

# Starting research collaboration within a Seal of Excellence EUA



**DIVERSE**  
European University Alliance

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

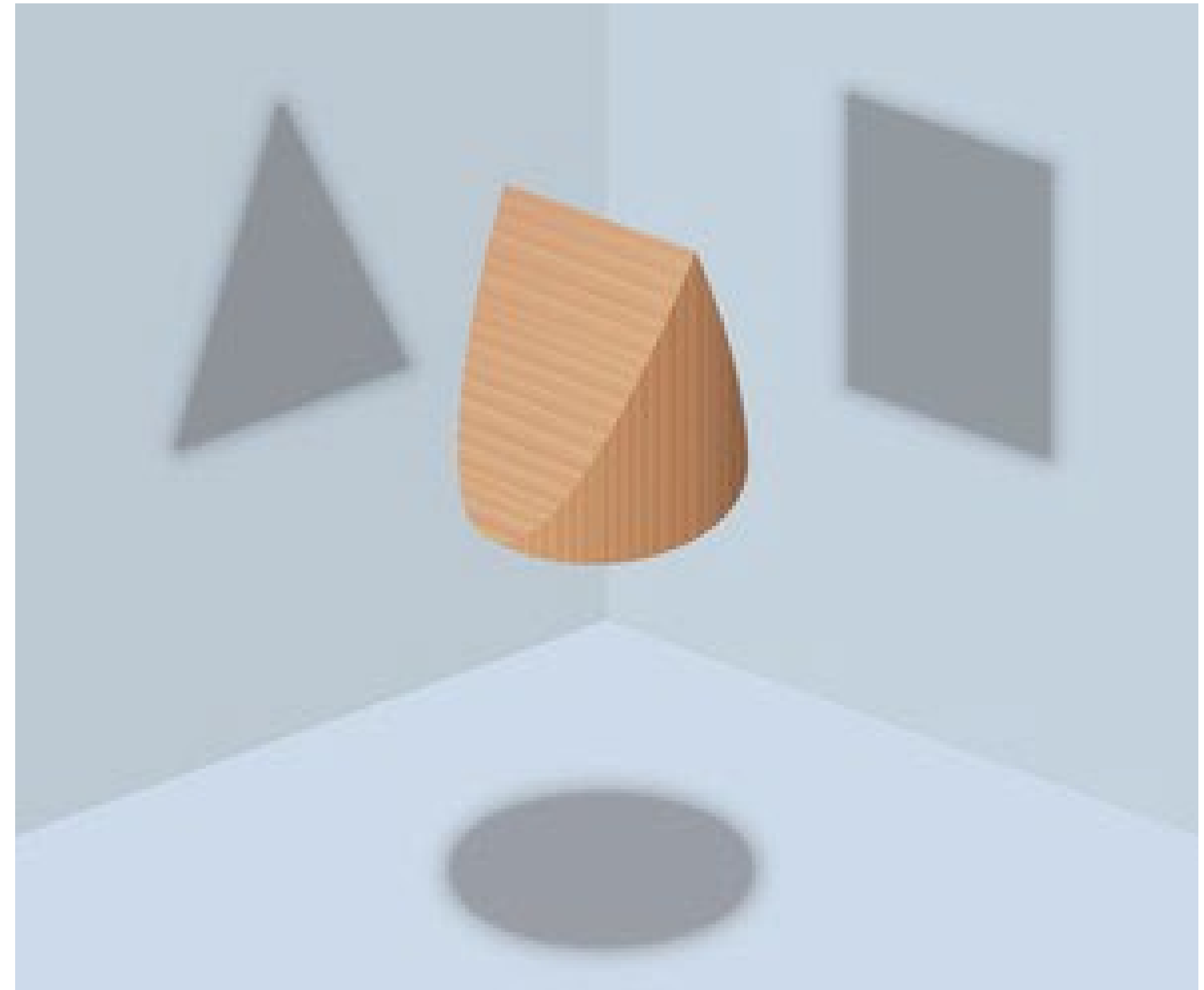
Kathi Lemmens-Krug

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



