

The EC Strategy to Support the Development of the European Alliances R&I Dimension

Keynote session

Date : 30/11/2023

9:00 - 9:30

Hybrid session

Roles

- Presenter: Ludovic Thilly (EC2U and FOREU2 Chair)
- Speaker 1: Anna Panagopoulou (DG RTD, Director ERA and Innovation)
- Marc Tachelet (REA, Director of European Research Executive Agency)

Structure

9:00am: Introduction by the Presenter

9:05am: Speeches from Anna Panagopoulou and Marc Tachelet

Looking to the Future: The European Universities Alliances R&I Dimension

Plenary session

Date : 30/11/2023

9:30 - 10:30

Hybrid session

Lead: Jaime Llorca & Blanca Burillo Lago (CHARM-EU)

Co-lead: Sarah Thompson (CIVICA)

Roles

- Presenter: Olga Wessels (ECUI and chairing FOREU1)
- Chair: Carsten Schneider (CIVICA)
- Speaker 1: Manuel Aleixo (EC, DG ERA)
- Speaker 2: Ludovic Thilly (EC2U - FOREU2)
- Speaker 3: Christian Inard (EU-CONEXUS)
- Speaker 4: Raul Ramos (CHARM-EU)
- Speaker 5: Sébastien Le Picard (EDUC)
- Rapporteur: Jaime Llorca (CHARM-EU)

Structure

9:30am Introduction by the Chair

9:35am Entry statement from EU-CONEXUS, CHARM-EU, EC2U and EDUC

9:55am Manuel Aleixo response to the statements

10am Discussion between the Chair, panelists and Manuel Aleixo

10:15am Q&A from the audience

10:25am Conclusions by the Chair

Topics of discussion

Abstract

In this plenary session four key aspects of joint research and innovation (R&I) activities within European alliances will be examined. First, the participants will discuss about the need for continuous funding to drive the development of joint research agendas, highlighting examples such as capacity building and joint research support structures. Secondly, they will address the importance of the investment pathway, calling for long-term, comprehensive funding models that are aligned with the diverse missions of universities, with a particular emphasis on the continuity of funding for Science with and for Society (SwafS). Thirdly, they will highlights the unique position of alliances as testbeds for piloting novel approaches to support the implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) policy agenda. Finally, they will tackle the concerns about financial support will be adress and respond to voices in Europe by advocating for strategic diversification of funding to ensure the pursuit of excellence in the research and innovation endeavours of Alliances.

About specific examples of joint R&I activities that will require funding, in order to keep developing the Alliances' common research agendas (capacity building, joint research support structures, etc.).

About the Investment Pathway (Alliances joint statement). SwafS not continuity and the need to find long-term, comprehensive funding models (considering all universities' missions).

About the Alliances being in a perfect position to act as testbeds to pilot novel approaches to support the implementation of the ERA policy agenda (mainly Action 13 and 17, but also Actions 3, 4, 5, 9, 14, 20).

About excellence. Response to voices in Europe against financial support to Alliances R&I development (diversification of funds).

Assessment of the R&I impact of the European Universities alliances – reports by Commission and REA experts

Date : 30/11/2023

11:00 - 11:30

Hybrid session

Plenary session

Roles

- Presenter: Olga Wessels (ECUI and chairing FOREU1)
- Speaker 1: Fionn O'Sullivan (TetraTech, Commission contractor)
- Speaker 2: Helena Acheson (Director. Europe, UI Global, Commission expert)
- Speaker 3: Gareth O'Neill (Technopolis, Commission expert)

Structure

- 11:00am** Presentation by Fionn O'Sullivan
- 11:10am** Presentation by Helena Acheson and O'Neill
- 11:25am** Q&A from the audience

Summary

Presentation Summary – Gareth O'Neill/Helena Acheson

The presentation is based on two Reviews – one completed and one underway – of the mid-term progress being made by European University Alliances with Horizon 2020, Science with and for Society (SwafS) support. The aim was to foster institutional change in key priority areas: implementing strategies to mainstream open science, strengthening of research careers, reinforcing knowledge valorisation and cooperation with the non-academic sector, engagement with citizens and society. Additionally, the Alliances were supported to share infrastructures and capacities in research and innovation and develop critical mass to implement common research & innovation agendas.

The [Progress of University Alliance Pilot I Report](#) covered tangible progress, main challenges, and good practices achieved in the different areas of institutional change.

The University Alliance Pilot II Report (work in progress) focuses on Good Practices across the abovementioned priorities

The presentation will provide an insight into the broad spectrum of Good Practices identified across all Pilot I and II University Alliances with respect to the above-mentioned Transformational Modules.

