

EELISA Governing Board meeting
November 18 & 19, 2024
Pisa, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna & Scuola Normale Superiore

EELISA Alliance Statement on “YOUNG RESEARCHERS, INNOVATORS AND FUTURE GLOBAL CHALLENGES”



NAVIGATING CHALLENGES: SUPPORTING YOUNG RESEARCHERS IN A CHANGING EUROPE

In a world where scientific research is crucial for tackling global challenges, the talent of young researchers is key. Europe is facing a historic moment marked by armed conflicts and socio-economic instability, accelerating climate change, environmental degradation, and rising inequalities. Moreover, Europe's aging population will affect demographic structures in the coming decades. The young researchers' drive, creativity, and innovativeness can unlock new solutions for these challenges, but their rise is often slowed down by financial constraints, intense competition, unequal access to infrastructure and resources, lack of support, and work-life imbalances.



THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENT

For many of the challenges Europe is facing, education is bound to be part of the solution. Europe's future will be shaped by the performance of its education systems and its ability to attract the most talented individuals.

The higher education sector must not only attract talent but also be able to nurture it and retain it. Talent should be able to thrive, regardless of background [gender, religion, sexual orientation, special needs (disability), culture, ethnicity, language, political views, and enjoy academic freedom, in line with democratic principles. Career prospects and work fulfilment are decisive to successfully retain academic talent.

The competition for top researchers and young professors is intense, driven not only by salary but also by the quality and international appeal of campus and city life, career development opportunities, the excellence of the student body, scientific and technological infrastructure, and the support services available for early-career professionals.

Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC played an important role in supporting researchers and research careers in the European Union. The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers ('Charter and Code for Researchers') have become reference points for researchers and employers or funders of researchers, contributing to strengthening the European Research Area (ERA) and supporting the development of a more attractive, open and sustainable Union labour market for researchers.



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF EUROPE: EELISA AMBITION

Ratified in the EELISA 2.0 mission statement, EELISA Alliance aspires to lead the way towards the university of the future, enhancing the quality and competitiveness of European higher education and contributing to Europe's green and digital transition. EELISA aims at a sustainable, deep and permanent collaboration to transform education, research and innovation, across disciplines and cultures, through a network of collaborative platforms, co-created by students, researchers and staff, together with all sectors of society.

To this aim, EELISA's ambition is to transform education and training through challenge-based learning prioritizing societal needs, and foster excellence in research contributing to the continuum of research – education - innovation. This will enable EELISA to become a stronger and more attractive network capable of competing with leading universities from around the world, and to attract top-tier researchers and talents, driving innovation and making an impact on the global stage.



BUILDING A TALENT ECOSYSTEM TO SUPPORT RESEARCHERS' CAREERS IN EUROPE

Following the Council Recommendation C/2023/1640 on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe, EELISA is determined to endorse the implementation at the partners' level of specific measures to support early-career researchers, including open, transparent and merit-based selection and recruitment of candidates, adequate income, social protection incentives, work-life balance and flexible working conditions, gender equality and balance, equal opportunities and inclusiveness.

Aligned with the European Commission's Communication "New ERA for Research and Innovation", EELISA will increasingly contribute to the establishment of a talent ecosystem, leveraging the dense web of relationships, processes, and methodologies delivered by our Alliance, to foster the capacity to attract, enhance, and allow free flow of talented researchers, especially in their early-career stage. EELISA will join the endeavour of *strengthening the cooperation between academic, private and public sector entities within a European scale to fuel innovation, notably by strengthening the University Alliances* (President von der Leyen's Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024–2029), ultimately leading to sustainable and more attractive research careers perspectives.



EELISA COMMITMENT TO EMPOWER TALENT

Attracting new talents and retaining the best and brightest minds here in Europe implies leading on innovation and creating the conditions for researchers to thrive.

EELISA acknowledges how relevant young researchers are to unlocking innovative solutions for global challenges, driving progress, and shaping a sustainable future for all.

Thus, as Presidents, Rectors, and Directors, we commit our higher education institutions to join our strengths to shape Europe's future through the high performance of our education systems, improve our capacity to support brilliant researchers, and take a leading role in the global pursuit of talent.

Pisa, November 19, 2024

The members and attendees of the EELISA Governing Board

Rector Hassan Charaf, Budapesti Műszaki és
Gazdaságtudományi Egyetem



Director Anthony Briant, École nationale des
ponts et chaussées



Vice-President for Outreach Kathrin Möslein on
behalf of President Joachim Hornegger,
Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-
Nürnberg



Rector Hasan Mandal, İstanbul Teknik
Üniversitesi

Vice-President for international relations
Jennifer Heurley on behalf of President El
Mouhoub Mouhoud, Université PSL



Director Luigi Ambrosio, Scuola Normale
Superiore



Alberto Garrido Colmenero, EELISA 2.0
Coordinator, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid



Dóra Eszter Baranyai, EELISA Student Council
representative, Budapesti Műszaki és
Gazdaságtudományi Egyetem



Rector Mihnea Costoiu, Universitatea Națională
de Știință și Tehnologie Politehnica București



Rector Guillermo Cisneros Pérez, Universidad
Politécnica de Madrid

President, Jean-Marc Piveteau, Zürcher
Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften



Rector Sabina Nuti, Scuola Superiore
Sant'Anna



Dale A. Martin, EELISA President



Sofia D'Aguiar, EELISA Executive Director



Dr. Merve Çalimli Akgün, EELISA staff
representative



Board members not attending in-presence:

Corsin Baumgartner, EELISA Student Council
representative, Zürcher Hochschule für
Angewandte Wissenschaften

Dr. Laura Trapiella-Alfonso, EELISA faculty &
researchers' representative

Dr. Wendy M. Purcell, external counsellor

President José Carlos Quadrado, ENAEE



History of changes

ALLIANCE MEMBERS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH