

KreativEU

Knowledge & Creativity
European **University**



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Looking Forward

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Former Director-General of UNESCO*

Culture, in all its diversity, can foster a sense of identity and cohesion for societies at a time of uncertainty. It is also a powerful source of creativity and innovation. No development can be sustainable without it.

*UNESCO (2013). *Culture & Development, no. 9, cultural goods, services and activities. Knowledge transmission. social cohesion. quality of life.* Unesco Publishing, Havana.

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Joint Mission Statement

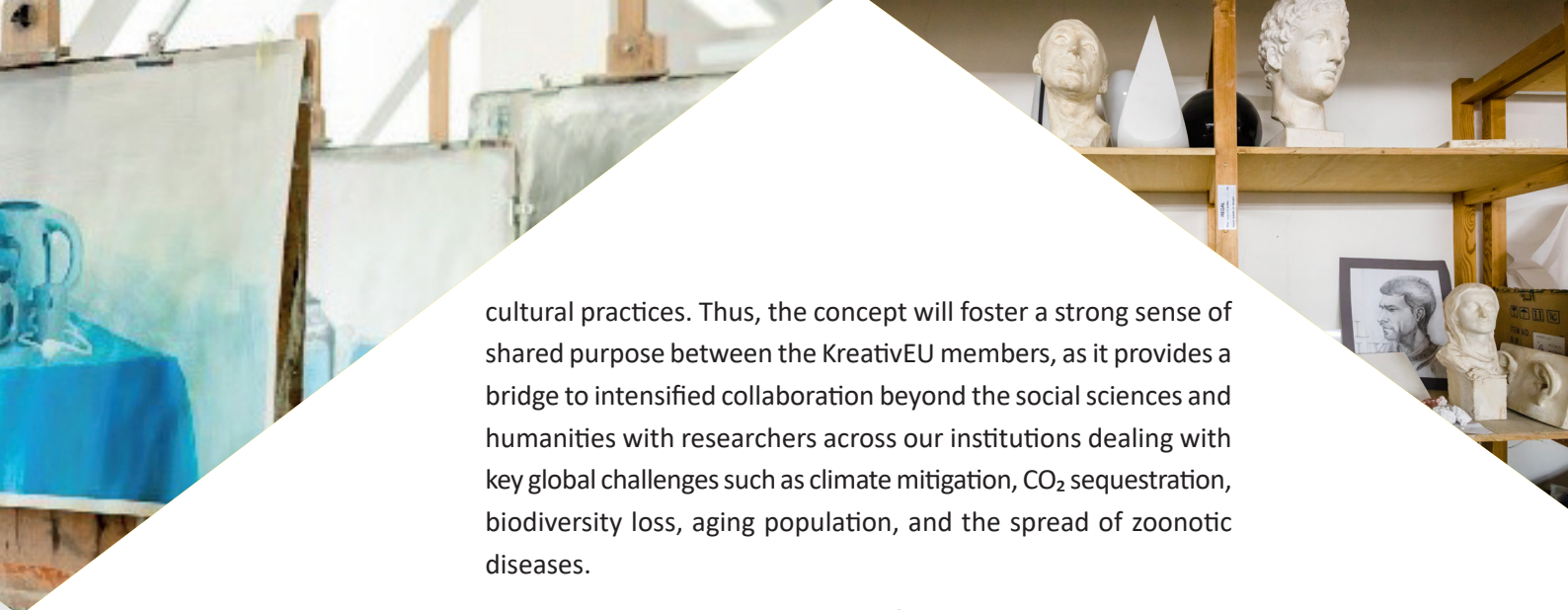
Mission Statement and Cooperation Agreement

The Universities forming the KreativEU consortium agreed to the **common goal of establishing a fully European University**, that places the **creative potential derived from Europe's cultural heritage** at the heart of its teaching, research and knowledge transfer activities. Committing to a **long-term institutional, structural and strategic cooperation** the partners will jointly implement an ambitious yet inclusive vision for transforming the study of culture, identity, memory and heritage for the benefit of society.

Building upon this strong foundation, KreativEU will provide the EU with **innovative concepts, methods, and solutions to address both current and future challenges**, contributing to a sustainable and harmonious future for communities and the environment alike. Our comprehensive strategy endeavors to instill a profound appreciation for the **interplay of cultural and ecological stewardship**, positioning the alliance as a catalyst for **positive transformation across local, regional, and global domains**.

KreativEU recognizes the inseparable interconnection of **tangible and intangible cultural heritage**, as well as the interwoven nature of **local and national traditions, crafts, cultural practices, and folklore**. The alliance is dedicated to formulating **cutting-edge educational and research programmes** that reevaluate these elements and their associated ecological surroundings, the lived environment, especially in the context of the digital age. **This ecocultural vision** serves as the foundational principle guiding KreativEU's efforts, ensuring that its initiatives not only **embrace cultural and ecological interconnectedness** but also leverage **digital advancements** to enhance the accessibility, dissemination, and understanding of cultural heritage.