From Agenda Setting to Implementation: Maximizing the Institutional Impact of the Swafs Projects

Panel session

Date : 30/11/2023

11:30-12:30

Hybrid session

Lead: Nicole Birkle (FORTHEM)

Co-lead: Miriam Kockvedgaard Zeitzen (4EU+)

Roles

- Presenter: Ludovic Thilly (EC2U and FOREU2 Chair)
- Chair: Katarzyna Molek-Kozakowska (FORTHEM)
- Speaker 1: Siobhan Moane (RUN-EU PLUS)
- Speaker 2: David Dreyer Lassen (TRAIN4EU+)
- Speaker 3: Sven Idarand (Transform4Europe)
- Speaker 4: Laura Martin (SEA-EU)
- Speaker 5: Nicole Birkle (FORTHEM)
- Rapporteurs: Agnese Rusakova (FORTHEM)

Structure

11:30am: Introduction to the focus of the session by the Chair

11:35 am: Short pitch by each speaker on how projects like the SwafsS-projects can really be institutional game changers including 1 good example for institutional/alliance level impact

11:55am: Panel discussion will be based on the following guiding questions

12:20pm: Open discussion with the audience

Topics of discussion

Abstract

Transformative processes at European Universities cannot be designed on a drawing board and implemented top-down, especially when launched in a multicultural, multidisciplinary, cross-institutional and cross-European environment. European University Networks have made an impressive step forward to foster collaboration in the research, innovation, and knowledge transfer dimension by creating joint agendas and action plans, and by exchanging on best practices, setting up tools and structures to facilitate cooperation and bringing researchers together for joint project applications. To progress from setting the agendas to sustainably implementing new formats and activities modelled and tested in the pilot phase requires time and resources. Some alliances have been faster in their implementation phase partly due to their ability to build on research partnerships in existence preceding the creation of the European University Alliance. Other alliances may need more time, particularly regarding the implementation of their research mission, as individual institutions in the alliance may be starting from quite diverse baseline conditions regarding research support structures, internal workflows, hierarchies, policies, and resources available.

In this session we want to discuss what is required to support faster implementation of actions developed regarding research, innovation, and knowledge transfer. We will evaluate how to implement actions without continued funding from the European Commission, how these actions promote an integrative approach to the all university missions, and what kind of enablers and barriers to implementation in a cross-culture and cross-institutional working environment are in place. Maximizing the impact means maximizing the enablers and resources and reducing the barriers, may they be institutional, national, or systemic.

From Agenda Setting to Implementation: Maximizing the Institutional Impact of the SwafS Projects

Date : 30/11/2023

11:30-12:30

Hybrid session

Topics of discussion

Panel discussion will be based on the following guiding questions

1. Strategies for strengthening human capital in Research and Innovation is critical for the sustainability of the European Universities. (RUN-EU/RUN-EU PLUS)
2. Sharing Research Infrastructures in 4eu+: Drivers, obstacles and solutions to challenges and collaboration (4EU+/TRAIN4EU+)
3. Lessons learned from implementing a cross-culture and cross-institutional working environment: enablers and barriers for a powerful impact (Transform4Europe/T4ERI)
4. Designing a sustainable research agenda: from solid, reliable and trust worthy research structure to the institutional commitment (SEA-EU/reSEArch-EU)
5. Funding of the Research Dimension of Alliances – how to move forward without a solid, flexible and targeted budget to implement results from the SwafS-projects and further develop actions related to R&I at alliance level (FORTHEM/FIT FORTHEM)

Advancing our Common Science Agendas

Date : 30/11/2023

2 - 4pm

Workshop 1

Lead: Sam Cole & Hattie Hine (EUTOPIA)

Co-lead: Julie Hyzewicz & Marie Ugeux (CIVIS)

Roles

- Facilitator: Tania van Loon (EUTOPIA)
- Speaker 1: Eva Martin (EUTOPIA)
- Speaker 2: Louise Wallenberg (CIVIS)
- Speaker 3: Siegfried Walch (Ulysseus)
- Speaker 4: Isabel Salgueiro (EELISA)
- Rapporteur: Ulla Harmala (CIVIS)

Structure

2pm Presentations: Welcome and aims by facilitator + Introduction of the speakers + Wrap-up

2:45pm Health break

2:50-4pm Workshop Groups: Introduction and Challenges + Silent Walk (everyone can write ideas on post-its) + Discussions in 4 groups (each assign 1 spokesperson) + Plenary Exchange

Presentations

Abstract

This workshop will showcase the joint structures, resources and support offices developed and piloted by SwafS projects to build capacity and collaboration on an alliance level. Presentations by alliances will focus on EUTOPIA's Grants, Legal and Innovation Office, networking tools developed by CIVIS to initiate new R&I collaborations, the co-creation of an international European University Alliance branch by Ulysseus and EELISA's initiatives to boost connections through joint calls and contests. Participants will also be invited to explore four key challenges relating to the development of these activities through interactive discussion in break out groups.

