

**Driving Impact in  
Entrepreneurship**

**Mentoring  
Feature**



**New Academic  
Leadership  
Programme**

[www.acceleratefuturehei.eu](http://www.acceleratefuturehei.eu)



Funded by  
the European Union

The information and views set out in this website are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein. Grant agreement ID: 101095083

Welcome

01

PAGE 3



02

PAGE 4

Kicking off the Final Year of Accelerate Future HEI



Driving Impact in Entrepreneurship

03

PAGE 6



04

PAGE 8

New Academic Leadership Programme



Acceleration Services Driving Institutional Transformation Across Europe

05

PAGE 10



06

PAGE 14

Mentoring Feature



MEET THE PARTNERS

07

PAGE 23

Universidad Europea de Canarias (UEC)

08

PAGE 25

University of Madeira

SISTER PROJECTS

09

PAGE 26

aUPaEU

10

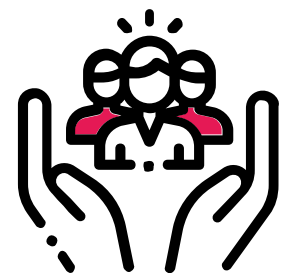
PAGE 28

CATALISI



## Welcome

Welcome to this new edition of the **Accelerate Future HEI e-zine**, where we continue to share the progress, insights, and milestones shaping our journey towards more entrepreneurial, innovative, and future-focused universities across Europe.



This issue highlights the tangible impact of our acceleration services in action. From reflections on our Austrian Transnational Partner Meeting (TPM) and hands-on TPM workshops, to an in-depth Institutional Transformation Acceleration Plan (ITAP) case study and partner mentoring experiences, we showcase how institutional transformation is unfolding across our consortium. A key feature of this edition is our Joint Policy Briefing, developed together with CATALISI and aUPaEU. Drawing on three years of collaboration and experimentation, it presents shared lessons

and recommendations to strengthen institutional transformation in alignment with the European Research Area.

You will also discover updates from our partners, insights from sister projects, and continued transformation across our growing ecosystem. As we move forward, our commitment remains clear: to empower universities with the tools, knowledge, and collaborative frameworks needed to drive sustainable, systemic change.

# Kicking Off the Final Year of Accelerate Future HEI

On 28-29 January 2026, the Accelerate Future HEI consortium gathered at USTP (University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten, Austria) for a two-day in-person meeting...



...dedicated to furthering the project's shared **mission of supporting higher education institutions** in becoming more innovative, entrepreneurial, and impact-driven

As one of the 12 project partners and the host of the meeting, USTP provided an ideal environment for collaboration, reflection, and strategic alignment. Accelerate Future HEI, funded under the Horizon Europe programme, aims to develop and test acceleration services that help higher education institutions (HEIs) undertake institutional transformation.

This includes building internal capacity, creating innovation-driven ecosystems, and aligning academic activities with societal needs. Over the course of the four-year project period (2023–2026), the consortium works toward creating robust transformation roadmaps, implementing targeted interventions, and sharing policy recommendations with the European Commission.



**accelerate  
futureHEI**  
supporting future focused higher education

**The meeting in St. Pölten** brought partners together at a pivotal moment, month 37 of the project, making the gathering **a key milestone to review ongoing progress and collectively** prepare for the final implementation phase.



The first day opened with a general project overview, providing partners the opportunity to reflect on achievements so far and align expectations for the year ahead. This was followed by an Institutional Transformation Acceleration Projects (ITAPs) working session, led by UIIN, which supported partners in refining their institutional transformation strategies and analysing the impact of ongoing activities.

In the afternoon, partners participated in an Impact Workshop facilitated by TUM International (TUMINT), focusing on methodologies for evaluating transformation activities and strengthening evidence-based reporting across the consortium. This was complemented by an Infographics Workshop led by Momentum Marketing Services, which explored effective visual communication techniques to enhance project dissemination and storytelling. These hands-on sessions promoted peer-learning and equipped partners with practical skills to improve their work package outcomes.

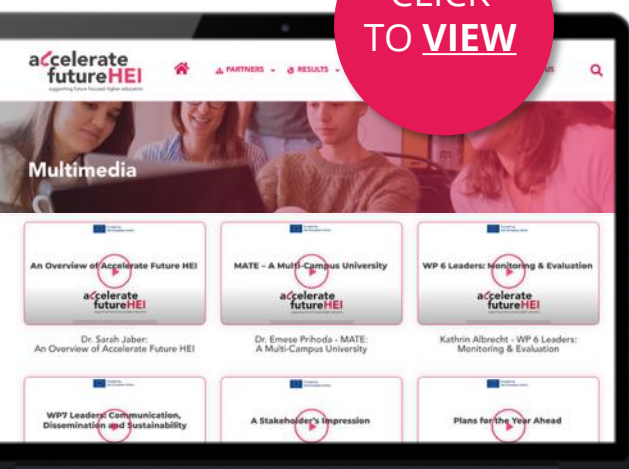
The second day of the meeting featured a guided tour of USTP's laboratories, showcasing its infrastructure in digital technologies, media, AI, and innovation. Partners gained insights into USTP's strategic initiatives, including entrepreneurship programs such as the Creative Pre-Incubator (CPI) by

accent, a long-standing support system for early-stage innovators funded by the federal state of Lower Austria. The second day concluded with a discussion of the next steps for the implementation of the Institutional Transformation Acceleration Projects, providing space for partners to share insights, challenges, and strategies for the upcoming months.

Across both days, there was an atmosphere of strong collaboration, forward-thinking dialogue, and a shared commitment to produce sustainable transformation results. As the consortium approaches the project's final year, the St. Pölten meeting successfully renewed momentum and helped partners prepare for the completion of their transformation projects, as well as for the development of final lessons-learned and policy recommendations.

Hosting the meeting allowed USTP to demonstrate its engagement not only as a project partner but also as an institution actively driving innovation, entrepreneurship, and regional impact. With valuable input gained from all partners, the gathering in St. Pölten represented an important milestone on the road toward stronger, future-ready higher education institutions across Europe.