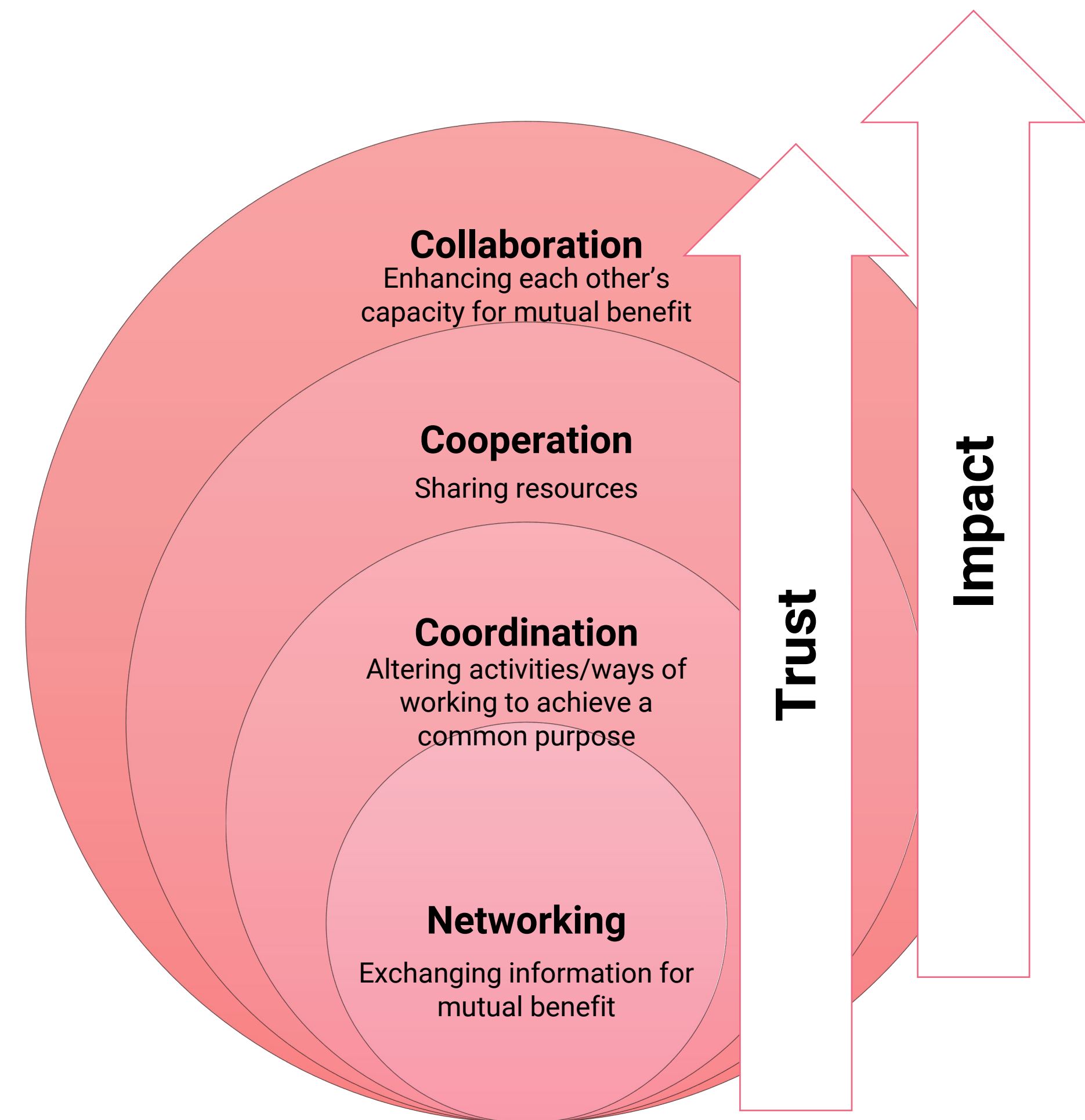
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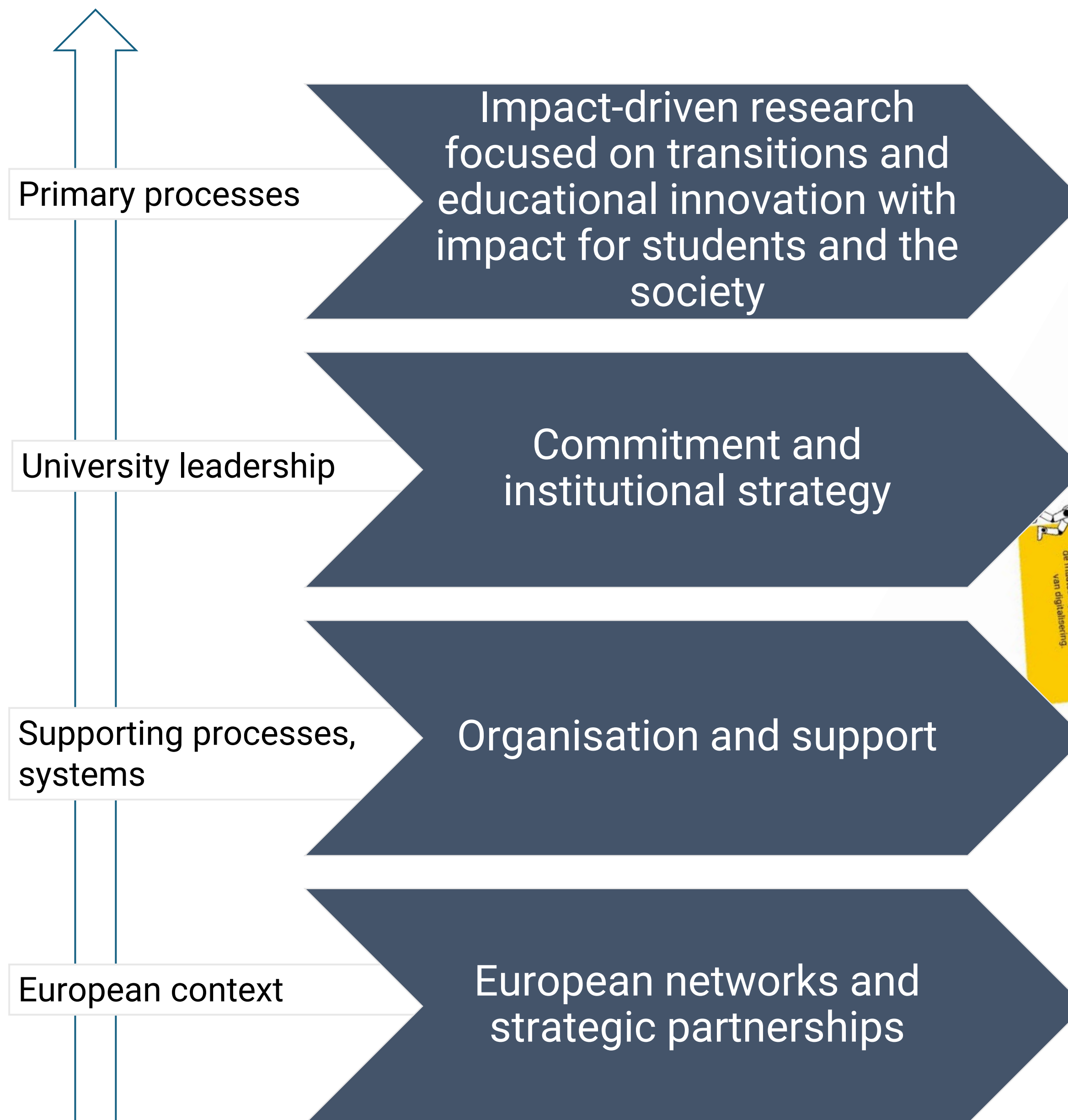
# Strategic direction of DIVERSE