EUTOPIA - GLENN-Main outcomes and lessons learned in R&I Collaboration

The presentation aims to centre on key aspects that have been helping to contribute to the practical deployment of the EUTOPIA Grants, Legal, and Innovation Office (GLENN). These include the sharing of best practices and the identification of common challenges focus groups, as well as by other productive activities like the Online EUTOPIA R&I Digital Support Platform. Join us to find out more about the progress made, outcomes achieved, lessons learned and potential impact generated to promote R&I Collaboration.

CIVIS -Initiating new R&I collaborations on the scale of a European University Alliance through the setting up of networking tools

This presentation will focus on the solutions that have been tested and developed to strengthen R&I collaboration between the eleven members of the CIVIS Alliance and to convince its research communities of the added value of this new cooperation framework. Fostering adhesion and a sense of belonging to the Alliance through the introduction of networking tools.

Advancing our Common Science Agendas

Date : 30/11/2023

2 - 4pm

Presentations

Ulysseus -Navigating Change and Governance: Co-Creating a European University Alliance branch in Vietnam

In this presentation, we will delve into the journey of Ulysseus European University and its member institutions as they embark on a pioneering venture – the establishment of a joint university branch outside Europe in collaboration with the University of Danang in Vietnam. With a focus on change management skills, we will explore the critical role they play in successfully navigating the complex challenges of international expansion. Furthermore, we will discuss the evolution of governance structures that underpin the initial joint investment into this ambitious endeavor, shedding light on the collaborative processes and decision-making frameworks adopted by these European University Alliances. Join us to discover how cooperation, adaptability, and strategic governance can shape the future of higher education alliances on a global scale.

EELISA - Boosting connections among researchers and innovators: joint calls and contests

Connecting our researchers and innovators and providing them with new and more opportunities to innovate and do research have been key objectives of EELISA InnoCORE. For achieving this, among others, we have created tools (such as the catalogue of facilities and the networking platform for researchers) and also put in place joint calls for funding and joint contests. In this presentation, we would like to focus on our experience regarding the design and implementation of the latter via two concrete examples, the [EELISA Connect Call for workshops](#) and the [EELISA Prototype contest](#). We will share with the audience the success factors, challenges and lessons learnt that we faced during the whole process. We would also like to listen to your recommendations and opinions so that we can improve them!

Pilots and Action Plans

Workshop 2

Date : 30/11/2023

2 - 4pm

Lead: Miriam Koktvedgaard Zeitzen (4eu+)

Co-Lead: Hattie Hine (EUTOPIA)

Roles

- Facilitator: Elena del Giorgio (4EU+)
- Speaker 1: Mattia Bellotti (EUTOPIA)
- Speaker 2: Sigríður Beck (TRAIN EUTOPIA)
- Speaker 3: Sophia Karner (Una Europa)
- Speaker 4: Manuel José Damásio (FILM-EU)
- Speaker 5: Ladislav Kristoufek (4EU+)
- Rapporteur: Miriam Koktvedgaard Zeitzen (TRAIN4EU+ Project Manager)

Structure

- 2:00pm** Moderator welcomes speakers & participants, introduces workshop & sets policy context.
- 2:10pm** Speakers present alliance topic & conclude with question for discussion (8 min. pr. alliance)
- 2:45pm** Moderator sums up & reiterates speakers' 4 questions to be discussed
- 2:50pm** Bio break & participants circulate to 4 boards in 4 corners w. 4 questions w. 4 alliances
- 3:00pm** Participants use floor to discuss 4 questions, speakers facilitate; at 15.25 return to seats
- 3.30pm** 4 groups/speakers presents issues from discussion & Moderator leads Q&A session
- 4:00pm** Workshop ends

Presentations

Abstract

In Workshop 2 on Pilots and Action Plans: what are the SwafS projects leaving for future developments of the Alliances' R&I dimension, we will showcase key outcomes of the 4 SwafS projects presented, focusing on areas where the 4 alliances FILM-EU, UNA.EUROPA, EUTOPIA & 4eu+ have seen tangible progress and overall impact. Building on these key outcome outlines, speakers will engage with the audience in terms of 4 key questions, encouraging exchanges and interactive discussions, facilitated by the speakers. Through the presentations, interactive exchanges and a concluding Q&A session, we aim to underscore the SwafS projects' efforts to position European University Alliances as key contributors to the European R&I landscape, highlighting their unique value in complement to existing R&I collaborations. Our second aim is to advocate for future investment needs to allow European University Alliances to take forward their ambitions and fulfil their potential as drivers of the European Research Area, in Europe as well as globally.