Going beyond established approaches to cultural heritage, the novel approach of **ecocultural identity** brings together the research perspectives of cultural and life sciences at a crucial point, the human being, and can be described as **where culture meets ecology**. The ecocultural identity approach acknowledges that the environment itself and how we read it is shaped by



cultural practices. Thus, the concept will foster a strong sense of shared purpose between the KreativEU members, as it provides a bridge to intensified collaboration beyond the social sciences and humanities with researchers across our institutions dealing with key global challenges such as climate mitigation, CO₂ sequestration, biodiversity loss, aging population, and the spread of zoonotic diseases.

KreativEU is **unique in its kind, offering a competitive and an attractive European education and research system**, with students, researchers, academics and society, at large, cooperating within different cultures and across borders and academic disciplines.

Specifically, involved Higher Education Institutions want to:

- **Promote novel, high-quality and highly relevant learning opportunities for students at bachelor, master and doctoral levels and in the realm of life-long learning and continuing professional development**, by fostering student-led learning, research-oriented learning and experiential learning outside the classroom and by promoting the open and the digital education paradigms. Recognising the inseparable interconnection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as the interwoven nature of local and national traditions, crafts, cultural practices, folklore, and ecocultural identity, the courses and study programmes offered by KreativEU will reevaluate these elements and their associated ecological surroundings, the lived environment, especially in the context of the digital age, across different academic disciplines and fields of expertise;
- **Promote a high quality and transnational research environment**, by investing upon local, regional and national ecocultural identities, heritage, traditions, architecture, crafts, folklore, and cultural landscape, linking and connecting it to a broader European perspective, as to contribute to the establishment of a European University unique in its kind, capable of offering a competitive and an attractive European Research system;
- **Promote a contemporary use of the past anchored in History**, also encouraging the transdisciplinary collaboration



of entrepreneurial artists, inventors, innovators, researchers, students, and (future) entrepreneurs, as well as public authorities, who are seeking further support in the creative arts environment to incubate their ideas and develop their future or existing projects or start-ups;

- **Establish a European knowledge-creation and design network** that mobilises the four missions of Higher Education (Education, Research, Innovation and Service to Society) to develop, through a challenge-based approach, Ethical-by-Design and Sustainable-by-Design AI systems based on European values. The challenge-based approaches through which these AI systems will be developed purposely account for European values, identity, and diversity, resting on the premise that European history and both tangible and intangible European heritage are key components of a future that is enriching, sustainable, and inclusive. Consequently, the resulting innovative yet feasible and effective AI systems will have the potential to contribute significantly to addressing global challenges, such as climate change, digital transition, biodiversity loss, inequality, and social exclusion in a way that aligns with European values and policies;
- **Establish a fully European University**, aimed at creating a long-term institutional structural and strategic cooperation, for the implementation of a competitive and attractive educational model for the enhancement of the European cohesion by fostering its artistic and cultural diversity, linking education, research, and innovation at the service of society, through the KreativEU inter-university Heritage European campus where students, staff and researchers can enjoy seamless mobility and create new knowledge together, across countries and disciplines;

- **Offer sustainable transnational mobility opportunities,** (both physical, with as environmentally friendly means of travel as possible, and virtual), in addition to regular Erasmus + mobility schemes, to all parties involved in the Alliance: students, researchers, teachers, professors, administrative and support staff, stakeholders, and alumni.

Activities supporting the purpose set for the mission statement

KreativEU Education

Development of a wide range of certified (ECTS or micro-credentials as appropriate) transnational transdisciplinary KreativEU label courses addressing culture, identity, memory, heritage and ecocultural identity for digital or hybrid delivery as part of degree programmes at all levels and Life-long Learning (LLL) activities; Creation of transnational, interdisciplinary Master degree programmes and PhD curricula; Transnational research-oriented learning through co-supervision of theses and dissertations at bachelor, master and doctoral level; Establishment of a KreativEU Career Centre to promote access to transnational career development opportunities for all, through placements, micro-credentials courses and other measures; Strengthening the didactic competency of teaching staff through a KreativEU Centre of Excellence for Digital Education.

KreativEU Research

A common strategic research agenda around the topic “Cultural memory and cultural material identity and heritage in intercultural relations: Local histories and local culture (including everyday history and lifestyles, sustainable use of landscape, and ecocultural identity) within the context of the international comparison” will be established; Mapping of national and local ecocultural identities, traditions, architecture, crafts, and folklore; Collecting source materials and knowledge, and promoting experience exchange; Organisation of scientific events (e.g., network conferences, workshops, walking seminars, etc.); Promote excellence in open access to scientific knowledge; Set-up of the KreativEU transnational research working groups.

