



D5.1

REPORT ON CAPACITY BUILDING TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR CAREER DIVERSIFICATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

Project Name	EmpoWering EDUC for Inclusive Development of the ERA
Project Acronym	EDUC-WIDE
Grant Agreement No.	101136533
Programme	HORIZON.4.1 - widening participation and spreading excellence
Topic	HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-03-01 - European Excellence Initiative
Project Starting Date	1. March 2024
Project Duration	36 months
Deliverable No.	5.1
File Name	EDUC-WIDE_Deliverable5-1
Work Package	5
Dissemination Level	Public
Contractual Submission Date	31 August 2025
Actual Submission Date	31 August 2025
Institution	Universitat Jaume I
Key Words	Career Diversification, Advisory Services, Gender Equality, GEP, Services Professionalisation
Abstract	This report summarizes the activities of Work Package 5, which focuses on career diversity and gender equality. Starting with diagnosing the current status among EDUC-WIDE partners, followed by setting common goals, and sharing best practices to develop a practical guideline and checklist. It also outlines the preparation of the Fellowship Call and the Research Management Training.



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101136533.

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

History of changes

Version	Publication Date	Change
0.1	05.05.2021	Initial version of the template
0.2	01.04.2022	Template reformatted to align with other deliverables templates.
0.3	21.07.2025	Draft version to share with MUNI as EDUC-WIDE leader
0.4	24.07.2025	Draft version to share with partners
1.0	31.08.2025	Final version

List of Contributors

Beneficiary	Name	Author/Contributor /reviewer
Universitat Jaume I	Núria Sánchez-Pantoja	Author
Universitat Jaume I	Josefa Ramos	Author
Universitat Jaume I	Roger Esteller	Contributor
Universitat Jaume I	Mercè Correa	Author - reviewer
University of Cagliari	Ester Cois	Contributor
University of Cagliari	Ambra Ilaria Cincotti	Contributor
University of Cagliari	Michele Mascia	Contributor
Universität Potsdam	Ulrike Schmidt	Contributor
Universität Potsdam	Fabienne Donau	Contributor
University of South-Eastern Norway	Aina Enstad	Contributor
University of South-Eastern Norway	Rebecca Schmacher	Contributor
Masaryk University	Iva Sedláková	Author
Masaryk University	Jana Nova	Contributor
Masaryk University	Ladislav Čoček	Contributor
Masaryk University	Dita Pešková	Contributor
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University	Iryna Hryhoruk	Contributor
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University	Orest Boichuk	Contributor
University of Pécs	Katalin Füzér	Contributor
University of Pécs	Csenge Lang	Contributor
University of Pécs	Dávid Molnár	Contributor
University of Pécs	Annet Uhrin	Contributor
University Paris Nanterre	Nicolas Bourbon	Contributor
University Paris Nanterre	Claudia Dell'uomo	Contributor

Abbreviations

CDEG: Career Development Expert Group

CoARA: Coalition for Advancing Research

EHEA: European Higher Education Area

ERA: European Research Area

EU: European Union

GEP: Gender Equality Plan

HR: Human Resources

HRS4R: Human Resources Strategy For Research

HSE: Health, Safety and Environment

MUNI: Masaryk University

PNU: Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University

REA: Research Executive Agency

UJI: Universitat Jaume I

UNICA: University of Cagliari

UP: University of Potsdam

UPECS: University of Pécs

UPN: University Paris Nanterre

UNIVREN: University of Rennes

USN: University of South-Eastern Norway

WP: Work Package

List of Tables

[Table 1. Meetings overview task 5.1](#)

[Table 2. Meetings overview task 5.2](#)

[Table 3. Meetings overview task 5.3](#)

[Table 4. Meetings overview task 5.4](#)

[Table 5. Selected topic for training series](#)

[Table 6. Thematic hashtags related to researchers categories](#)

[Table 7. Advisory services for researchers at our universities](#)

List of Figures

[Figure 1. Programme 28 April Workshop Pécs](#)

[Figure 2. Programme 29 April Workshop Pécs](#)

[Figure 3. Photo of the attendees in person on 28 April...](#)

[Figure 4. Photo of the attendees in person on 29 April...](#)

[Figure 5. Programme 9 December Workshop Brno.](#)

[Figure 6. Programme 10 December Workshop Brno.](#)

[Figure 7. Photo of the attendees in person on 10 December...](#)

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	6
2. T5.1 Building Interaction Spaces to Facilitate Interdisciplinary, Intersectoral, and International Exposure of EDUC Researchers	9
2.1 Meetings Overview	10
2.2 Documents	10
2.3 Future Plans	10
3. T5.2 Building Capacities of Research Career Advisory Services	12
3.1 Meetings Overview	12
3.2 Task Development Process	13
3.3 Workshop in Pécs	14
3.4 Results: Good Practice Guide	18
3.5 Forward Planning	19
4. T5.3 Gender Equality Plans in Practice	20
4.1 Meetings Overview	20
4.2 Task Development Process	21
4.3 Workshop in Brno	22
Outcomes and Key Results	22
4.4 Results: Indicators Data and Evaluation Checklist	25
4.4.1 Indicators Data analysis	26
4.4.2 Evaluation Checklist	29
4.5 Forward Planning	29
5. T5.4 Developing Resource Base for Training of Research Management Skills	31
5.1 Meetings Overview	31
5.2 Task Development Process	31
5.3 Forward Planning	32
6. Conclusions	33
Annex I - Proposal of the Fellowships call	34
Annex II - Good Practice Guide for Advisory Services	43
Annex III - Information on support services for research staff	90
Annex IV - Checklist (GEP Implementation Assessment)	99

1. Introduction

This project has received funding from the European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101136533 – EDUC-WIDE, managed by the European Research Executive Agency (REA), acting under powers delegated by the European Commission. This report has been authored by Universitat Jaume I and peer-reviewed by the University of South-Eastern Norway, University of Cagliari, University of Potsdam, Masaryk University, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, and University of Pécs.

This deliverable was authored by Universitat Jaume I and reviewed by six EDUC-WIDE partner institutions.

Context of WP5

Work Package 5 builds upon the outcomes and synergies of previous initiatives within the EDUC alliance, particularly:

- Under **H2020 EDUC-SHARE**, cooperation focused on soft-skills training and alignment with the **Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)**
- Within the **Erasmus+ rollout project**, activities addressed career diversification and the empowerment of women in research

Despite these efforts, there remains a need for enhanced coordination and shared understanding across the consortium, particularly regarding career development services and the implementation of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs).

Objectives of WP5

- Creating spaces for **interdisciplinary, intersectoral, and international** research collaboration.
- Enhancing **institutional capacity** for career development and **advancing gender equality**, especially in **widening countries**.

Task 5.1 - Fellowship Scheme & Researcher Mobility

Task 5.1 focuses on launching a pilot of the EDUC Fellowship Scheme to support researcher mobility and collaboration across disciplines, sectors, and countries.

The aim is to encourage the mutual exchange of researchers, boost leadership capacities in widening institutions, and strengthen support for career development and innovation. It also seeks to foster open, inclusive, and fair research environments that reflect the broader goals of the European Research Area (ERA).

Key objectives include:

- Enabling two-way circulation of researchers between widening and Advanced partners.
- Enhancing leadership capacity in widening partners through co-leadership of Work Packages.
- Promoting career development services tailored to researchers' needs.
- Encouraging knowledge and technology transfer in innovation ecosystems.

Task 5.2 - Building Capacities of Research Career Advisory Services

Task 5.2 aims to enhance institutional capacities in research career advisory services across the EDUC-WIDE Alliance by fostering structured knowledge transfer between Advanced and widening partners. The activity contributes to the overarching goals of Work Package 5 (WP5), which supports inclusive, interconnected, and sustainable Research and Innovation (R&I) ecosystems in line with the ERA and the widening Participation agenda.

The task is structured in three stages:

1. **Initial Diagnosis (completed November 2024)**
The initial mapping phase in November 2024 highlighted significant differences in the availability and quality of advisory services.
2. **Development of a Good Practice Map**
A Good Practice Guide was developed, featuring contributions on HR (by USN), research advice (UNICA), innovation support (UP), and equal opportunities (UJI).
3. **Identification of Areas for Improvement (M15–M16)**
Key areas for improvement were later confirmed during a workshop held in Pécs in April 2025.

This guide will form part of Deliverable D5.1 and will also serve as a foundation for upcoming training activities under Task 6.2.

Task 5.3 - Gender Equality Plans in Practice

Task 5.3 aims to strengthen institutional capacities for the effective implementation of **GEPs** across the EDUC-WIDE Alliance, with particular emphasis on building expertise and operational support in widening universities.

Objectives

- Foster learning and cooperation on the implementation of GEPs across all partner universities.
- Develop practical tools and indicators to support evidence-based monitoring and evaluation.
- Build capacity among widening partners to operationalise GEPs effectively.

Process

The task is structured in three stages:

1. **Diagnosis (completed October 2024)**
The diagnostic phase in October 2024 revealed a lack of systematic monitoring indicators.
2. **Data Collection and Tool Development**
In response, tools are being developed, including a set of indicators, a practical checklist, and a shared OpenUp repository.
3. **Gap Analysis (M15–M16)**
A subsequent gap analysis will guide targeted capacity-building efforts feeding into Deliverable D5.1.

This task will also contribute to the design of training activities on research management with a gender dimension (in coordination with T6.3), reinforcing sustainable institutional change in widening contexts.

Task 5.4 - Research Management Training Resource Base

Task focuses on creating a modular training programme in research management tailored to R2–R4 researchers.

1. The work began with **mapping existing training resources (months 1–6)**.
2. Followed by the **design of a comprehensive training portfolio (months 7–12)**.
3. **The development of module content (months 13–18)**, which will be delivered as part of Deliverable D5.2.

Objectives

- Develop a modular online training programme targeting researchers at R2–R4 levels.
- Specify the structure and content of the pilot training to be implemented in T6.4.

Training Format

The training programme will consist of nine asynchronous online sessions, each lasting 1 to 1.5 hours, and covering essential topics in research management. It is designed to foster collaboration between researchers and support staff and will be piloted under T6.4.

2. T5.1 Building Interaction Spaces to Facilitate Interdisciplinary, Intersectoral, and International Exposure of EDUC Researchers

T5.1 focuses on the establishment of collaborative environments designed to stimulate interdisciplinary and intersectoral engagement, while fostering international exposure for EDUC researchers. This task underpins the co-development and digital implementation of the EDUC Fellowship scheme, aligning with Horizon Europe's principles of excellence, inclusiveness, and co-creation.

EDUC Fellowships aim to strengthen research capacities and foster leadership in widening universities by enabling two-way mobility of talent between widening and advanced EDUC partner institutions and their respective ecosystems. Fellows (early-career researchers) and their hosts (EDUC universities, ecosystem stakeholders, or global partners) will co-develop applications on the OpenUp platform.

The implementation of the EDUC Fellowship scheme is coordinated by three core EDUC-WIDE universities:

- **Universitat Jaume I:** Responsible for coordinating the preparatory phase of the call for applications, including the definition of the eligibility criteria and overall design of the fellowship scheme.
- **University of Pécs:** Tasked with the publication and dissemination of the call via the OpenUp digital platform, ensuring visibility across the EDUC alliance and associated ecosystems.
- **Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University:** In charge of the evaluation and selection process, as well as operational management of the call under Task T6.2, in alignment with Horizon Europe standards of excellence, transparency, and inclusiveness.

This coordinated structure reinforces the co-leadership model and promotes active involvement of widening universities in the governance and delivery of EU-funded fellowship programmes.

Finally, it should be noted that a series of coordination meetings have taken place involving **MUNI, UJI, UPECS, and PNU**, with the aim of jointly developing the call for applications under the EDUC Fellowship scheme. **Universitat Jaume I (UJI)** has taken the lead in preparing the initial draft of the call.

The current version of the call text has been shared via Microsoft Teams for internal consultation. Consortium members are actively providing comments and suggestions for improvement. These inputs will be systematically reviewed and assessed during a dedicated evaluation phase in September, with the objective of finalising the call and ensuring its readiness for publication before December.

This process reflects the collaborative, transparent, and iterative approach in line with EU best practices for co-creation and inclusive governance in Horizon Europe actions.

2.1 Meetings Overview

Table 1. Meetings overview task 5.1

Date	Topic	Num. Participants	Modality
28 January 2025	Drafting the Call Documentation. Round 1	8	Zoom
18 March 2025	Drafting of the Call documentation. Round 2	6	Zoom
15 April 2025	Finishing of the Call documentation. Round 3	5	Zoom

2.2 Documents

In line with the co-creation and participatory approach promoted throughout EDUC-WIDE, a preliminary draft of the call has been circulated among all partner institutions for consultation and feedback. The current version of the draft call text can be found in [Annex I](#). It is important to note that this draft is not final and is still under development; the formal launch and publication are planned for December 2025.

As part of the joint preparation process, the consortium has undertaken a shared analysis of the key procedural elements for the implementation of the call (including publication, application, selection, grant agreement, and reporting). Based on this collaborative exercise, it was agreed that a set of harmonised templates would be developed to ensure the consistent assessment of applications and the appropriate justification of expenditure in line with Horizon Europe financial rules.

The working drafts of the following templates are currently under development and will be finalised alongside the call text prior to publication:

- Application Form
- Letter of invitation
- Letter of the applicant
- Reporting

2.3 Future Plans

The EDUC Fellowship scheme is expected to generate long-term, sustainable impact both at institutional and European levels. For the organising widening universities. The fellowships will act as a strategic lever to enhance institutional capacity in research support services, particularly in career development and talent management. Through active participation in the co-design, dissemination, and management of the scheme, these universities are strengthening their operational leadership, thereby improving their positioning and competitiveness within the ERA.

At the European level, the EDUC Fellowships will contribute to closing the R&I performance gap between widening and advanced countries by enabling circulation of talent. The initiative promotes interdisciplinary, intersectoral, and international mobility of

early-career researchers, facilitating the transfer of knowledge and innovation across sectors and regions. Moreover, the activation of the Career Development Expert Group (CDEG) under Task 5.2 creates a permanent peer-learning structure that enhances the quality and coherence of research career guidance services across the alliance.

Overall, the EDUC Fellowship scheme supports the objectives of Horizon Europe by strengthening excellence, promoting inclusiveness, and reinforcing the synergy between academia and regional innovation ecosystems. It thus represents a concrete step towards a more integrated, cohesive, and innovative European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and Research landscape.

3. T5.2 Building Capacities of Research Career Advisory Services

Task 5.2 aimed to reinforce institutional capacity in research career advisory services within the EDUC alliance, with a particular focus on widening institutions. Coordinated by UJI, the task ran from Month 1 to Month 18 and centred on the creation and activation of the CDEG as a peer-learning and capacity-building platform.

Throughout the task, widening partners engaged in institutional self-assessment and capacity building. Task 5.2 has significantly contributed to fostering structural change, strengthening support services, and promoting inclusive practices across the EDUC alliance and the wider EHEA.

3.1 Meetings Overview

Table 2. Meetings overview task 5.2

Date	Topic	Num. Participants	Modality
26 February 2024	Presentation of WP5 – Career Diversity in R&I: Building the Toolset	25	Teams
11 March 2024	Current Status of the Following Aspects of Research Strategies at Each Institution: GEPs and Career Advisory Services	11	Teams
19 June 2024	Agreement to work separately T5.2 and T5.3	30	Teams
21 October 2024	Review of Documentation Collected Through Collaborative Work on Research Career Advisory Resources	24	Teams
14 November 2024	Data Collection and Initial Diagnosis: Presentation, Structure, Work Plan Proposal	24	Google Meets
25 February 2025	Information Gathering and Initial Meetings: Guideline Objectives, Scope, Preliminary Criteria, and Proposed Schedule	7	Google Meets
3 March 2025	Information Gathering and Initial Meetings: Guideline Objectives, Scope, Draft Criteria, Structure, Timeline, and Planning for Pécs Workshop	23	Google Meets
10 April 2025	Approval of Proposed Speakers, Moderators, and Topics for the Workshop ‘How to Improve Research Advisory Services for Career Diversification’, to Be Held in Pécs (Hungary) on 28–29 April	10	Google Meets
28 and 29 April 2025	CDEG Meeting and Knowledge Sharing Workshop in Pécs	32	Hybrid (Pécs - online)

3.2 Task Development Process

Task 5.2 is designed to reinforce the institutional capacity of widening universities to deliver high-quality, inclusive, and tailored research career advisory services, in alignment with the goals of the ERA. Through structured knowledge transfer and mutual learning among EDUC Alliance members, this task supports the implementation of robust advisory structures that contribute to sustainable research careers and foster career diversification.

1. Initial Phase: Data Collection and Preliminary Diagnosis

The first stage of T5.2 involves a comprehensive data collection and mapping exercise to assess the current state of research career support services across EDUC universities. This phase seeks to establish an initial diagnosis, identifying strengths and areas for development in existing systems. The data collection was structured around a detailed Resources Map, encompassing the following categories:

- Resources for Academic Research Staff.
- Resources for Non-academic Research Staff.
- Rules and Regulations Related to the Research Career System.
- Advisory Services for Professional Development in Research.
- Self-help and Self-assessment Resources.

To better align with the practical delivery of services and EU terminology, the Resources Map has since been restructured into two core sections:

1. **Advisory Services for Professional Development in the Research Field**
 - Human Resources
 - Research Advisory
 - Entrepreneurship and Innovation
 - Equal Opportunities
2. **Support Resources for Advisory Services**
 - Training for Academic and Non-academic Staff
 - Regulations Related to the Career System
 - Self-help Tools and Competence Assessment Resources

This reorganisation will facilitate a clearer understanding of the support ecosystem and allow more targeted development of good practices.

2. Proposed Work Plan and Key Activities

The next phase focuses on the development of a guideline on good practices for research career advisory services, which will be coordinated by UJI with strong support from all EDUC partners. Each university will take the lead in one thematic area:

- Human Resources – USN
- Research Advisory – UNICA
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation – UP
- Equal Opportunities – UJI

The guideline aims to serve both as a tool for the widening universities to develop new services, and as a reference for the continuous improvement of existing advisory systems. It will include ethical principles, streamlined procedures, examples of practical tools, contact points, and quality indicators.

Work Plan:

- **Data Completion and Analysis:** All partners contribute to finalising the mapping exercise, including user feedback and available training.
- **Drafting of the Guidelines:** Based on findings, best practices will be documented, with contributions from all EDUC partners.
- **Implementation and Dissemination:** The final guideline will be shared through the OpenUp platform and institutional channels. Its application in widening universities will be promoted through dedicated workshops and follow-up training.

The guide will be written in accessible language, following a clear and logical structure. It will include examples, templates, and checklists to facilitate practical implementation. Input from relevant services through targeted meetings will ensure the content is grounded in institutional realities.

3. Outputs and Dissemination Strategy

- **Guideline Document:** Structured into six chapters, covering the four thematic areas, the current state, and continuous improvement tools.
- **Publication and Dissemination:** The guideline will be made available on the OpenUp platform and institutional websites. It will be actively promoted within university services and among stakeholders.
- **Capacity-building for widening Universities:** Training sessions based on the guideline may be delivered as part of T6.2. The guideline is intended to become a practical tool for improving advisory services and career outcomes.

Task 5.2 contributes to building a more cohesive, capable, and collaborative environment for research career development across the EDUC Alliance. By empowering institutions through shared knowledge, evidence-based practices, and targeted training it aligns closely with EU objectives of strengthening human capital in research and innovation.

3.3 Workshop in Pécs

The EDUC-WIDE CDEG Workshop, held over two days on 28–29 April 2025, convened partners from the EDUC-WIDE project, intending to strengthen institutional capacity and professionalising research career support services in alignment with the European Research Area (ERA) and the EHEA. The event provided a valuable platform for peer exchange, knowledge transfer, and the identification of common challenges and good practices in the domain of researcher development.

Day 1 – Towards a Good Practices Guideline for Career Services

Representing the University of South-Eastern Norway (USN), a speaker presented USN's structured institutional support for international mobility among early-stage researchers. Their approach includes tailored guidance, Erasmus+ funding advice, and the use of institutional tools such as online platforms and internal mobility grants. The presentation highlighted the importance of personalised support mechanisms that address the diverse needs of doctoral researchers across Europe, moving beyond generic mobility packages.