Common R&I Agenda: From conceptualisation and pilot in SwafS project to implementation at alliance level

- Speaker 1: Mattia Bellotti, Secretary General (EUTOPIA)
- Speaker 2: Sigríður Beck, Management Board (TRAIN EUTOPIA)

Una Europa's vision for research & innovation

- Speaker: Sophia Karner, Senior policy officer (UnaEuropa)

Jointly designing a research agenda through joint research initiatives: the FilmEU Artistic research Agenda

- Manuel José Damásio, Coordinator (FILM-EU)

Cultivating the Future: Strengthening Research & Innovation Human Capital in the 4EU+ Alliance

- Ladislav Kristoufek, Vice Rector Research Charles Uni., Prague (4eu+)

Reforming Research Assessment

Date : 30/11/2023

2 - 4pm

Workshop 3

Lead: Edita Lenkauskaitė (EU-CONEXUS)

Co-Lead: Luisa Bernstorff (Arqus)

Roles

- Moderator: Fernando Cornet (Arqus)
- Presenter: Antonio Ferrer-Montiel (NeuroTech)
- Speaker 1: Andrea Tokic, HRS4H award (EU-CONEXUS)
- Speaker 2: Prof. Eva Mendez, Open Science (YUFE)
- Speaker 3: Joachim Reidl - The pilot on research assessment (Arqus)
- Rapporteur: Edita Lenkauskaitė (EU-CONEXUS)

Structure

2:00-2:05pm: Introduction by Joachim Reidl (Arqus)

2:05-2:15pm: Policy/General Overview Presentation by Antonio Ferrer Montiel (NeuroTech)

2:15-3:00pm (15 min x 3 – speeches): EU-CONEXUS+Arqus+YUFE

3:00-3:40pm (40 min workshop 20/20 min): Free discussion on raised questions by speakers + SLIDO to identify the answers).

3:40-4:00pm: Summary and Group Photo

Topics

HRS4H award - Andrea Tokic (EU-CONEXUS)

On behalf of the Eu-Conexus Alliance, Andrea Tokić will present the results of a study conducted in the EU-Conexus Alliance on the mutual challenges in implementing the measures required by the HRS4R Award. The progress of HRS4R will be discussed as well as the relationship between HRS4R and research assessment reform

Open Science - Prof. Eva Mendez (YUFE)

On behalf of YUFE, Prof. Eva Mendez will present the activities of the Alliance for the promotion of Open Science. In addition, she will overview the best practices identified during the SwafS project and will discuss measures and tools to make Open Science accessible and attractive to the public.

The pilot on research assessment - Joachim Reidl (Arqus)

Joachim Reidl will present the work of the Task Force on Research Assessment Reform set up in the Arqus Alliance, which wants to be a tool for mutual learning and support in relation to the initiatives for research assessment reform that have started at various Arqus partner universities. He will focus especially on the experience at the University of Graz.

Inter- and Trans-disciplinarity in research management

Date : 30/11/2023

2 - 4pm

Workshop 4

Organisers: Circle U. and EPICUR

Roles

- Facilitators: Natalia Tikhonov Sigrist (Circle U.) and Anouk Tso (EPICUR)
- Speaker 1: Kathrin Wieck (ENHANCE)
- Speaker 2: Esther Chiama & Marco Aperti (UNIC)
- Speaker 3: Thrasyvoulos Tsiatsos (EPICUR)
- Rapporteur: Nora Korp (EPICUR)

Structure

- 2pm** Short introduction to the topic by the co-facilitators.
- 2:05pm** Presentation of three alliances
- 2:50pm** Break
- 3:00pm** Group discussions
- 3:40pm** Reporting and further exchanges in plenary

Introduction to the topic

Over the last decades, inter and trans-disciplinary research has been a major trend in research development and has been supported by research funding agencies at national, European and international levels. Inter- and transdisciplinarity have been put forward as a means to understand nature and society in all their complexity.

Dealing with global challenges and “wicked problems” demands knowledge development across sectoral and disciplinary “silos”. Research and innovation institutions in Europe have undoubtedly all potentials to make inter- and transdisciplinarity a reality and a motor for the development of our societies. Yet, the scientific dynamics at the forefront of research frequently challenges disciplinary boundaries, while scientific breakthroughs are often found in the tensions and interactions between different academic fields.

That does not mean that academic excellence in specialised fields is inherently opposed to pushing the research frontiers beyond disciplinary categories. Rather the opposite is the case: the academic strongholds carry the potential for unleashing the transformative power of inter-disciplinary research and scientific convergence. For the sake of both scientific excellence and groundbreaking research, as well as for the societal engagement and problem-solving contribution of universities, eliminating the obstacles for inter- and transdisciplinary research is fundamental.