KreativEU Culture with and for society

Development of a transnational artistic and heritage incubator based on the exchange of information from CCI (Cultural and Creative Industries) sectors, offering creative pathways into future reuse of historical and artistic creations and traditions in cultural and creative industries.

KreativEU knowledge-creation and design network on smart sustainability

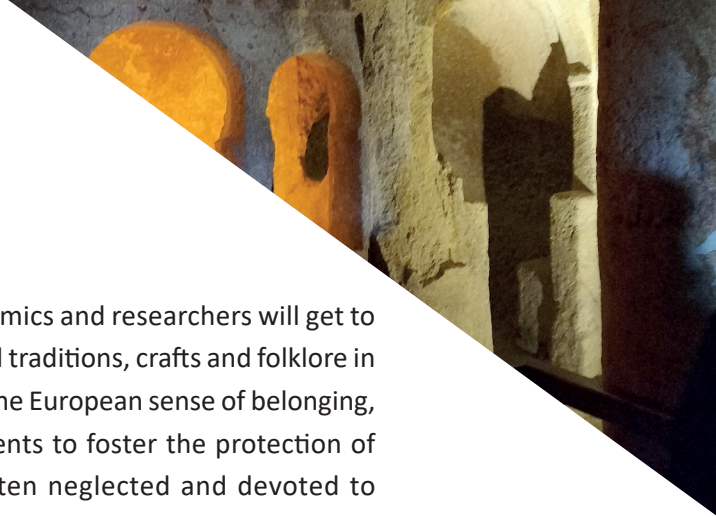
Establishing a knowledge-creation and design network that brings together students, lecturers, researchers, entrepreneurs, companies, local and regional actors, and civil society actors working together based on a challenge-based approach to develop European AI systems for addressing global challenges. This network consists of one permanent and several temporary knowledge-creation and design teams with the aim of deliver various forms of AI systems at various stages of early development, such as design briefs, (first prototypes, use cases, and case studies); Acquisition of lessons learned and set-up of the KreativEU Smart Sustainability Think Tank.

KreativEU Heritage European campus

Commit to a common structure of excellence as one large university offering the most advanced courses, at all academic levels, in heritage studies; To sow the seeds for the future long-term development of the Alliance, in strong connection with the interests of the KreativEU's staff and students, the KreativEU Seed Funding Initiative will be implemented. This initiative aims to support the development of cutting-edge and internal bottom-up research, artistic, entrepreneurial, technological, and societal projects, and to support the launching of internal competitions for the best ideas/products.

KreativEU Mobility

Facilitate mobility, guaranteeing the necessary unity through exchange, in order for students, academics, and other staff, as well as stakeholders and alumni to encounter different cultures, traditions, ecocultural identities, crafts and folklore in their material and immaterial manifestations, expanding the holistic view that we pursue for the KreativEU. Through visits



and exchanges, students, academics and researchers will get to embody those national and local traditions, crafts and folklore in other countries, strengthening the European sense of belonging, which inevitably will lead students to foster the protection of this artistic manifestations, often neglected and devoted to oblivion. Our aim is to foster a better understanding on cultural practices and memory and to promote a better relationship among partners on this basis and it is the belief of KreativEU that this is achieved through an increased mobility of all forms.

Vision Statement

In 10 years from now, we wish the KreativEU to have become:

- An outstanding Higher Education Network that puts creativity in the core of its transversal activities, being an open and innovative space for mobility, helping to overcome preconceived visions of regional and national identities and cultures and to achieve a more creative, united, and stronger Europe.
- A fully fledged European University with the common objective of jointly promoting high-level education, innovation and research activities in the multidisciplinary field of Cultural Heritage, enhancing Europe's central role as a world leader in the protection and safeguarding of the world's cultural and natural heritage.
- A transnational Alliance based on the involvement of regional and local economic, social and cultural actors and stakeholders and on a challenged based approach focused on digital, sustainable and creative practices applied to cultural heritage.
- A model in implementing the EU political agenda to solve big societal challenges and to overcome the disparities in digital skills across the EU, built on the richness of Europe's cultural diversity, reinforcing EU's global role and leadership.
- A transnational Alliance aiming at strengthening the European dimension and way of life by promoting tolerance, equality and diversity, openness and critical thinking, democratic practices, and flexible and attractive academic, research, entrepreneurial and artistic careers for a resilient Europe, serving both society and economy.

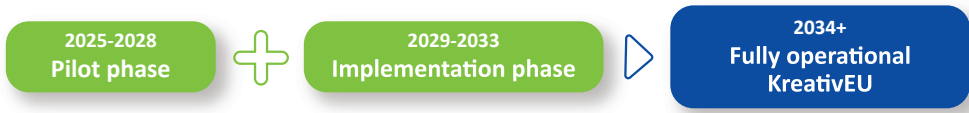
With the KreativEU Alliance a new generation of EU citizens working together across cultures, borders, languages, sectors and disciplines will be educated. Students from the KreativEU are expected to be leaders of change and enablers of societal transformation. The Alliance will achieve this vision by establishing a KreativEU Heritage European campus, linking spaces and places to knowledge, creativity, education, research and innovation.