From the University of Cagliari (UNICA), two representatives shared their institution's integrated approach to pre- and post-award support for Horizon Europe proposals. This includes assistance with proposal development, consortium building, budgeting, financial compliance, and project reporting. The importance of interdepartmental coordination and tailored support was emphasised, reflecting the ERA's emphasis on research excellence, openness, and impact throughout the project lifecycle.

The University of Potsdam (UP) shared its institutional model for supporting entrepreneurial initiatives, particularly among early-stage researchers. This includes access to advisory services and funding opportunities that align with the EU's knowledge valorisation agenda and innovation policies within the European Research and Innovation Area.

Key Actions Identified

- Development of a centralised PhD mobility information portal.
- Implementation of structured workshops for mobility planning at the doctoral level.
- Provision of targeted support for health insurance and related arrangements during international stays.
- Improved compliance and budgetary assistance for Horizon Europe proposals.

Strategic Focus

The day's discussions reinforced the need to further integrate EHEA and ERA priorities through institutional strategies that enable structured mobility, enhanced international cooperation, and robust research support infrastructures across Europe.

Day 2 – Towards a Good Practices Guideline for Career Services

The second day of the workshop focused on drafting a “Good Practices Guideline” to support the institutional professionalisation of research career services within the ERA. The guideline is intended as a dynamic, adaptable resource for institutions across Europe to strengthen services offered to researchers from R1 (doctoral candidates) to R4 (leading researchers).

Key Thematic Areas

- **Human Resources (University of South-Eastern Norway – USN)**
USN presented reforms to institutional HR policies in line with national mandates and CoARA principles. Initiatives include decentralised delivery of career services, structured onboarding programmes (such as “PhD Get Started”), and supervisor involvement in career development.
- **Research Advisory Services (University of Cagliari – UNICA)**
UNICA outlined its centralised research support model that integrates advisory services for Horizon Europe proposals, mobility, entrepreneurship, and post-award management. The institution's HR Excellence in Research recognition and the CRIA Centre were highlighted as essential enablers.
- **Entrepreneurship and Innovation (University of Potsdam – UP)**
The University of Potsdam showcased “Potsdam Transfer”, a key structure supporting both start-up creation and knowledge transfer. The programme is aligned with EU, national, and regional strategies to foster entrepreneurship among PhDs and postdocs.
- **Equal Opportunities (Universitat Jaume I – UJI)**
Université Paris Nanterre reflected on its participation in EDUC-WIDE, emphasising the need to enhance institutional engagement. Gender equality was addressed concerning Horizon Europe's GEPs, with Universitat Jaume I (UJI) taking the lead on this section of the guideline and UPN contributing relevant content.

Programme

CDEG Meeting and Knowledge Sharing Workshop in Pécs

PROGRAMME

04.28. MONDAY

14:00-14:15	Welcome and introduction	dr. Katalin Füzér	PTE
14:15-14:45	How USN facilitates and support young researchers looking for international experience	Jannicke Dovre (online)	USN
14:45-15:15	Support given to researchers for proposals and post-award projects	Emanuela Porru and Simona Scalas (online)	UNICA
15:15-15:45	Coffee break		
15:45-16:15	Support given to researchers and graduates on their startups ideas and in becoming successful entrepreneurs	Nicole Remus-Sticken (online)	UP
16:15-16:45	How CoARA Commitments Influence Personal Growth and Evaluation	dr. András Zsidó	PTE
16:45-17:30	Colloquium and conclusions of the day	Moderated by PNU and MUNI	
19:00-21:00	Social dinner		



Co-funded by
the European Union

Figure 1. Programme 28 April Workshop Pécs

04.29. TUESDAY

9:00-9:10	Welcome and introduction	Csenge Láng	PTE
9:10-9:25	Presentation of the Good Practices Guideline	Núria Sánchez-Pantoja	UJI
9:25-9:40	Area of Human Resources	Aina Enstad	USN
9:40-9:55	Area of Research Advisory	Ester Cois (online)	UNICA
9:55-10:10	Area of Entrepreneurship and Innovation	Ulrike Schmidt (online)	UP
10:10-10:25	Area of Equal Opportunities	Claudia Dell'Uomo (online)	UPN
10:25-11:00	Coffee break		
11:00-12:30	CDEG Partners' working session and closing of the day	Moderated by UJI	

Figure 2. Programme 29 April Workshop Pécs

Pictures



Figure 3. Photo of the attendees in person on 28 April - Workshop Pécs.



Figure 4. Photo of the attendees in person on 29 April - Workshop Pécs.

3.4 Results: Good Practice Guide

Task 5.2 aimed to build the institutional capacity of widening universities to offer high-quality, inclusive, and tailored research career advisory services, in line with the ERA objectives and priorities. Through mutual learning, knowledge sharing, and structured peer collaboration within the EDUC Alliance, this task has delivered tangible outcomes with impact beyond the consortium.

A series of CDEG meetings were organised bringing together experts from all partner institutions. These meetings served as platforms to exchange practices, analyse needs, and collaboratively draft a “Good Practices Guideline” for research career services.

The content of the guideline was defined through a collaborative process. Coordinated by the UJI, each partner university led the development of one of the four thematic areas:

- Human Resources (USN)
- Research Advisory Services (UNICA)
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation (UP)
- Equal Opportunities (UJI, with the collaboration of UPN)

The structure and content were discussed and refined during the EDUC-WIDE Workshop in Pécs (April 2025), which also featured institutional case studies, plenary sessions, and feedback loops. The guide, annexed in the [Annex II](#), is organised into six chapters: a contextual introduction, four thematic areas and conclusions.

The **final output** is a **Good Practices Guideline**, conceived as a dynamic, practical resource. It includes tools, ethical considerations and indicators for implementation. It will be disseminated via the **OpenUp platform**, institutional websites, and targeted workshops (including under Task 6.2) to support uptake in widening institutions and beyond.

Ultimately, Task 5.2 contributes to professionalising research career support, strengthening the ERA through capacity building, and ensuring long-term impact by aligning institutional advisory services with EU values and strategic frameworks.

3.5 Forward Planning

The implementation of the Good Practice Guide on Research Career Advisory Services, developed under Task 5.2 of the EDUC-WIDE project, will have a measurable and strategic impact on both the participating universities and the broader higher education and research landscape across the European Union. The activity, coordinated by Universitat Jaume I (UJI), has contributed substantially to institutional strengthening, professionalisation of services, and alignment with the objectives of the ERA and the widening Participation agenda.

At the level of the participating institutions—including UJI, University of South-Eastern Norway (USN), University of Cagliari (UNICA), University of Potsdam (UP), and Université Paris Nanterre (UPN), with contributions from University of Rennes, Masaryk University, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, and University of Pécs — the Guide will have directly the quality and consistency of advisory services offered to researchers at all career stages (R1–R4). By integrating tailored recommendations, standard operating procedures, and quality assurance mechanisms into their existing frameworks, institutions will be able to make informed improvements to their human resources strategies, research advisory services, innovation and equal opportunities.

One of the most significant outcomes will be the strengthening of institutional capacity in widening universities. Staff at these universities will be benefited from targeted training and knowledge transfer from more experienced partners, leading to increased confidence, efficiency, and professionalisation in the provision of research career support. The co-creation of content across institutions also ensured that the Guide has grounded in real institutional practices, thus will be enhancing its usability and adaptability across diverse contexts.

The Guide has also will facilitate long-term change by serving as a strategic reference document that can support continuous improvement through built-in evaluation tools and feedback mechanisms. The structured R1–R4 classification and thematic taxonomy will enable universities to map their services effectively and ensure alignment with researcher needs.

More broadly, the Guide contributes to the harmonisation of research career advisory services across the EU. By enabling the comparison and adaptation of practices across borders, the project supports the development of a more integrated and equitable European Research and Innovation (R&I) ecosystem. This is particularly valuable for ensuring transparency and comparability in researcher support, and for promoting sustainable career paths across institutions.

The dissemination strategy, including local translations and digital publication, will further increase uptake across European universities. In the long term, the establishment of a Research Career Advisory Network within the EDUC Alliance ensures the sustainability of outcomes, promoting further collaboration and collective learning. As such, Task 5.2 delivers clear European added value and contributes meaningfully to ERA's strategic goals.

4. T5.3 Gender Equality Plans in Practice

Task 5.3 focused on fostering knowledge exchange and capacity-building related to the implementation of GEPs, with particular emphasis on supporting widening universities in advancing their institutional gender equality agendas.

The initial online CDEG meeting served to establish a baseline for the GEP agenda across the consortium. Between Months 4 and 9, UJI and MUNI jointly prepared the in-person CDEG meeting (Month 9, hosted by MUNI), dedicated to the topic of GEP implementation in practice. This meeting was complemented by a knowledge-sharing workshop showcasing selected tools and methodologies to promote gender equality in research-performing organisations.

Throughout the period (M1–M18), widening partners worked individually to strengthen institutional capacity for the effective implementation of their respective GEPs. Task 5.3 facilitated mutual learning and cross-institutional exchange among experts involved in GEP design and implementation, thereby fostering a community of practice within the consortium.

In addition, the CDEG actively promoted cooperation and peer learning, with the objective of supporting sustainable and context-sensitive implementation of GEPs in line with Horizon Europe requirements.

4.1 Meetings Overview

Table 3. Meetings overview task 5.3

DATE	TOPIC	Num. Participants	Modality
26 February 2024	Presentation of WP5 – Career Diversity in R&I: Building the Toolset	25	Teams
11 March 2024	Current Status of the Following Aspects of Research Strategies at Each Institution: Gender Equality Plans and Career Advisory Services	11	Teams
19 June 2024	Agreement to work separately T5.2 and T5.3	30	Teams
18 September 2024	Discuss the speakers and the topics proposal for the December Workshop in Brno (Czech Republic)	26	Teams
9 and 10 December 2024	Expert Group (CDEG) Meeting: Exchange of Best Practices and Case Studies from EDUC Member Universities	27	MUNI, Brno
20 May 2025	Meeting to analyse the indicator data	12	Google Meets
18 June 2025	Proposal for Validation of Indicator Data and Checklist Upload to the OpenUp Platform in accordance with EU Standards	14	Google Meets

4.2 Task Development Process

The main objective of Task 5.3 is to foster institutional capacity for the practical implementation of GEPs, with a particular focus on widening partners. The task promotes cooperation, knowledge sharing, and peer learning in alignment with Horizon Europe's cross-cutting priority on gender equality.

Task 5.3 has been developed through a collaborative, multi-phase approach, involving all consortium partners, and closely coordinated by UJI with support from MUNI. The process is structured into three main stages:

Stage 1 – Initial Diagnosis (Completed in October 2024)

- Each partner institution conducted an initial self-assessment to evaluate the current state of GEP implementation.
- It was observed that no university in the consortium currently applies **quantitative indicators** systematically for monitoring or evaluation of GEPs.
- A set of realistic, user-friendly **quantitative indicators** was jointly proposed, refined, and validated through collaborative discussion across partners.

Stage 2 – Data Collection and Checklist Development

- Partners began collecting data aligned with the agreed indicators to assess their availability, relevance, and applicability across diverse institutional contexts.
- This phase enabled partners to identify challenges and opportunities in using data for monitoring gender equality progress.
- A **shared workspace** was created on the **OpenUp platform** to facilitate collaborative work and resource sharing, including outputs from prior EDUC projects.
- Based on the collected data, a **checklist** has been co-designed to support institutions in evaluating the implementation of their GEPs.
- The checklist aims to be visually appealing, practically oriented, and easy to use, particularly for institutions with limited resources or prior experience in gender mainstreaming.

Stage 3 – Identification of Areas for Improvement (M15–M16)

- Analysis of the indicator data will allow for the identification of areas for improvement within partner institutions.
- This phase will inform institutional GEP revisions and support the development of tailored capacity-building measures.

Process of Indicator Development

The formulation of relevant and measurable indicators to assess the effective implementation of GEPs in research-performing organisations presents several challenges when the focus is strictly limited to the research domain.

The objective of the present proposal is not to deliver a definitive or exhaustive list, but rather to provide a structured starting point for collaborative work among consortium partners. The intention is to collectively define a set of indicators deemed relevant, feasible, and aligned with the objectives of the project and Horizon Europe gender equality provisions.

In designing the initial indicator framework, the following criteria were prioritised:

- **Relevance to the research sector:** All proposed indicators specifically target gender equality in research-related activities (e.g. recruitment of researchers, access to research funding, leadership in research teams).
- **Quantifiability:** Indicators are expressed either in numerical terms (e.g. absolute values, percentages) or as binary (yes/no) variables, to ensure ease of measurement and comparability across institutions.
- **Feasibility and realism:** The indicators are designed to be practical, realistic, and adapted to the operational context of the partner institutions, particularly widening universities.
- **Simplicity and usability:** Efforts have been made to simplify the structure of the indicator table and to ensure clarity in definitions, thereby enhancing their applicability across a range of institutional contexts.

These indicators are intended to serve a dual purpose: to inform institutional self-assessment processes and to feed into the broader monitoring and evaluation efforts foreseen at project and European levels.

This work is part of an ongoing, iterative process within Task 5.3, and the current proposal remains open to refinement based on partner feedback and evolving project needs.

Key Outputs of T5.3

- A finalised list of indicators for GEP monitoring (with proposal for integration of additional MUNI indicators into future activities, such as T6.3).
- A practical, visual checklist for assessing GEP implementation.
- A shared digital repository on the OpenUp platform for resources and tools developed across previous and current EDUC initiatives.

4.3 Workshop in Brno

As part of the activities under Task 5.3 (*Gender Equality Plans in Practice*), a two-day workshop and CDEG meeting was held in December 2024 at Masaryk University (Brno). The event brought together gender equality experts and institutional representatives from across the EDUC alliance to discuss practical strategies for implementing Gender GEPs within the research domain.

The workshop aimed to foster mutual learning, share institutional experiences, and co-develop tools and resources to support capacity-building — particularly in widening universities. The discussions and outcomes contributed directly to the development of a shared repository and monitoring framework to be used across the consortium.

Workshop Structure and Content

The two-day workshop included thematic presentations, interactive discussions, and moderated colloquia. Each session linked practical examples to the broader objectives of GEP implementation under Horizon Europe.

Outcomes and Key Results

The workshop generated substantial insights and practical outputs, including:

- **Shared understanding of GEP implementation challenges** in the research sector, particularly regarding data collection and indicator development.
- **Agreement on the need for a centralised digital workspace** to support knowledge sharing and access to practical resources.
- **Commitment from partners to contribute actively** to the creation and population of the OpenUp workspace with relevant tools, case studies, and training materials.

This workshop marked a key milestone in advancing GEP implementation in the EDUC-WIDE project. It successfully fostered mutual learning, identified concrete tools for institutional use, and laid the groundwork for sustained collaboration and content sharing across the consortium.

Programme



GEP Works|

Venue: [Sir Roger Scruton Meeting Room, Komen](#)

Link for online participants: <https://cesnet.zoom>

Monday December 9th, 2024

14:00 - 14:15	Welcome and Introduction
14:15 - 14:45	Ethical Governance of research and Innovation: the gender perspective: Progress at the University Jaume I <i>Elsa González Esteban (University Jaume I)</i>
14:45 - 15:15	Training and awareness-raising programs for staff and students (to integrate their research and teaching activities): case-studies and best practices <i>Ester Cois (University of Cagliari)</i>
15:15 - 15:45	GEP in EDUC needs action! <i>Tony Burner (University of South-Eastern Norway)</i>
15:45 - 16:15	Coffee Break
16:15 - 17:00	Colloquium and conclusions of the day <i>Moderated by: Christina Wolff (University of Potsdam)</i> Questions, knowledge acquired and its application in the EDUC-WIDE project
19:00 - 20:00	Guided City Tour Meeting point: in front of Hotel Barceló at 18:55
20:00 - 21:30	Social Dinner (<u>restaurant in Hotel Passage</u>)



Funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101019719

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible




Figure 5. Programme 9 December Workshop Brno.

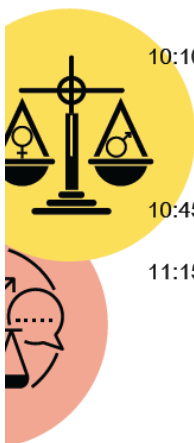
Workshop Program

[m, Komenského nám. 2](#), Masaryk University, Brno, Czechia

usnnet.zoom.us/j/92125813381 (both days)

Tuesday December 10th, 2024

- 9:00 - 9:10 **Welcome and Introduction**
- 9:10 - 9:40 **Data analytics tools to assess the gender dimension in Open Science (Open Access publications and Open Data)**
Katalin Fuzér (University of Pécs)
- 9:40 - 10:10 **Implementing GEP in research: Navigating the Ukraine context**
Tetiana Solodzhuk (Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University)
- 10:10 - 10:45 **Colloquium and conclusions**
Moderated by: Jana Nová (Masaryk University)
Questions, knowledge acquired and its application in the EDUC-WIDE project
- 10:45 - 11:15 **Coffee Break**
- 11:15 - 12:30 **EDUC-WIDE CDEG Partner's working session**
Knowledge acquired and its application in the EDUC-WIDE project



Grant Agreement No. 101136533.
effect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the
y can be held responsible for them.



Co-funded by
the European Union

Figure 6. Programme 10 December Workshop Brno.

Pictures



Figure 7. Photo of the attendees in person on 10 December - Workshop Brno.

4.4 Results: Indicators Data and Evaluation Checklist

As a result of the collaborative research work carried out by all the partners, a total of 31 indicators have been established and are distributed across 4 sections. The final list of indicators for each section is shown below:

A) General statistics: data are collected on the total size of the sample in each university, broken down by gender or profile.

A.1. Total staff (*number*).

A.1.1. Academic and research staff (*total; %women; %men*).

A.1.2. Administrative and service staff (*total; %women; %men*).

A.2. Students enrolled.

A.2.1. Bachelor's degree (*total; %women; %men*).

A.2.2. Master (*total; %women; %men*).

A.2.3. PhD candidates (*total; %women; %men*).

B) Organisational Culture and Gender Balance in Management and Decision-Making: reference is made to regulations and specific training, as well as gender balance in senior positions and the resources allocated to promoting and guaranteeing equality.

B.1. University regulations related to research (*list of those reflecting the principles of gender equality*).

B.2. Does the university offer gender equality training? (*yes/no*).

B.2.1. If so, what is the target group? (*specify the target group*).

B.2.2. Is the training compulsory for research staff? (*yes/no*).

B.2.3. Is the extent of this training monitored in any way over time? (*yes/no*).

B.3. Balance of genders in research management:

B.3.1. Participation of women and men in the Rector's Office: Rector (*Woman/Man*).

B.3.2. Participation of women and men in the Rector's Office: Vice-rectors (*total; %women; %men*).

B.3.3. Participation of women and men in Faculties/Schools: Deans or Directors (*total; %women; %men*).

B.3.4. Participation of women and men in Faculties/Schools: Vice-deans or Deputy directors (*total; %women; %men*).

B.3.5. Participation of women and men as heads of research institutes (*total; %women; %men*).

B.3.6. Participation of women and men as heads of services related to research (*total; %women; %men*).

B.4. A specific programme has been developed to encourage managers to receive training in gender equality and gender-sensitive leadership? (*yes/no*).

B.5. Permanent services offering information, counselling on sexual harassment, gender violence and gender diversity. (*Yes/No*).

B.6. The total budget for offices and institutes dedicated to implementing equality at the university (€).

C) Recruitment, selection and career progression: indicators related to the recruitment and remuneration of research staff.

C.1. The regulations in research staff recruitment include gender equality requirements? (*Yes/No*).

C.2. Competitive examinations cover specific topics on equality? (*Yes/No*).

C.3. Remuneration audit report based on gender equality in research? (*Yes/No*).

D) Integrating the Gender Dimension into Research and Innovation: it includes aspects such as specific training for research staff, gender equality and the pay gap.

D.1. Training on methodologies with a gender perspective in research? (*Yes/No*).

D.2. Training on conflict prevention and intercultural differences in research? (*Yes/No*).

D.3. Balance of genders in research:

D.3.1. Participation of women and men as PI in research teams (*%women; %men*).

D.3.2. Does my university have internal calls for research projects? (*yes/no*).

D.3.3. If so, participation of women and men in evaluation committees for that research projects (*%women; %men*).

D.3.4. If so 4.3.2, do the evaluation committees incorporate an expert in gender equality? (*yes/no*).

D.3.5. People receiving research grant awards (*total; %women; %men*).

D.4. Pay gap by sex among research staff (*Yes/No*).