The effective implementation of inter and trans-disciplinary research still encounters significant structural, cultural and practical obstacles in a traditionally mono-disciplinary academic world (this can also be dependent on national contexts – e.g. national procedures for recruitment, evaluation of researchers, funding mechanisms, etc.).

By developing R&I activities and stimulating the building of joint research environments across institutions and disciplines, European University Alliances are expected to significantly push inter- and transdisciplinarity to make it a reality and a key leverage for research quality and excellence. Approaching the ending of the pilot phase for the first two “generations” of alliances – including the European funding for their R&I dimension through the SwafS actions – it is essential to take stock of the main achievements, the lessons learnt and the challenges and identifies the next avenues to foster inter- and transdisciplinary research in Europe.

Objectives of the workshop

As cross-alliance event focusing on the R&I dimension of the alliance, the main objectives of this session are:

- to facilitate exchanges of experiences and expertise between alliances in developing inter- and transdisciplinary initiatives,
- to identify and discuss challenges alliances have been facing in developing these initiatives and share solutions found to overcome these challenges,
- to reflect on possible avenues for the alliances to further develop inter- and transdisciplinary research in the next phase of the initiative.

Organisation of the workshop

The workshop will be co-facilitated by Natalia Tikhonov Sigrist (Circle U., UCLouvain) and Anouk Tso (EPICUR, Universiteit van Amsterdam). After a short introduction to the topic as well as the objectives of the session, the workshop will be organized in the parts:

- 1. Short presentation of initiatives, activities and experiences in three alliances** (50 minutes) Three alliances (EPICUR, ENHANCE, UNIC) will shortly present (10-12 minutes) one specific initiative developed by their alliance to foster inter- and transdisciplinarity. In their presentation, the colleagues will emphasize how the initiative has been facilitated by the fact of being an alliance and how they have effectively fostered inter- and transdisciplinarity. Each presentation will be followed by a short Q&A with the participants. A short break (5-10 minutes) will follow.
- 2. Group discussions on the challenges faced and solutions developed by the alliances** (40 minutes) Depending on the number of participants, groups of 8-10 colleagues will be formed to discuss specifically what have been the main challenges the respective alliances have faced in fostering trans- and interdisciplinary research and what have been the solutions/innovations to overcome these challenges? Each group will be invited to take note on virtual wall (Padlet) or on a poster with post-its, and will appoint a rapporteur.
- 3. Reporting and further exchanges in plenary** (20 minutes) Rapporteurs will briefly explain the main conclusions of the group discussions, focusing on the similarities as well as differences in the challenges encountered and solutions developed by the alliances. Nora Korp (EPICUR, Universität für Bodenkultur Wien) will conclude the workshop by identifying 2-3 take home messages that could offer future perspectives for the alliances in their efforts to push inter- and transdisciplinarity.

Boosting Excellence within the European R&I Ecosystem through the European Universities Alliances

Date : 1/12/2023

9:00 - 9:45

Plenary session

Lead: Julie Hyzewicz & Marie Ugeux (CIVIS)

Co-lead: Isabella Baer-Eiselt & Edita Lenkauskaite (EU-CONEXUS)

Roles

- Presenter: Olga Wessels (ECIU and chairing FOREU1)
- Facilitator: Isabella Baer-Eiselt (EU-CONEXUS)
- Speaker 1: Tudor-Trestieni Ion, Head of sector, R&I actors and research career (DG RTD)
- Speaker 2: Frédéric Marias (UNITA)
- Speaker 3: Joakim Esbjörnsson (EUGLOH)
- Speaker 4: Marius Gilbert (CIVIS)
- Rapporteur: Marie Ugeux (CIVIS)

Structure

- 9am** Presentation from Tudor-Trestieni Ion
- 9:15am** Moderated discussion with Tudor-Trestieni Ion and representatives of the alliances
- 9:40am** Wrap-up with the main conclusions of the session by the moderator

Required: IT support

Abstract

The workshop will begin with a presentation by Mr. Ion, representative of DG RTD, on the various aspects that can be developed to boost the R&I sector in Europe through the European Universities Alliances initiative. Mr. Ion will report on ongoing discussions within the ERA Forum around Actions 4 (promote attractive research careers and mobility), 13 (empower Higher Education Institutions Excellence initiatives) and 17 (research management in public research performing organisations). This will serve as an introduction to the ensuing discussion between Mr. Ion and representatives of the participating Alliances, opening the debate on the challenges facing European Universities Alliances and the opportunities they represent to help shape the new European research environment.

Taking care of the knowledge square

Date : 1/12/2023

10:00 - 11:30

Roundtable 1

Lead: Ruben Teboul (Circle U.)