- 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)?

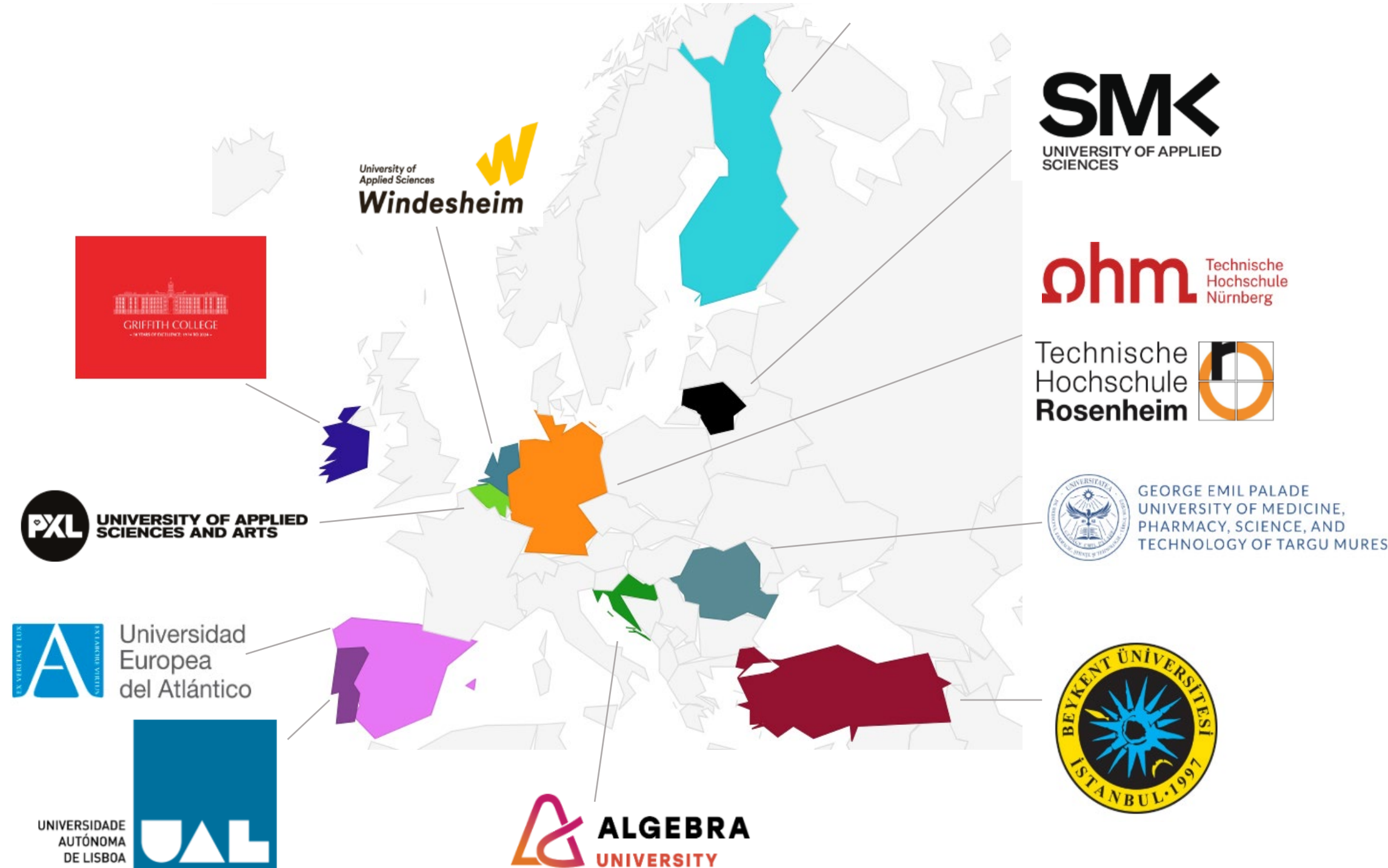


Levels of partnership (Source: adapted from Himmelman, 1996)









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 Hochschule 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](#)

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# Questions?





# YUFE4Postdocs

## MSCA Co-Fund

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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



