

## ANNUAL PLAN 2024 - SUMMER UPDATE SCIENCE AND EDUCATION FOR SOCIETY

### STRATEGIC CLUSTER

### WORKING GROUP LEADERS

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### OBJECTIVES

The Science & Education for Society Working Group addresses topics related to the concept of place-based universities and engagement with society and citizens while also working on the role of education (both VET and Higher Education) in the Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategies (RIS3) as well as education and skills for research and innovation. The Working Group facilitates information sharing, knowledge development, and aims to strengthen existing and build new relationships with the EU institutions. Facilitating project development is also part of the Working Group's scope. For this purpose, the Working Group assesses the interest of the membership for specific calls under Erasmus+ and support in the most efficient way the members in building consortia, primarily with the ERRIN online tool for project development.

### CONTEXT

The key EU level priorities, strategies, and events that the Working Group aims to follow up on in 2024 are:

#### Key EU processes to follow

- 2023-2024 European Year of Skills (ends 8/5/2024)
- EU Skills Agenda - [Pact for Skills](#)
  - Large scale Skills cooperations and Regional Skills Partnership
  - [Harnessing Talent in Europe: a new boost for EU Regions](#)
  - Skills ecosystems
- Outcomes Mid-term evaluation of Horizon Europe and Erasmus +
- Preparation of FP10 and the next Erasmus+ programme
- European Education Area (EEA) in relation to ERA and European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
- Evidence based to evidence informed policymaking and the impact on science for society
- Societal impact of research, Societal Innovation
- ERA Action 11, An ERA For the Green transition, Sub-Action 11.3 Research & Innovation for the Future of Work (ERA4FutureWork)

- A blueprint for a future joint European degree, accompanied by recommendations on quality assurance and on attractive academic careers in higher education.
  - Council Recommendation on attractive and sustainable careers in higher education (non-legislative, Articles 165 and 166 TFEU, Q2 2024)
  - Council Recommendation on a European quality assurance and recognition system (non-legislative, Articles 165 and 166 TFEU, Q2 2024)

### Important funding programmes

Erasmus+ centralised actions are of interest

- Policy Experimentation - Adult Education - Priority 7: Supporting the Pact for Skills; deadline for submission 4 June 2024
- Policy Experimentation - Priority 11: Micro-credentials eco-systems and Priority 12: Micro-credentials for the digital and green transitions - deadline for submission 4 June 2024
- Policy Experimentation - Priority 6: Joining forces to reskill workers focus ILA - deadline for submission 4 June 2024
- European Universities - Community of Practice: follow up on the selected project and the future investments - Priority 7: Supporting the Pact for Skills; deadline for submission 7 February 2024

The SEFS Working Group will explore in the wider membership the interest for the Erasmus+ calls supporting the establishment of Regional and Interregional Skills Partnerships. The revamped ERRIN Project Development Tool will be used to collect the expressions of interest, which will guide the SEFS WG in any further support activities for specific calls or consortium building.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTPUTS IN ERRIN PROJECTS

### Projects of strategic interest to the Working Group:

#### CHARTER – European Skills Alliance for Cultural Heritage

- Topic: Skills Alliance for Cultural Heritage
- Benefits for members Policy influencing opportunities:
  - CHARTER Paris conference targeting Regional and National stakeholders from the sector: 19-20 March 2024
  - CHARTER Policy round table with EU institutions and other key stakeholders (Brussels, 18 April 2024)
  - CHARTER Workshop Drafting policy recommendations (Rotterdam, June 2024)
  - Exploring the establishment of an interregional Skills partnership for Cultural Heritage (Q1-Q3 2024)

### Other relevant and member-driven projects:

- UIREKA, European University Alliance linked to green transition and Cities mission;
- Community of Practice of the European Universities Alliances (follow up of the approved project after call results): For-EU4All – Forum of European Universities for All consortium

## How does the group support partnership building and collaborate with other European organisations or networks?

- **JRC – Science meet regions initiative**
- Cooperation or joint events with UAS4 Europe, OECD (Entrepreneurial skills)
- EARLALL, European Association of Regional and local authorities for Lifelong learning
- IGLO – Working Group on Higher Education, UnLiON - Working Group on Higher Education: collaborate on sessions where a regional dimension could be added.
- VANGUARD
- Lifelong learning platform
- EURASHE and UAS4Europe

## What topics and tailored activities could be proposed for less active regions, for example tackling topics directed to widening countries?

- When organising exchange of regional examples, the SEFS Working Group will take an inclusive approach.

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

### Unlocking potential: regional perspectives on knowledge valorisation

**Date: 2 October 2024**

In the [2022 Council Recommendation](#), knowledge valorisation is referred to as the process of creating social and economic value from knowledge by linking different areas and sectors and by transforming data, know-how and research results into sustainable products, services, solutions and knowledge-based policies that benefit society. This Recommendation broadened the concept of knowledge valorisation limited to IP management by universities and public research organisations, to encompass from 2022 onwards the entire R&I ecosystem and its increasingly diverse range of actors.

In the same line of thinking, the Action 7 of the European Research Area Policy Agenda 2022-2024, is dedicated to upgrading the EU Guidance for a better knowledge valorisation and stresses the need of reinforcing the links between the R&I actors and making sure that research results bring value to the society.

This informative Working Group meeting aims to deepen the understanding of efficient and effective ways of knowledge valorisation in the regional and local R&I ecosystems. The two codes of practice for citizen engagement and Industry-Academia co-creation for knowledge valorisation, recently published by the European Commission, will be presented. The meeting will facilitate an exchange about good regional practices among ERRIN members and discuss what needs to be strengthened in the next programming period to address the current challenges.