Co-lead: Michael Zacherle (EPICUR)

Roles

- Moderator: Pr Elizabeth Macintyre (Circle U.)
- Speaker 1: Vinicius de Carvalho (Circle U.)
- Speaker 2: Michael Zacherle (EPICUR)
- Speaker 3: Christian Iaione (ENGAGE.EU)
- Speaker 4: Marc Vanholsbeeck, Belgian Science Policy
- Speaker 5: Ragnhild Solvi Berg, Norwegian Directorate
- Rapporteur: Birgitta Kappes(EPICUR)

Structure

- 10:00 - 10:05am** Short introduction to the topic and panels by the moderator
- 10:05 - 10:45am** First round of questions with the panellists
- 10:45 - 10:55am** Q&A with the audience
- 11:55 - 12:05am** Second round of questions with the panellists
- 12:05-12:15pm** Q&A with the audience
- 12:15-12:30pm** Wrap-up / take-home messages from the moderator and panellists

Introduction to the topic

Back in the early 2000s, the Lisbon Strategy has been one of the key drivers for the R&I agenda in Europe. To make the EU “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”, it was indeed vital to strengthen the nexus between education, research and innovation and make the “knowledge triangle” a reality for the EU. The successive research framework programmes, and more specifically the creation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, have contributed to foster the integration of the knowledge triangle.

More recently, in 2019, the European Commission started to include transfer to society as the fourth mission and to replace the knowledge triangle with a square. The newly founded “European Universities” have replied by including actions such as research management training offers and the establishment of an Early Career Researcher board into the projects funded by ERASMUS+, thus softening up the existing hard boundaries of science subsidy practice in the EU already.

In its communication on achieving the European Education Area by 2025, the European Commission emphasized the central role of higher education institutions to foster the knowledge square. The European University alliances are now expected to make this a reality. Concepts like research and transfer as essential elements of exchange with society and research-oriented teaching illustrate the need to connect all missions of universities with each other. By establishing a systemic, structural and sustainable cooperation, by testing diverse innovative models and formats of cooperation, by transforming higher education institutions, alliances will break the “traditional” silos between the four building blocks of the knowledge square and maximize its impacts with and for the society.

During the pilot phase, alliances were mainly funded through the Erasmus+ which remains primarily an education programme of the EU. The R&I dimension of the alliances has been supported through a specific SwafS call in Horizon Europe which was discontinued. The uncertainty about the EU support after 2027, specifically concerning research and innovation, is very challenging for the alliances. Obviously, most alliances will continue to develop and intensify the R&I agenda and strive to make the knowledge square a reality. However, it will be essential that the future investment pathway for the alliances is structurally supporting the nexus between education, research, innovation and service to society – and thus overcoming the existing silos that still exist between these building blocks.

Taking care of the knowledge square

Objectives of the Roundtable

As cross-alliance event focusing on the R&I dimension of the alliance, the main objectives of this session are:

- to discuss how alliances have contributed to make the knowledge square a reality and foster a holistic approach in the developments of their activities;
- to engage with partners and experts outside the alliances and exchange views, experiences and expertise on the fulfillment of the knowledge square;
- to potentially contribute to future policy developments at EU, national, regional and institutional level.

Organisation of the Roundtable

The roundtable will be moderated by Pr Elizabeth Macintyre (Circle U., Université Paris Cité). After a short introduction to the topic and the panelists, the moderator will lead the discussions with 4 to 5 panelists by addressing them specific questions. The panelists will be invited to short (3-4 minutes), forward-looking and, in some extent, provocative in the responses. This to stimulate reactions and comments from the audience.

A rapporteur (Birgitta Kappes, EPICUR – Karlsruhe Institute of Technology) will conclude the roundtable by sharing key take-home messages.

Questions to the Panel (subject to change)

To alliances' panellists:

- During the pilot phase, what have been the main achievements in your alliance addressing the knowledge square?
- During the pilot phase, what have been the main challenges that your alliance faced in fostering engagement with citizens and society?
- What types of organizational changes (if any) were facilitated in your alliance to address these challenges?
- What resources and support would you deem necessary to operationalize the knowledge square in the next phase of your alliance?
- What leverage(s) can alliances offer to make the knowledge square a reality for their member institutions and beyond?

To external panellists:

- What are the main implications for HEIs to move from the knowledge triangle to the knowledge square?
- The core three missions of university is education, R&I and service to society. Therefore, the "knowledge square" is not a novelty. What are the main challenges HEIs are facing to foster the nexus between the four components of the "knowledge square"?
- In comparison with other inter-university cooperation, how alliances could foster the holistic vision on R&I?