Section 4.4.1 below provides an overview of the results obtained from the beneficiary universities for each indicator. Additionally, to facilitate future monitoring of the implementation of Equality Plans, a checklist has been designed to be easily and quickly completed. Section 4.4.2 is dedicated to this checklist.

The EDUC-WIDE project recognises the social realities and diversity across the EU. In the implementation of GEPs, it is essential to acknowledge that gender exists along a social and biological continuum, which goes beyond the traditional binary framework. Nevertheless, due to restrictions on data collection and study, it is currently not feasible to carry out a more nuanced and inclusive assessment of relevant indicators. Consequently, the analysis does not seek to exclude other gender identities, but is constrained by the availability of disaggregated data.

4.4.1 Indicators Data analysis

For several months, data has been collected from all the universities involved in the project, including both advanced and widening institutions. The purpose of this task is not

to compare data between universities. The differences in social and cultural factors, size, resources and other factors make it clear that such a comparison would not be feasible or fair. However, it is important to promote gender equality in research at our universities and to analyse the results jointly. Furthermore, sharing data between partners encourages the exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge between our services.

A) General statistics:

The size of the partner universities varies greatly. Taking as a reference the number of students (adding bachelor, master and doctorate), the smallest is the UJI with just under 14,000 students, while the largest is MUNI with almost 34,000 students (indicators **A.2.1 to A.2.3**). In terms of staff, PNU would be the university with the least number of staff with almost 1500 in total, while MUNI would be the one with the highest number of staff, around 7000.

For the analysis of the data, gender parity (or equality) is considered to exist when each gender is represented by a minimum of 40% and a maximum of 60%. While practically all universities report gender parity among their academic and research staff (indicator **A.1.1**), none of them do so among their administrative and service staff (indicator **A.1.2**), where women are consistently more numerous (between 61.8% and 67.9% of the workforce). As for the student body, there is parity among doctoral students at all universities. Conversely, half of the universities do not have gender parity for Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Where there is no parity, women are always more numerous (between 61% and 66%), although an exceptional case is notable, in which women make up 75.5% of Master's students.

B) Organisational Culture and Gender Balance in Management and Decision-Making:

Each university has its own approach to structuring and managing the rules and regulations governing research. The main motivation behind indicator **B.1** (University regulations related to research) is therefore to encourage universities to incorporate gender equality principles in a cross-cutting manner into all their regulations, whether newly created or updated. Fortunately, as a requirement for joining the consortium, all partner universities have a Gender Equality Plan and a HRS4R strategy. Sharing our own regulations incorporating gender equality principles provides resources to facilitate the adoption of these principles in areas for future improvement.

Only three universities claimed to offer gender equality training (indicator **B.2**). According to indicator **B.2.1**, this training is offered to academic and research staff at all three universities, and to administrative and service staff at two of them. At the third university, it is offered to doctoral students and some other degree students (medicine, nursing, criminology, teaching, history and heritage, humanities, advertising and public relations, and labour relations). The extent of this training is monitored in some way in all three universities (indicator **B.2.3**), although it is not compulsory in any of them (indicator **B.2.2**).

A total of six indicators were considered when assessing gender balance in research management positions. The first of these, **B.3.1**, refers to the position of Rector and, as a single-person role, parity does not apply. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that, of the seven universities for which data were collected, only two have a female rector. As far as vice-rectors are concerned (indicator **B.3.2**), there is a very well-balanced parity in most cases, except in two wide universities where almost all the posts are occupied by men.

In terms of management positions in Faculties and Schools, parity among Deans/Directors is only achieved in two of the advanced universities (indicator **B.3.3**). In four other universities, these positions are predominantly occupied by men, while in one university, there is a majority of women in these roles. Vice-Deans and/or Vice-Directors (indicator **B.3.4**) show a greater balance, with only two universities having a higher proportion of men.

As for research institutes and centres (indicator **B.3.5**), except for one university with a majority of women at the head, and another university with a majority of men, the rest of the universities providing data show a balance in these positions. Finally, indicator **B.3.6** shows the balance of male and female heads of research-related services. For this indicator, the services listed in [Annex III](#) with Information on Support Services for Research Staff, belonging to task 5.2, have been considered. According to the provided data, women are in the majority as heads of research-related services in all universities, although in two of them there is parity because the percentage of women is 60% or less. In the universities without parity, over 70% of heads of research-related services are women.

Only four partners responded to the question of whether their universities have developed a specific programme to encourage managers to receive training in gender equality and gender-sensitive leadership (indicator **B.4**). Two of these partners indicated that they have such a programme. Regarding permanent services offering information and counselling on sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and gender diversity (indicator **B.5**), all but one of the universities reported having such services. In closing this section, it should be noted that only three universities provided the total annual budget for offices and institutes responsible for implementing equality within the university (indicator **B.6**), and all three belong to the advanced university group. Work on this indicator revealed the complexity of controlling and monitoring this expenditure in detail.

C) Recruitment, selection and career progression:

Only half of the universities claim to include gender equality requirements in their research staff recruitment regulations (indicator **C.1**). Most universities say they include specific equality issues in competitive examinations for certain roles (indicator **C.2**), but there is clear room for improvement in this area. This section ends with indicator **C.3**, which reveals that, of the seven universities, only three advanced universities carry out an audit report on gender-equality-based remuneration in research.

D) Integrating the Gender Dimension into Research and Innovation:

Almost all universities offer training in research methodologies with a gender perspective (indicator **D.1**), which is sometimes favoured by participation in EDUC projects. However, only four of the seven universities offer training in conflict prevention and intercultural differences in research (indicator **D.2**).

An important theme of this evaluation process, which uses five indicators, is gender balance in research. The first of these, indicator **D.3.1**, considers the participation of men and women as Principal Investigators (PIs) in research teams. Only four universities have provided data for this indicator. Overall, although the difference is usually small in favour of men, there is never parity. Five universities indicated that they have internal calls for research projects (indicator **D.3.2**). Three of these universities indicated that there is parity in the evaluation committees of these internal calls; the other two did not provide this information (indicator **D.3.3**). Unfortunately, none of the universities have evaluation committees that include a gender equality expert (indicator **D.3.4**). Finally, the percentage of men and women granted awards has been analysed, using data from only five universities (indicator **D.3.5**). While three of the universities have a clear male majority

among the awardees, one university has a clear female majority, and only one university shows parity in this indicator.

The last indicator refers to whether or not there is a gender gap among research staff, and only four universities provided this data (indicator **D.4**). Half gave an affirmative answer and half gave a negative one.

4.4.2 Evaluation Checklist

At the beginning of this task, in order to be able to diagnose our universities, it was deemed essential to define common, quantitative indicators or those that could be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no', and based on data that was relatively easy to obtain. The period of data collection from the partner universities allowed us to validate that we were working with realistic and achievable indicators for almost all of the universities. However, filling in the indicators is a laborious process that results in an excessive amount of data and information, which makes follow-up and monitoring of evolution over time difficult.

Consequently, at the end of the process, the consortium agreed to design an easy-to-use checklist to facilitate future monitoring tasks. Like the indicators, the checklist is structured into four sections containing a total of 27 questions. All the questions have a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer in the first column. The second column allows us to indicate whether or not there has been an improvement compared to three years ago.

In this way, universities have a simple tool at their disposal that allows them to:

- 1st. Based on these questions, they can devise or design strategies and measures that promote equality at the university.
- 2nd. Assess the evolution of the implementation of measures aimed at improving equality in research at a glance.

The checklist PDF file has been shared with all universities via the OpenUp platform and is attached to this deliverable in [Annex IV](#).

4.5 Forward Planning

Task 5.3 has laid the foundations for long-term institutional transformation by fostering mutual learning, capacity-building, and practical support for the implementation of GEPs across the EDUC alliance, with a particular emphasis on widening institutions. Going forward, the task is expected to generate a positive and sustainable impact on both participating institutions and their wider academic communities, while contributing meaningfully to the broader objectives of the ERA and Horizon Europe's cross-cutting priority on gender equality.

The collaborative development of indicators, the practical checklist for GEP implementation, and the establishment of a shared digital repository are key enablers for sustained institutional learning. These outputs will serve not only as internal tools for self-assessment and progress monitoring but also as transferable resources that can support peer institutions across the EU seeking to improve gender equality in research.

The following concrete measures are planned to maximise dissemination and uptake of the results from Task 5.3:

Internal institutional dissemination: All participating universities will integrate the indicators and checklist into their internal monitoring processes. Workshops and briefings

will be organised to familiarise relevant academic and administrative staff with these tools, supporting their operationalisation within existing equality frameworks.

Cross-consortium knowledge exchange: The OpenUp digital platform will continue to function as a central repository for tools, templates, and good practices. Partners have committed to regularly updating this space and using it to promote shared learning and synergies with related EDUC and Horizon Europe initiatives.

Sustainability and integration in future project phases: The monitoring indicators developed under Task 5.3 are proposed for further refinement and integration into the activities under Task 6.3. This will ensure continuity and support ongoing institutional engagement beyond the lifetime of the current task.

Task 5.3 has created a practical, evidence-based framework to support the advancement of gender equality in research institutions. By enabling data-driven decision-making and encouraging community building across the alliance, the task is contributing to the mainstreaming of gender considerations across institutional strategies, thus supporting the objectives of inclusive excellence promoted by the European Union.

5. T5.4 Developing Resource Base for Training of Research Management Skills

As part of EDUC-WIDE, the EDUC Research Management Training Programme has been developed to support R2 and R3 researchers — those who are not yet fully independent in shaping their research agendas, as well as those recently appointed as research group or project leaders. The programme aims to strengthen their collaboration with research managers, foster a stronger research management culture across the EDUC Alliance, and enhance the researchers' competitiveness in the broader research landscape.

5.1 Meetings Overview

Table 4. Meetings overview task 5.4

DATE	TOPIC	Num. Participants	Modality
12 June 2024	Introduction to the topic – understanding the term and target group, mapping existing resources (Survey document)	10	ZOOM
28 January 2025	Identifying key topics for individual training modules based on the survey	16	ZOOM
3 March 2025	Shortlisting training topics	15	ZOOM
8 April 2025	Structuring the training and assigning module leads	13	ZOOM

5.2 Task Development Process

1. Task force Formation:

The first step was establishing a task force comprising representatives from each EDUC-WIDE partner university. Members included individuals responsible for staff development, project management, or career support.

2. Topic identification:

A survey document was developed to map the existing educational resources related to research management within the EDUC-WIDE alliance. The task force also used insights from Task 5.2 (Career Development) to compile a comprehensive list of relevant topics.

3. Topic Shortlisting and Module Assignment:

After evaluating the long list of topics, a refined list was selected for inclusion in the training series. Each module was assigned a leading partner or group of partners:

Table 5. Selected topic for training series

No.	Module	Partner in lead
1	Introduction to Research Management	USN, MUNI
2	The Role of Research Managers	USN, MUNI
3	Leadership	PNU, UP

No.	Module	Partner in lead
4	Open Science	UNICA, UPECS, PNU, UJI
5	Research infrastructures	MUNI
6	Pre-award	UP, USN, MUNI
7	Post-award	UP
8	Technology transfer	UPECS
9	Research assessment	MUNI

4. Content Development:

Once topics were assigned, each team independently developed and refined the content of their respective module.

5. Preparation of Training Annotations:

As a final step, each team created module descriptions and content outlines, contributing to Deliverable D5.2.

5.3 Forward Planning

The next steps for the Research Management Skills training include the production of video materials between September and December 2025. These recordings will be uploaded to EDUC's Moodle-based e-learning platform, widely used across the alliance.

The pilot implementation of the EDUC RM Training is planned for January to June 2026. Participants will be able to complete the modules at their own pace, with each module concluding with a short quiz to assess their understanding of the topic. Successful completion will be awarded with a certificate.

6. Conclusions

Work Package 5 has delivered a comprehensive, collaborative framework to strengthen research careers and institutional capacities across the EDUC-WIDE Alliance, with a clear focus on supporting widening universities. Through its interlinked tasks, WP5 has created tangible added value at European level by fostering structural reforms in researcher development, career advisory services, gender equality implementation, and research management skills. These actions collectively contribute to advancing the ERA, aligning closely with Horizon Europe's core values of excellence, inclusiveness, and co-creation.

The co-development of the EDUC Fellowship Scheme (T5.1) has enhanced interdisciplinary, intersectoral, and international collaboration, addressing regional imbalances in mobility and leadership through a co-led model involving widening institutions. WP5 also delivered a Good Practices Guide (T5.2) for research career advisory services, developed collaboratively across four thematic areas. This strategic resource promotes peer learning, capacity-building, and service professionalisation, with dissemination supported by a digital repository on the OpenUp platform. Task 5.3 advanced the implementation of GEPs by co-developing practical monitoring indicators and tools to support evidence-based evaluation, aligning with Horizon Europe's gender mainstreaming agenda. Finally, Task 5.4 focused on developing a modular training programme in research management for early-career researchers, promoting accessibility and relevance across the alliance. Collectively, WP5 contributes to ERA objectives by fostering institutional capacity, inclusive governance, and talent circulation in European R&I ecosystems.

The evaluation of WP5's success is structured around both qualitative and quantitative metrics. Key tools include:

- **Monitoring indicators** for GEP implementation and institutional support services.
- **Feedback mechanisms** from workshops, training sessions, and pilot activities.
- **User engagement analytics** from the OpenUp platform.
- **Internal review and validation** of deliverables by the CDEG.

In conclusion, WP5 has made substantial contributions to improving institutional resilience, inclusiveness, and excellence in research support across Europe. Its outputs not only support the immediate goals of the EDUC-WIDE project but also serve as a replicable model for advancing ERA priorities in other institutional and regional contexts.

Annex I - Proposal of the Fellowships call

The following pages show the proposal for the call, which has been shared with the partners for their consideration and approval. Work on this proposal will continue until the call is published in December. Therefore, **this document is not final**.

In addition, the following templates are being prepared to simplify the application process for interested individuals:

- Application Form
- Letter of invitation
- Letter of the applicant
- Reporting



Call for Fellowship

(Draft for general discussion in the partnership June 2025)

The project “EDUC-WIDE” is funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101136533.

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Call for fellowship

The EDUC-WIDE project emphasises research and innovation and within WP5 and WP7, multiple calls are available to support research collaboration and researcher development.

The EDUC Fellowships for Researchers Call aims to expose researchers at any career stage to diverse sectors, disciplines, and cultures, facilitating the acquisition of new skills and fostering the development of new partnerships among EDUC Universities and their ecosystems.

The call is structured as a rolling call, launching in December 2025 and remaining open until the funds are exhausted or until December 2026, whichever comes first.

Priorities of the call

This call has the following priorities:

- Building interaction spaces to facilitate interdisciplinary, intersectoral, and international exposure of EDUC researchers
- Expose researchers to different sectors, disciplines, and cultures.
- Acquisition of new skills that could be difficult to be acquired without this specific mobility.
- Development of new partnerships (among EDUC universities and into their ecosystem), that is cooperation with newcomers¹.

Therefore, it is expected that the fellowships proposal addresses sufficiently the previous priorities and provides evidence through the activities proposed and the impact expected.

Figures and definitions, responsibilities

- Visiting researcher: he/she will be the beneficiary of the grant, and therefore will travel and stay during the agreed period for the fellowship. He/she will be responsible for reporting the activities performed during the stay showing the evidence of the results achieved.
- Applicant organisation: this is the organisations that the visiting researcher is employed by or associated with (as PhD candidate). It will receive the fellowship funds and according to its own internal and national regulation, it will cover the subsistence and travel expenses to the visiting researcher.
- Tutor: head person, responsible or supervisor of the researcher in the sending institution. This is mandatory for PhD. Candidates or other staff that is part of a research team or project.
- Hosting organisation: organisation that will welcome the visiting researcher, it can be a partner organisation or associated institution of the EDUC-WIDE project or EDUC Alliance (without restriction that some activities can be done in other institutions of the ecosystem of the partner).

¹ That is organisations that are not currently part of the consortium



- Mentor: person that will welcome and provide support to the visiting researcher in the host organisation.

Requirement for applicants

Only researcher staff from EDUC-WIDE consortium organisations can apply for a grant for this call, with the following requirements:

- Are employed by / associated with the sending organisation at least three months before the form is submitted, and their contract / relation, is expected to last, at least six months after the end of the fellowship (full time or part-time contract as researcher/professor, or PhD candidate).
- Have the authorisation of his/her head or supervisor (if necessary, because of their position)
- Only organisations in the following table are allowed to be sender and host institutions.

UNIVERSITY	COUNTRY	Type of Participation
Masaryk University	Czech Republic (Widening)	Sending and hosting institution.
University of Pécs	Hungary (Widening)	Sending and hosting institution.
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University	Ukraine (Widening)	Sending and hosting institution.
University of Cagliari	Italy	Sending and hosting institution.
University of Potsdam	Germany	Sending and hosting institution.
University of South-Eastern Norway	Norway	Sending and hosting institution.
University Jaume I	Spain	Sending and hosting institution.
University of Rennes	France	Associated (without direct funding), only as host institution.
University Paris Nanterre	France	Associated (without direct funding), only as host institution.
Associated partners from EDUC-WIDE project		Only as host institution.

Duration

The individual mobilities should last from 4 weeks (short-term) to 12 weeks (mid-term) and be concluded by December 2026 at latest.

Hosting organization

Any organisation from the EDUC-WIDE or EDUC consortium (beneficiary or associated partner) can be the hosting organisation.

Still activities of the fellowship can be developed also in other organisations that are part of the ecosystem of an EDUC / EDUC-WIDE partner, in this case, the Mentor, can belong to the organisation that the visiting researcher will develop the activities.

Procedure and deadlines

Following is the expected timing for the fellowship procedure:

- Call open November 2025
- Collection of applications from December 2025
- Commission will meet to accept/reject applications as they are received on a rolling call procedure
- Implementation after selection till December 2026
- Reporting must be completed within 30 days after the end of the stay.

As a rolling call, the selection committee will verify the eligibility and the costs, and the quality of the proposal received during the whole period (till December 2026). Based on the report of the selection committee the EDUC-WIDE steering committee will issue a formal approval on the award.

Documentation

Application form (to be submitted in OpenUp) will include:

- Data of the applicant's organisation and the visiting researcher. Also, the hosting organisation and the mentor.
- Aims and objectives of the fellowship, background and motivations to start this collaboration, innovative aspects and expected general impact on both the visiting researcher and organisation.
- Tasks and activities to be performed in the hosting organisation or associated institutions, distributed in time and how those are related to the priorities of this call and the involvement of the mentor.
- How the activities will be developed, that is methodology. That can include the participation of different staff and roles, other target, departments/services/organisations, or innovative approaches (specifically those that will benefit from an international fellowship). The methodology has to include interdisciplinary, international and intersectoral components, and describe any newcomer organisation².
- Impact: how will lessons learnt improve the researcher performance and the local research group in the applicant organisation, including science communication and dissemination strategy, in both the applicant and hosting organisation?

² It is encouraged the participation of associated institutions or other organisations that belong to the ecosystem of the host institution that provide and added value to the fellowship



- Total amount requested must be detailed and properly justified.
- Short CV of the visiting researcher and the mentor (or ecosystem institution personnel that will be in direct contact with the visiting researcher) in the host institution.

Annexes (documents to be uploaded to OpenUP):

- Letter of the applicant organisation granting permission for the researcher to undertake the fellowship. This letter should be issued and signed by a representative of the organisation³ and include the acceptance of the tutor if required (e.g. in case of a PhD candidate or in case the visiting researcher is part of a research group, team or project). That letter should state clearly that the researchers meet the required criteria (template will be provided).
- Letter of invitation of the hosting organisation agreed by the mentor and approved by a representative of the organisation⁴. Other legal information can be added in case the visiting researcher is going to perform some days at an associated institution (also NDA or other agreements).

Funding and eligible expenses

Total amount for fellowships is 170.000 € in total (50.000 € for UNICA, UJI, USN and UP; 80.000 € MUNI and PNU; 40.000 € UPECS), to be distributed among the awarded applicant organisations.

The following expenses are allowed:

- Travel , subsistence and accommodation, based on the applicant organisation regulations and procedures, unit costs⁵ can be used as orientation.
- Other costs, if duly justified, such as specific consumables or special needs.
- Up to 25% of indirect costs for administrative services, consumables, or other expenses not directly related to the fellowship.

