Starting research collaboration within a Seal of Excellence EUA

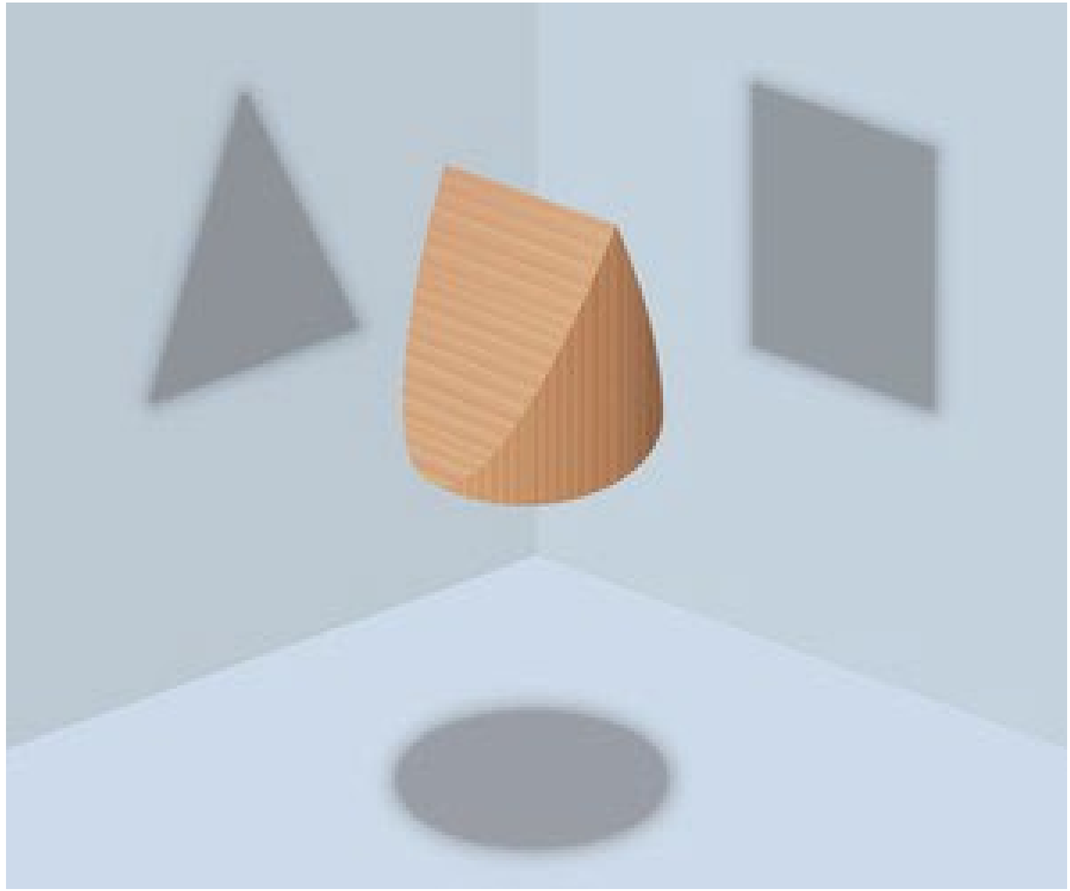
TCA - European University Alliances in the Dutch Higher Education Landscape
3 April 2025, Woerden

Kathi Lemmens-Krug

Windesheim University of Applied Sciences

Three perspectives on research collaboration

- European University Alliance - *DIVERSE*
- Institution - *Windesheim University of Applied Sciences*
- National context - *Dutch Higher Education Landscape*