Roundtable 2

Lead: Luisa Bernstorff (Arqus)

Co-lead: Jaime Llorca & Blanca Burillo (CHARM-EU)

Roles

- Moderator: Javier Valls (Arqus)
- Speaker 1: Aphra Kerr (CHARM-EU)
- Speaker 2: Ladislav Kristoufek (4EU+)
- Speaker 3: Mihalis Kritikos (EC)
- Rapporteur: Blanca Burillo Lago (CHARM-EU)

Structure

- 10:00am** Introduction by the Moderator
- 10:10am** Presentations by EC, CHARM-EU and 4EU+
- 10:55am** Discussion with the audience
- 11:15am** Conclusions by the Moderator

Presentations

Publish or perish in the AI era - Ladislav Kristoufek (4EU+)

In the landscape of academic research, the maxim "publish or perish" has taken on new dimensions in the era of artificial intelligence (AI). The integration of AI in research has not only accelerated the pace of scientific discovery but has also underscored the importance of transparency and collaboration. Open data, open code, and open science initiatives have emerged as pivotal pillars in this era, fostering accessibility and reproducibility in research. However, as the field progresses, challenges in peer review have become increasingly complex.

Establishing a distinct Ethics organizational/conceptual approach for research projects funded in the area of AI - Mihalis Kritikos (EC)

The presentation will shed light on the importance of establishing a distinct Ethics organizational/conceptual approach for research projects funded in the area of AI to enable the development of a human-centric, trustworthy and robust digital research ecosystem. To this end, for Horizon Europe, a first set of specialized guidance notes has been produced followed by several other organizational modalities. Given the novelty of this set of technologies from a research ethics governance perspective, the talk will discuss the particular needs for guidance, education, training and development of expertise. Furthermore, the challenges that are associated with the upcoming adoption of the EU Artificial Intelligence Act and its possible impact upon the design and implementation of research projects will be discussed. Particular attention will be given to the work of other international organisations in this particular field of research governance.

Ethics and research integrity in AI research – an interdisciplinary perspective - Aphra Kerr (Maynooth University)

Maintaining ethics and research integrity in AI research demands an interdisciplinary perspective. As AI increasingly permeates diverse aspects of society, the collaboration of fields becomes crucial. .

Key questions

- What are the implications for peer review processes? Ladislav Kristoufek (4EU+)
- What are the implications for research assessment? Ladislav Kristoufek (4EU+)
- What are the implications for bibliometrics? Ladislav Kristoufek (4EU+)

Roundtable 3

Lead: Claire Douet (ERUA)

Co-lead: Nicole Birkle (FORTHEM)

Roles

- Chair: Arnaud Regnaud (ERUA)
- Speaker 1: Carole Brunet (ERUA)
- Speaker 2: Timo Taskinen (FORTHEM)
- Speaker 3: Dana Strauss (EC2U)
- Speaker 4: Beatrix Busse (EUniWell)
- Speaker 5: Pádraig Murphy (ECIU)
- Rapporteurs: Claire Douet (ERUA) and Agnese Rusakova (FORTHEM)

Structure

- 10:00 - 10:05am** Introduction to the focus of the roundtable by the Chair
- 10:05 - 10:45am** TOPIC 1 - *What methodologies have been used in European University Alliances for strategic planning or/and implementation of responsible R&I*
- 10:05- 10:20am** Short presentations by 3 speakers on topic 1
- 10:20 - 10:30am** Questions by the moderator addressed to the 3 speakers
- 10:30 - 10:45am** Questions from the audience
- 10:45 - 11:30am** TOPIC 2 - *To what extent is responsible R&I compatible with academic activism?*
- 10:55 - 11:05am** Questions by the Chair addressed to the 2 speakers
- 11:05 - 11:20am** Questions from the audience
- 11:20 - 11:30am** Wrap-up/ exchange of contacts

Presentations

Abstract

Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) encompasses various aspects, including the integrity and methodological rigor of fundamental research, the reach and applicability of research findings, effective science communication, fostering public trust in science, and strategic allocation of research funding to tackle pertinent societal issues. The ERA Policy Agenda advocates for the establishment of R&I networks to enhance knowledge ecosystems and the promotion of citizen science. It also emphasizes the importance of openness, freedom, inclusivity, and diversity in European scientific endeavors.

This roundtable will delve into how European University Alliances uphold their commitment to responsibility in Research and Innovation (R&I) SWAFS projects by promoting societal engagement and involving external stakeholders. The discussion will examine how universities within these alliances have contributed to addressing challenges associated with responsible R&I. We propose structuring the conversation around two primary themes, where experts from specific alliances will share insights, followed by a broader discussion.