The Consortium

Based on the core values summarised above, the KreativEU Alliance (Polytechnic University of Tomar (IPT, Portugal) (Lead Partner); D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics (TAE, Bulgaria); University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (USB, Czech Republic); University of Camerino (UNICAM, Italy); University of Greifswald (UG, Germany); Breda University of Applied Sciences (Buas, Netherlands); Opole University of Technology (OUTech, Poland); Valahia University of Targoviste (VUT, Romania); Trnava University (TUT, Slovakia); Södertörn University (SH, Sweden); and Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University (ATU, Turkey)) **developed their joint long-term institutional, structural and strategic cooperation**, as to have a **fully operational KreativEU European University by 2034**.



- Södertörn University (SH, Sweden)
- University of Greifswald (UG, Germany)
- Opole University of Technology (OUTech, Poland)
- Breda University of Applied Sciences (Buas, Netherlands)
- University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (USB, Czech Republic)
- Trnava University (TUT, Slovakia)
- Valahia University of Targoviste (VUT, Romania)
- D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics (TAE, Bulgaria)
- University of Camerino (UNICAM, Italy)
- Polytechnic University of Tomar (IPT, Portugal)
- Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University (ATU, Turkey)





Between 2025 and 2028 a pilot phase will be implemented in close collaboration with students, academics and researchers' body, in order to promote the inclusion, access and participation of under-represented groups and minorities and in order to balance gender equality. A four-years evaluation cycle will be accomplished for the monitoring of the full operation of the European University as to account for the next phase. By 2029 and until 2034 an implementation phase will take the fore, based on the established joint structures, joint curricula, joint research groups and other joint activities.

A collective effort began in 2021 with the first brainstorming meetings between founder Universities.

The journey toward consortium formalization witnessed pivotal moments during a series of meetings, with Tomar, Portugal, acting as a focal point in both September 2022 and October 2023 meetings. These gatherings set the groundwork for the consortium's evolution and strengthened its resolve to advance shared goals. As the consortium evolved, subsequent meetings in Montpellier, Adana, České Budějovice, Svishtov, Trnava, Targoviste, and Camerino solidified its framework, with seven founding members, **which led by the Polytechnic University of Tomar, secured 81 points and a Seal of Excellence in the 2023 Erasmus+ European Universities call. After the October 2023 meeting in Tomar, the consortium expanded to eleven HEIs.**

The KreativEU consortium was established based on:

1. The willingness of the eleven members to develop a unique alliance of HEIs across Europe, linking and connecting differing tangible and intangible cultural identities to a common European value;

2. The **complementarity and interdisciplinarity offered among the consortium**, especially in research and education;
3. **The small size but high-ranking profile of the eleven HEIs.** With a total number of 74558 students almost all institutions have under 10000 students, but they are ranked high among small HEIs, especially in relation to their pioneering and interdisciplinary approach to cultural heritage preservation, enhancement and valorisation;
4. **Prior cooperation** especially within Erasmus projects and mobility agreements, with several researchers already collaborating across the several institutions;
5. The **wide geographical coverage.** Partners were chosen based on their differing cultural traditions and identities and on their potential of representativeness in the European level. This is of the utmost importance to foster outstanding deliverables and a high impact.
6. **All partner institutions are based on historical cities.**

During the pilot phase, many tasks will require to expand this network and actively engage associated partners and stakeholders. **More than 100 associated partners have already been involved, according to their own specific expertises.**

The KreativEU will create a unique educational and research approach that places creativity in the core of its transversal activities, being an open and innovative space for mobility, with internal and external actors benefiting from shared knowledge, training and research.

















Workplan

To reach **the ambitious vision of creating an innovative, globally competitive, and attractive European education and research system, based on the exchange of knowledge around tangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as the interwoven nature of local and national traditions, ecocultural identities, crafts, cultural practices, and folklore**, thereby contributing to the development of the European Research Area (ERA) and the European Education Area (EEA), the KreativEU Alliance will work towards the completion of 8 work packages . These work packages are structured to ensure an efficient and balanced division of roles and tasks between the partners. Each partner will co-coordinate at least one work package. The lead partner IPT will coordinate two work packages.

As graphically shown in the figure, WP1 and WP8 will be the focal points for governance, coordination and dissemination of all other WPs, while WP6, which will entail the setting up and formalisation of the legal basis and physical and digital infrastructure of the Alliance (the KreativEU Heritage European campus), will play a key role for future sustainability and become the basis for further implementation after the four-years pilot phase.