Context of our European University Alliance - DIVERSE

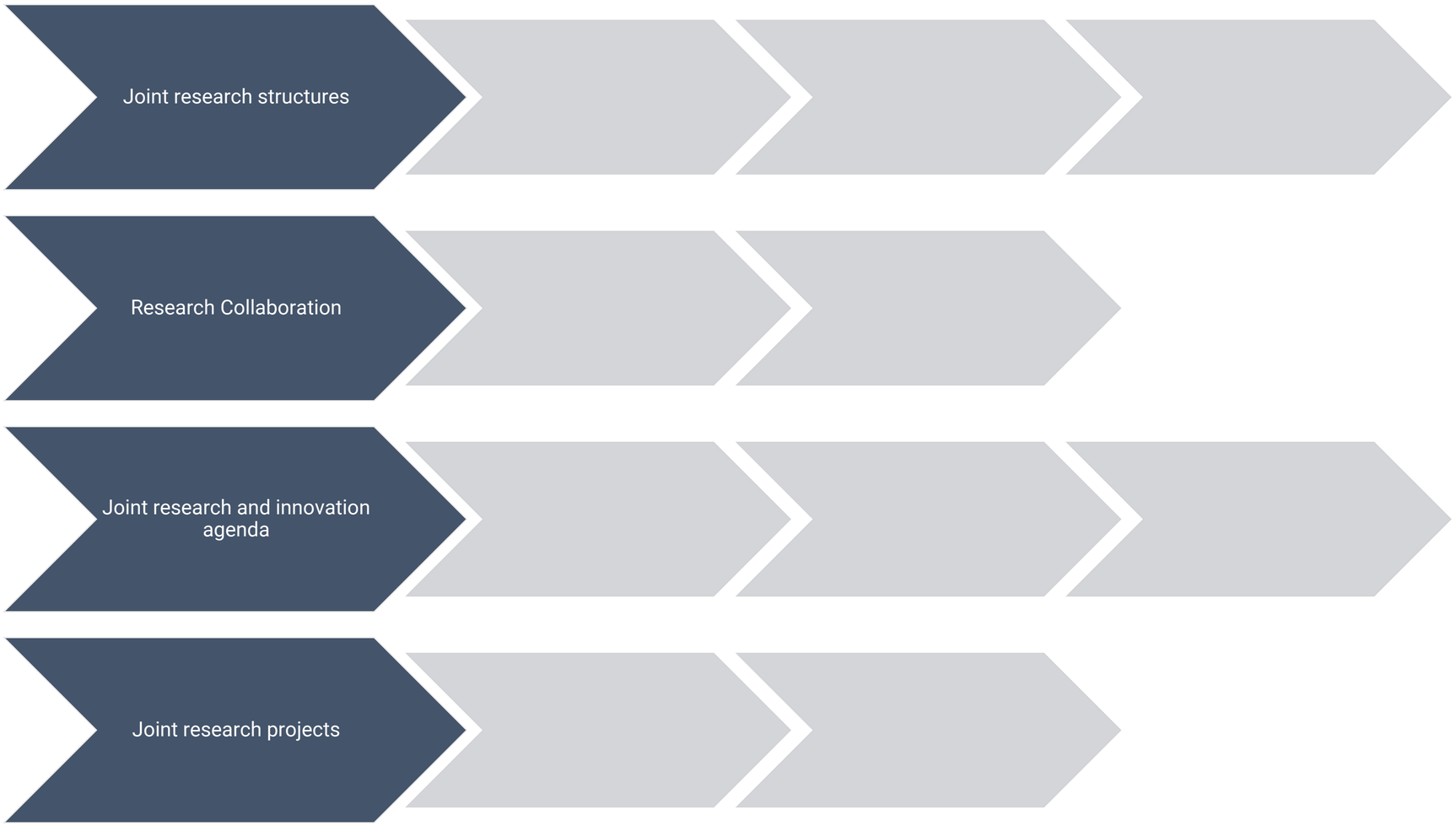
- Start September 2024
- Seal of Excellence
- Mix of institutions (public-private, small-big, UAS – University, research – education)
- Focussed on thematic challenges (multidisciplinary nature and valorisation and innovation focus)
- Governance: Executive Board, 3 thematic workings groups
  - Research, Development and Innovation (WG RDI)
  - Teaching and Learning (WG T&L)
  - Mobility (WG Mobility)