### **UAS4EUROPE and ERRIN Horizon Europe Proposal Workshop**

**Date: 6-7 November 2024**

UAS4EUROPE and ERRIN are co-organising a Horizon Europe Proposal Workshop with the focus on capacity building for newcomers to the programme interested in applying for Horizon Europe's Pillar 2. This will be a hands-on and interactive workshop by demystifying proposal preparation for collaborative research calls in Horizon Europe. We will invite a Horizon Europe evaluator to share practical insights, do's and don'ts from an evaluators' perspective, and some successful applicants will share their experience. During this workshop, participants will learn about ERRIN's project development tool, which is a very easy tool for targeted partner searches and consortium building within the wide ERRIN-network of R&I stakeholders coming from 120 regions in 22 European countries. The workshop will provide a unique networking opportunity for paving the way for strong partnerships, and possibly some more targeted follow-up sessions in 2025 for consortium building for specific calls. The workshop targets scientists and research managers and administrators at Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS); public administrators and other stakeholders involved in regional innovation ecosystems.

### **European University Alliances and their commitment to the S3 Strategies: returning to the issue and looking at the present and future**

**Date: 2 December 2024**

In September 2022 the SEFS WG discussed with the European Commission and regional examples the relationship between the then 44 European Universities and the S3-strategies of the regions where the Universities have their campuses. Two years later, there are 64 alliances, spanning 35 countries and encompassing more than 560 higher education institutions of all types, across all regions of Europe. They are solidly anchored in communities and innovation networks, bringing together almost 2200 associated partners ranging from non-governmental organisations to enterprises, cities, local and regional authorities, and higher education institutions from the [Bologna Process countries](#). Besides the 14 new alliances of European Universities, a new Community of Practice for all European Universities will also start their activities in autumn this year, aiming to reinforcing peer learning between the alliances and boosting dissemination of reusable results and models within the wider higher education sector.

In this information meeting, the SEFS Working Group will take stock of the initiative from a regional ecosystem's perspective:

- Has there been an evolution over the four calls in how alliances aim to demonstrate their contribution to regional development? How do the alliances engage with the regional ecosystems and with their local communities, including in the context of the Smart Specialisation Strategies?
- How is the European Commission following up about the regional embedding of the granted alliances?
- Are there any examples following the European Commission's promotion of providing Cohesion Policy Funds to the Alliances?
- Can or should the Community of Practice contribute to circulating good practices in this field, and engage with regional stakeholders in future policy dialogues with the Commission on the future of the Alliances?

## PAST 2024 ACTIVITIES

### [Evaluating the societal innovation impact of R&I: learnings from Horizon 2020 and looking forward to the 10th Framework Programme](#)

**Date: 18 March 2024**

Horizon Europe shall deliver societal impact by contributing to address, through R&I, the EU policy priorities and global challenges, including UN Sustainable Development Goals. Progress towards societal impact is monitored across the whole programme, through three impact pathways and related indicators in the short, medium and longer terms. This information meeting was dedicated to the outcomes of the [Ex post evaluation of Horizon 2020, the EU framework programme for research and innovation](#), which was published on 29 January 2024. It discussed the **impact of Horizon 2020 funding for social innovation and exchange about the next steps in HEU and FP10**. The aim of the meeting was to foster a better understanding of what worked well and what are the remaining challenges. Furthermore, the meeting provided an opportunity for ERRIN members to learn from regional and European good practices in this field.

**Learnings from the meeting:** [240426\\_Draft\\_Recommendations\\_Evaluating the societal innovation impact of R&I learnings from Horizon 2020 and looking forward to FP10.docx](#)

The H2020 programme has shifted considerably with political priorities being adopted. This has made assessing social impact more complicated. The programme had a pivotal role in responding to the Covid crisis and vaccine development and is seen as the second largest provider of science relating to climate in the world. However, there are gaps and issues, such as the monitoring arrangements which can be perceived as too narrow.

On FP10, the high-level working group is examining how to increase impact and ways to sustain a project beyond the three-year funding period of a project, as often applying the results in practice will be difficult once funding runs out.

**Follow up for this workstream:** return to the topic when the first draft of FP10 will be presented OR when the current pilot for SRLs in CL5 have been evaluated

### Strengthening skills governance in regional innovation ecosystems: lessons learnt and remaining challenges

**Date: 14 June 2024**

As the activities of the EU Year of Skills came to an end in April 2024, the Science and Education for Society Working Group organised a Working Group meeting to reflect on the lessons learnt from the regional case studies ERRIN members conducted in the context of ERRIN's project [CHARTER](#). This project is the first Erasmus+ funded sectoral blueprint that involved six regions to explore the place-based perspective on skills governance from a regional innovation ecosystem's perspective.

This online meeting targeted ERRIN members and presented more cross-cutting processes and policy-related learnings derived from the CHARTER case studies. Furthermore, the Basque Government, one of the pioneering regions in the CHARTER project, shared its regional approach for engaging the ecosystem's stakeholders into the regional skills debate, which recently culminated in the establishment of a [new Regional Skills Partnership for the Basque Cultural and Creative industries](#).

The members exchanged ideas about the remaining challenges and how the existing instruments can be strengthened in the next programming period.

**Learnings:** Regional competences in skills development are important enablers where it was clear that those regions with greater powers are able to undertake more extensive activities.

**Follow up for this workstream:** One of the follow up activities noted was the suggestion to examine the opportunities within Horizon Europe to develop the research linked to the actions of the CHARTER project, in particular if regions will take part in the Resilient Cultural Heritage European Partnership.