WP2, WP3, WP4 and WP5, while strictly integrated and interconnected within each other and with other work packages, all address a specific theme:

WP2 » Education

WP3 » Research

WP4 » Culture with and for Society

WP5 » Knowledge-creation and design network on Smart Sustainability

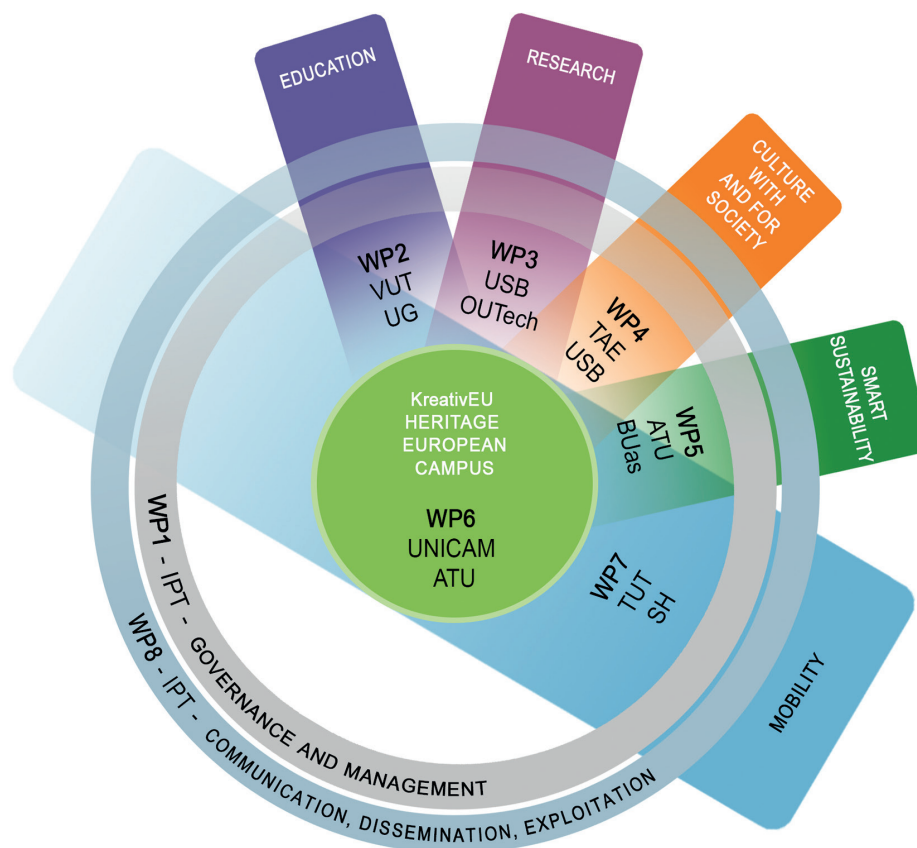
WP1, WP6, WP7 and WP8, on the other hand, are “transversal” sets of activities, keeping together the work plan addressing:

WP1 » Governance and Management

WP6 » Heritage European campus: Legal Framework and Physical and Digital Infrastructure

WP7 » Mobility

WP8 » Communication, Dissemination, Exploitation.







WP No	Task No	Task Name
WP1	T1.1	Setting-up and functioning of the Network Governance structure
	T1.2	Setting-up and functioning of the Project Governance structure
	T1.3	Day-by-day coordination
	T1.4	Technical and financial reporting
	T1.5	Quality Control
	T1.6	Cybersecurity and Data Protection policies, procedures, and reporting
WP2	T2.1	Development of transnational and interdisciplinary KreativEU label courses, certified with ECTS and micro-credentials as appropriate, on culture, identity, memory, heritage and ecocultural identity for use in degree programmes, LLL programmes and summer schools
	T2.2	Creation of transnational, interdisciplinary and joint Master's degree programmes related to culture, identity, memory, heritage and ecocultural identity that pilot the European degree label
	T2.3	Creation of transnational, interdisciplinary and joint doctoral training programmes related to culture, identity, memory, heritage and ecocultural identity that pilot the European degree label.
	T2.4	Joint supervision of interdisciplinary theses/dissertations at Bachelor, Master and doctoral level
	T2.5	Establishment of a KreativEU Career Centre connected to increased employability and upskilling (also in connection with practical training, flexible mobility, lifelong learning, and micro-credentials)
	T2.6	Establishment of a KreativEU Centre for Excellence in Digital Education and AI

WP No	Task No	Task Name
WP3	T3.1	Joint research strategy
	T3.2	Mapping of national and local ecocultural identity, traditions, architecture, crafts, and folklore, collecting source materials and knowledge, and promoting experience exchange
	T3.3	Organisation of scientific events (e.g., conferences, workshops, walking seminars, etc.)
	T3.4	Promote excellence in open access to scientific knowledge
	T3.5	Acquisition of lessons learned and set-up of the KreativEU transnational research working groups
WP4	T4.1	Setting-up of the structure, rules and procedures for the joint management of the incubator
	T4.2	Stakeholders' involvement and engagement
	T4.3	Piloting of the incubation scheme
	T4.4	Digital and research support to the Art and Heritage Incubator
	T4.5	Acquisition of lessons learned, fine-tuning and set-up of the transnational Art and Heritage incubator
WP5	T5.1	Establish and maintain the permanent team for the KreativEU knowledge-creation and design network on smart sustainability
	T5.2	Organise thematic summer schools, hackathons, and the closing symposium
	T5.3	Preparing proposals for further development of AI systems
	T5.4	Acquisition of lessons learned and set-up of the KreativEU Smart Sustainability Think Tank