Working Group Research Development and Innovation

Building a routine and trust
Develop shared goals, activities and responsibilities
Connect on research themes
Start research joint activities

Resource limitations
Institutional and national differences in RDI structures
Consolidating relationships

Strategic direction of Research Development and Innovation



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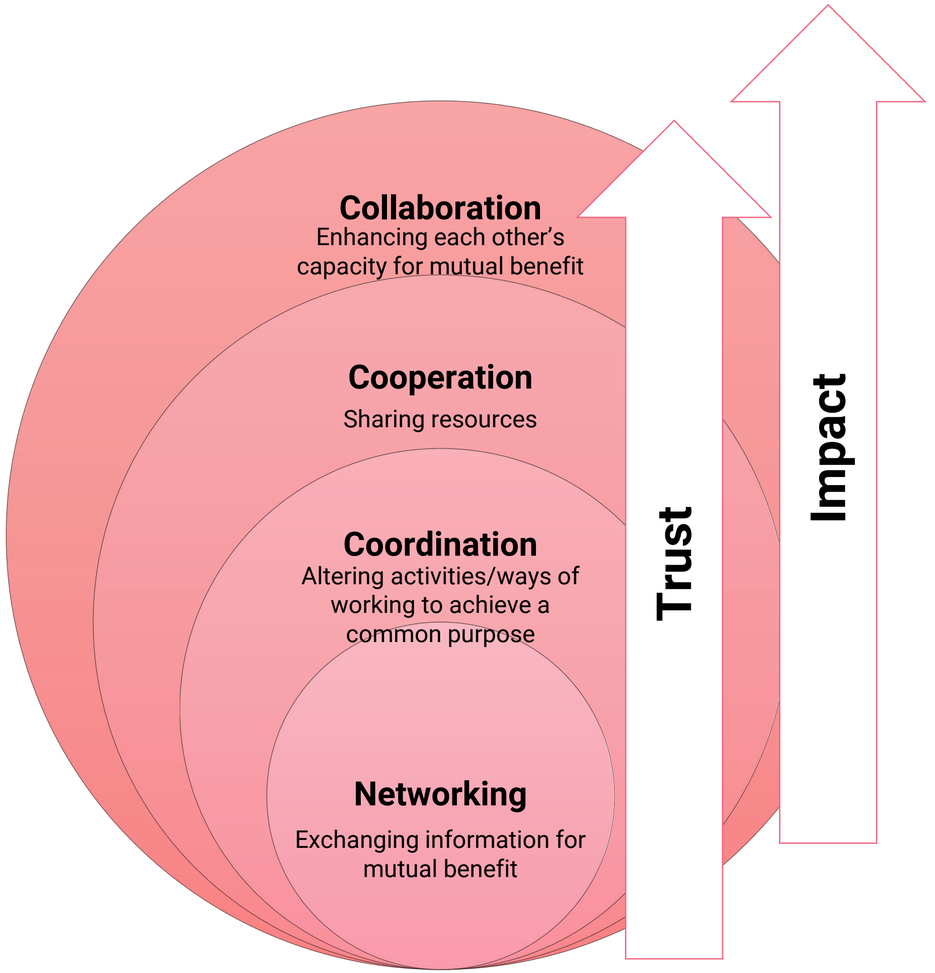
Strategic direction of DIVERSE

- What kind of partnership do we want to be?
- What are the opportunities?
- What is possible given the contextual conditions (no structural funding, cutbacks on research and education investment in European countries, geopolitical shifts)?



