling academics to jointly drive forward new ideas or to explore new fields of research and innovation and by facilitating collaborations,
 - by building and fostering interdisciplinary and -cultural competencies continuously.



EPiCUR's vision of a European University for the future is to create a place where all students, researchers of all career stages and staff can participate in an academic life strongly rooted in European traditions, irrespective of their nationality, mother tongue, cultural or socio-economic background.

References:

- <https://archive.epicur.education/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Deliverable-1.1-Foundations-for-a-future-EPiCUR-Common-Research-Agenda.pdf>
- <https://archive.epicur.education/research/>

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