The justification of expenses will be done based on the achievement of results, no need to provide real costs evidence, although all receipts must be kept for potential audits or financial controls; all financing received should be spent on direct costs directly related to the fellowship activities.

How to Apply

Applications can be submitted online together with all requested annexes via OpenUP (<https://educ.openup.education/welcome>).

Together with the online application form, the applicants are requested to upload the following annexes:

³ local coordinator of EDUC-WIDE project, department/faculty director, director of the research office are allowed.

⁴ local coordinator of EDUC-WIDE project, department/faculty director, director of the research office are allowed

⁵ [Commission Decision C\(2021\)35 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework](#)



Co-funded by
the European Union

- Letter of the applicant organisation
- Letter of invitation of the host institution

Templates are provided that can be used as a guide.

The rolling call will be closed at the end of December 2026 or once the funding is exhausted, whichever happens first. See the call page in OpenUp to check if the call is still open.

Selection Criteria

The commission will first check the eligibility criteria of the documentation provided, specifically:

1. Both sending and receiving organisations are listed in the Letter of the sending organisation includes de adequate information and states clearly that the visiting researcher meets the criteria for eligibility, the applicant organisation will comply with the financial rules and the submission of the final report maximum 30 days the finishing of the fellowship.
2. Invitation letter of the receiving organisation, stating clearly the purpose of the fellowship and the mentor commitment in relation to the application form duties.
3. All sections in the application form are properly filled in, and both sending and receiving organisation are eligible (administrative check).

If all above is correct, the application form will be assessed based on the following criteria:

1. Are the objectives of the fellowship aligned with the priorities of the Call? Is the objective of the fellowship sufficiently motivated? Is it innovative and does it promote new collaborations?
2. Will the activities planned contribute in an effective way to reach the objective of the fellowship? Will the methodology include interdisciplinary, international and intersectoral components?
3. How will the project impact on the skills of the visiting researcher, the receiving and sending organisation? Is there any activity planned before the fellowship starts / after to maximise the impact and the achievement of the aims?
4. Is the relation cost/impact sufficient?
5. Is the experience of the mentor (or other staff that will be involved in the host organisation) and the activities to be performed in the host institution aligned with the profile of the visiting researcher?

The application will be assessed as a whole, but also individually, meaning a weak quality on an item could result on the project's rejection.

Selection Process

Once received the proposal, the commission can:

- Accept the proposal.
- Pause the proposal suggesting minor modifications (to the budget or other details for which the commission requires a clarification) The applicant will have then to update their proposal to accommodate the suggestions. In this case, no resubmission is required, only negotiation.

- Reject the proposal, in case it is not eligible or lacks in quality. The applicant will be allowed to resubmit the proposal again with the issues resolved.

The acceptance or rejection of the commission will be done based on the criteria stated in the previous section. The evaluation and selection process will be coordinated by PNU.

In the next step, successful applicants will receive approval from the EDUC-WIDE Steering Committee depending on the remaining funding.

Contacts

For general enquiries, please contact your local EDUC-WIDE contact.

General Conditions

Nature of research and publication of results

This call intends to support research and collaboration conducted in academic institutions and its ecosystem. All research results achieved under this call shall be published. User shall follow the best practice by publishing in Open Access journals and provide their data in a FAIR manner.

Acknowledgements

Publications resulting from work undertaken within the EDUC-WIDE Fellowships must contain an acknowledgement according to the following pattern:

The authors acknowledge financial support of the “EDUC WIDE project funded by the European Union’s Horizon Europe under Grant Agreement No. 101136533. This manuscript reflects only the authors’ views and opinions, neither the European Union nor the European Commission can be considered responsible for them.

Similar acknowledgements should be included in the thesis document, during conference presentations, including the proceedings, and at other public presentations.

Researchers shall notify the organisers of this call of all publications that resulted from the EDUC-WIDE funded seed projects. Please send the PDF file and reference details of the publication as soon as it has been published to educ-wide@unica.it. Please indicate the type of publication: Scientific Journal, Book, Patent, Proceedings, article on the web, other. These publications should also carry the acknowledgement given above.

Ethics and regulations

All the fellowships in the development of their research activities should adhere to the ethic and regulation procedures of the sending and hosting institutions.

Reporting

Each fellowship recipient is required to submit a final report detailing the activities undertaken during the fellowship, including a summary of learning outcomes and/or vision of future collaboration within the host (template is provided). The report has to be submitted to PNU contact person maximum 30 days after the fellowship has ended, latest by 27 January 2027.

Annex II - Good Practice Guide for Advisory Services

The following pages present the final version of the Good Practice Guide for Research Career Advisory Services, developed within the framework of the EDUC-WIDE project. This guide serves as a key instrument for knowledge exchange, mutual learning, and the sharing of institutional practices among partner universities. It aims to support the professional development of research staff by promoting accessible, inclusive, and high-quality advisory services across the alliance.

Given the public nature of this deliverable, a revised version has been prepared for publication. In this version, the personal contact details of contributors have been removed to comply with data protection standards, while general contact information — such as institutional email addresses and web links to relevant advisory units — has been retained to ensure continued access to services and resources. This approach supports transparency, transferability, and wider uptake of the guide, in line with EU principles of openness, ethical standards, and stakeholder engagement in the ERA.



GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR ADVISORY SERVICES



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement No. 101136533.

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

History of changes

Version	Publication Date	Change
0.1	04.04.2025	Initial version
0.2	29.04.2025	Draft version to work in the Workshop
0.3	10.06.2025	Draft version
1.0	15.07.2025	Final version for the Deliverable

List of Contributors

Beneficiary	Section	Author/Contributor /reviewer
University of South-Eastern Norway	Chapter 2 Aina Enstad	Author
University of Cagliari	Chapter 3 Ester Cois Michele Mascia	Author Author
University of Potsdam	Chapter 4 Ulrike Schmidt Nicole Remus-Sticken	Author Contributor
University of Paris Nanterre	Section 5.7 Nicolas Bourbon Claudia Dell'uomo	Author Author
Universitat Jaume I	Introduction, Chapters 1 and 5 Josefa Ramos Núria Sánchez-Pantoja Mercè Correa	Author Author Author and reviewer

Abbreviations

CoARA: Coalition for Advancing Research
CREA: Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (from UNICA)
ERA: European Research Area
GEP: Gender Equality Plan
HRS4R: Human Resources Strategy For Research
HSE: Health, Safety and Environment
MGR: Mobilità Giovani Ricercatori (from UNICA)
MUNI: Masaryk University
NIH: National Institute of Health
OPAQ: Office for the Promotion and Evaluation of Quality (from UJI)
PNU: Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University
REA: Research Executive Agency
UJI: Universitat Jaume I
UNICA: University of Cagliari
UP: University of Potsdam
UPECS: University of Pécs
UPN: University Paris Nanterre
UNIVREN: University of Rennes
USN: University of South-Eastern Norway
WP5: Work Package 5

List of Tables

[Table 1. Thematic hashtags related to researchers categories](#)

[Table 2. Advisory services for researchers at our universities](#)

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	5
1.1 Objective and current state (UJI)	6
1.1.1 Objective of the guide	6
1.1.2 Status and scope of work	6
2. Area of Human Resources	9
2.1 Scope of action	9
2.2 Formalities and ethical principles	9
2.3 Common procedures	10
2.4 Resources, tools, training	12
2.5 Quality assessment indicators	14
3. Area of Research Advisory	15
3.1 Scope of action	15
3.1.1 UNICA Job Placement service	16
3.1.2 UNICA's Funding and mobility opportunities	17
3.1.3 Implement career development strategies: HRS4R strategy	19
3.1.4 Build capacities for continuous professional development	20
3.2 Ethical principles	21
3.3 Common procedures-examples and tips	22
3.4 Resources, tools and training	22
3.5 Quality assessment indicators	25
4. Area of Entrepreneurship and Innovation	26
4.1 Scope of action	26
4.2 Formalities and ethical principles	26
4.3 Common procedures	27
4.4 Resources, tools, training	28
4.4.1 Training Pathways and Key Offers	28
4.4.2 Tools	30
4.5 Quality assessment indicators	31
5. Area of Equal Opportunities (UJI with UPN as collaborator)	32
5.1 Scope of action	32
5.2 Ethical principles	33
5.3 Common procedures	33
5.4 Resources, tools, training	35
5.4.1 RESOURCES:	35
5.4.2 TOOLS:	36
5.4.3 TRAINING:	37
5.5 Quality assessment indicators	38
5.7 The UPN approach: Gender and Equality Framework under the EDUC-WIDE GEP (2025)	39
6. Conclusion	43

6.1 On the scope of the work	44
6.2 On the usefulness and dissemination of the Guide	45

1. Introduction

Work Package 5 – Task 5.2: Building Capacities of Research Career Advisory Services

Project: EDUC-WIDE

Coordinator of T5.2: Universitat Jaume I

This Good Practice Guide is part of the EDUC-WIDE project, within the WP5 in the T5.2 Building Capacities of Research Career Advisory Services led by Universitat Jaume I. This project has been funded with support from the European Union (101136533 - EDUC-WIDE) through the European Research Executive Agency (REA) ("EU Executive Agency" or "Grantor"), under the powers delegated by the European Commission. This Good Practice Guide has been designed for Universitat Jaume I, University of South-Eastern Norway, University of Cagliari, University of Potsdam and University Paris Nanterre with the collaboration of University of Rennes, Masaryk University, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University and University of Pécs.

Task 5.2 is embedded within the overarching framework of Work Package 5 of the EDUC-WIDE project, which is dedicated to strengthening institutional capacities and fostering inclusive, interconnected, and sustainable Research and Innovation (R&I) ecosystems in Widening countries. WP5 is strategically aligned with the objectives of the ERA and the Widening Participation agenda and contributes directly to enhancing the attractiveness and accessibility of research careers across the alliance.

This Guide presents information on the current services offered by the participating universities. It has six main chapters, in addition to this introductory chapter and the final one, on continuous improvement tools. The Guide begins with Chapter 1, Objectives and Current State, written by UJI with input from the other participating universities. Chapter 2 is led by USN. It deals with the advice offered by the university to research staff in the field of Human Resources. Chapter 3 is led by UNICA and focuses on Research Advisory services provided by the University. Chapter 4 is led by UP and focuses on Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Chapter 5 is led by UJI with the collaboration of UPN. It focuses on Equal Opportunities for researchers. Conclusions and tools for continuous improvement are presented in Chapter 6. All the universities in the EDUC WIDE consortium were invited to contribute and propose the content of each chapter of the guide, as well as to give feedback on the guide as a whole during the development of the task.

This Good Practice Guide can provide support to the universities in the consortium. They will be able to integrate the tools and resources of their partners into their universities and provide quality guidance to researchers. The Guide serves as a strategic tool for universities to improve institutional performance and promote an inclusive and progressive academic environment. This Guide can be used by universities as a practical reference and strategic framework to improve their operations and decision-making processes in key areas such as policy development, training and capacity building, internal evaluation, etc. The first draft of the Good Practices Guide will be presented at the Pécs Workshop, scheduled for 28–29 April 2025, providing an opportunity for review, validation, and the integration of stakeholder feedback across the consortium.

Widening Universities

Targeted capacity-building activities for staff at widening institutions may be integrated into Task 6.2, with a focus on familiarising personnel with the content, methodology, and

operationalisation of the Good Practices Guide. These training sessions would support the effective deployment of advisory services and contribute to institutional transformation in line with the objectives of the ERA.

Moreover, widening universities are strongly encouraged to actively disseminate the Guide's content among their research communities, ensuring that researchers at all career stages benefit from improved advisory mechanisms and support structures.

1.1 Objective and current state (UJI)

1.1.1 Objective of the guide

The primary objective of Task 5.2 is to develop and implement a Good Practices Guide in research career advisory services. This Guide aims to facilitate knowledge transfer and support the harmonisation and enhancement of career support services across the alliance, particularly in widening institutions.

The Guide will serve both as a capacity-building tool and as a strategic reference document to:

- Transfer best practices and institutional knowledge from more experienced institutions to Widening partners.
- Support institutional transformation and sustainable service development.
- Improve the quality, efficiency, and visibility of research career advisory services across the consortium.

This task aligns closely with the EU's ERA objectives, particularly regarding talent circulation, researcher careers, and institutional reform.

1.1.2 Status and scope of work

Scope and Structure of the Guide

The scope of the Guide encompasses four critical advisory service areas, coordinated by advanced partners within the EDUC alliance:

1. Human Resources – led by the University of South-Eastern (USN).
2. Research Advisory Services – led by the University of Cagliari (UNICA).
3. Entrepreneurship and Innovation – led by the University of Potsdam (UP).
4. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion – also by the Universitat Jaume I with the collaboration of the University Paris Nanterre (UPN).

The Guide will include the following core elements:

- Ethical principles and good practice frameworks.
- Standard operating procedures and efficient workflows for common services (e.g., mobility guidance, contract advice).

- Tools and resources (e.g. training modules, online toolkits) are available at each institution.
- Training pathways for both service staff and the research community.
- Quality assurance and monitoring indicators.
- Contact points to foster future inter-university collaboration and peer-learning.

Methodology and Data Collection

To ensure the Guide is evidence-based and context-sensitive, the following methodology will be adopted:

- Mapping of existing practices: Each university will collect detailed data on the structure, activities, and users of their advisory services.
- Gap analysis: Identify key strengths and areas for improvement, including service accessibility, career diversification, and equal opportunities.
- Training needs assessment: Examine the current offer of training for service personnel and researchers, with attention to upskilling needs and digital capabilities.
- Pilot implementation: Wide Universities will trial new initiatives such as Career Events, joint mentoring activities, or innovation support sessions.

This document is presented with an appendix that includes a list of information contributed by partner universities, with the aim of sharing services and processes implemented by these institutions. These may serve as a source of inspiration for the creation of new services or the improvement of existing ones. This proposal presents a structured taxonomy to classify advisory services available to research staff, aligned with the R1–R4 researcher career stages. It aims to respond to the evolving needs of researchers throughout their professional development.

Expected Outcomes and Long-Term Impact

Task 5.2 will deliver a consolidated Good Practice Guide that supports the professionalisation and institutionalisation of research career advisory services across the alliance. The implementation of this Guide is expected to:

- Strengthen institutional capacity in widening universities through knowledge sharing and co-creation.
- Enhance the quality and inclusiveness of researcher support services.
- Increase collaboration rates, project success rates, and researcher satisfaction.
- Promote career diversification through training in emerging areas such as Research Management.
- Facilitate gender equality and equal opportunity policies within research careers.

In line with EU policy on research career development, the outcomes of this task will also contribute to the broader modernisation of human resources strategies in higher education and research institutions.

Sustainability and Future Collaboration

To ensure long-term impact and sustainability, the Guide will be:

- Published in digital format and made openly accessible via the project website.
- It will be translated by each university into its own language, enabling broad uptake across diverse institutional and national contexts.

Benefits of Cooperating with Transnational Partners to Achieve the Project

Cooperation with transnational partners within the framework of Task 5.2 brings significant added value and is fully aligned with the strategic priorities of the ERA and the Widening Participation agenda. This collaborative approach supports the advancement of research careers, fosters institutional capacity-building, and strengthens the cohesion of the European Higher Education and Research landscape.

Enhanced Knowledge Transfer and Learning

Working transnationally allows for the transfer of best practices and institutional models from more established institutions to those in widening countries. This reciprocal exchange enables partners to benchmark their services, identify transferable approaches, and adapt solutions to local contexts, fostering mutual learning and continuous improvement. It also ensures that the Good Practice Guide is informed by a broad spectrum of institutional realities, increasing its relevance and applicability across Europe.

Building Institutional Capacity Across Diverse Contexts

Transnational collaboration will directly support capacity building in less experienced institutions by providing access to the expertise, resources, and training methods of their more developed counterparts. Through structured cooperation, widening partners will enhance the professionalisation of their research career advisory services, reinforcing their institutional role in supporting talent development and research excellence. This contributes to the structural reform objectives of ERA, promoting convergence in service provision across the EU.

Promoting Harmonisation and Strategic Alignment

By involving a diverse consortium of universities under the EDUC alliance, the project fosters the harmonisation of advisory practices while recognising and accommodating institutional diversity. It facilitates the development of shared tools, indicators, and quality assurance mechanisms, thus enabling coherent support to researchers across different national systems. Such alignment enhances the visibility and interoperability of research support services at the European level, making career progression more transparent and predictable.

Strengthening Gender Equality and Inclusion

Working collaboratively on equal opportunities and inclusion enables the consortium to exchange effective strategies and gender-sensitive practices, helping to mainstream these approaches across all partner institutions. It also ensures that the services designed are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of underrepresented groups in research careers, particularly in Widening countries.

Fostering Long-Term Strategic Partnerships

The task also aims to establish a Research Career Advisory Network within the EDUC alliance, which will serve as a long-term platform for peer learning, joint development, and sustainability. This network will facilitate continued collaboration beyond the project duration, strengthening institutional links and promoting collective advancement in research career support.

Increased European Added Value and Policy Impact

Finally, transnational cooperation ensures that the results of Task 5.2 have broader European relevance, contributing to key ERA goals such as talent circulation, career attractiveness, and institutional modernisation. It demonstrates the project's capacity to generate EU added value, going beyond isolated improvements to create a shared vision and collective progress across the alliance and potentially informing policy at the EU level.

2. Area of Human Resources

This chapter has been developed especially in collaboration with the University of South-Eastern Norway. It should be remembered that examples and good practices are shown and are intended to serve as a reference. Any university wishing to use and transfer these good practices to its own services should adapt them to its own needs and procedures.

2.1 Scope of action

The scope of this section includes information, documentation and suggestions to those services that support early-stage research with career related information, support and activities from the startup to the finish line of the employment period.

The aim is to present a list of services that can help to develop a good structure for the development of a research career. The main goal is to strengthen the facilitation for research mobility, career planning and development, and to facilitate for researcher training and management so that our research fellows are better able to navigate for future research life, either in academia, beyond academia in the industry or public sector.

2.2 Formalities and ethical principles

Everyone should have equal rights and access to the same information, equal treatment and transparency, also within the field of research career development and equal opportunities.

It is regulated by law (Universities and Colleges Act, from August 24) that:

- The institution has a duty to ensure that a career plan is prepared for all PhD fellows and postdoctoral fellows.
- The career plan must be followed up and updated regularly in the annual employee interviews.

- All PhD fellows and postdoctoral fellows shall have access to career guidance during their employment period.

Advice:

- Incorporate a plan for other career-enhancing work (work in addition to research projects and doctoral education that provides relevant knowledge and experience for further careers at higher education or research institutions or in other sectors).

For fixed – term recruitment for researchers:

- An employment contract must be entered into before the start of work.
- In determining the length of the fixed-term period, the institution shall consider the specific nature of the work, any time for other career-enhancing work and available funding.
- At the start, it must be clarified who is responsible for following up the employee with academic supervision.
- Make sure that the information is updated and given in the preferred language.
- Increase professionalisation of the recruitment process.
- Establish arenas for networking and collaboration. This is especially important when the University has several campuses on different locations.

2.3 Common procedures

At USN we do not have an institutional welcome desk or service center. The University consists of 8 Campuses, with 4 Faculties serving the total of 6 PhD programs. The Faculties and PhD Programs are located across Campuses.

The career information, development and training are given within each Faculty and/or PhD program. Career workshops, seminars on various transferable skills, career guidance with the supervisor and/or the head of the department are examples of activities that are arranged.

The HR department contributes with design, development and structure regarding the content and templates for career support and services at USN. The HR department collaborates closely with the Faculties, the Research, Innovation and Library department and to some extent, other external partners (career advisory companies and university alliances).

HRS4R strategy

University of South-Eastern Norway was granted the "HR Excellence in Research" award in 2020. We have recently had a revision of the first action plan and the second plan (2026-2028) has newly been approved by the USN top management. Highlights from the new plan:

Research ethics: Identifying areas of improvement to ensure that the institution has a research culture that promotes responsible and ethical research, including strengthening on-boarding and training for newly recruited researchers.

Research assessment: Develop and implement the USN Assessment Matrix. In accordance with national (NOR-CAM) and European (CoARA) reform of qualifications criteria for academic employment and promotion.

Working conditions: Strengthening psychosocial working conditions for PhD Research Fellows.

Research Careers and Talent Development: Strengthening Career Services for PhD Research Fellows and Postdocs, aiming to meet the new national legislation, develop a holistic and systematic career service that better supports the young researchers, whether they want to stay in an academic position or transfer beyond academia.