CLICK  
TO VIEW



Check out more of our partner meeting activities here:  
**Multimedia - Accelerate Future HEI**

# Driving Impact in Entrepreneurship:

## TUMint Impact Workshops and What's Next



*By Kathrin Albrecht and Cara Knott, TUM International GmbH*

As part of the **Accelerate Future HEI** project, **TUMint** has been leading a series of **Impact Workshops**, designed to **assess and accelerate** the transformation of **European universities** into more **entrepreneurial and innovative** institutions. These workshops focus on enhancing each institution's **entrepreneurial mindset** and creating **entrepreneurial activities** through structured **Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)** strategies.

The M&E framework has been crucial in measuring and documenting the progress of Institutional Transformation Acceleration Projects (ITAPs) across universities. The workshops facilitate peer learning, provide guidance on M&E tools, and encourage open dialogue about the successes and challenges each institution faces. Through this process, universities can align their activities with broader institutional goals, ensuring long-term sustainability and success.

Following foundational workshops in 2023 and 2024, the Accelerate Future HEI project entered 2025 with renewed focus on Measurement & Evaluation (M&E) a core component for meaningful transformation. Over the past year, partners have deepened their engagement with the project's tools and frameworks for tracking the progress of Institutional Transformation Acceleration Plans (ITAPs).



**Accelerate Future HEI** project entered 2025 with renewed focus on **Measurement & Evaluation (M&E)** a core component for meaningful transformation

In **February 2025**, the consortium gathered for an **Impact Capturing Workshop**, during which TUMint guided university partners through interactive sessions focused on the application of M&E tools.

Participants exchanged ideas on how to operationalise evaluation frameworks, refine KPIs and better understand the practical challenges of monitoring change within complex institutional structures. Alongside rich group work and plenary discussions, a highlight was the introduction and active involvement of the Board of Experts, a panel of independent professionals who support partners by reviewing progress and advising on strategy refinement.

By mid-2025, the shift in confidence among HEIs was clear. Feedback from partners revealed that their ITAPs had matured from planning documents toward “living strategic tools” aligned with institutional missions. Likewise, the M&E toolkit evolved from being perceived as complex to being seen as a practical mechanism enabling evidence-based reflection and learning. Partners reported not only capturing data but gaining insights about themselves through the process, with many describing their ITAPs and evaluation systems as increasingly valuable to internal transformation dynamics. This progress was supported by regular exchanges with the Board of Experts, whose strategic feedback helped partners sharpen their indicators and focus on measuring what matters most in entrepreneurial transformation.

The latest Impact Workshop occurred in person in January 2026 at the University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten. Here, the focus sharpened on taking stock of M&E progress for 2025 and developing plans for 2026. Partner universities had the opportunity to review the Board of Experts’ feedback from their third Interim Progress Reports.

Partners shared reflections on data collection, assessment of activity implementation, and alignment of KPIs with institutional outcomes. The session was designed to support peer learning, encourage reflection on evidence gathered so far, and allow for discussions about next steps in enhancing entrepreneurial mindsets and activities across HEIs. This collaborative reflection will consolidate insights from individual ITAPs, preparing the consortium to advance confidently in 2026 and beyond.

The TUMint Impact Workshops focus on milestones but are also engines of shared learning, accountability, and strategic refinement. By providing space for structured evaluation, expert feedback, and peer exchange, these workshops help HEIs transform ambition into measurable impact, building not just tools but cultures of entrepreneurial thinking across Europe’s higher education landscape





# New Academic Leadership Programme

*Author: Dr.sc.admin Agita Smitina,  
Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences*

**Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences has launched a new Academic Leadership Program.**

Read on to find out how this came about, what it focuses on and the benefits it is bringing.

The entrepreneurial university can play a crucial role in economic development across countries. Such a university acts as a central driver of development within an innovative society, operating within a continuous process of transformation. Its capacity to evolve depends greatly on the entrepreneurial mindset and actions of its community: academics, researchers, and leaders, who generate knowledge, create solutions, and nurture innovation. At the same time, the university itself acts entrepreneurially by engaging with its surrounding environment: building partnerships, transferring knowledge, and shaping ecosystems where transformative, innovative, and entrepreneurial activities can take root and flourish.

University leaders play a central role in strengthening the capacity of an entrepreneurial university, as they set the vision, create enabling structures, and mobilise resources. Leaders can enhance the entrepreneurial capacity of their institutions by being visionary change agents, establishing supportive policies and structures, creating partnerships, and cultivating an entrepreneurial culture among staff and students. Furthermore, university leaders who are also researchers should possess strong leadership traits, as their role extends far beyond producing knowledge; they influence people, shape institutions, and guide innovation.

The importance of university management in developing an entrepreneurial mindset was highlighted in a survey conducted at Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, which included students, staff, and management. Almost all participants emphasised the significant role of the rector and other managerial staff in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, promoting openness in external cooperation, and strengthening the university as an entrepreneurial institution.


Recognising the importance of leadership skills, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, through the Accelerate Future HEI project, has set the goal of fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, mindful leadership, and human resource management skills among its leadership, professional staff, and lead researchers. Based on a staff needs survey, the Academic Leadership Program was developed. This program offers senior staff training across six modules: strategic academic leadership, change management, collaboration and communication, personal motivation and effectiveness, and a supervision program. While most of the training targets management staff, certain modules are also designed for academic staff to enhance self-leadership skills in working with students.

UIIN training plays a key role in the Academic Leadership Program. ViA's senior personnel have already gained valuable knowledge through the first module in areas such as strategic university cooperation, partnership building, entrepreneurial mindset development, and the creation of entrepreneurial ecosystems. In August 2025, the Academic Leadership Program was officially launched with its first training session. The day

included lectures and discussions on leadership in higher education, as well as group work exploring various aspects of leadership: self-leadership, scientific activity, leadership in the international environment, and leadership within the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> alliance.

During the workshop on leadership in science, each researcher had the opportunity to discuss their personal motivation for working in science and research, as well as to evaluate their professional development in accordance with the EURAXESS researcher career framework. Priority tasks in daily work were addressed for both the coming month and the year ahead, along with the identification of needed support. Participants agreed that the individual career growth and success of each researcher contribute to the collective strength, reputation, and development of an institution. The session on international academic leadership promoted shared goals, collaborative planning, and communication among E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> organisations, while the workshop on self-leadership emphasised each person's ability to act as a leader and inspire both colleagues and students.