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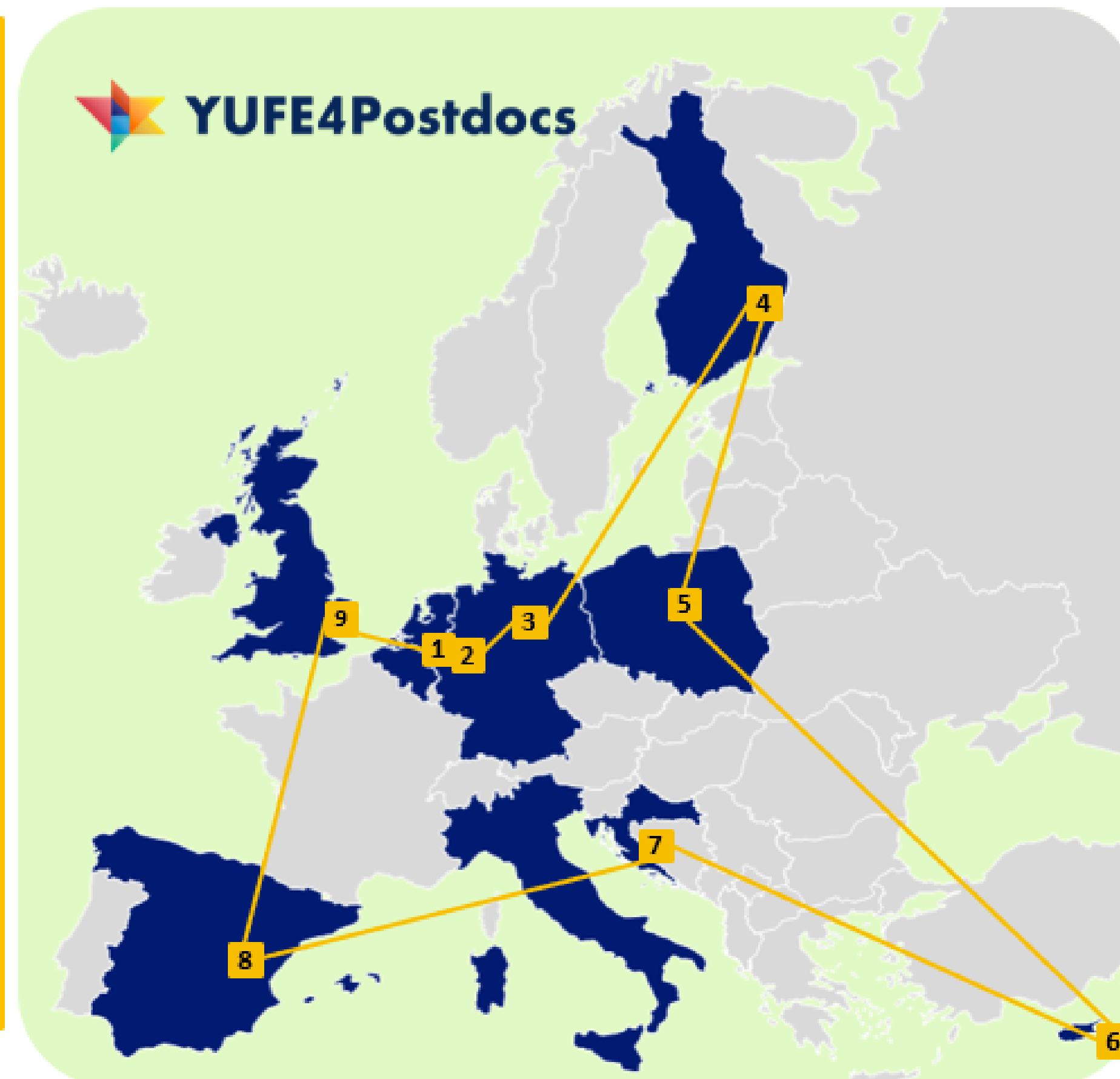
# European Opportunities

## LEAD BENEFICIARY

- 1  Universiteit Antwerpen

## YUFE UNIVERSITIES

- 2  Maastricht University
- 3  Universität Bremen
- 4  UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND
- 5  NICOLAUS COPERNICUS UNIVERSITY IN TORUŃ
- 6  University of Cyprus
- 7  UNIRI
- 8  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)

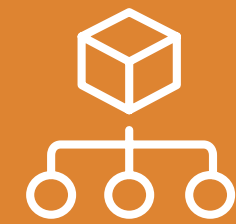


# Organisational Structure



## 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- & transdisciplinary 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
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275 applications  
→ 20% acceptance  
rate