WP No	Task No	Task Name
WP6	T6.1	Preparation and adoption of a framework for the common legal statute of the KreativEU European University
	T6.2	Pool of spaces and resources for the physical campus
	T6.3	Digital infrastructure and tools to ensure connectivity between participating HEIs: development of basic digital infrastructure
	T6.4	Digital infrastructure and tools to ensure connectivity between participating HEIs: pilot and novel infrastructures for education, research, and engagement
	T6.5	KreativEU Seed Funding Initiative
WP7	T7.1	Student mobility
	T7.2	Staff mobility
	T7.3	Stakeholders' mobility
	T7.4	Research mobility
	T7.5	Strategic mobility/International
	T7.6	Overcome obstacles to mobility
WP8	T8.1	Joint communication strategy
	T8.2	Communication and dissemination activities
	T8.3	Outreach activities
	T8.4	Joint internationalisation strategy
	T8.5	Exploitation of results - Industry including SMEs, authorities, industrial authorities, policymakers, sectors of interest, civil society.

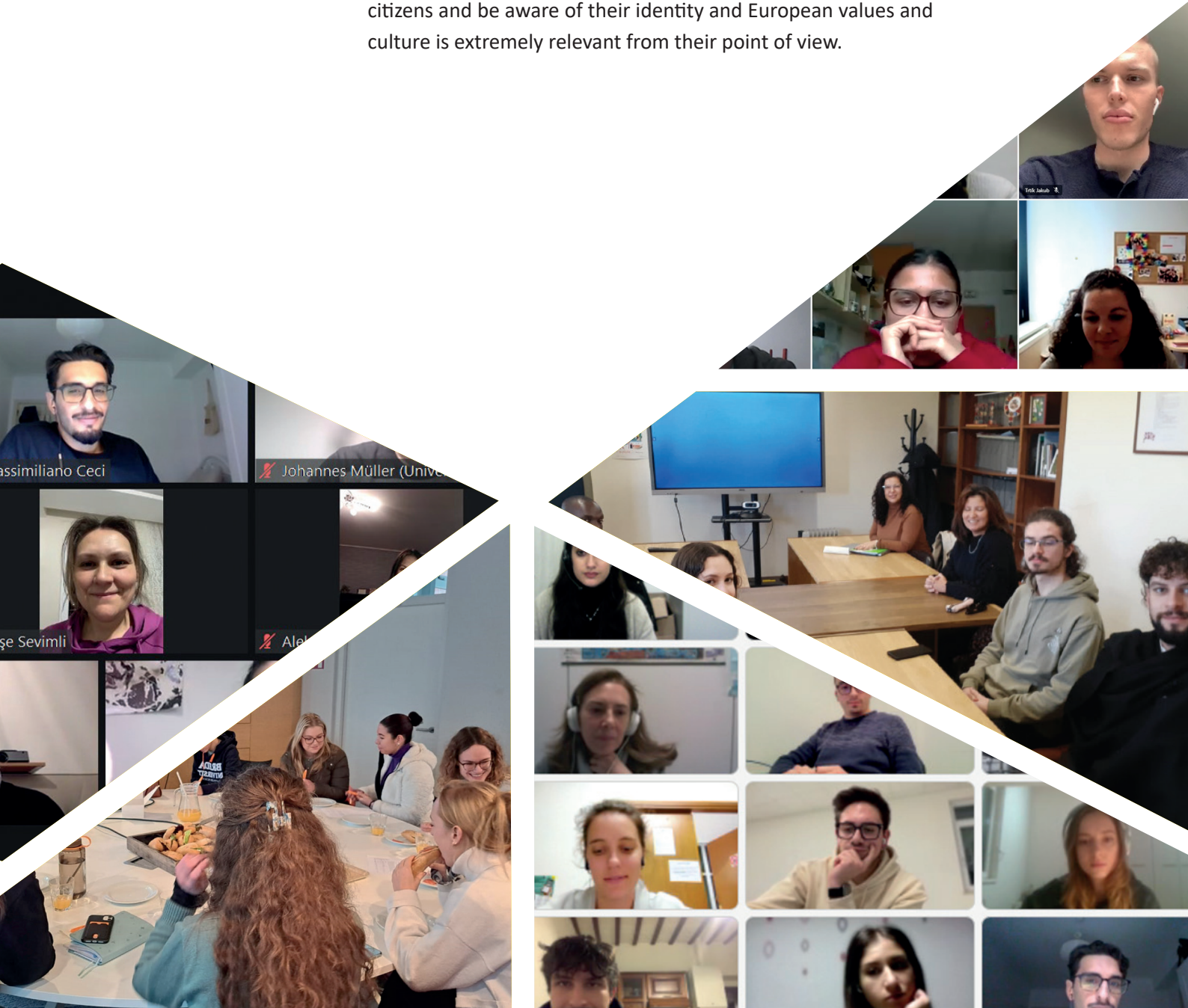
Students' Involvement

In order to get students even more involved with the measures and activities foreseen for the pilot phase, a two-pronged methodological approach was implemented: first, in a series of national focus groups (one per partner institution), we collected students' feedback on how receptive they were towards KreativEU and what recommendations they had based on their student perspective; and, afterwards, through the organisation of an international focus group, involving one student from each partner institution, we asked for specific feedback about each work package and dedicated activities proposed by the KreativEU alliance for the initial four-year pilot phase. Students (men and women) from different study cycles (bachelor, master and PhD students), and disciplines (e.g., humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, engineering and technology) participated in the focus groups, which were conducted in December 2023. Each focus group involved six to eleven students, in physical or online sessions. Eight questions were prepared for both the international and the national focus groups, and a time frame of one hour was set as the ideal amount of time to run the focus groups. The eleven national focus groups were run in the languages of the countries of the partner institutions and the international one made use of the English language.