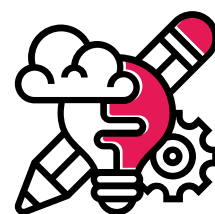
Common conclusions from the discussions highlighted the importance of stable support from management, grounded in strategic vision, scientific competence, international engagement, care for both young and experienced researchers and lecturers, and an inclusive and fair management style. Such an approach inspires teams to achieve high-quality scientific results and ensures the sustainable development of the university's scientific institutes and the university as a whole.



**The Academic Leadership Program continues with training on strategic change management and will run until the end of 2026.**



# Acceleration Services Driving Institutional Transformation Across Europe



*By Rimante Rusaite, Senior Project Officer, UIIN*

As the **European Research Area (ERA)** enters a new **policy cycle**, **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)** are being called upon to **modernise structures**, strengthen **research careers**, advance **Open Science**, and deepen **ecosystem engagement**. But how does **institutional transformation** happen in practice?

Over the past three years, three Horizon Europe projects: **CATALISI**, **Accelerate Future HEI**, and **aUPaEU**, have been testing and refining acceleration services designed to support systemic change in universities across Europe. Together, they provide valuable evidence on what enables and what hinders transformation aligned with ERA priorities.

Across the three initiatives, acceleration services were co-designed and piloted at an institutional and alliance level. These included Living Labs, mutual

learning workshops, Communities of Practice, digital platforms, monitoring frameworks, and structured transformation pathways.

Nearly **3,000 stakeholders** spanning academia, public authorities, industry, and civil society engaged in activities across widening and non-widening countries, demonstrating the cross-border relevance of institutional change.

## Key achievements include:

- Operationalising acceleration services within diverse HEI contexts
- Strengthening awareness of ERA priorities such as Open Science, research assessment reform, talent circulation, and digital transformation
- Improving cross-unit coordination and leadership engagement
- Testing new governance models and monitoring practices
- Deploying shared digital infrastructures, including the Agora platform

What emerges clearly is that **transformation** is most effective when it is **co-created, tested in real institutional settings**, and supported by **structured peer learning**.

## Seven Systemic Barriers to Transformation

Despite tangible progress, the projects also identified recurring challenges that continue to limit the pace and depth of change. Among the most critical barriers:

### 01 Lack of a shared operational framework

Acceleration services were interpreted differently across institutions, highlighting the need for clearer definitions, typologies, and common impact indicators at the EU level.

### 02 Leadership commitment & cultural inertia

Transformation advances when senior and mid-level leaders actively champion it. Where leadership engagement is uneven, momentum slows. Cultural resistance and perceived “extra workload” also affect implementation.

### 03 Institutional silos & limited coordination capacity

Large, decentralised universities often struggle to align departments under a common transformation agenda, particularly where research and education remain weakly connected.

### 04 Fragmented digital infrastructures

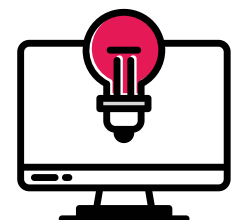
Interoperability remains a systemic challenge. While shared tools such as the Agora platform demonstrate the value of coordinated digital environments, fragmentation across institutions limits scalability.

### 05 Limited monitoring & evaluation capacity

HEIs frequently lack harmonised indicators and structured monitoring systems to track transformation progress and impact consistently.

### Crosscutting Lesson Also Emerged:

Prioritisation matters. Institutions focusing on a limited number of high-impact transformation domains achieved more measurable progress than those attempting broad, multi-domain reforms simultaneously.



## Complementary Approaches, Shared Impact

Each project contributes from a **different angle:**

- **CATALISI** focuses on deep institutional transformation and governance reform.
- **Accelerate Future HEI** strengthens entrepreneurial capacity, innovation culture, and ecosystem engagement.
- **aUPaEU** provides shared digital infrastructure through the Agora platform, enabling cross-border coordination and scaling of acceleration services.



Together, they demonstrate that **transformation** requires both **internal cultural change** and **interoperable external ecosystems**. **Joint actions**, including **policy workshops**, **cross-project learning sessions**, **shared communication activities**, and **coordinated policy dialogue**, have further strengthened **evidence-based recommendations** for the next **ERA Policy Agenda cycle**.

## What Universities Need Next

While acceleration services have proven effective catalysts, long-term transformation requires sustained structural support.

**Universities will need:**

- Clearer EU-level frameworks for acceleration services
- Stronger integration of transformation goals into governance and career progression
- Multi-year funding mechanisms beyond project cycles
- Shared digital standards and interoperable infrastructures
- Harmonised monitoring and evaluation systems



Most importantly, **transformation** must move from **project-based experimentation** to **institutionalised practice** embedded within **long-term strategies**.

## Shaping the Next Phase of the ERA

As the **ERA Policy Agenda 2025–2027** takes shape, the lessons generated by CATALISI, Accelerate Future HEI, and aUPaEU provide concrete evidence of what works.

Acceleration services are not a one-size-fits-all solution. But when co-designed, strategically prioritised, and supported by leadership and interoperable infrastructures, they become powerful vehicles for systemic change.

The next step is clear: consolidate tested practices, strengthen shared frameworks, and ensure that institutional transformation becomes a sustained European priority, not a temporary initiative.



