



Press Release

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The Transform4Europe European University Alliance now ready to roll out its first projects

Transform4Europe (T4E) is an alliance of seven European universities that was officially recognized by the European Commission last year as a 'European University'. On 26 January, the T4E alliance held a virtual kick-off meeting at which it showcased its activities to the participating universities and the alliance's external partners in the different European regions. The meeting involved short talks and discussion sessions during which a broad spectrum of ideas was presented, including joint study programmes, an annual Mobility Week and a range of different formats for teaching core European skills.

The European Commission is providing €5 million in funding to the Transform4Europe project over a three-year period. This new university alliance will provide a platform for educating and training a new generation of young Europeans who collaborate across subject boundaries to acquire digital, intercultural and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. The T4E network is an alliance of the following seven partners: Saarland University, the University of Alicante (Spain), the Estonian Academy of Arts (Estonia), the University of Silesia in Katowice (Poland), Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski (Bulgaria), the University of Trieste (Italy) and the Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas (Lithuania).

The kick-off meeting on 26 January also included a presentation of the proposed interdisciplinary certificate programme that will comprise supplementary knowledge-enhancement courses run by two to three of the T4E partner institutions and that will enable students to expand and improve their knowledge and experience of topics of European relevance. The initial phase of



the project will involve around 350 students and 50 members of university teaching staff who will be able to interact not only virtually via remote digital connections, but also in person at one of the partner universities. The content of these courses, covering such areas as cultural heritage, language diversity or entrepreneurship, will be digitally recorded so that they can be subsequently offered by all T4E partners as part of the certificate scheme. Students studying to enter the teaching profession will be a particularly important target group, as they will later be the people transporting European ideas and perspectives into the school environment.

Another project proposed by the T4E alliance is the 'Mobility Week' that will be offered each year. During this week, none of the partner universities will conduct examinations or mandatory teaching activities. The aim of the Mobility Week is to encourage as many students as possible as well as academic and non-academic personnel to either spend five days at one of the partner universities or to participate in one of the virtual exchange courses. Each of the partner universities in the T4E alliance will use the Mobility Week to offer events and activities that highlight different aspects of 'transformation', such as intensive language courses, workshops with accompanying lectures or job shadowing for non-academic personnel.

A core objective of this European alliance is to encourage and promote entrepreneurial thinking. To realize this goal, one-week international visiting lectureships will be established so that business people, professionals and practitioners can travel from their home regions in order to communicate some of the special features of the business culture in their respective home countries. There are also plans to run lecture series that are open to the public and that will be offered jointly by universities and companies active in a specific region.

A further aim of the T4E alliance is to promote multilingualism amongst students and university staff. Intensive language courses run at specific universities will be made available to all other partner universities and shorter preparatory courses at an elementary level will be offered in each of the languages used within the T4E Alliance. Lunchtime 'language labs' will also be introduced as a new language-learning format where small groups of students



will be able to chat with their counterparts in partner universities in other parts of Europe. A similar arrangement will also be put in place for university staff so that they have the opportunity to get acquainted with visiting academics and scholars from the partner universities. The aim is to broaden the benefits of mobility to include university employees, so that university staff working from their home institutions can also prosper from pan-European cooperation.

Further information:

T4E Alliance Website: www.transform4europe.eu

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