Levels of partnership (Source: adapted from Himmelman, 1996)

Primary processes

Impact-driven research focused on transitions and educational innovation with impact for students and the society

University leadership

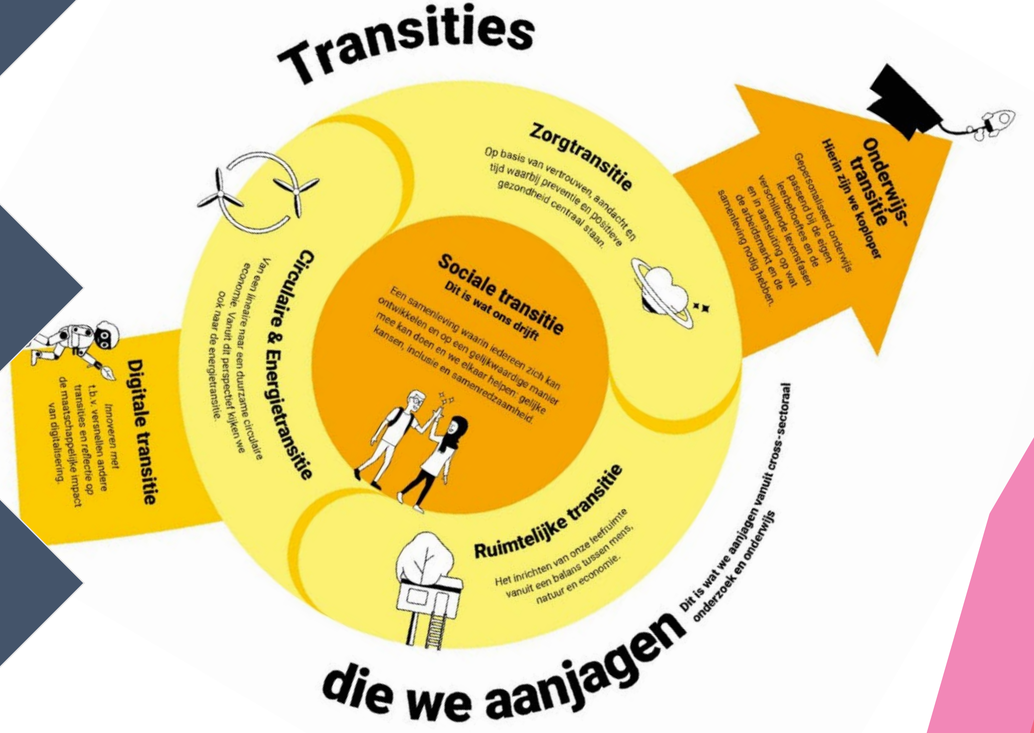
Commitment and institutional strategy

Supporting processes, systems

Organisation and support

European context

European networks and strategic partnerships



DIVERSE
European University Alliance

1. Algebra University (Croatia)
2. George Emil Palade University (Romania)
3. Istanbul Beykent University (Turkey)
4. Autonomous University of Lisbon (Portugal)
5. Griffith College (Ireland)
6. SAMK UAS (Finland)
7. Technische Hochshule Nürnberg Georg Simon Ohm (Germany)
8. Universidad Europea del Atlántico (Spain)
9. Technical University of Applied Sciences Rosenheim (Germany)
10. PXL University of Applied Sciences and Arts (Belgium)
11. SMK College of Applied Sciences (Lithuania)
12. Windesheim University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands)

Link to Seal of Excellence European Commission: *Seal of Excellence - European Education Area*

DIVERSE Website: *Diverse University Alliance*

DIVERSE Linkedin: *Diverse University Alliance Linkedin*

DIVERSE at Windesheim contact:
Rob Maat (Executive Board, T&L, Mobility)
r.maat@windesheim.nl
Kathi Lemmens-Krug (Research, Development and Innovation)
k.lemmens-krug@windesheim.nl

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meet the world

Questions?