Europe's competitiveness depends on universities that are excellent, agile, collaborative, and future-ready. Follow our website for the latest updates: [Home - Accelerate Future HEI](#)



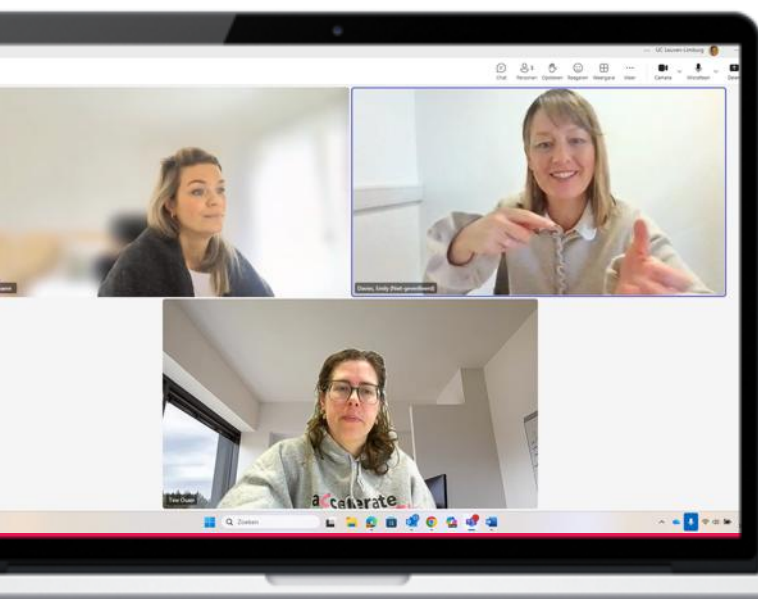
## Building Inclusive & Impactful Entrepreneurship at UCLL:

## Lessons Learned from Emily Davies from the University of Exeter

Last October, our **Future Accelerate HEI** team at **UCLL** had an inspiring **coaching session** with **Emily Davies** from the **University of Exeter**, who shared **valuable insights** from her experience running **entrepreneurship programs** focused on **sustainability and inclusion**.

Emily walked us through her Monitoring & Evaluation framework, which tracks student confidence at the start of their entrepreneurial journey and maps their skills development over time. Her data revealed important gender gaps, such as fewer female students pitching for funding, which Exeter addressed by shifting communication language and increasing female representation among speakers from 26% to 40%. She also showed how participation differs across faculties, with business and engineering students most represented, and medical students struggling to join due to intense academic schedules.

Emily also emphasised the importance of sustainable community-building beyond the program itself. At Exeter, students join a 10-week pre-incubator and incubator track supported by an alumni ecosystem that invests in people first, featuring case studies, digital badges, and close LinkedIn engagement to highlight success stories. She shared best practices such as offering a flat speaker fee to attract small business owners, aiming for equal gender representation among speakers, and creating intimate alumni events around specific themes like B Corp leadership.

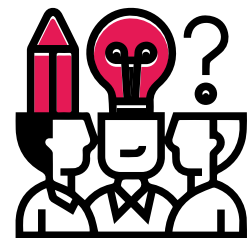


This holistic approach, combining structured evaluation, inclusive communication, and a strong alumni network, gave our team practical strategies to integrate into our own UCLL projects on sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation.



## Insights from the ViA Mentoring Sessions

Like all of the Accelerate Future HEI, university partners, the **Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (ViA)** continue to participate in **mentoring sessions** designed to strengthen their approach to leadership development, student engagement, and institutional change.



ViA working closely with their mentor, Dr Susan Elrod, an experienced biology professor, university administrator, and national leader in STEM education, they explored practical strategies for cultivating leadership and embedding innovation within the university.

Across several sessions, discussions evolved from understanding the foundations of change leadership to addressing specific challenges in the Academic Leadership Programme, evaluation methods, and long-term sustainability of project initiatives. Here's a snapshot of how the process has evolved from ViA's perspective.

## Setting the Foundation

Our first mentoring session introduced us to **Susan's extensive experience in higher education leadership and organisational change.**



**Dr Susan Elrod**

Throughout her career, she has used an entrepreneurial mindset and a shared leadership approach to achieve goals that result in meaningful progress and lasting change. Susan shared that she has developed a Change Leadership Toolkit, which she uses in collaboration with organisations such as

the UIIN (University Industry Innovation Network). Her approach often begins with individual leaders and gradually expands to groups, enabling knowledge and skills to spread across an organisation.

One of her **key messages** resonated strongly with our team:

**Successful change often emerges from the middle of an organisation rather than only from top leadership.**



During this initial conversation, the **ViA team outlined their goals** within the project and identified two areas where they needed guidance:

- Developing a roadmap for students that highlights events and activities where they can gain hands-on experience and practical skills.
- Creating a leadership training plan for academic staff and university managers.



This **first session** set the stage for a **collaborative mentoring process** focused on turning ideas into structured, impactful initiatives.

## Strengthening the Academic Leadership Program

In September 2025, the mentoring conversation focused on two pressing issues: refining our **Academic Leadership Program** and **addressing feedback** from the review of our Internal Progress Report (IPR) by **Prof. Dr Enno Masurel**.

Our team struggled with a common challenge in leadership training: **how to measure success and long-term impact?** How can we tell if leadership training truly changes behaviour, mindset, and decision-making?