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As a general feeling across the students from the eleven partner institutions, the idea of having a European University aimed at offering high quality education, research, and entrepreneurial activities based on the EU cultural and artistic diversity was very well received. Students were really excited with the perspective of becoming involved with KreativEU, because experiencing and 'touching' new countries, cultures, traditions, and ecologies very much attracted them. They consider that multiculturalism is extremely important nowadays, as a facilitating bridge between the countries. For people wanting to work worldwide in the future, getting to know other lifestyles, cultures and ways of study/work would certainly help developing the necessary soft skills. For students, a multicultural perspective is also fundamental for overcoming global challenges. Therefore, training students to become European citizens and be aware of their identity and European values and culture is extremely relevant from their point of view.



For students, the KreativEU Alliance has the potential to be a BIG EUROPEAN FAMILY (to use their own words) by sharing a common ecocultural identity, with each partner, however, retaining its own regional/national cultural uniqueness. In other words, with the KreativEU the concept of a European ecocultural identity may foster a sense of unity amidst the European diversity, acknowledging the rich tapestry of traditions, languages, and histories that make up the European cultural landscape. This shared identity not only strengthens the bonds among member states but also promotes a collective understanding of Europe's interconnected past and future. Embracing this European ecocultural identity can contribute to a more cohesive and inclusive continent, where the diversity of its people is celebrated as a source of strength and collective heritage. By fostering a common understanding of its artistic and cultural diversity and pluralism, KreativEU will definitely lead to a more united Europe.