Examples on common procedures on research career development:

- Provides information on the employment, the regulations, the contract, work permits and agreements.
- Provides information on startup procedures and welcoming new employees.
- Provides information on work-life balance and welfare to create a supportive and healthy environment for PhD research fellows, promoting their well-being and success.

Example from USN: [Relocating to Norway to work at USN - Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge](#)

Example of welcoming new employees: [Welcome to USN](#) (Norwegian language, texted in English -on Youtube)

Example from USN: organization of a buddy [The USN Buddy](#) (Norwegian language, texted in English - on Youtube)

All new employees receive a buddy. The role of the buddy is to be a social support for a new employee and to provide local, social and some work-related support for the new employee. Also recognize that each PhD Candidate has unique needs and challenges. Tailor support and resources to accommodate these differences, ensuring personalized care. If the new employee is a foreigner, it is important that the buddy has in mind that the new employee is not familiar with Norwegian culture, language and social codes.

The HR department also provides schemes, templates and guidelines that shall help the researcher to navigate and strengthen the necessary researcher qualifications for their future career. Some examples:

- Selection and hiring of research staff and research support staff.
- Work environment manuals and schemes. This includes the researcher's working environment and inclusion with the research groups.
- Guidelines for the evaluation of research.

- Guidelines for research career development.
- Manuals/templates for appraisal interviews.
- Templates for career and competence planning.
- Guidelines for academic career development - assessment, qualification, tools.

A new framework is being developed at USN following the principles within CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment).

Ongoing reforms to science systems are directed at resolving research assessment. Current assessments are perceived to overly focus on publishing in scientific journals, and neglecting other types of contributions to research, teaching, societal interaction, and innovation. Moreover, there are concerns that irresponsible use of quantitative indicators leads to undesirable behaviour and research cultures. This project investigates the drivers and barriers to reforming research assessment based on multiple entry points: how notions of research quality develop and institutionalise, the reward and incentive system in science, norms that research assessments should comply with, and the role of quantitative indicators in peer review.

- Guidelines for career promoting work for PhD fellows and Postdoctoral fellows.
- Research mobility: A mobility coordinator from the HR department is responsible for information, procedures and forms regarding research mobility. Information is given online/website and in meetings with the Faculties as well as the individual researcher. The mobility coordinator also handles practical guidance and assistance such as filling out mobility grants applications, informs about travel documents, housing, visa and insurance.

In addition to the HR department, the PhD Research Fellow is surrounded by different resources who give support and advice and assist in different academic and administrative matters. The HR department and the Research, Innovation and Library department work closely together in these matters and have tailored a website with useful information. (The website is constantly updated with new information. In particular, the career development section is under construction and will be restructured and updated with more details regarding career guidance, career training activities, webinars, start-ups and innovation possibilities and much more).

[PhD Research Fellow information website](#)

2.4 Resources, tools, training

To ensure that all researchers have professional, academical and personal development, it would be advisable to offer a series of workshops on topics such as grant writing, public speaking, and career learning activities. Under follows some advice/best practices:

- Provide access to online courses and certifications that enhance research and professional skills.

- Make sure that the individual career plan is followed up during the research employment.
- Set up regular meetings for personal and academic development for enhancing the transition to the next career step.
- Implement guidelines and structure for career advice and support.
- Give information about transferrable skills courses, career webinars, workshops and career guiding sessions.
- Give examples of relevant career promoting work.
- Contribute to teaching, laboratory and exercise teaching, supervision and examination work within the employee's areas of competence.
- Provide training in the use and operation of research infrastructure.
- Put in place Norwegian/English language training, educational competence, HSE courses and the like necessary for the performance of teaching and research work.
- Allow participation in dissemination, exhibition and collection work.
- Contribute to the preparation of research project applications or the organization of academic conferences.
- Give time to do clinical activities.
- Contribute to ongoing research projects, academic development work, consultancy and analysis work in the academic environment.
- Organize an internship or collaboration with public or private actors.
- Train and support supervisors.

Provide training for supervisors on mental health literacy and effective communication. Equip them with the skills to identify signs of distress and offer appropriate support. Also create a respectful and inclusive environment by implementing regular training sessions on diversity and inclusion for all advisors and train them in skills so they can assist in career development as well.

Create a mentorship program that pairs researchers with multiple mentors from different disciplines. Organize networking events where researchers can meet potential mentors from industry and academia.

A list of examples from USN follows:

Developing Doctoral Supervision

An annual course for strengthening supervisory support. The course aims to train both novice and experienced PhD supervisors. They are skilled in topics like:

- Roles and responsibility.
- Equality and diversity.
- Ethical issues.
- Career development and possibilities for PhD Candidates.
- Mental health and work-life balance.

Onboarding program for new PhD Research Fellows - PhD Get started

A one-day program for all new PhD Research Fellows that aims to give structured information from the start of the PhD Journey. The program is developed in collaboration with the HR and the Research, Innovation and Library department as both departments have important supporting roles and responsibilities for the target group. The program is arranged once a year and is in addition to the startup meetings that is given within each PhD program.

The PhD's will be informed about the university's relevant rules and regulations, research mobility offers, career learning and planning and work-life balance.

- Career awareness – career planning and career learning.
- PhD mobility services – how to apply for mobility fundings, where to go and whom to contact.
- Rules and regulations (holiday, sick leave, progress, working hours etc).
- Mental health and work-life balance.
- Information from the Unions, the library support and the HSE service.
- Networking and social gathering.

USN has the lead of a Research School in Complex Systems, a collaboration between three universities and industry partners.

[Industrial Research School in Complex Systems - Frontpage](#)

The research school aims to increase the value creation and quality of our PhD's towards world-class research and innovation of Complex Systems through cross-fertilization between industry and academia.

The research school shall:

- Give PhD candidates access to research and work in companies to increase problem understanding and relevance.
- Contribute to meeting the industry's need for cutting-edge expertise in complex systems.

2.5 Quality assessment indicators

Evaluation and feedback is important for the improvement of the structure, content and services that are given.

Conduct annual surveys to gather feedback from advisees about their experiences with the advisory services. Also include the aspects of the psychological working environment, the overall benefit of Doctoral study, the support and the career development and guidance given to the Candidates.

Example from USN:

The employee appraisal interview is an important part of USN's comprehensive work with organizational and personal development. This also includes PhD research fellows and Postdoctoral fellows.

The HR department has designed a template for the appraisal process and interviews specifically for the PhD's and Post doctoral fellows. This includes a separate conversation regarding career planning and future career goals. The aim is to create a plan for the researchers' personal and academic development already from the start, to ensure that they will have a good transition for the next career step.

[Career conversation PhD.docx](#)

[Career and Competence Development Plan PhD.docx](#)

The Research, Innovation and Library department is responsible for the annual PhD Candidate Survey. This survey is a part of the total feedback and an important quality assessment indicator for the university. All career-related questions are of greatest importance. Some of the questions could be:

- Have you had any career conversations with your leader or supervisor?
- Do you have a clear understanding of your future career possibilities after your PhD?
- Have you participated in a career workshop or any career network?
- Do you have the transferable skills and competences that you need for your future working life?
- Are you satisfied with the career support (skills courses, conversations, information and training and support) that comes from USN?
- What can USN do to better support your career development?

3. Area of Research Advisory

This chapter has been developed especially in collaboration with the University of Cagliari. It should be remembered that examples and good practices are shown and are intended to serve as a reference. Any university wishing to use and transfer these good practices to its own services should adapt them to its own needs and procedures.

3.1 Scope of action

This section presents a list of the Research Advisory services provided to researchers at the University of Cagliari (UNICA).

From an administrative perspective the services described are embedded in the "Research and Territory division", one of the 10 operational divisions of UNICA.

The Research and Territory Division provides administrative support to the research projects carried out by the departments of UNICA and promotes dialogue, interaction, and collaboration with the stakeholders in the regional context (public administrations, enterprises, research centres, non-profit organisations) to favour the transfer of results and the placement of its graduates.

In particular, it promotes:

- support for research, both by overseeing and coordinating the university's participation in national and international programmes and projects, also in collaboration with institutional, economic and social entities; it coordinates participation in international scientific and technological collaborations.
- participation in national and international calls for research funding, administrative support, management of research grants, in liaison with the financial and personnel divisions.
- career guidance activities and post-graduate traineeships aimed at fostering employment opportunities for UNICA graduates.
- university's relations aimed at innovation and local development, in order to enhance the university's service function with respect to the regional territory.
- technological transfer of the knowledge developed through scientific research, encouraging the establishment of spin-offs, start-ups and patenting activities.
- partnership relations aimed at the development of technology clusters, competence centres, joint projects with enterprises.

The research advisory services offered by UNICA to its researchers are:

- Job placement service.
- Research funding services.
- Mobility services.
- HRS4R strategy.
- The Industrial Liaison Office.
- The University's Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CREA).

3.1.1 UNICA Job Placement service

The [Job placement service](#) offers various services to increase the employability of final-year students and graduates and encourages interaction between demand and labour offer.

Undergraduates and graduates can benefit from the following services:

- support in choosing a career path;
- advice on the drafting and revision of CV and cover letter;
- support for the preparation of job interviews;
- job vacancy matching service: through the national portal Almalaurea, final-year students and graduates can be contacted directly by companies and send their applications in response to advertisements;
- information on training activities and job opportunities;

- meeting days with companies: initiatives dedicated to the selection of graduates or the illustration of new professional opportunities;
- extracurricular internships: within 12 months of obtaining the degree graduates can activate training and orientation in agreement with the university;
- the higher education and research apprenticeship: it is an employment contract that is activated in agreement with the university, aimed at students enrolled at the university or postgraduate.
- University career day: the main opportunity for University of Cagliari's graduates to meet Companies.

Recently, specific job placement initiatives - in particular, recruiting events - are targeting doctoral and post-doctoral students. UniCa Job Placement promotes [recruiting events](#) for PhD and PhD students organised by the Emblema Foundation as part of the forDoc programme. UNICA has recently approved the constitution of the "UniCa Alumni" association, with the aim of gathering UNICA graduates into a community that promotes the university's values and fosters networking opportunities.

3.1.2 UNICA's Funding and mobility opportunities

a) Research Funding opportunities

Three offices provide support to researchers at different stages of projects' life according to the granting authority. The support is also provided to the departments which are in charge of all the administrative procedures necessary for the project implementation.

Progetta Horizon

The office is dedicated to simplifying the process of accessing funding opportunities within the European framework programs, providing specialized and personalized assistance. The services include:

- the accurate mapping of competences and research areas within UNICA, followed by targeted promotion of funding calls.
- on-demand assistance for researchers who wish to identify and evaluate funding opportunities on specific topics.
- support in building strong consortia, ensuring the development of solid and collaborative project proposals.
- guidance in drafting the scientific section (Part B) of project proposals.

EU and USA grant office

The EU and USA grant office provides technical and administrative assistance to researchers and administrative offices of the University for the submission, management, and reporting of European projects funded by the European Commission's framework

programs and by the US National Institute of Health (NIH). In particular, for EU projects the office supports its researchers in the following 3 main phases:

- Pre-award assistance: in analysing different funding opportunities and/or specific calls, building international consortia, and preparing the financial plan. The office also supports researchers and their partners during the contract signing phase for the preparation of the preliminary project documents and in all the interactions with the EU and the partners of the consortium.
- Post-award and in progress assistance: during project's life the office offers its support in administrative, financial, and accounting management and assists the researchers for accurate project reporting and preparation of financial reports (Form C). Furthermore, in case of economic and financial verifications by the European Commission (second-level audit) the office supports in reviewing and preparing the required documentation.

The office operates in close collaboration with the Working Group for the promotion and participation in European research programs, which brings together expertise from various University offices, to grant the necessary assistance to the Rector's Delegate for international projects, Prof. Luigi Raffo. Furthermore, with reference to the Horizon Europe programme, the office cooperates with APRE, the National Agency for the Promotion of European Research, which provides information, support, assistance, and training activities to enhance the participation of UNICA to the calls of the European framework programs.

International cooperation office

The office provides support to researchers on specific calls such as Interreg programs, LIFE, National and local calls in the field of international cooperation, in all main phases:

- Pre-award assistance: it supports researchers in filling out the application forms and finding the right program among the different opportunities. It holds the connections within the main contact points and coordinates the necessary activities of approval from the legal representative of the University.
- Post-award and in progress assistance: it supports researchers and other offices in the University to manage the projects, assuring that they have the necessary support to correctly use the funding in compliance with the different requirements of the specific calls. Specific support is given during the requests for amendment and official communication with the granting authorities especially at the final stages of the project.

Moreover, UNICA provides researchers with additional services:

- Grant Search. It is available only for UNICA researchers; after they log in, they are directed to a page containing the summaries of competitive calls for proposals aimed at funding basic and applied research, technology transfer and development cooperation, promoted by public and private bodies at local, national and international levels.
- Networking platform CROWDHELIX. In order to enhance the research strategies of the University of Cagliari and in compliance with the objectives of the integrated

strategic planning, the University has decided to join the Crowdhelix collaboration intelligence platform starting from January 2022. This decision aims to strengthen the participation of our researchers to international competitive funding opportunities, particularly within the Horizon Europe program. The use of Crowdhelix allows all UniCa researchers to initiate and/or strengthen their collaborations, thereby expanding their networking and actively engaging with several research and innovation communities worldwide.

b) Mobility opportunities.

UNICA supports incoming and outgoing mobility, through different opportunities and a dedicated service.

[MGR \(Mobilità Giovani Ricercatori\).](#)

It is an outgoing mobility programme for UNICA's young researchers financed by the Autonomous Region of Sardinia under the Regional Law no. 7/2007 'Promotion of Scientific Research and Technological Innovation in Sardinia'. It is aimed at supporting the development of research activities and internationalisation through the establishment of collaboration and scientific exchange relations with other universities at international level. These exchanges will enhance UNICA participation in European and other International funding programmes.

The MGR's funds are distributed through specific calls, and UNICA researchers are supported by the personnel of the Research and Territory Division, who oversee the administrative procedures.

[Visiting Professor/Scientist programme](#)

This programme encourages the incoming mobility of lecturers and scientists working at European and non-European universities, institutions and research centres, including emeritus professors. Through these initiatives UNICA expanded the teaching offer and boost scientific research. The selection process takes place each year through the publication of a call for long or short-terms visits. The office in charge of this activity is embedded in the Education and orientation division of UNICA.

[Euraxess Service Centre and Mobility](#)

The office is the only Euraxess service centre in Sardinia. The office gives information about administrative duties and procedures (visa, permit of stay, health insurance, bank account, taxation, social security etc.), before international researchers arrival and during the whole period they spend in Sardinia. The office also provides them with practical information relating to accommodation, everyday life, school for children, language courses, and translation services.

3.1.3 Implement career development strategies: HRS4R strategy

UNICA was granted the HR Excellence in Research label in 2024. UNICA Action Plan (AP) for [HRS4R](#) strategy includes 29 actions. AP actions related to research career advisory are:

1. Plan training courses for all researchers (R1-R4) on research integrity, intellectual property rights, ethics, professional attitude, and data management to increase awareness over professional responsibility.

2. Provide administrative support to researchers in drafting the data management plans requested by European projects.
3. Training activities organized by multidisciplinary teams for the faculty staff with managerial positions to develop management, organizational and mentoring skills. Participation in these activities should be mandatory for the academic members in relevant management positions (e.g., department Heads, PhD coordinators, and supervisors to ensure good supervision quality).
4. A pilot project involving three Departments, to foster mentorship programmes by formally assigning a senior researcher/expert to R1, R2 and/or R3 researchers. The mentors will advise them on career perspectives through the design of a personalized career development plan (PCDP), including training needs, research progress monitoring, mobility phases.
5. Provide research starting grants for R3 researchers.
6. Supporting Open Access publishing of early stage researchers.

3.1.4 Build capacities for continuous professional development

As part of the Third Mission activities, the University of Cagliari aims to implement relations with businesses. UNICA offers companies and agencies services aimed at encouraging the matching of job offer and demand, as well as a series of opportunities for companies to contribute to the University's research activities and to the training of professionals in the field of research.

[The Industrial Liaison Office](#)

The office acts as an intermediary between the University's supply of technological competences and the demand for innovation expressed by the actors operating in its territory: companies, public administrations, third sector realities, other educational and research actors.

The activities performed by the office are diverse:

- Promoting actions aimed at the creation of spin-off companies.
- Follow all procedures related to patenting and management of the patent database.
- Carrying out networking activities and developing partnerships with public and private organisations.
- Offer design support within the framework of regional, national and EU initiatives concerning innovation and technology transfer.
- Finding information on research activities, technology transfer, university-business collaboration opportunities.
- Seeking sources of funding and other types of facilities.

[The University's Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship \(CREA\)](#)

The Centre encourages the integration and contamination between the different scientific-disciplinary sectors of the University and pushes business culture in the territory. CREA acts as a link between backers, national and international stakeholders as well as innovative ideas and projects developed within the University of Cagliari.

The aim and mission are to create links between students, researchers and entrepreneurs operating locally and worldwide. CREA promotes and manages the activities of the

Contamination Lab, Contamination Up and Unica&Imprese, including research and dissemination.

The main services provided are:

- Entrepreneurship education: organization of highly valuable training opportunities that encourage the beginning of a new entrepreneurial path.
- Open innovation: Through cross-fertilization programs and exchange meetings, CREA UNICA promotes the meeting of researchers from very different disciplinary areas.
- Technology Transfer: University knowledge and the most current research topics will be essential in the process of creating a business. The experience gained in a defined research area will be an important point of reference for companies and CREA supports researchers in Technology Transfer and Public Engagement activities.

One of the activities is the UNICA Contamination bootcamp, an open innovation programme which involves Businesses (SME), Researchers and Startups. CREA organized a 4 days training programme based on mutual learning process: companies learn to generate innovation in a collaborative and shared way assisted by first-rate venture capital experts, brilliant researchers and startups. Participants acquire skills such as team building and learning by doing.

Basic and applied research legal framework:

- Patents Regulation (Rector's Decree n.1465/2025 September 18th, 2024).
- Regulations of the University of Cagliari for the establishment of spin-offs (Rector's Decree no 11 of October 6th, 2016).

3.2 Ethical principles

The University of Cagliari has pursued over time all the principles of the ethical and professional aspects of the "European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct" (C&C).

UNICA fully recognizes research freedom (RF) and supports it also at the international level. UNICA aims at creating the conditions whereby researchers at all career stages, students, staff, and all workers associated with the University are treated equitably regardless of "gender, ethnic or social origin, physical appearance, age, genetic features, religious, personal or political beliefs, citizenship, economic conditions, disability, sexual orientation, personal health conditions, including pregnancy, role/position outside the University", in compliance with the non-discrimination principle.

Furthermore, UNICA addresses the aspects related to professional responsibility and professional attitude by internal rules, such as the Code of Ethics and Conduct, industrial property, the creation of spin-offs, and the Patents regulation.

The new Code of Ethics and Conduct has been recently issued (Rector's Decree no. 364/2025 of 09/04/2025). It is conceived as a guide for all members of the academic community; it establishes rules of conduct based on the recognition and respect of individual rights and the acceptance of duties and responsibilities towards the Institution. UNICA appointed the [Ethics Commission](#), it is composed of three members and it carries

out advisory and control activities regarding the implementation and compliance of the code of ethics and conduct of the University of Cagliari.

Ethical issues also involve the research activities, thus UNICA participates in the “[Sardinia Ethics Committee](#)”. It is an independent entity which performs advisory functions in connection with ethical issues related to scientific activities. It is responsible for clinical trials of drugs, the use of medicines and medical devices, the use of surgical and clinical procedures or the study of food on humans. All the scientific activities related to the above-mentioned topics have to be submitted to the evaluation of the “Sardinia Ethics Committee”.

Finally, at UNICA it was established [the Animal welfare committee](#). In Italy, all the research projects involving vertebrate animals and cephalopods must be authorised by the Ministry of Health. The application for authorisation must be submitted by the Animal Welfare Committee of the Institution. This committee also advises the staff working with animals for research purposes, on animal welfare issues related to the acquisition, housing, care and use.

3.3 Common procedures-examples and tips

The offices described in the first paragraph perform their activities in different ways, according to the input received by the coordinators and the researchers. Nevertheless, it is possible to highlight two procedures that are common to them:

- Preparation and publication of calls, management of the selection processes, customised support during the different steps of the administrative procedures and during the implementation of the activities (e.g. mobilities, internships).
- Scouting of funding opportunities, promotion of the open calls through different channels (website, mailing lists) and customised support to researchers.