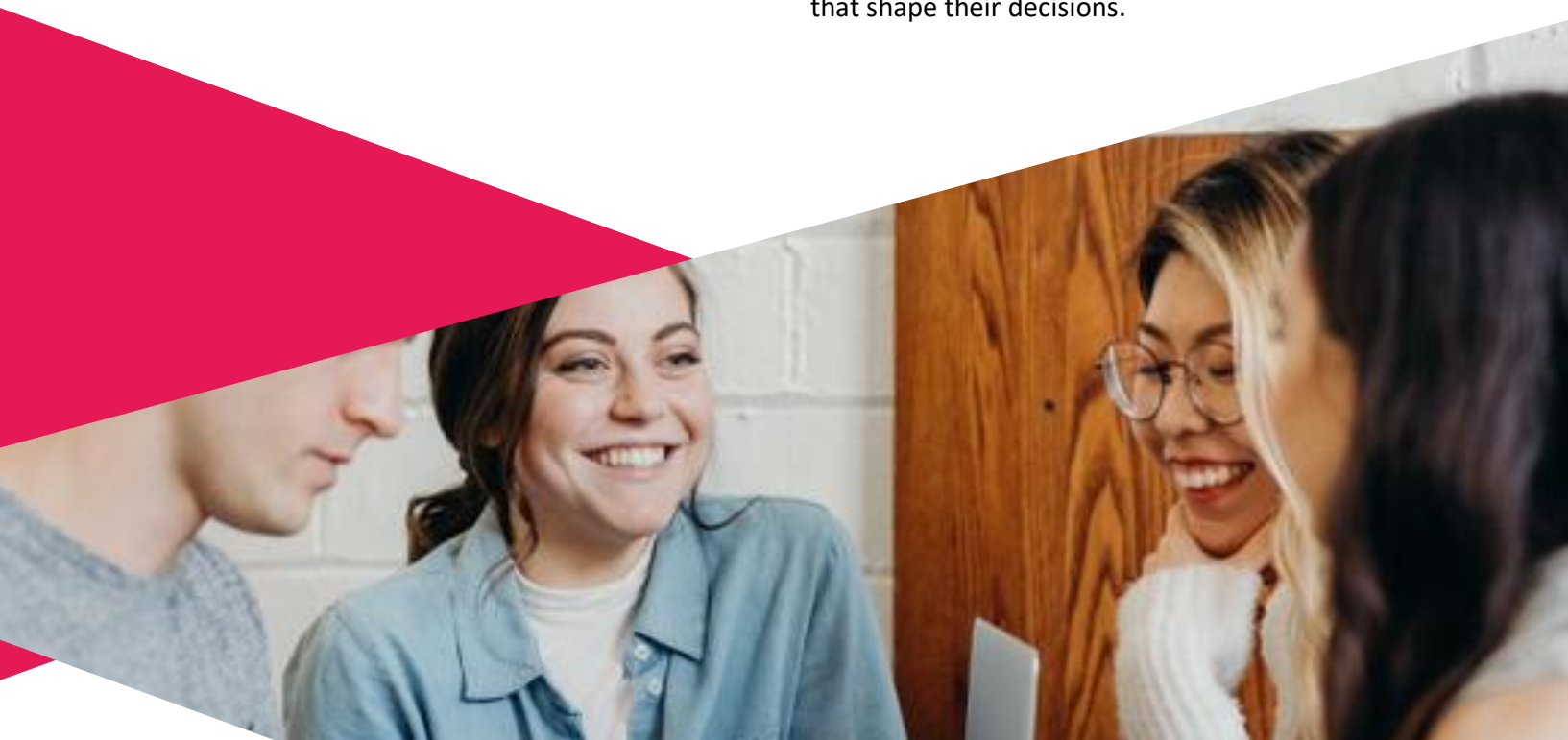
Susan suggested implementing a **Leader Development Plan**, supported by peer mentoring when needed. She also raised a critical question we had not fully considered:

## Who will hold leaders accountable for their development plan?

This insight reframed our thinking about **leadership development** not as a one-time training activity, but as a **continuous and accountable process**.

Regarding the IPR review, Susan helped us interpret the reviewer's concern that our activities appeared disconnected from the project's broader objectives. Her advice was to step back and focus on context.

Using tools such as the Eisenhower Decision Matrix, she encouraged us to prioritise only three to five key priorities that truly align with the project's goals. Understanding the context, she emphasised, helps leaders recognise both opportunities and barriers that shape their decisions.



# Mentoring Feature



## Creating Structure and Strategic Alignment

**By October 2025**, our discussions moved toward strategic integration.



We explored how the Academic Leadership Program could become part of the university's long-term strategy, rather than remaining a stand-alone initiative benefiting only a small group. Although university leadership had responded positively to the idea, we needed guidance on how to embed the program so that it would benefit the

broader academic community. Susan also reviewed our updated IPR and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. Her feedback highlighted that while our project contained many promising activities, they lacked clear structure and measurable outcomes.

She recommended:

- Developing a clear definition of the entrepreneurial mindset for both students and staff.
- Identifying observable behaviours that demonstrate this mindset, such as taking initiative, allocating resources, and supporting innovation.
- Reformulating our outcomes so they reflect measurable change rather than simply describing activities.

She also encouraged us to start with smaller, achievable goals rather than attempting to implement large-scale initiatives all at once.

## Designing Sustainable Creative Spaces for Students

In November 2025, our focus shifted to a different initiative: creating a creative space for students that would encourage experimentation, collaboration, and innovation.

Our main concern was **sustainability**:

**How could this space remain active and valuable after the project ends?**

”

Susan shared practical **observations from similar initiatives**:

- Creative spaces thrive when they have a dedicated director or coordinator responsible for programming, activities, and community engagement.
- Gathering direct feedback from students, such as through surveys, helps ensure the space reflects their needs and interests.
- Adoption often grows when trusted professors or peers recommend the space and demonstrate its value.

We also discussed best practices for evaluating leadership development activities, particularly when participants are engaged in confidential supervision sessions. Susan highlighted that effective leaders are generally open to discussing their development process, even if specific details remain private. Focusing on indicators and processes, rather than personal details, can help maintain confidentiality while still capturing meaningful feedback.



## Supporting the Transition from Managers to Leaders

Our most recent mentoring session in January 2026 addressed a critical challenge within academic institutions: **helping individuals who hold managerial roles transition into leadership roles.**

We invited the university's academic vice rector to join this conversation, as she had recently taken on responsibility for strengthening leadership across program directors. One of the major

challenges she described was that many program director roles are not full-time positions, which affects workload, motivation, and the ability to engage in strategic leadership.

Susan recommended starting with simple, **supportive steps**:

- Regularly **check in with managers** to understand what they need to succeed.
- Help them prioritise tasks using tools such as the **Eisenhower Matrix**.
- Introduce **leadership development** gradually rather than expecting immediate transformation.

She also suggested practical strategies to encourage **leadership growth**:

- Show managers clear **pathways for leadership progression**.
- Create opportunities for them to **discuss challenges and opportunities together**.
- Help them **carve out dedicated time** for leadership responsibilities.
- Provide accessible learning resources such as **readings, seminars, and podcasts**.
- Encourage them to **focus on one leadership task at a time** to build confidence and experience.

After the session, Susan shared a leadership self-assessment worksheet that helps individuals identify their strengths as change leaders and areas for personal growth.