Topic 1. What methodologies have been used in European University Alliances for strategic planning or/and implementation of responsible R&I

- How does your alliance integrate responsible Research and Innovation (R&I) principles within its strategic documents at the alliance level?
- Have you formulated collective guidelines and frameworks specifically focused on responsible R&I? If so, what was the collaborative process involved in their development?
- How do you intend to promote and ensure adherence to these guidelines?
- Has your alliance successfully devised shared methodologies aimed at engaging external partners in R&I activities?
- Furthermore, how feasible is it to adapt these methodologies to suit diverse local contexts, and have you explored the concept of action research in this context?
- Moreover, have you managed to extend projects initiated with the involvement of citizens to international settings? Is the approach of citizen science tailored to operate seamlessly across various borders and cultural differences?

Topic 2. To what extent is responsible R&I compatible with academic activism?

- Is the inclusivity/diversity aspect of responsibility in R&I prioritized in your alliance. Can you give an inspiring example?
- What levels of societal involvement have you achieved regarding your alliance's R&I? Can you share any inspiring examples?
- What are the most pressing ethical issues faced now by researchers working with external stakeholders in your alliance?

Other key questions

- How do you, as non-academic actors who are often approached by universities, understand responsible R&I?
- How do you, as non-academic actors who are often approached by universities, prefer to be involved?
- What are the most pressing issues and challenges you would like to be involved in developing?

Conclusions & Closing

Date : 1/12/2023

11:30 - 12:30

Hybrid session

Lead: Sarah Thompson (CIVICA)

Co-lead: Claire Douet (ERUA)

Roles

- Presenter: Ludovic Thilly (EC2U and FOREU2 Chair)
- Chair: Sergei Guriev (CIVICA)
- Speakers 1: Minna Wilkki (European Research Executive Agency)
- Speaker 2: Olga Wessels (ECIU)
- Speaker 3: Ludovic Thilly (EC2U)
- Speaker 4: Auður Inga Rúnarsdóttir (Aurora)
- Rapporteur: Sarah Thompson (CIVICA)

Structure

- 11:30-11:35am** Chair to introduce the session
- 11:35am-12:00pm** Recap of the roundtables/workshops
- 12:00-12:20pm** Discussion on next steps for the alliances
- 12:20-12:30pm** Concluding remarks from Minna Wilkki
- 12:30pm** Group Photo

Presentations

Abstract

The closing session of the conference will provide a synthesis of the two-day event and conclude with a look towards the next steps for the alliances. Seven representatives (either rapporteur, moderator, or speaker) will begin by recapitulating the discussions and insights emanating from each of their diverse roundtables and workshops. The session will then transition into a final discussion featuring the two conference presenters, and a representative from the Aurora alliance, chaired by CIVICA Research. Minna Wilkki from the European Research Executive Agency is slated to deliver impactful concluding remarks. Core themes to be explored in this session include the transformative impacts and value-added of research within European University alliances, as well as the prospective funding landscape and future trajectory of research activities within the alliances. This forward-looking dialogue will close the event while helping lay the foundation for a forthcoming joint statement from the alliances.

Recap of the roundtables and workshops

One representative (rapporteur, moderator, or speaker) from the workshops and roundtables will provide a brief overview of the main takeaways from their session.

- Workshop 1 – Advancing Our Common Science Agendas: building joint structures and support offices, pooling resources, capacity building, human capital, etc. – **Isabel Salgueiro (EELISA)**
- Workshop 2 – Pilots and Action Plans: what are the SwafS projects leaving for future developments of the Alliances' R&I dimension – **Elena del Giorgio (4EU+)**
- Workshop 3 – Reforming Research Assessment – **Edita Lenkauskaitė (EU-CONEXUS)**
- Workshop 4 – Inter- and Trans-disciplinarity in research management – **Nora Korp (EPICUR)**
- Roundtable 1 – Taking care of the knowledge square: holistic support for a holistic handling of all four dimensions (broader vision) – **Birgitta Kappes (EPICUR)**
- Roundtable 2 – Research Ethics & Integrity: The Role of New Technologies – **Blanca Burillo Lago (CHARM-EU)**
- Roundtable 3 – Responsible R&I: Fostering Societal Engagement & Involving External Stakeholders – **Agnese Rusakova (FORTHEM)**

Presentations

Discussion on next steps for the alliances

Closing discussion to take place between alliance representatives (conference presenters and Aurora) and moderated by the chair (CIVICA). Topics to include:

- The future of European University Alliances, and the critical role that research plays in the establishment of a European University
- The funding landscape for the research dimension of the alliances
- Lobbying actions the alliances can engage in together
 - Joint statement to be prepared after the conference that synthesises inputs from all workshops and roundtable discussions

Concluding remarks - Minna Wilkki

Ms. Wilkki to speak on the following topics:

- Notable remarks from the previous sessions during the forum
- The role of research in the alliances, now and into the future; what are the expectations from the European Commission in terms of research within the alliances
- Perspectives on what the future of funding opportunities for the research dimension of the alliances will look like, including recommendations on how alliances should proceed knowing that many will no longer have dedicated research funding in the near future