Tips:

- It is important to promote the activities performed by the offices to the research community, through different channels (newsletters, mails, social media, public events). This is because researchers, especially in the early stages of their careers, might not be aware of the opportunities they have to be advised on specific aspects of their work.

3.4 Resources, tools and training

The offices listed in section one offer dedicated support to researchers. The main **tools** are:

- The website: with specific sections devoted to the publication of new calls.
- UNICA mailing list: accessible to UNICA's staff members.
- Mail exchange: offices receive request of support by researchers.
- Public events: e.g. University career day, the main opportunity for University of Cagliari's graduates to meet Companies.

Training offered to staff:

The EU and USA grant office, with reference to the Horizon Europe programme, cooperates with the Agency for the Promotion of European Research ([APRE](#)), which provides information, support, assistance, and training activities to enhance the participation of UNICA to the calls of the European framework programs.

Intensive/interdisciplinary courses are run for PhD students, within the PhD programmes

The intensive/interdisciplinary courses are aimed at providing PhD students with practical skills and general information related to different domains, such as the preparation of research project proposals, open science, intellectual property and patents, public speaking and gender equality. The courses are taught by vice-rectors and the administrative staff of the Research and Territory Division and the Division for Quality, Library Services and Museum Activities.

A. Funding your research through the calls of the European Community Framework Programmes

Teachers: UNICA Delegate for International Research Projects; Administrative staff Technical Assistance to EU, HE and US Research Programs - Research and Territory Division.

Short Description:

The 20-hour course aims to introduce PhD students (of any year) to the framework programs of the European Commission and to the Horizon Europe program, its structure, its work programs, its calls. Information will be provided on how to frame one's research activity in this context, the tools for submitting a proposal, the evaluation criteria, starting from practical examples. The way to write a successful proposal will be described in detail by delving into the three main parts: Excellence, Impact, Implementation. Each lesson will have a theoretical part and a practical part of exercise in which PhD students will be asked to work independently on project proposals. Researchers from the University of Cagliari who have obtained funding in this field will then be invited to present good practices and their suggestions. The course is available only face-to-face, a final assessment test is expected.

B. Scientific Research: Sources, Tools and Evaluation

Teachers: UNICA Vice Rector for research and the administrative staff of the Division for Quality, Library Services and Museum Activities

Short Description:

The course aims to introduce the topics of scientific communication, copyright, Open Access/Open Science, and research evaluation. The aim is to acquire the skills to carry out bibliographic searches, to know how to use information in a responsible way, to produce new knowledge by disseminating results in an open form, to understand the functioning of the research evaluation system. The main tools for conducting effective bibliographic searches on resources in the field will be presented (this module will be differentiated according to the relevant subject area) and elements for handling data in an open manner will be provided. At the end of the course, the learner will have a better understanding of

electronic research infrastructures, of the tools and services available for publishing results, including open access, and of how to assess the scientific productivity of researchers.

C. Innovation and Valorisation. From intellectual property to technology transfer

Teachers: Administrative Staff of the “UNICA Liaison Office”, Research and Territory Division.

Short description:

The 6-hour course is divided into three modules: the first two are mainly theoretical and the third is practical, especially for research on patent databases. The primary objective of this course is to make young researchers aware of what intellectual property (IP) is, how it is generated, and how it is protected. It underscores the significance of an efficient intellectual property rights (IPR) system in fostering creativity and innovation across the entire economy. Recognizing that intellectual property is integral to the daily lives of researchers, the course aims to equip today's PhD students – who will become tomorrow's Principal Investigators, politicians, and general managers – with a basic awareness and understanding of IP.

It is deemed essential for these future leaders to know the fundamental aspects of intellectual property to leverage them effectively in their chosen professional paths. Furthermore, the course highlights the importance of being aware of the opportunities to utilize the vast technical and commercial information available in intellectual property documentation. It also emphasizes the need for universities to transform their research activities into intellectual property rights, manage their IP portfolios, and engage in technology transfer with industrial partners to create value and benefit society as a whole. Moreover, PhD students will learn about the consequences of inadequate protection of intangible assets, including the risks of reverse engineering, plagiarism, and industrial espionage.

In particular, the course covers:

- the characteristics of inventions and patents;
- the legal profiles of intellectual property rights (patents, trademarks, know-how, designs, copyright), the protection requirements, the duration, the national and international filing procedures (the Italian patent, the PCT international patent, the European patent, the international extensions, nationalizations and validations) and the Italian and international search report, the profile of the inventor and the ownership of the invention.

Practical cases are discussed, and the use of both public and paid patent databases will be shown. The course gives the opportunity to understand concepts such as "proof of concept", "technology transfer" and "open innovation" and the different best practices for carrying out technology transfer operations will be described. In this regard, we will talk about spin-offs and start-ups of research, collaborative university/business research.

D. Continuous Professional Development Course entitled "The Glass Ceiling ain't broken"

Teacher: Rector's Delegate of UNICA for Gender Equality.

Short description:

The course is focused on women and leadership in the non-compulsory education sector, developed as an output of the European Erasmus+ Project SMILE (Social Meaning Impact through Life-Long Learning Universities in Europe) (2022): it involved young researchers at different stages of their career, from PhD students to full professors, along 4 sessions, each lasting 3 hours.

E. Gender Equality in the Academic Context and Research: Policy Tools and Strategies

Teacher: Rector's Delegate of UNICA for Gender Equality.

Short Description:

The 20-hour course aims to promote among doctoral students of any year and any scientific area a critical analysis of the phenomena of horizontal and vertical segregation that continue to define profound asymmetries in the distribution of disciplinary and career paths between men and women in the academic and research context of excellence. The focus of the training activity starts from this context analysis to highlight the social, cultural and organizational practices and mechanisms that produce these asymmetries and to explore the policy tools and strategies activated on a local, national and international scale, in a comparative perspective, to counter all forms of discrimination based on gender and gender identity and to promote equality, inclusion and enhancement of diversity, from an intersectional perspective (e.g. Gender Equality Plan, Diversity Plan, Gender Budget).

F. Public speaking in research

Teacher: Vice rector in charge of public relations and Patrizia Mottola.

Short Description:

The 10-hour course aims at the preparation and presentation of a research topic according to the principles of effective communication.

The course includes 4 introductory hours on the principles of effective communication, management of speech design, preparation of supporting materials, preparation and presentation of a research topic according to principles of effective communication. These theoretical indications will be interspersed with exercises in which doctoral students will have the opportunity to practice presenting content related to their current research.

3.5 Quality assessment indicators

UNICA participates in a national project called "Good practice" promoted by POLIMI (Politecnico di Milano) graduate school of management. It consists in the administration of a customer satisfaction survey, the target audience is divided into three groups: students; technical-administrative staff and librarians; professors, researchers, PhD students and research fellows.

The data collected are divided into different areas, but it does not provide the specific data of the services analysed in this chapter, nor the recommendations for improvement received.

4. Area of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

This chapter has been developed especially in collaboration with the University of Potsdam. It should be remembered that examples and good practices are shown and are intended to serve as a reference. Any university wishing to use and transfer these good practices to its own services should adapt them to its own needs and procedures.

4.1 Scope of action

This section describes the operating principles and good practices of the Startup Service at the University of Potsdam. The Startup Service is part of the Potsdam Transfer unit, the University of Potsdam's central institution for startups, innovation, and the transfer of knowledge and technology. As such it is one of seven central units, which are providing services to students, researchers and the wider academic and non-academic staff.

The main mission of the Startup Service at the University of Potsdam is to empower researchers and students to develop the insights and skills gained from their studies and research into successful market applications. Increasingly, this support is framed through an impact lens: the aim is not only to scale viable companies, but above all to scale the positive social and ecological impact generated by research. To achieve this, the service focuses on inspiring their "customers" to start new entrepreneurial ventures and providing tailored solutions to meet the specific needs of their target groups to do so. The Startup Service works with individuals at and beyond the University of Potsdam, also extending their services to alumni, as well as researchers in the wider region of Brandenburg and internationally.

4.2 Formalities and ethical principles

The general tasks of Potsdam Transfer and the Startup Service are described in the [Statutes](#) of the central unit (January 2025). More concretely, the objectives in relation to entrepreneurship and innovation and the measures to reach them are defined in the [Transfer Strategy of the University of Potsdam](#) (2017).

Third-party funding plays a key role in enabling the Startup Service to realise its strategic goals, with support drawn from regional, national, and international programmes. Through this acquired funding, political and legislative goals from the different political levels become tangible actions, such as German economic policies aimed at integrating innovative scientific ideas into society.

Ethical principles that guide the work of the Startup Service team are rooted in an unwritten code of conduct of the scientific community that ensures the integrity of research and the intellectual property of researchers:

- **Be free from discrimination** (do not discriminate personally and do not tolerate any form of discrimination);
- **Be open and appreciative** (focus on the individual; the person is central in the advisory process and more important than the idea);

- **Act confidentially and responsibly** (essential when dealing with intellectual property and early business ideas);
- **No support is given for ideas relating to dual-use items**, if **sanctions** are in place or **security concerns** apply.

Equally important are the soft skills and mindset of the Startup Service team members. They must be able to listen empathetically, set aside personal judgment, and create a space for open dialogue. The ability to ask the right questions, think creatively, and demonstrate an entrepreneurial mindset themselves are essential qualities. These competencies mirror those of effective mentors or coaches and are critical in encouraging innovation and guiding founders.

4.3 Common procedures

The Startup Service team works with agile methods, responding to the individual needs of their “customers”, and adapting formats and the respective concepts in response to learnings from previous offers. There is no one-size-fits all, but a range of methods is used to support researchers on their own innovation path, also depending on the goal and focus of a specific workshop.

Nevertheless, these are common procedures at the Startup Service:

- **Raising awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities:**
Conducting targeted outreach activities to sensitise researchers to the topics of entrepreneurship and business ventures, and to familiarise them with the available support structures.
- **Promoting entrepreneurial thinking in academia:**
Integrating entrepreneurship into academic discourse through events, workshops, and internal communication formats designed for researchers.
- **Embedding impact-oriented entrepreneurship:**
Helping researchers integrate social and environmental goals into their venture ideas for increased impact and sustainability.
- **Providing individual, step-by-step advisory services:**
Offering personalised advisory support to guide researchers through the process of entrepreneurial thinking. The advisory approach places particular emphasis on developing an entrepreneurial mindset - encouraging researchers to adopt new perspectives, especially introducing user-centric business model and lean startup perspectives, identifying core problems and understanding their target group as a foundation for shaping their business idea.
- **Encouraging academic involvement in startup support:**
Encourage (senior) academic staff to provide professional support and mentoring for research-based startup initiatives.
- **Offering settlement opportunities for spin-offs:**
Providing researchers with access to basic office solutions on or near university premises to support the founding and establishment of startups.

- **Offering innovation and co-working spaces:**
Offering dedicated innovation spaces tailored to the needs of research-driven startups and spin-offs, supporting both collaboration and early business development.
- **Developing services for the post-startup phase:**
Expanding the range of advisory and support services to include the post-founding phase, focusing on sustainable business development, scaling, and market access for research-based enterprises.
- **Strategic cooperation within the university:**
Cooperating with diverse units and members of the university to build a community around entrepreneurial thinking and reaching target groups.
- **Building and engaging in networks:**
Actively participating in and expanding regional, national, and international networks to support research-based entrepreneurship. These networks facilitate mutual exchange, access to expert knowledge and specific advisory services.
- **Promoting international visibility and collaboration:**
Building international partnerships to enhance the visibility of Germany's entrepreneurial academic landscape. These collaborations support the strategic aim of attracting global talent and cooperating for research-driven innovation.
- **Securing external funding to strengthen startup support:**
Continuously identifying and applying for third-party funding opportunities at the regional, national, and international levels to ensure the sustainable delivery and expansion of startup support services.

4.4 Resources, tools, training

Providing researchers with the resources and knowledge they need in order to turn their research into a startup idea is at the core of the activity of the Startup Service. Central in the advisory services is to help researcher customers take up a new perspective to help them think beyond academic research and develop an entrepreneurial mindset. Oftentimes, researchers cannot name the underlying problem and who is affected by it and it is exactly these two things that are most relevant in developing research results into a business idea.

To foster the entrepreneurial mindset and equip researchers with the relevant knowledge for founding, the Startup Service has a variety of support schemes in place. The threshold is kept deliberately low and researchers don't need a business idea yet to participate in most activities - interest and curiosity often suffice and are the initial momentum that can be built on.

4.4.1 Training Pathways and Key Offers

Individual Consulting Process:

A step-by-step personal consultation process that is adapted to each individual researcher. The consulting staff bases the process on the needs, interests and goals of the researcher and adapts to their speed. Support reaches from developing ideas, to

applying for funding or setting up the business. Researchers might be referred to external experts (see below) or to a relevant workshop offer that the service organises.

Access to External Expertise:

Network is key. The Startup Service works with experts in the city and region that can advise researchers on specific topics in their founding process, e.g. legal matters or business entity types. An external partner for this is e.g. Business Support Potsdam, who provide individual advisory for the customers of the Startup Service. While the Startup Service staff are generalists, the Business Support has a pool of experts that offer specialised consultation sessions.

Coachings & Workshops:

Workshops are at the heart of the Startup Service. They employ methods such as Design Thinking and further creativity techniques, like Business Model Canvas, Lean Canvas or LEGO® Serious Play®, to help researchers make the shift to an entrepreneurial mindset. Topics and formats are regularly reviewed and further developed to ensure they remain relevant and impactful.

- **Startup Basics** is a workshop series providing key knowledge and valuable insights into different aspects around founding a business.
- **Startrampe** (launching pad) is a three-day intensive workshop that helps researchers develop and validate their startup ideas through hands-on methods, expert input, and peer exchange.
- **Impact Startrampe** is a “purpose-driven” edition of Startrampe that guides researchers in turning scientific results into ventures or initiatives aimed at measurable social/ecological benefit.
- **From PhD to Impact Innovator** is a two-day workshop for PhD students and postdocs guiding participants in transforming their doctoral research into entrepreneurial projects by exploring their innovation potential, applying design thinking, pitching ideas, and connecting with experienced sciencepreneurs.
- **Potsdam Entrepreneurship Experience Lab (PEELx)** is a four-day, hands-on business modelling workshop where interdisciplinary teams of students, researchers, alumni, and university staff develop and validate impactful, research-based startup ideas in a real-world context. The teams explore how their work can drive social or ecological change, regardless of whether the outcome is a new business, an NGO, or a strategic partnership.

EXIST Funding Programme:

EXIST is a German national funding scheme that provides several ways to support up-and-coming founders with a kickstart fund. The Startup Service gives expert advice on accessing the funds and submitting competitive applications for the EXIST Business Startup Grant and the EXIST Transfer of Research funding.

Matching Platform:

Job postings from researcher-led startups are shared to highlight growth opportunities and attract talent. By pooling these listings, the Startup Service helps connect startups with the broader student and research community at the University of Potsdam.

International Startup Service:

The Startup Service is very internationally focussed. Two-thirds of companies founded at the University of Potsdam are by international researchers. The Startup Service offers an individual consultation process as well as many of its workshops in English. Some of their workshop offers are open to researchers from their international ecosystem, such as from EDUC universities. Additionally, via the Soft Landing Capital Region scheme, international researchers are attracted to base their startup in the region and profit from the described services.

Train-the Trainer:

In addition to supporting their core target groups, the Startup Service team offers a dedicated Train-the-Trainer programme for colleagues who want to act as facilitators, startup advisors, or project managers. This two-day, hands-on workshop equips participants with effectuation-based methods and practical tools to effectively support aspiring entrepreneurs and foster an entrepreneurial mindset within academia.

Training for own staff:

A training budget is planned into project funding to support staff development. Training includes both individually initiated learning and regular team workshops planned to stay updated on entrepreneurship and business trends. The team stays informed through conferences, workshops, expert collaborations, new team member insights, and active networking via events and online platforms.

4.4.2 Tools

To effectively support researchers on their entrepreneurial journey, the Startup Service uses a variety of practical tools that facilitate ideation, planning, collaboration, and communication with customers. Altogether, these tools help turn abstract research ideas into structured, actionable plans, making the path from academic insight to startup more tangible and achievable.

Interactive digital platforms like **Miro** enable creative teamwork during workshops and consultations, allowing participants to collectively develop and iterate ideas in real time. Central to this process are method-based templates such as the **Business Model Canvas**, which helps map out key aspects of a business including value propositions, customer segments, and revenue streams, and the **Lean Canvas**, which is tailored for early-stage ventures with a focus on problem-solving and identifying target customers. The **Research Canvas**, developed specifically for researchers, guides them in translating academic insights into business opportunities by clearly defining the underlying problem, affected stakeholders, and potential applications. Creativity exercises like the **Speed Boat** method encourage participants to reflect on barriers and drivers in their innovation journey.

Communication and ongoing networking are supported through platforms like **Slack**, which facilitates team collaboration (e.g. onboarding of new colleagues) and participant engagement beyond workshops, as well as **LinkedIn** groups that connect partners and alumni within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Additionally, structured templates and manuals such as those from the **Business Plan Competition Berlin-Brandenburg (BPW)** offer detailed guidance on developing comprehensive business plans.

4.5 Quality assessment indicators

In line with its commitment to excellence in research and teaching, the University of Potsdam places great importance on regularly evaluating its transfer structures both internally and externally. The Startup Service actively seeks expert advice to further develop its existing services in a needs-based and purposeful manner. These efforts include participation in initiatives such as the “Gründungsradar” (“Startup Radar”) conducted by the Stifterverband, a comprehensive national benchmarking tool that evaluates startup support at German universities across multiple key dimensions.

The University of Potsdam achieved a 5th place among Germany’s large universities (those with over 15.000 students) in the 2025 Gründungsradar ranking, placing it among the leading institutions in startup support. The Gründungsradar assesses universities across seven dimensions: including institutional embedding of entrepreneurship, awareness-raising, qualification, support services, startup activity, monitoring and evaluation, and network engagement, using a total of 46 indicators.

The [seven dimensions of quality assessment indicators](#) described below as defined by the Gründungsradar:

1. Institutional anchoring of entrepreneurship

Institutional anchoring of entrepreneurship is crucial for establishing long-term, effective startup support at universities. Clear strategies, secured resources, and transparent structures with incentives foster collaboration among all stakeholders.

2. Awareness-raising and skills development

Raising awareness of entrepreneurship among students and academic staff is essential for effective startup support. Sufficient staffing and targeted communication help ensure that both curricular and extracurricular activities reach their audience. Equally important is equipping potential founders with the skills needed for entrepreneurial careers. Since awareness-raising and qualification often go hand in hand, they are evaluated together.

3. Startup support

Effective startup support is best achieved in collaboration with external partners, such as through advisory services and mentoring programmes. It also relies on sufficient staffing within the university and tailored support offerings aimed at specific target groups.

4. Startup activities

The previously described elements form the foundation for universities’ startup activities, which aim to increase both the number and sustainability of new ventures. These activities can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively.

5. Monitoring and evaluation in startup support

Measuring the impact of startup support is vital to assess outcomes and adjust measures as needed. Continuous monitoring, tracking, and evaluation enable internal review and external transparency. Universities should plan for these from the start, using standardised processes to ease data collection.

6. Networking in startup support

Networks are key to effective startup support, enabling universities to enhance their offerings through collaboration with external partners. Sharing best practices inspires

innovation, while partnerships with business, politics, and civil society help address challenges and motivate aspiring founders.

7. Internationalisation in startup support

The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action has set the goal of positioning Germany as a global leader in science-based startups. University startup services actively strive to contribute to this objective, leveraging the strong potential of many German universities.

Regularly assessing performance against these indicators allows the Startup Service at the University of Potsdam to identify strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring that its support remains aligned with the needs of its community. This commitment to quality and transparency helps the university maintain its leading position in startup support and contributes to fostering an innovation-driven ecosystem of researchers and founders.

5. Area of Equal Opportunities (UJI with UPN as collaborator)

This chapter has been developed by Universitat Jaume I, as coordinator of task 5.2, **to serve as an example of potential content** based on the current situation at this university. Each university should adapt it to the aspects that have been more developed in their university and they think that could be useful and transferable to other universities. Additionally, UPN has contributed with relevant content.