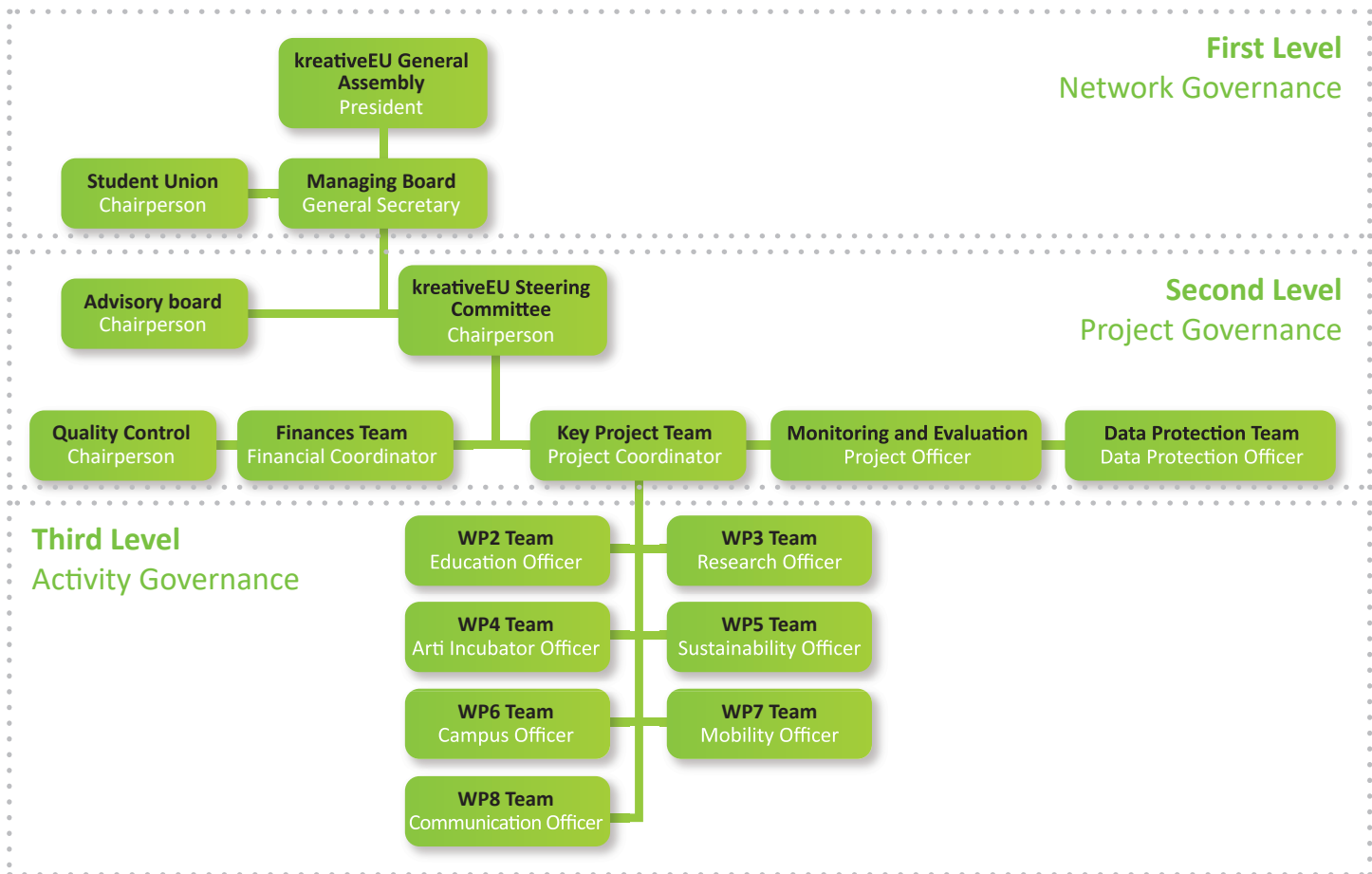


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Governance

The KreativEU Alliance will function with a multi-level governance (First Level: Network Governance; Second Level: Project Governance; and Third Level: Activity Governance), to ensure, during the four years of EU financing, a transparent and inclusive decision making combined with effective management and control, and also grant sustainability and openness to new Universities and stakeholders joining the Alliance. There are already more than 100 stakeholders involved as Associated Partners, and other will be invited to join in the future.



Looking Forward

The consortium's already impactful projects included securing **€400,000 EU funding for the HERITAGE GAME project (2024-2026), involving all the initial seven HEIs.** This project explores gamification tools for safeguarding heritage with a focus on community-based approaches for low density territories. Regular scientific conferences, meetings with local authorities, and the **establishment of a joint UNITWIN under UNESCO reflected the consortium's commitment to academic and regional collaboration.** Furthermore, **the city of České Budějovice in Czechia, designated as the Capital of Culture 2028, formalized cooperation with KreativEU.**

Looking forward, the consortium is in the process of deepening connections through city and region twinning, **innovative Horizon projects on memory politics and heritage, digitization in conflict zones, and establishing the open-access journal *Science, Heritage & Technology.* The *First Annual International KreativEU Conference* is scheduled for May 16-17th, 2024, in Targoviste (Institute of Multidisciplinary Research for Science and Tech), Romania. Likewise, events such as *ATLAS Annual Conference 2024. Leisure & Tourism 2030: Navigating the Future*, June 25-28th, 2024, organised by the Breda University of Applied Sciences,**

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The Netherlands; ***CILRAID 2024 - International Scientific Conference on Craft: Craftsmanship – its Local, Regional, and International Dimension, June 6th, 2024***, organised by Opole University of Technology, Poland; as well as the ***IFZO annual conference, October 9-10th, 2024*** in Greifswald on the theme **“Fragmented Transformations in the Baltic Sea Region: The Role of Innovations and Pioneers of Change”** will also foster the closer collaboration and involvement of the KreativEU HEIs, Associated Partners and other stakeholders.

With an eye on engagement, the consortium undertook to issue an ISIC common card, organise shared celebrations, design official attire, and confer honorary degrees, solidifying its role as a dynamic force in European higher education and collaborative research.



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1st Annual International
KreativEU
Conference

for a
**Heritage, Science and Technology
Sustainable Preservation**

Topics

**Cultural Heritage:
Legal Challenges
and Management**

**Mapping, Interpretation and
Marketing of Historical Sites**

**Natural Hazards and
Cultural Heritage**

**New Trends in
Conservation of
Cultural Heritage**

**Technologies and Materials
in Cultural Preservation**

**Invasive and Non-Invasive
Techniques Applied
on Heritage**



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**16
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MAY, 2024

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A PLACE EMBRACED BY HISTORY AND HERITAGE









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