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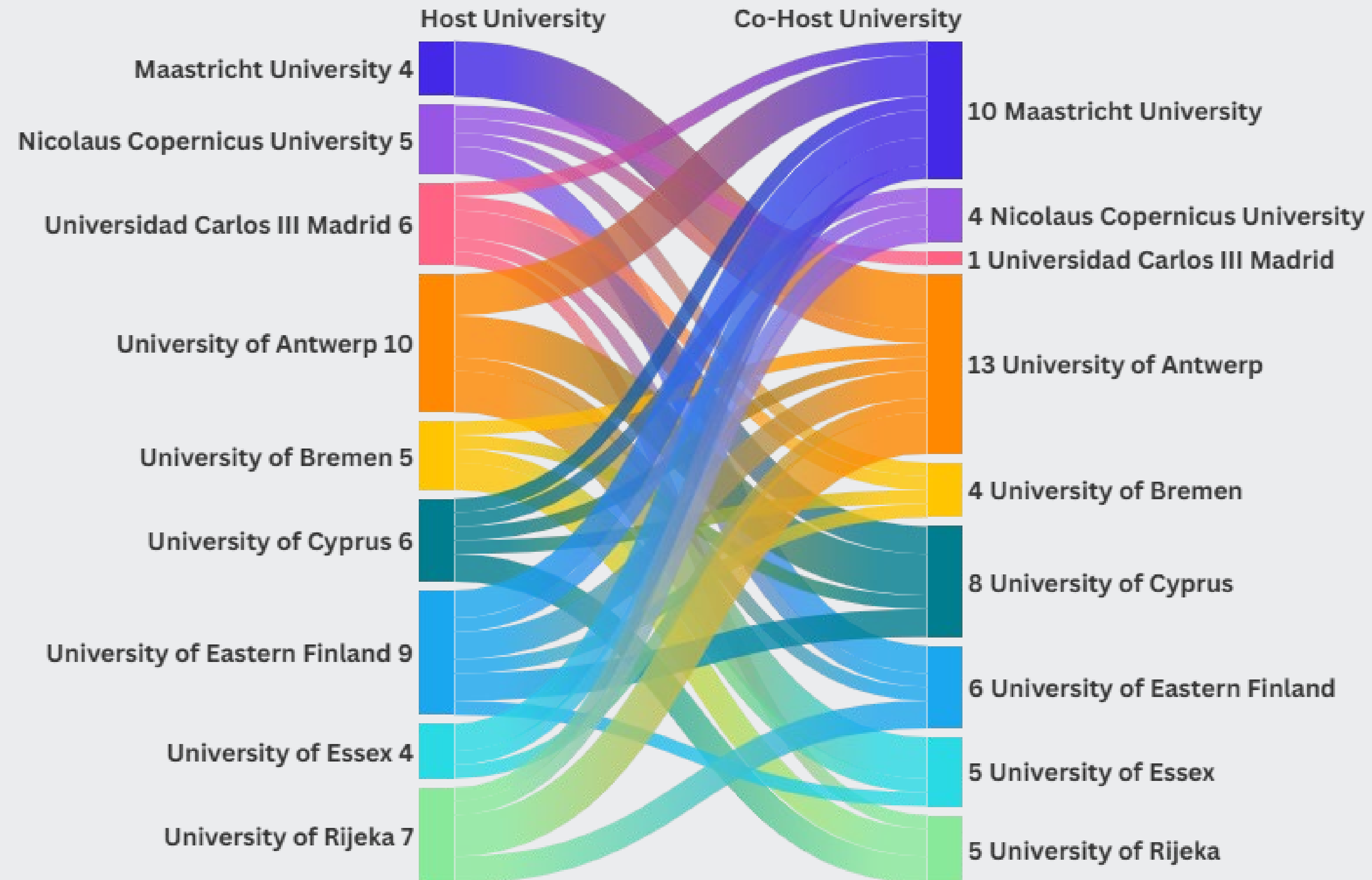
Selected as CoARA  
case study on  
Reforming Academic  
Career Assessment  
(Jan 2025)

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# Brain Circulation





# Dedicated Training Programme

## YUFE4POSTDOCS TRAINING PROGRAMME



### 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

YUFE Academy

Staff Programme

#### Host Institution

Postdoc training portfolio

Complementary staff trainings

### PILLAR 1

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



### PILLAR 2

JOINT TRANSFERABLE SKILLS TRAINING



### PILLAR 3

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING OPTIONS





# 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





# Thank you

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