5.1 Scope of action

The scope of this section includes those services that support equal opportunities for career development in the field of research. In this sense, we can include areas such as:

- Recruitment of staff.
- Accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Gender equality.
- Integration of foreign nationals.

The aim is to present a list of services that can help to develop a culture of equal opportunities in the development of a research career. This would include examples of procedures that are helping in the establishment of that culture and that would be good practices to export to other universities.

Below are some examples of advisory services that could be considered in this section:

The recruitment service for research and research support staff ([example at Uji](#)).

Some of the services provided by this service include:

- Vacancies and calls for applications.
- Selection panels and scales.
- Incentive plans.
- Evaluation of research activities.
- [Welcome portal](#) for research staff.

The Accessibility Unit ([example at UJI](#))

This Unit was created with the aim of ensuring the accessibility of the University's websites and applications for mobile devices. The work areas of this unit are:

- The coordination and issuance of guidelines on accessibility.
- Attention to the requirements of users on accessibility issues.
- Coordination of periodic accessibility reviews.
- Issuance of annual accessibility reports.
- Coordination of awareness and training actions.

The Equality Unit ([example at UJI](#))

The aims of this unit are:

- To remove the obstacles to effective equality between women and men.
- To promote full equality between women and men.
- To include the study and application of the principle of equality in courses and programmes of initial and continuing teacher training.
- To promote teaching and research on the meaning and scope of equality between women and men, the inclusion of teaching on equality between women and men in appropriate curricula, the creation of specific postgraduate courses and the conduct of specialised studies and research on the subject.

5.2 Ethical principles

The Vice-Rector's Office in charge of Research at the university, and in the case of UJI through the welcome desk of the recruiting service, provides an advisory service on [research ethics](#). In relation to the area covered in this section, this service provides researchers with training and advice resources on the [gender perspective in research](#) and the use of inclusive language when dealing with people with disabilities.

The main instrument for supporting researchers in matters relating to ethical principles is the [Code of Good Practice in Research and Doctoral Studies 2025](#) (CBPID). This code establishes the overarching ethical and deontological principles that must prevail in all scientific activities conducted at the public university of Castelló. It is structured around four key thematic areas: integrity, gender equality, open access, and communication and public engagement.

5.3 Common procedures

The most common research-related procedures carried out by the **recruiting service** could be:

- Selection and hiring of research staff and research support staff.
- This procedure includes the drafting of the call for applications, the formation of selection boards and the establishment of the applicable scales. In addition, job exchanges are established for each call for application, and potential candidates will be notified. Once an offer has been accepted by the selected candidate, the service completes the process by managing the contractual formalities.
- Welcome process for researchers.
- When a researcher arrives at the UJI for the first time, researchers receive a welcome email from the Human Resources Department. This email provides useful

links, documentation and contact details to facilitate integration into the university community. Particular attention is given to providing support services for managing residence permits for international staff, and to provide information on campus accessibility, the ombudsman's office and the Equality Unit.

- Incentive Plans management
- It includes the design of the university's own system for the evaluation of research staff incentives, the publication of the annual call for applications and its management.
- Providing information on the evaluation of research activity.
- Information is provided on calls for the evaluation of research activities, as well as the applicable scales.
- Management of the [welcome desk for research staff](#).
This web portal includes information related to career development, working conditions, rights and duties, etc.

The most common research-related procedures carried out by the **Accessibility Unit** could be:

- Coordinating and ensuring the effective functioning of communication mechanisms.
- Coordinating periodic accessibility reviews.
- Coordinating and encouraging promotion, awareness and training activities.
- Provision of training courses to promote access to information and communication technologies. Those are courses for people who develop content for websites, manage social networks, provide audiovisual content, etc.
- Provide resources and tools to train research staff to create accessible content.
- Guides and tutorials that help research staff make their content accessible, as well as accessible applications and technologies.
- Conducting internal monitoring reports.

The most common research-related procedures carried out by the **Equality Unit** could be:

- Development, implementation and evaluation of the monitoring of the University's Equality Plan.
- This plan is reviewed periodically, and its main objective is to establish the measures and means necessary to achieve effective equality between men and women (including in the field of research).
- Development, implementation and evaluation of the monitoring of the University's Inclusion and Non-Discrimination Plan.

- The objective of this Plan is to establish some axes and actions to generate the appropriate university environment so that no person in the university community can be discriminated against because of birth, racial or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, conviction or opinion, age, disability, nationality, illness, socioeconomic status, linguistic, political and union affinity, appearance, or any other personal or social condition or circumstance (including in the field of research).
- Provision of training courses to promote effective equality between men and women (including in the field of teaching and research).
- To inform and disseminate information about the university's research groups that include the gender perspective and the treatment of affective-sexual diversity.
- To give visibility to doctoral theses with a gender perspective.
- Promotion and dissemination of congresses related to gender equality and attention to diversity.

5.4 Resources, tools, training

In this section, duplication of content with other chapters of this guide has been avoided. It should also be noted that the implementation of equality plans in universities has been specifically addressed under Task 5.3 of the same Work Package within the EDUC WIDE Project. Consequently, this section focuses on providing resources, tools and training that are specifically linked to equal opportunities, which are defined as the absence of any kind of discrimination. This section does not cover initiatives, activities or usual processes that are not explicitly aimed at the promotion of equal opportunities.

5.4.1 RESOURCES:

Code of good practices in research and doctoral studies:

This cross-cutting, multi-faceted resource promotes the gender perspective at institutional levels. All Plan beneficiaries must necessarily adhere to this set of good practices.

Link to the document: [CBPID](#)

Equality Plan:

It promotes gender equality in all areas. It ensures equal opportunities and treatment for women and men. This is specifically in research activities.

Link to the document: [GEP UJI](#)

Plan for the promotion of research and knowledge transfer with a gender approach:

This Plan outlines a variety of activities and initiatives. For instance, some aspects are included in calls for proposals that promote a gendered perspective:

- Explicit adherence to the code:
Persons who receive funding under the Plan must adhere to the Code of Good Practices in Research and Doctoral Studies.
- Impact assessment:
The evaluation considers the scientific-technical, social, and economic impact of the expected results within the project's field of knowledge (10%).

- Deadlines:

The principal investigator must have obtained their first doctorate no more than 10 years ago. This period may be extended due to childcare, pregnancy-related disability, gender-based violence, etc.

Foundation ISONOMIA:

The Foundation Isonomia at UJI is a non-profit entity that has like object promote the equality of opportunities among women and men, as well as of other social communities, economic, labour, educational and culturally disadvantaged or susceptible to suffer discrimination, in all the fields of the life of the people, with the end to contribute to a juster society and more egalitarian.

More information: [Foundation Isonomia](#).

Violet point Rainbow:

The Universitat Jaume I of Castellón has a permanent Violet Point-Rainbow on campus that offers information, orientation, and psychological and legal advice on matters relating to sexual bullying, male chauvinism, and diversity in affective-sexual and gender matters. The aim is to raise awareness of the need to find solutions to social problems such as machismo and LGTBIfobia. More info: [Violet point - rainbow](#).

Scientific outreach:

- International day of women and girls in science:

Celebrated annually on February 11 to encourage the participation of women and girls in science. More info: [link](#).

- European researchers' night:

Held at the end of September to bring science closer to the public through scientific demonstrations, talks by women researchers, games, and more. More information: [Science GTS](#).

- They have the formula:

Exhibition about women dedicated to the study of chemistry from ancient times to the present day.

5.4.2 TOOLS:

Official notice board (ONB):

This tool improves the transparency and accessibility of all staff recruitment procedures at the university, facilitating their effective publication and dissemination.

ListenAll:

Mobile App for Android and iOS developed by the Universitat d'Alacant for recognition and transcription of speech to text in real time.

Tleo:

This application, developed by the University of Málaga, is designed for the simultaneous transcription of classes, lectures, conferences and dictations. The free version can produce a written text from a conversation and save the transcription. It is compatible with mobile phones, tablets and computers.

TapTapSee:

This app is available for Android and iOS and allows you to identify and describe objects in photographs aloud or in text. Just take a photo with your phone or select an existing one,

and the app will describe it in a few seconds — including any people or colours in the image.

Screen magnifiers:

This software allows images on the screen to be displayed at a larger size. They are very useful for people with partial visual impairment. [This list, prepared by the Universitat d'Alacant](#), details the most commonly used screen magnifiers for each platform, along with guidelines for using them.

Look to Speak:

This app, developed by Google Creative Lab, is available for Android and allows people to select phrases or pre-written words to be spoken aloud using only their eyes. It is available in Spanish, French and German. It is designed to help people with speech or motor difficulties.

PROTOCOL for prevention, detection and action in case of harassment and discrimination at the Universitat Jaume I of Castelló.

PROTOCOL for the change of name of transsexual, transgender and intersex people at the Universitat Jaume I.

5.4.3 TRAINING:

Course: Research and gender perspective

Cross-disciplinary training by the Doctoral School.

Hours: 15 hours.

Language of instruction: English.

Fee: Free of charge.

Objective: To provide research staff at Universitat Jaume I with targeted training to implement a gender perspective in their research, in accordance with the provisions of the Law 14/2011 on Science, Technology and Innovation, Article 33j (Spanish Act), "measures for the inclusion of the gender perspective as a cross-cutting category in science, technology and innovation", and the Horizon 2020 Programme (EU Regulation No. 1291/2013), Article 16, "effective promotion of gender equality and the gender dimension in research and innovation shall be ensured."

Link to the information of the course: [INFO](#)

Course: Healthy leadership: How to lead research teams?

Cross-disciplinary training by the Doctoral School.

Hours: 23 hours.

Language of instruction: Spanish.

Fee: Free of charge.

Objective: This course will teach participants the basic concepts of a healthy leadership style, from a positive approach. The ultimate goal is to optimise healthy leadership styles as a key social and organisational resource, contributing to the personal and professional development and promoting psychological and social well-being within the institution.

Link to the information of the course: [INFO](#).

Course: Accessibility for content managers

Acquire the skills to generate and manage web content in compliance with digital accessibility standards. Free online course.

Course: Creating accessible documentation

Students will acquire the skills to create accessible documents using common market programmes. Free online course.

Course: Accessibility in audiovisual content

Acquire the skills and knowledge to produce audiovisual materials that are accessible to a range of audiences. Free online course.

Course: Web accessibility awareness

A Course designed to raise public awareness about that new technologies are made accessible. Free online course.

Course: Editing and generations os accessible web content

The course is organised by the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP), with the support of the Web Accessibility Observatory under the General Secretariat for Digital Administration, part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation. This online course is available 24 hours a day and may be completed at your own pace. Designed with content editors in mind, the course is open to any individuals interested in developing accessible content.

Course: Research methodologies with a gender perspective, challenges in STEM degrees

This course presents European and Spanish regulations relevant to research staff, focusing on the integration of sex and gender analysis in research projects (Horizon Europe, the State and the Generalitat Valenciana's funding calls.) and the position of scientific publishers on this issue. In line with these requirements, it identifies the main gender biases in research, how to overcome them, and how to integrate sex and gender analysis across all phases of the research cycle. The course concludes with a practical internship, in which participants provide a gender review of one's own project or research.

5.5 Quality assessment indicators

In this section, we would like to take this opportunity to talk about an existing service at the Universitat Jaume I: the Office for the Promotion and Evaluation of Quality (OPAQ). This unit is responsible for promoting continuous improvement in processes and services at UJI from a quality perspective. To this end, the OPAQ offers support and advice to the university's centres, degree programmes and administrative and management units, and encourages participation from all interested parties.

The OPAQ's activities include developing, implementing and deploying the internal quality assurance system; promoting institutional accreditation; and obtaining [international quality seals](#) (EuroInf, EurACE and the seal of excellence in human resources recruitment), as well as maintaining quality management systems in accordance with the ISO 9001 standard. The OPAQ also develops and reviews indicators of the university's activity, measures stakeholder satisfaction and service quality, monitors improvement proposals and disseminates quality actions.

Since 2019, quality assessment surveys of the different services and units have been carried out at the Universitat Jaume I every February. The survey is open to the entire university community, and each person can evaluate the quality of any services they have used in the previous year.

In the early years, a general report of the results was made public. In addition, a specific, detailed report evaluating each unit or service was sent to the unit itself and the vice-rectorate to which it belonged. Since 2023, the general results report published on the website has also included some specific data for each unit or service. For instance, regarding the Human Resources Service and the Equality Unit, we can consult the following indicators for 2023 and 2024:

- General satisfaction
- Evolution of general satisfaction since 2019.
- Fulfilment of expectations
- Satisfaction with the resources available to the unit/service.
- Reliability offered by the unit/service
- Availability of staff
- Professionalism of the people providing the service
- Treatment received from service staff.

In the case of the Accessibility Unit, data is only available since 2024 because it is a newly created unit.

Each of these indicators is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing 'totally dissatisfied' and 5 representing 'totally satisfied'.

5.7 The UPN approach: Gender and Equality Framework under the EDUC-WIDE GEP (2025)

Since 2021, the University of Paris Nanterre (UPN) has engaged in a reflective and structured effort to advance Gender and Equality Policy, combat all kind of discrimination and hate speech and promote Inclusion at different levels. Anchored in national and European frameworks, this commitment has evolved through both strategic planning and active institutional participation. Initiated within the context of the **Educ-Share** project (Horizon 2020, project occurred and successfully achieved during 2020-2023/4) and supported by the **Educ-Wide GEP** framework, UPN's internal assessment highlighted both its achievements, and the reforms still needed to foster an inclusive academic environment.

Central to this progression has been the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2021–2023), established in application of the French Law of 6 August 2019. Jointly driven by the Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation in France, this plan provides a renewable three-year framework.

It aligns with the broader Research Programming Act (2021–2030), which supports improvements to guarantee equity, career structures, and working conditions for research and higher education staff throughout academic environments. As part of this legislative approach, there has been a renewed focus on the reclassification (« repyramider ») of technical and research roles and the implementation of a more coherent career trajectory for teaching and research personnel.

The **Action Plan**'s five core strategies entangle, at all scale of university levels and departments, a circle of connected Human Resources practices and stances, such as:

- Strengthening gender governance
- Promoting equal access to employment and responsibilities
- Addressing salary and career disparities
- Supporting work-life balance
- Fighting discrimination and multiple gender-based violence

These elements are foundational to UPN's Gender and Equality policy and vision. While the plan is robust enough, its implementation at the institutional scale faces limitations, given that key reforms - such as salary policy, contract types, and extended leave provisions - remain under the regulatory authority of the national civil service. It is also important to consider that UPN operates through a collaborative commission-based approach, where evaluations are conducted horizontally to implement new procedures and actions. Indeed, Equality is mirrored within UPN local design, allowing UPN to act as an academic European promoter by dressing the device of a fair, democratic and inclusive higher education organisation while articulating consultation bodies at all university levels. It requires a longer but certainly more appropriate and rightful decision-making policy process.

In fact, despite some delays related to the **Educ-Wide** scheduling roadmap, UPN has made important institutional strides. The Mission Égalité et Non-Discrimination was established to engage across all university departments and functions, by promoting a culture of genuine inclusion. Its structure includes specialised units offering deep support and concrete listening services to victims of gender-based violence and discrimination - whether occurring on or off campus and addressing the situations accordingly whenever the University can act within the legal responsibility. These services are reinforced by targeted training for priority groups, internal awareness campaigns, and collaboration with student associations and specialised associations and organisations locally and nationally.

Among the Mission's central initiatives is the Equality Month (*Le mois de l'Égalité à Nanterre*), a dynamic and multidisciplinary programme held annually in March. The 2025 edition featured an array of events - from academic conferences on obstetric violence, psychiatric care, and trans rights, to artistic performances such as the *Nanterre Drag Show* and the *Bobigny Trial reenactment*. The inclusion of activities like virtual reality experiences on invisible disabilities and the eloquence workshop co-organised with *Amnesty International* further demonstrates the university's creative and participatory approach to raising awareness. The programme was designed not only to educate but also to actively engage the university's diverse communities. It successfully fostered dialogue across departments, between students and staff, and with civil society, reinforcing the role of the university as a space for inclusive debate, critical inquiry, and democratic participation. *Equality Month* has thus grown to become a cornerstone of UPN's public engagement and a model for translating institutional commitments into experiential learning and advocacy.

In the last university year (September 2024 - July 2025) both the political strategy and the structural organisation for Equality Inclusion and Non-Discrimination underwent massive changes. A vice-presidency was created to build a transversal strategy and strengthen it in the next few years. The vice-presidency will be helped by a task force of 4 researchers in charge of advising, constructing and developing the policies, the research development but also the education of students. Each researcher will have a topic: gender equality and

gender based-violence, fight against discrimination (with a focus on racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia and LGBTQIA-phobia), laicity in relation with the antisemitism and Islamophobia topics, as well as disability. The Mission went through a very important structural evolution because it became an autonomous service of the University under both the authority of the General Service Directory and the Presidency; the Mission is now called *Coordination Center for Equality and Non-Discrimination*. With the purpose to significantly change the culture across the University spaces, 4 job positions have been opened, and 3 of them will be operational within the Coordination Center, by differentiating contributions and purposes as well as by allowing employers to implement specific skills and put into place significant actions through the Mission.

- The first position is dedicated to the Events and Sensibilizations Actions: organizing a yearly programme of events for the whole community (with the Equality Month being the most important moment of the year), reinforcing the sensibilities and education of students on these topics.
- The second position has been conceived for the management and treatment of the incident situation (gender based and sexual violence, discriminatory and hateful acts and speech's): listening and responding on requests coming from UPN actors, taking the statement, advising on the UPN's responsibilities and offering possible answers, following up on them.
- The third position has been crafted by aiming to create, plan and promote several training modules for the university personnel (teachers, researcher, administrative and technical workers): crafting workshops and thematic workshops, adapting courses to agents' responsibilities, needs and competences.
- The fourth position will be executed jointly with the Juridic Direction Service, with the purpose to enforce the sanctions and juridical consequences due to incidents situations which are treated previously by the Coordination Center.

Furthermore, UPN's active participation in the national scientific survey *ACADISCR*, which collects data on the experiences of discrimination within higher education and research, further reinforces its evidence-based approach to systemic change. The UPN is also actively involved in the CPED, a national association reassembling people who take care and are responsible for Equality Diversity and Inclusion actions in Universities and Public Higher Education schools. Frequently, different members of the association CPED present their work, compare their peculiarities and strategies, and share best practices with other stakeholders.

Parallel to these social, cultural and pedagogical efforts, UPN's institutional commitment is reinforced through the University Boarding's decision to adhere to the HRS4R and follow its labeling process with the scope of ameliorating researchers' professional environment. In alignment with the *European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*, UPN has developed a roadmap designed to improve working conditions and promote transparency and equity in academic careers. Within this process, 4 expert working groups implemented an institutional diagnosis and proposed to the UPN to different deputy commissions to put into place actions targeting early-career support, recruitment conditions, and the fostering of inclusive research environments. Also, the on-going discussion on adopting the Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) model, will strategically mark a significant step forward in European campuses research quality and development. **HRS4R** can contribute to:

- Strengthening procedures for recruiting academic staff and researchers.
- Encouraging participation in national campaigns (e.g., disability doctoral contracts).

- Developing mentoring programmes for new colleagues.
- Hosting foreign researchers and promoting inclusive onboarding practices.

UPN's operational roadmap includes further strategic priorities:

- The creation of video training modules on non-discrimination.
- The development of statistical tables and recruitment indicators.
- The assessment of staffing needs for the Equality and Non-Discrimination Mission.
- The pursuit of AFNOR French certification to continuously strengthen the institution's equality frameworks.
- Organizing roundtables and policy-focused debates to link research, governance, and civil society.

In line with UPN's on-going labeling workflow and aim, through inter-offices and inter-departments design and interactions, the European assessors « welcomed the care taken in aligning HR practices with those of the EU Charter for Researchers ». Because the « comprehensive analysis and action plan » submitted by UPN met « the requirements for the use of the 'HR Excellence in research' award », UPN can keep continuing its statements and advancements by considering European suggestion and modeling the HR local Policy and innovative devices during the following phases of the label procedure. UPN is now allowed to use the *HR Excellence in Research* award for officially disseminating and promoting its academic presence on websites, e-publications, publicity materials to stimulate and endorse a favorable and sustainable working environment.