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RESEARCHERS IN MOTION

Young Universities for the Future of Europe

YUFE4Postdocs

MSCA Co-Fund

Andreas Bressler

Maastricht University

Andreas.Bressler@maastrichtuniversty.nl

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YUFE4Postdocs at a Glance

Nine Partner Universities

Coordinated by UAntwerp

56 Postdoc Positions

Budget of €14,7m: 50% MSCA, 50% university funding

YUFE Research Topics

Urban Challenges and Opportunities

Enhance Research Collaboration

Support early-career researchers, strengthening partnerships and foster brain exchange

YUFE4Postdocs at a Glance

Best-scored in 2021 MSCA co-fund call

Nine Partner Universities

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YUFE Research Topics

Urban Challenges and Opportunities

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European Opportunities

LEAD BENEFICIARY

1 Universiteit Antwerpen

YUFE UNIVERSITES

2 Maastricht University

3 Universität Bremen

4 University of Eastern Finland

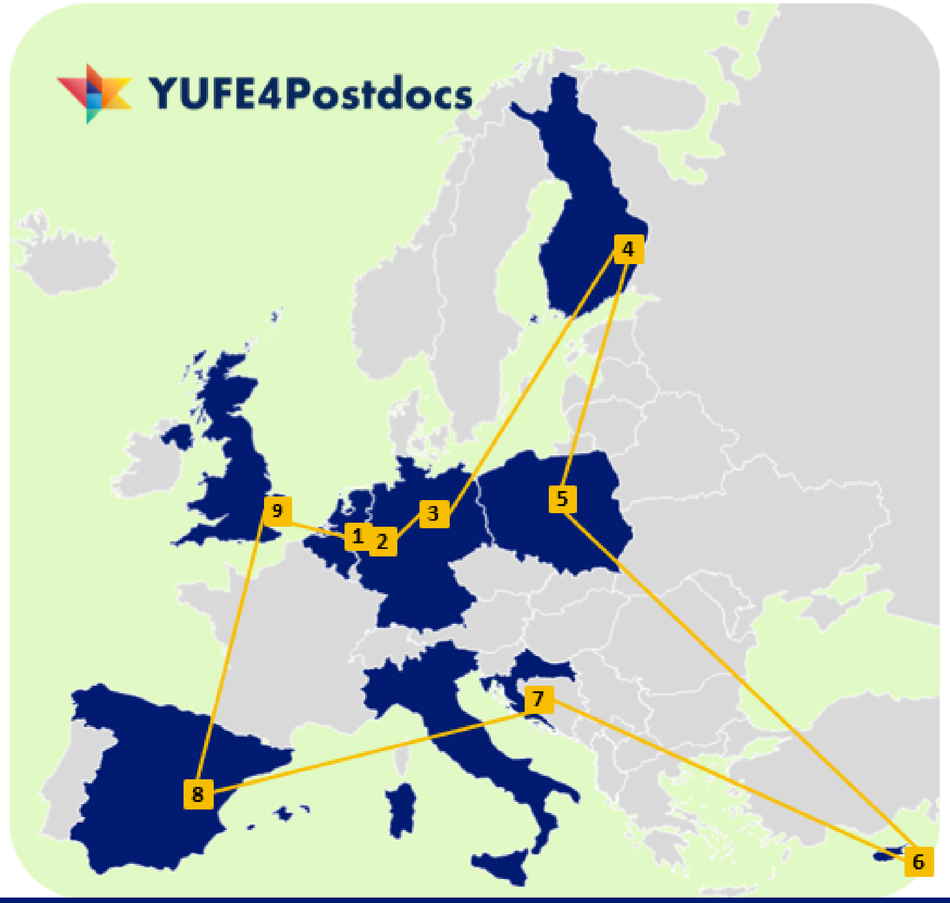
5 Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

6 University of Cyprus

7 UNIRI

8 uc3m Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

9 University of Essex



ASSOCIATED PARTNERS

BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS

- BRIGHTLANDS MAASTRICHT HEALTH CAMPUS (NL)
- CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY TORUN (PL)
- CROATIAN CHAMBER OF ECONOMY (HR)
- GETAFE INICIATIVAS (ES)
- NORTH KARELIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (FI)
- VOKA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANTWERP-WAASLAND (BE)

CITY COUNCILS & REGIONS

- ANTWERP (BE)
- BREMEN (DE)
- COLCHESTER (UK)
- ESSEX (UK)
- GETAFE (ES)
- KUOPIO (FI)
- MAASTRICHT (NL)
- NICOSIA (CY)
- RIJEKA (HR)
- TORUN (PL)