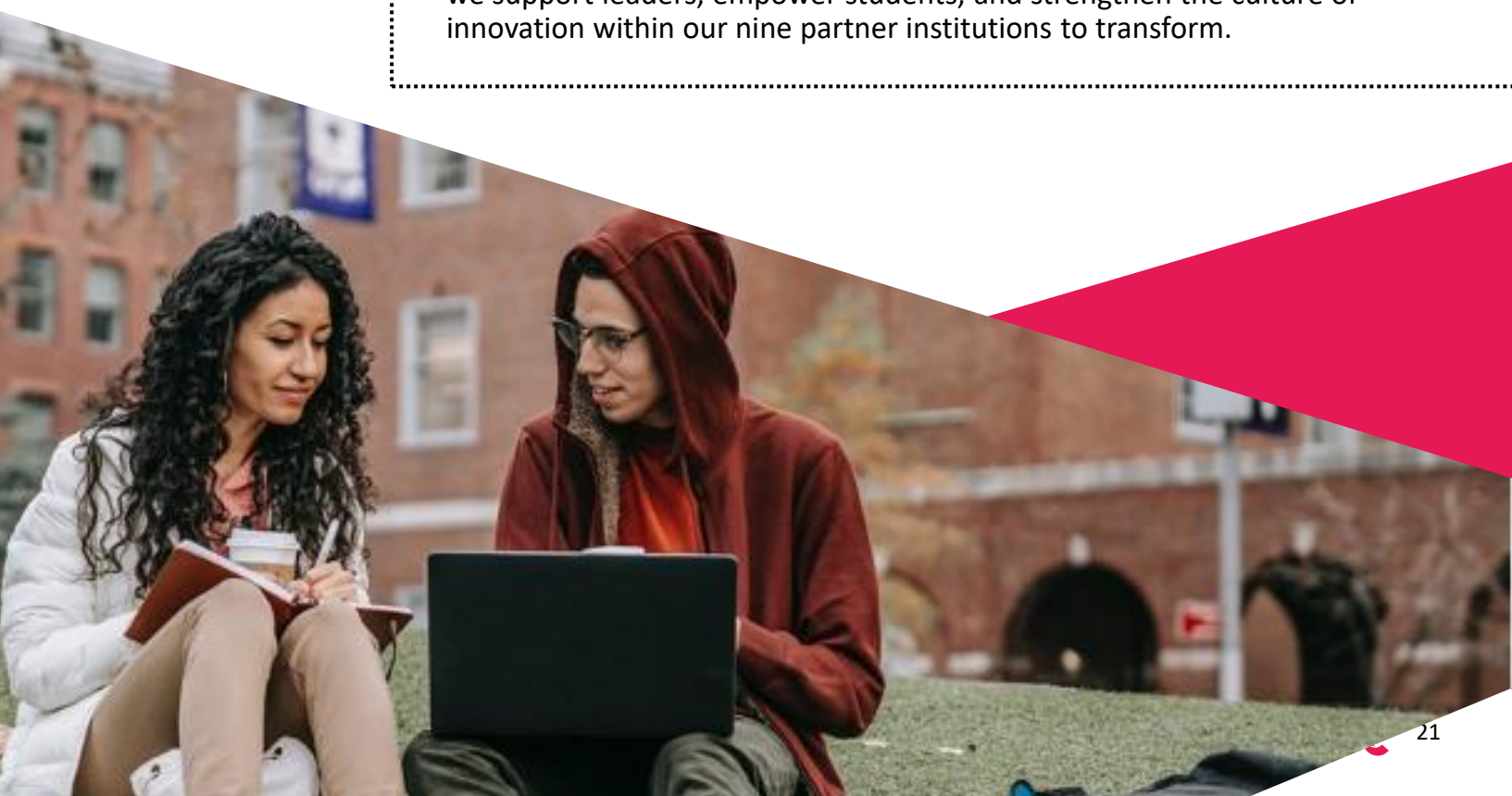
## Building a Culture of Leadership

The ViA mentoring sessions provided a framework for thinking about **leadership as an ongoing developmental process embedded within institutional culture.**

### Several key lessons emerged:

- Change often grows **from the middle of organisations**, not only from top leadership.
- Leadership development requires **accountability, reflection, and measurable outcomes.**
- Strategic initiatives succeed when they are **aligned with institutional goals and supported by a clear structure.**
- Sustainable innovation depends on **community ownership and dedicated coordination.**

Most importantly, these sessions reminded us that leadership is not a title; it is a set of actions and behaviours that can be developed, practised, and shared across the university community. As the Accelerate Future HEI project continues, these insights will guide how we support leaders, empower students, and strengthen the culture of innovation within our nine partner institutions to transform.



## Mentoring Workshops at MATE



**Dr Krisztina Tóth**

The mentoring workshops at **MATE (Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences)** continue with our mentor, **Dr Krisztina Tóth**, who has so far provided support to workshop participants primarily in the areas of organisational change management and effective project communication

The subject of the January workshop was dynamic project management, which included an examination of coaching tools aimed at developing partnerships and cooperation. In addition, there was a discussion of top trends in project management and the applications of brain research findings, which show that behaviour must also be managed in order to manage performance. The workshop focused on the logic of project launch contracts, the different contract levels in projects, and the individual project management tools in each project phase. In addition, workshop participants gained insight into how coaching works.

Our February workshop focused on power skills, which mainly concerned the areas of communication and cooperation, conflict management, and problem solving. During the workshop, it was identified which

skills define power skills and how power skills complement soft skills in order to enable the organisation to define cooperation and effective operation at the same time. Workshop participants learned how the skills that fundamentally define operations work in practice. An interesting aspect of the workshop was that it specifically addressed the individual university roles of lecturers.

Participants then learned about the individual areas of emotional intelligence and how they contribute to the development of social awareness and social skills. The workshop also covered the steps of cooperative communication and the possibilities for effectively exiting the roles of the Karpman drama triangle. We are already looking forward to the next workshop, which will discuss the topic of change management.





## MEET THE PARTNER:

# Universidad Europea de Canarias

**Universidad Europea de Canarias (UEC)** is a forward-looking higher education institution based in Tenerife, Spain, committed to academic excellence, innovation, and strong connections with the professional ecosystem.

With campuses in La Orotava and Santa Cruz de Tenerife, UEC combines a student-centred learning model with applied research and industry collaboration, creating an environment where education and real-world impact go hand in hand.

UEC offers a diverse portfolio of undergraduate and master's degrees across Social Sciences, Health Sciences, and Architecture. Its academic approach is built around experiential and project-based learning, where students work on real challenges, case studies, and interdisciplinary projects. This methodology helps learners develop not only technical knowledge, but also critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills that are essential for today's fast-changing labour market.