Finally, in July 2025, the UPN voted its new « Plan of actions for Equality and Non-Discrimination in the Workplace » which corresponds to UPN's new strategy from 2025 to 2027 (effectively between late 2025 and beginning of 2028). Seven axes, 26 sub axes and 73 objectives are listed and translated into concrete actions. These axes are:

- Evaluating, Preventing and Treating wages gaps
- Guarantying for Equal access to jobs and promotions for women and men
- Articulating job and personal life
- Fighting against gender-based violence
- Fighting against stereotypes, biases and discrimination
- Taking actions for the health of workers (with a gender and inclusion focus)
- Developing and disseminating a culture of Equality Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

At the same time, and with the aim to allow the possibility of consistent changes which foster the **HRS4R** requirements, it is essential to underline UPN efforts that have been facing structural and institutional constraints which continue to shape the pace and extent of HR circular progress and diversification.

For instance, the introduction of specialised leave for conditions such as endometriosis has been considered but remains legally restricted. Moreover, while equality indicators were officially introduced, their application only began midway through the 2023–2024 academic year, relying primarily on consolidated data from 2022. In light of this, as a **Educ-Wide** associated partner, UPN expresses a clear interest in contributing to and cooperating with further projects, and mostly by following the Alliance common **Equality and GEP** guide-lines, and focusing on gender, equality and non-discrimination enhancement and key-strategic issues.

However, current internal planning cycles and institutional schedules are not fully aligned with those of the Alliance. As such, the university will not be in a position to implement integrated actions within the immediate timeframe. At the same time, UPN genuinely reaffirms its engagement in the project and remains committed to progressing within this **Educ-Wide** vision and forecasting advancement. Substantive engagement and implementation of collaborative actions are planned to begin with the next academic year, 2025–2026. This timeline will allow UPN to synchronize internal efforts with the strategic objectives of the **Educ-Wide** project and to contribute meaningfully through a coordinated and sustainable framework and cooperations.

6. Conclusion

This Good Practice Guide, developed under Task 5.2 of the EDUC-WIDE project and coordinated by Universitat Jaume I, represents a significant milestone in the collective efforts of the consortium to advance the institutionalisation and professionalisation of research career advisory services across the European Higher Education Area. The Guide supports the wider objectives of the European Research Area (ERA), particularly in the context of Widening universities, by promoting inclusive, high-quality, and sustainable research ecosystems.

The Guide presents a structured and comprehensive mapping of existing advisory services in the areas of Human Resources, Research Advisory, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and Equal Opportunities, as implemented by partner institutions. It draws on shared experiences, identifies good practices, and integrates tools and recommendations aligned with researcher needs at all career stages (R1–R4). A harmonised framework of ethical standards, standard operating procedures, training pathways, and quality assurance indicators has been co-created, providing a strategic and operational reference for improving institutional performance in the provision of career support services.

This initiative responds to the strategic priority of enhancing the attractiveness and accessibility of research careers, particularly within less experienced institutions. The Guide directly addresses structural gaps by supporting institutional transformation, improving service accessibility, and enabling a more cohesive approach to researcher development. It reflects the principles underpinning the Widening Participation agenda and contributes to levelling the playing field across diverse national contexts.

The Guide introduces a shared taxonomy of services and offers an integrated, transnational approach to service design and delivery. It facilitates the mutual transfer of knowledge between more experienced and less experienced institutions, encourages peer learning, and fosters alignment with ERA policy goals such as talent circulation, equal opportunities, and research excellence. Its innovative potential lies in its scalability, adaptability, and capacity to be used both as a training tool and a strategic planning instrument. The

collaboration has also led to the proposal of establishing a permanent Research Career Advisory Network within the EDUC Alliance, which is key to ensuring continuity and knowledge sustainability.

The implementation of the Guide has the potential to generate long-term institutional impact, particularly if combined with capacity-building actions such as those planned under Task 6.2. These would support the operationalisation of the Guide and help embed its methodologies into institutional practice. While the Guide lays a strong foundation, future iterations could benefit from:

- Deeper integration of digitalisation strategies and data analytics for service improvement.
- Enhanced engagement with researchers through participatory design methodologies.
- Systematic monitoring of the Guide's uptake and impact across institutions.
- Expansion of case studies to reflect a broader range of institutional realities.

In conclusion, through open access, localisation, and strategic dissemination, the Guide can inspire similar frameworks across the EU and beyond. This Good Practice Guide constitutes an important step forward in realising a more inclusive and interconnected European research landscape. It enhances institutional capacity, strengthens cross-border cooperation, and exemplifies the EU's commitment to fostering excellence through shared knowledge and strategic alignment.

6.1 On the scope of the work

The consortium partners' collaborative efforts have highlighted substantial variations in the institutional contexts, resources, operational circumstances, and organisational structures.

For the purposes of the Guide, this indicates that a diverse range of services and procedures are implemented differently across institutions.

Within this framework, the direct transfer of services, processes or methods does not seem feasible. The categorisation of the information into four thematic areas, based on scope of intervention, facilitates the interpretation and practical application of the resources and procedures presented by each university. This, in turn, enables partners to adapt the Guide's application to their particular institutional requirements.

The knowledge and expertise shared by each partner in this Guide will enable us to critically reflect our own services and identify potential improvements. Thus, this Guide functions both as a basis for implementing new services or methodologies and as a source of inspiration that can be further improved during the second phase of the EDUC WIDE project.

6.2 On the usefulness and dissemination of the Guide

The dissemination of this Guide across the consortium universities is essential to maximise its impact. The document has the potential to inspire both operational staff and institutional leadership to adopt enhanced practices aimed at improving the support and advisory services available to research personnel.

Furthermore, during the second phase of the project, it is strongly recommended that partner institutions gather structured feedback from relevant stakeholders regarding the Guide's usability and applicability in their institutional contexts. This participatory evaluation will support the iterative refinement of the Guide, allowing for the incorporation of targeted improvements and necessary adjustments identified through Task 6.2.

Beyond the immediate consortium, the Guide may also serve as a transferable model for other higher education institutions across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), promoting knowledge exchange and institutional development at a broader level.

Annex III - Information on support services for research staff

In order to establish a consistent framework for the classification of the various advisory services available to research staff, the following proposal is put forward. This taxonomy aims to address the evolving needs of researchers throughout the different stages of their research careers. Accordingly, the various elements have been grouped based on thematic hashtags, which are identified in the central column. These hashtags may be employed throughout the guide to link and categorise the resources presented in the subsequent chapters.

Table 6. Thematic hashtags related to researchers categories

R1 - R2	HASHTAG	R3 - R4
Training Research	#Training-R	Training in Research
Research Funds	#R-Funds	Research Funds
Life / Work Balance	#HealthyBalance	Life / Work Balance
Equality		Equality
Mental Health		
Alternative Careers	#ExpandingYourCareer	
Entrepreneurship		Entrepreneurship
Transfer of Knowledge		Transfer of Knowledge
Mobility	#Mobility	Sabbaticals/Mobility
Mentorship	#Leadership	Mentorship
Leadership		Leadership
Career Plan	#CareerPlan	Accreditation/Promotion
Open Science	#R-Impact	Open Science
		Research Impact

The following is a list of support services for research staff at the universities that make up the consortium. The services cover different areas to support the development of a professional research career, both within and outside the university. These services could inspire the creation of new units or improvements to existing services in our own universities.

Table 7. Advisory services for researchers at our universities

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
PNU	Research Training	Offers guidance and support in developing core research skills, including methodology, academic writing, and project design, particularly for early-stage researchers	#Training-R
PNU	Mobility	Provides advice on academic mobility opportunities such as Erasmus+, international exchanges, and research stays abroad, enhancing career development through international collaboration	#Mobility
PNU	Research Funds	Provides advice and support on identifying, applying for, and managing international research funding opportunities, including Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ projects.	#R-Funds
UJI	Careers Service Office (OIPEP)	The OIPEP is the service commissioned on managing and fomenting employability, which facilitates students and graduates job placement. This fact is performed thanks to the cooperation with other companies and institutions: internship management in companies, occupational conferences and trade shows, insertion labour programmes, international mobility programmes, and the follow-up of graduates professional experience throughout the Employing Monitoring Centre.	#ExpandingYourCareer #Mobility #CareerPlan
UJI	Doctoral School	The Doctoral School is responsible for the Transversal Training Plan for research staff. It also provides information and advice on developing research careers in companies and other non-academic organisations (PhD with an Industrial mention) Furthermore, it promotes the internationalisation of research staff by facilitating stays at foreign universities through doctoral programmes with an international mention or co-supervised doctoral programmes. Finally, the Doctoral School promotes mentoring programmes.	#Training-R #ExpandingYourCareer #Mobility #CareerPlan #Leadership
UJI	Human Resources Service	This service helps research staff from the beginning of their careers in aspects of recruitment, professional profiles, leave, time management, etc.	#ExpandingYourCareer #CareerPlan

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
UJI	INCREA Chair for Innovation, Creativity and Learning	From the Chair INCREA for Innovation, Creativity and Learning develop programs oriented to strengthen entrepreneurial competencies to the students. The entrepreneurial competencies are fundamental to improving their employability. For this, we organize distinct actions of sensitization, networking, formation, and mentoring in which they work values and attitudes related to creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship.	#ExpandingYourCareer
UJI	International Relations Office (ORI)	The International Relations Office (ORI) is the unit responsible for managing exchange and mobility programmes between the Universitat Jaume I and external institutions, and for promoting the university's internationalisation.	#Mobility
UJI	Library	Provides advice and support on using tools for the scientific research development, open acces, publishing, etc.	#R-Impact #Training-R
UJI	Office for Cooperation in Research and Technological Development (OCIT)	Promotes and manages the research and technological innovation activities of the Universitat Jaume I as regards these two aspects: Promotion of university-businesses collaboration by establishing links between the scientific and technological knowledge generated by researchers and the needs of companies and organisations in terms of R&D&I. Support for the participation of research groups in public programmes for the funding of R&D activities	#R-Funds #ExpandingYourCareer #Mobility
UJI	Service on Research Ethics	To promote responsible research and innovation at UJI, as well as the work of specific committees. To ensure compliance with regulations and principles relating to ethical, quality, integral, responsible and accessible research, as well as the necessary good scientific practices (GCP), for this purpose. To prevent poor research practices at UJI and promote good innovation and responsible research practices. To improve knowledge and training levels considering the following areas: integrity, gender equality, public commitment, and open access.	#R-Impact #Training-R

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
UJI	The Accessibility Unit (URA)	AIM: ensuring the accessibility of the University's websites and applications for mobile devices. The URA will focus on different areas such as the coordination and issuance of guidelines on accessibility; attention to the requirements of users on issues of accessibility, coordination of periodic reviews of accessibility, issuance of accessibility reports and coordination of awareness and training actions.	#HealthyBalance
UJI	The Equality Unit	Remove the obstacles hindering effective equality between women and men. Integrate the study and application of equality principles into courses and programmes for initial and ongoing teacher training. Promote research on the meaning and scope of equality between women and men. Create specific postgraduate courses. Carry out specialised studies and research on the subject.	#HealthyBalance
USN	Research and Researcher Education Unit / External Research Funding Group	Provides advice and support on identifying, applying for, national and international research funding opportunities, including Horizon Europe and career development grants e.g. ERC starting grant, consolidator grant and advanced grant (and national equivalents). Advice	#R-Funds #ExpandingYourCareer
USN	Research mobility support (mobility coordinator)	Information about all the practicalities regarding application for fundings, information about visa, housing, travel, schooling for children and vaccination and insurance. Promoting career development in collaboration with international partners.	#Mobility
USN	KOIN - Commercialisation and entrepreneurship	Valorization, IPR, Patent, Commercialization project, Start-up, Funding opportunities	#ExpandingYourCareer
USN	HR dept.	Formulating career goals and planning relevant activities contributes to predictability. Reflecting upon skills awareness, mapping possibilities and clarifying personal career goals.	#CareerPlan

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
UNICA	Research Funds	Provides advice and support on identifying, applying for, and managing regional, national and international research funding opportunities.	#R-Funds
UNICA	Research mobility support	Information about all the practicalities regarding application for fundings, information about visa, housing, travel, schooling for children and vaccination and insurance.	#Mobility
UNICA	The University's Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CREA)	CREA provides different type of services related to entrepreneurship education, open innovation and technology transfer.	#ExpandingYourCareer
UNICA	Inclusion and Learning Services (SIA)	Provides counselling, reception, intermediation and integration for students with disabilities and learning disabilities (L.D.) in order to guarantee the right to study during their university career.	#HealthyBalance
UNICA	Library	Provides advice and support on using tools for the scientific research development, open acces, publishing, etc.	#R-Impact #Training-R
MUNI	Centre for Doctoral Studies and Academic Affairs	Supports early-career researchers through the MUNI PhD Academia by offering interdisciplinary courses, transferable skills training, and career development opportunities tailored to the diverse needs of PhD candidates. It also fosters a supportive research environment by coordinating university-wide events and providing training for professionalisation of PhD supervision. Provides a special scholarship to support international mobility for doctoral students.	#Training-R #ExpandingYourCareer #Mobility
MUNI	Grant Support	Supports researchers by providing expert guidance on funding strategies, project planning, and grant writing. It offers tailored support for major European schemes such as ERC, MSCA, and Horizon Europe, including consultations, proposal reviews, and administrative help. This comprehensive service helps researchers strengthen their scientific profile, secure funding, and lead international research projects.	#R-Funds

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
MUNI	Career Centre	Offers a possibility of career coaching and counselling to discuss career paths and opportunities, events and panel discussions with employers, soft-skill seminars and enhancing wellbeing and work-life balance for PhD students.	#CareerPlan #ExpandingYourCareer #HealthyBalance
MUNI	Research Ethics Committee	Supports researchers by providing independent ethical review and approval for projects involving human subjects, ensuring compliance with ethical standards and contributing to the overall quality of research at MU.	#R-Impact
MUNI	Centre for International Cooperation	Supports researchers by facilitating international mobility, helping them gain valuable experience and build global academic networks. It also provides methodological guidance and consultations for international project applications, contributing to researchers' professional development.	#Mobility
MUNI	Competence Development Centre (CERPEK)	Provides training and support to help university teachers develop effective teaching skills that enhance student success and well-being. Also offers development programmes focused on leadership and personal growth, helping researchers and academic staff strengthen their ability to lead teams and manage their own professional development.	#Training-R #HealthyBalance #Leadership
MUNI	Student Advisory Centre	Offers free psychological counselling to students (including doctoral candidates) and staff to support mental health and well-being. Additionally, it organizes group support programmes fostering personal growth and resilience through shared experiences in a safe environment.	#HealthyBalance
MUNI	Technology Transfer Office	Supports research and innovation by fostering collaboration between researchers and businesses, and by helping research teams access public R&D funding programmes.	#ExpandingYourCareer
MUNI	Open Science	Supports researchers' careers by providing guidance on Open Access and Open (FAIR) Data including data management plans, offering tools for citizen science, comprehensive project consultancy, and providing support for researchers at every stage of the research cycle.	#R-Impact

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
MUNI	Libraries	Data Management Plans (DMPs): Assistance in creating DMPs to ensure proper data handling throughout the research lifecycle. Data Sharing and Open Access: Support in making research data accessible and compliant with open access policies. Support for Researcher Profiles: Assistance in managing and updating researcher profiles to enhance academic networking and visibility. Training and Workshops: Organizing sessions to educate researchers on open science practices, including open access publishing and data sharing.	#R-Impact #Training-R #CareerPlan
MUNI	PMO - Personnel Management Office	Training and Workshops: Organizing sessions to educate HR employees on career advisory to create systematic institutional career support at MUNI. Supporting leadership of MUNI on the need to hold (yearly) evaluation (feedback) where the employee reflects on goals reached and goals set. Helping to shift focus on the qualitative indicators of the job. Creating well-being strategy (as a part of Strategic plan of MUNI) including special outlook on the Sabbatical leave for employees.	#CareerPlan #HealthyBalance
UPECS	Technology Transfer Office	The TTO is supporting researchers in intellectual property questions and technology transfer.	#ExpandingYourCareer
UPECS	Research Support	The central research support is a coordinative hub fostering the information flow and identifying development needs in the topic of research.	#R-Impact
UPECS	HR Development Department	This department is coordinating the HRS4R project and other HR activities in EDUC, e.g. coordinating the job ads at EURAXESS.	#ExpandingYourCareer
UPECS	Publication Support	The publication support in the library offers a wide range of services in the topic of publications, open science and research data management.	#R-Impact
UPECS	Project Management Directorate	This directorate offers project management support for researchers.	#R-Funds

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
UPECS	Career Office	This office offers training and consultation mainly for students but also for researchers.	#ExpandingYourCareer
UPECS	International Centre	This directorate offers mobility programs for researchers.	#Mobility
UP	Potsdam Graduate School (PoGS)	Offers career development programs, training, and funding for doctoral candidates and postdocs and junior faculty. Supports supervision quality and leadership skills for researchers.	#Training-R #R-Funds
UP	Research Support Division (Dezernat 1 – Forschungsangelegenheiten)	Advises researchers on third-party funding, proposal writing, and national/international funding opportunities. Offers individual support	#Mobility
UP	Welcome Center Potsdam	Supports international researchers and their families before and during their stay. Helps with visa, housing, and integration.	#R-Funds
UP	Equal Opportunities Coordination Office	Promotes diversity, gender equality, and inclusive career development. Offers workshops and guidance for female and underrepresented researchers.	#Training-R #ExpandingYourCareer #Diversity #Leadership
UP	Career Service	Offers workshops, counselling, and networking opportunities for students exploring careers inside and outside academia.	#ExpandingYourCareer #CareerPlan
UP	Zentrum für Lehrerbildung und Bildungsforschung (ZeLB)	Provides support and professional development for researchers in teacher education and educational sciences.	#ExpandingYourCareer

UNIVER SITY	NAME OF THE SERVICE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION (Area in which it advises on research career development)	RELATED HASHTAGS
UP	International Office	Coordinates international partnerships and supports mobility programs for researchers. Advises on Erasmus+, DAAD, and strategic international collaboration.	#Mobility
UP	Potsdam Transfer	Central contact point for knowledge and technology transfer, startup support, and patent consulting. Supports researchers in applying their findings in practice.	#R-Impact #Training-R
UP	Center for Quality Development in Higher Education (ZfQ)	Offers training and certification for teaching in higher education. Supports young academics in developing didactic skills and reflective teaching practices.	#R-Funds #ExpandingYourCareer
UP	University Sports Centre (Zentrum für Hochschulsport)	Provides a wide range of sports courses and health-related activities for students and staff. Promotes work-life balance and physical well-being.	#HealthyBalance

Annex IV - Checklist (GEP Implementation Assessment)

SECTION 1: General stats

		Parity* (40%/60%) Yes / No	Improvement over 3 years ago
Staff	Academic		
	Non-academic		
Students	Bachelor		
	Master		
	Doctorate		

SECTION 2: Organisational culture and Gender balance in management and decision-making

		Yes / No	Improvement over 3 years ago
Research-related regulations	Have they been updated in line with gender equality principles?		
	There is a service to resolve conflicts arising from gender-based or diversity-related discrimination		
Gender equality training	It is available		
	It is compulsory for research staff		
	Participation is monitored		
Gender balance in research management	Parity in vice-rectorates (vice-rectors)*		
	Parity in Faculties/Schools (Deans or Directors)*		
	Parity in Faculties/Schools (Vice-deans or Deputy directors)*		
	Parity research institutes (Heads of institutes)*		
	There is a Gender Sensitive Leadership Training Promotion Programme for managers		
	Permanent services offering information, counselling on sexual harassment, gender violence and gender diversity		
	Is the total budget for offices and institutes dedicated to implementing equality at the university quantified?		

SECTION 3: Recruitment, selection and career progression

		Yes / No	Improvement over 3 years ago
Research staff recruitment process	Regulations include gender equality requirements		
	Competitive examinations cover specific topics on equality		
A remuneration audit report based on gender equality in research has been conducted			

SECTION 4: Integrating the gender dimension into research and innovation

		Yes / No	Improvement over 3 years ago
Specific training for research	Training on gender-sensitive methodologies is available		
	Training on conflict prevention and intercultural differences is available		
Gender balance in research	Parity in research teams (PI)*		
	Parity in the evaluation committees of internal research projects is required (in case my university has internal calls)*		
	The evaluation committees for internal research projects include a gender equality expert (in case my university has internal calls)		
	Parity in the recipients of research grant awards*		
Pay gap	Pay gap by sex among research staff		

* Gender parity is considered to exist when each gender is represented by a minimum of 40% and a maximum of 60%.