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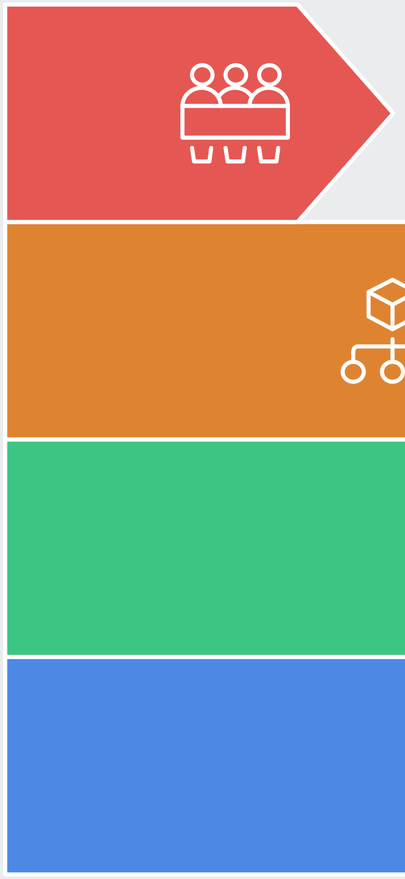
Organisational Structure



Steering Committee

Oversight and decision-making body

Y4P Central Office

Project Management by University of Antwerp

Navigators at nine Partners

University-specific implementation together with local staff

Postdocs & Supervisors

Dual Supervision
Societal Stakeholder

CoARA-proof Selection Procedure

Step 1 - Eligibility check

- Coordinated effort with partner universities
- Content and ethics check

Step 2 – International peer review

- Contracted to ESF/Science Connect
- 14 weeks duration
- UAntwerp is co-funding: cost €90.000 per call, €48.000 available in central budget

Step 3 – Inter- & transdiciplinary selection committees

- Two Selection Committees per call and per focus domain
- Academic (YUFE & non-YUFE) and societal experts (urban stakeholders)
- 12 members/committee – external academic chairs

CoARA-proof Selection Procedure

Step 1 - Eligibility check

- Coordinated effort with partner universities
- Content and ethics check

275 applications
→ 20% acceptation rate

Step 2 – International peer review

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- 14 weeks duration
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Selected as CoARA case study on Reforming Academic Career Assessment (Jan 2025)