A defining element of the university model is the integration of professional and simulated environments into teaching. Students regularly engage in labs, simulations, and practice-based projects that replicate real professional contexts. Close cooperation with companies and institutions ensures that learning activities remain aligned with market needs and emerging profiles. This practical orientation is reflected in consistently high student performance indicators and strong graduate employability outcomes.

## Digital transformation is embedded across programs and teaching practices.

UEC promotes the structured use of advanced digital tools, including artificial intelligence, data analytics, and professional software environments.



These tools are used to support research, creativity, design, analysis, and decision-making tasks in multiple disciplines. The objective is not only digital literacy, but the development of applied digital competencies that students can transfer directly into their future careers.

Quality and continuous improvement are core institutional priorities. The university operates with certified internal quality assurance systems across its academic centres and systematically monitors academic results, student satisfaction, and program performance. This culture of evidence-based improvement supports innovation in teaching and curriculum design while maintaining rigorous academic standards.

Research and knowledge transfer are also central to UEC's mission. The university supports active research groups, competitive internal research calls, and collaboration with external partners. Dedicated support structures help researchers develop projects, publish results, and connect with industry and society. Open science principles and public research visibility

are promoted through institutional repositories and scientific portals, reinforcing transparency and impact.

Internationalisation is a strategic priority and a practical reality. UEC participates in European and international projects, academic networks, and collaborative initiatives focused on educational innovation and capacity building. These partnerships allow the university to exchange best practices, co-develop new methodologies, and contribute to shared higher education transformation goals.

Within the Accelerate Future HEI project, Universidad Europea de Canarias contributes to its experience in innovation-driven education, digital integration, and university–industry collaboration. Its role focuses on connecting entrepreneurial thinking, data-driven learning, and applied methodologies to institutional development. Through this partnership, UEC supports the creation of more agile, inclusive, and future-ready higher education models that respond to societal and economic change across Europe today.



# Universidad Europea

# MEET THE PARTNER:

## University of Madeira

The University of Madeira (UMa) aims to find appropriate solutions within a framework of responsibility, equity, and sustainability that contribute to the development and affirmation of Madeira and the country in a globalised and dynamic world.

The University pursues scientific research activities, promoting the diffusion and social and economic valorisation of knowledge and technological innovation. It guarantees the human education at the highest level, in its cultural, scientific, artistic, technical and professional aspects, conducting academic studies to obtain a degree, a Technical Course and other courses. It seeks to prepare its students for the challenges of global society and lifelong learning by providing them with scientific knowledge, technical competence and transversal training.

UMa wants its students to be citizens of the world, creative and enterprising, responsible and professional, tolerant and attentive to the environmental, cultural and human challenges of a society that is intended to be sustainable and equitable. To this end, UMa promotes and supports actions and programs that contribute to the integration of its graduates into professional environments and foster its spirit of initiative and entrepreneurship, as well as the mobility of students and graduates, particularly in the European area of higher education.

In terms of relationship with the rest of the society, UMa collaborates with the community, governing bodies, companies, professional associations and institutions of higher education and research, discovering, disseminating and applying knowledge, graduating company boards and conducting research and development projects and offering specialised services.

It also develops a teaching and research policy that takes into account the specificities of the Madeira Region in which it is located, collaborating in the formulation of national and regional policies on education, science and culture, and giving its support on legislative projects concerning these subjects. UMa is also an essential element for the deepening of the internationalisation of the Region, seeking to contribute to a greater connection to the diaspora and to the construction of the Portuguese Language space and the European space in teaching, science and culture. By its very nature and dynamics, UMa maintains a relationship of commitment and interdependence with the economic, social and cultural development of the Madeira Region.



# Introducing our Sister Project

## aUPaEU Workshop - digital services

### & policies for institutional transformation

January 2026, the aUPaEU project hosted its mid-term workshop **“Stepping into Agora: a discussion with co-creators, lead users and policy experts”** at the **Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC)** in Barcelona.



The event gathered **127 participants:**



The event gathered 127 participants: 52 on-site and 75 online, including representatives from universities, European University Alliances, and policy experts, reflecting strong interest in institutional transformation across the European Higher Education landscape. The event focused on institutional transformation, which the aUPaEU project has been committed to supporting for three years now.

The first part of the workshop focused on Agora (the digital platform developed by aUPaEU) and its services, which are designed to accelerate transformation. Project coordinator Jesus Alcober presented Agora as a “digital nexus” because it provides a central hub for university alliances to fulfil all aspects of their mission: not only education but also research, innovation, and service to society. He also introduced the concept of a “Metagora”, as a federation of Agoras, to overcome university alliance boundaries, positioning Agora as a digital mediator.



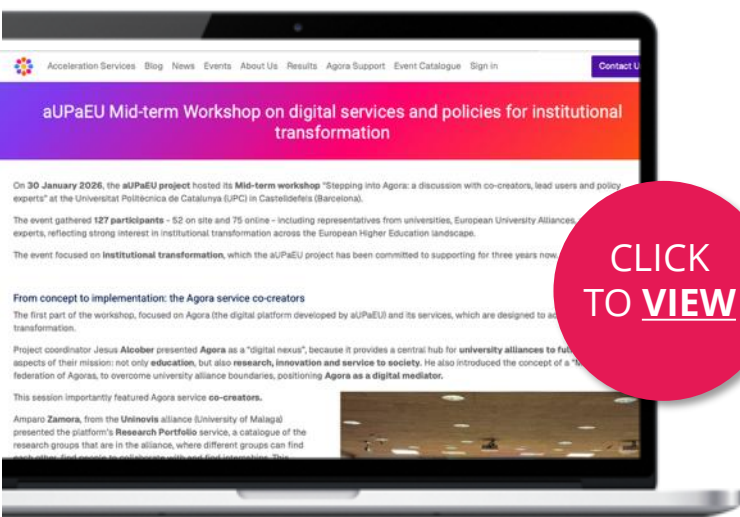


The workshop also featured a **Policy Round Table**, moderated by **Prof. Roberto Zanino (Politecnico di Torino)**, which focused on institutional transformation within the European Research Area (ERA).