Step 3 – Inter- & transdisciplinary selection committees

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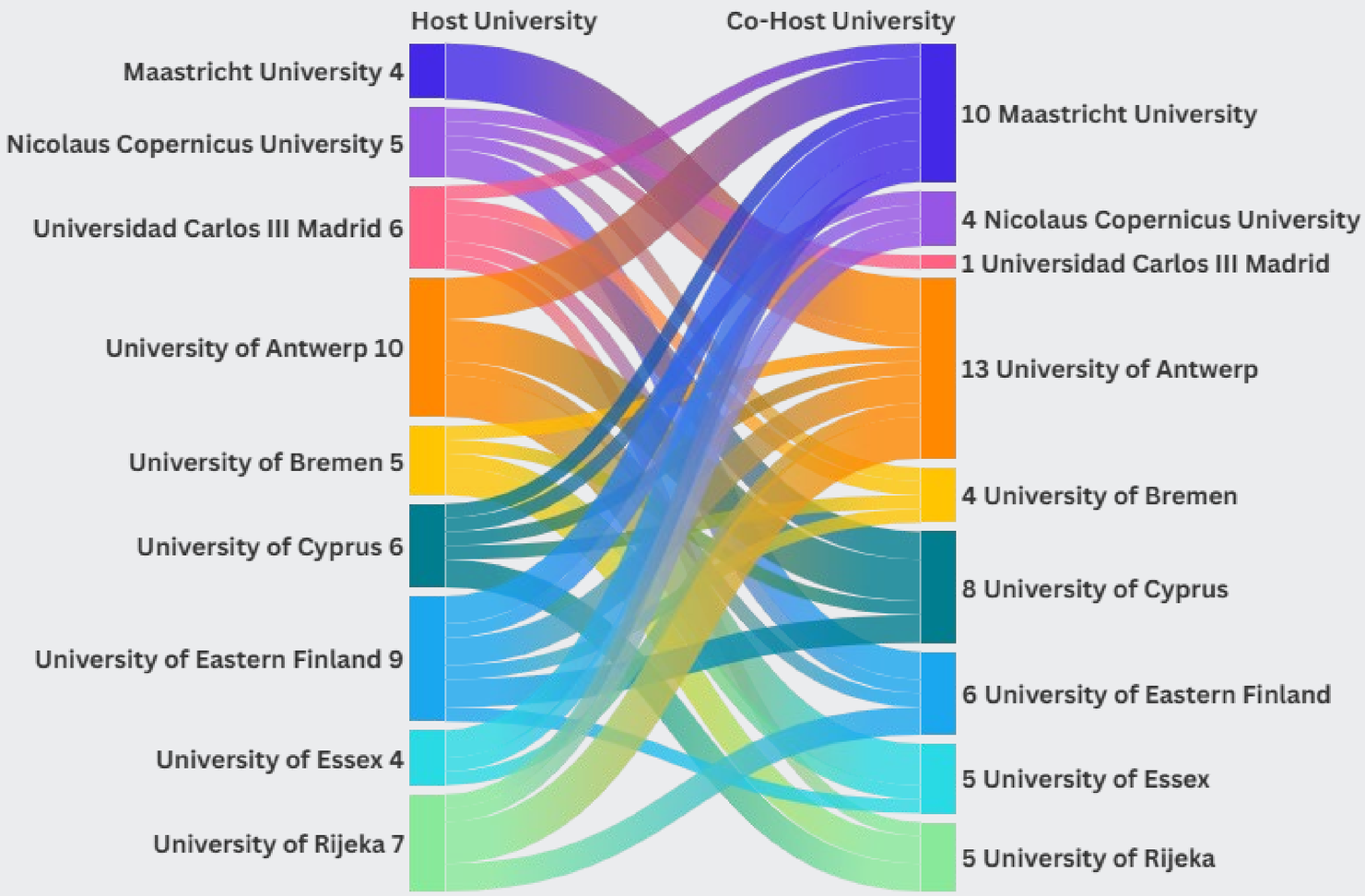
Brain Circulation



YUFE

Dedicated Training Programme

YUFE4POSTDOCS TRAINING PROGAMME

YUFE4Postdocs

INTAKE MEETING
Community building, introduction to Open Science & Y4P training offering

2 NETWORK-WIDE 2-DAY SEMINARS
1. Open Science & CERI
2. CERI at an advanced stage of the research process, science communication, valorisation and entrepreneurship

MANDATORY JOINT WORKSHOPS & COURSES
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Research Ethics and Integrity

À LA CARTE (non-exhaustive list)
- R&I Proposal Writing
- Entrepreneurship & Business Development
- Science Communication & Public Engagement

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COMPLEMENTARY TRAININGS

YUFE	Host Institution
YUFE Academy	Postdoc training portfolio
Staff Programme	Complementary staff trainings

PILLAR 1
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

PILLAR 2
JOINT TRANSFERABLE SKILLS TRAINING

PILLAR 3
INDIVIDUAL TRAINING OPTIONS

YUFE

Lessons learned

- Motivated and stable staff needed at central office and as local navigators
- 1,5FTE for central office is too little
- MSCA regulation are not made for alliances, but workarounds are possible

- High appreciation from the postdocs
- Highly attractive for professors
- Great instrument to implement the alliance values

- Some postdocs may leave before contract completion for various reasons

Young Universities for the Future of Europe

Thank you

Andreas Bressler

Maastricht University

Andreas.Bressler@maastrichtuniversty.nl

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