“The aUPaEU project has attracted significant interest from many different Alliances, which is really great, because the project’s original ambition was exactly to service the needs of the whole system of Higher Education Institutions in Europe”- Zanino remarked, adding that - “The governance of the institutions making up Alliances must now be involved if we want the results of this project, which is responding to real bottom-up needs, to be made relevant for the institutions diffusing through all their different layers to have a real impact. Without engagement from rectors and institutional leadership, even well-designed initiatives risk having limited impact.”

Guest speakers Michał Banaszak (Vice-Rector for Digitisation and Cooperation with the Economy at AMU), Mattia Bellotti (EUTOPIA’s Secretary General), Maria Mecenero (Policy Officer at DG RTD) and Jan Palmowski (The Guild’s Secretary General) addressed key elements of the 2025-2027 ERA Agenda, including competitiveness, research career attractiveness, infrastructures, capacity and Artificial Intelligence.

The workshop concluded with Andreas Sumper, Vice-rector for International Policy at UPC, making a strong call for continued collaboration and the further integration of the developed services. Agora represents the starting point of a broader process aimed at strengthening universities’ capabilities in a concrete and shared way.



All workshop presentations and recordings are available here

Follow us on LinkedIn: 



CATALISI

Catalysation of institutional transformations of Higher Education Institutions through the adoption of acceleration services



## Introducing our Sister Project

### Shaping the Future of Institutional Change in Higher Education: **Outcomes of the CATALISI Final Conference**

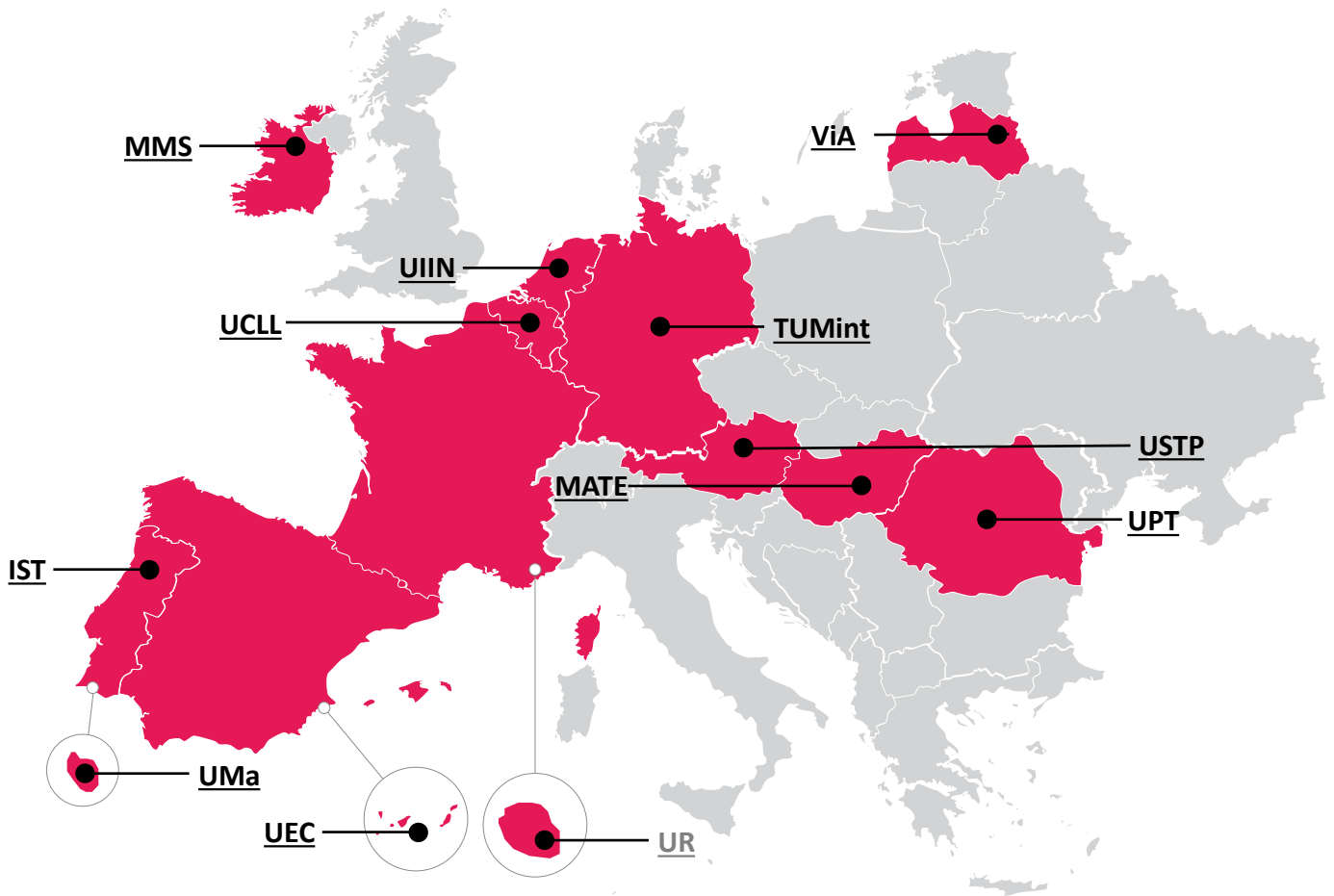
On 11 November 2025, the CATALISI consortium hosted its Final Conference in Amsterdam, bringing together policymakers, researchers, university leaders, and innovation stakeholders to reflect on three years of collaborative work. The event was a huge success,

showcasing the project's achievements, sharing lessons learned, and validating policy recommendations for the future of the European Research Area (ERA) together with our sisters and synergy projects.



Do not miss all the **key insights and presentations** in this link





# accelerate futureHEI

supporting future focused higher education

Follow our journey 



To Learn more visit the project [www.acceleratefuturehei.eu](http://www.acceleratefuturehei.eu)



The information and views set out in this website are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein. Grant agreement ID: 101095083

## Contact Us

**Rimante Rusaite**  
Senior Project Officer- UIIN  
E-mail: [rusaite@uiin.org](mailto:rusaite@uiin.org)  
Web: <https://www.uiin.org/>



momentum

