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Call for Applications
Across Seasonal School Fund 2022



Call for Applications

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Across is an exceptional collaboration project of 10 European universities driven by the mission to establish an integrated cross-border European University. All partners are passionate about the idea to create a joint European higher education area:

- Bialystok University of Technology (Poland)
- Chemnitz University of Technology (Germany)
- University of Craiova (Romania)
- University of Girona (Spain/Catalonia)
- University of Lleida (Spain/Catalonia)
- University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia)
- University of Perpignan (France)
- Rēzekne Academy of Technology (Latvia)
- University of Ruse (Bulgaria)
- University of Udine (Italy)

The European Cross-Border University Across aims to become a reference in knowledge transfer and innovative development of cross-border territories and to train proactive professionals who can act and influence social, economic and scientific development of cross-border areas by addressing their fundamental challenges.

1. Aim of the across Seasonal School Fund

Seasonal Schools can be organized by lecturers and students. The aim of the DAAD funded programme is to bring together researchers, lecturers, and students from Across partners by supporting summer and winter schools, offering a blend of academic education and enrichment activities to strengthen the collaboration in teaching and research tackling cross-border challenges. Successful applications, event outcomes, and further actions will be promoted within the Across network. Thus, it is a unique chance to expand the network of existing research collaborations.

2. Key Criteria for the Use of the Seasonal School Fund

In delivering a summer or winter school, the programme organizers must meet the following conditions.

- a. The seasonal school must be carried out by at least two professors from two different Across universities located in different countries. The goal should be that as many researchers and teachers from different across universities participate. Please outline how you will include researchers and teachers from the other Across universities in the seasonal school
- b. Should address topics of the Across key areas*, related to cross-border regions:
 - Education in cross-border contexts
 - Culture, identity, heritage
 - Economic and social development
 - Management of natural resources
- c. The summer school must be open to students from all 10 Across universities with a fair distribution among the students. Please outline how the event will be advertised at all universities.
- d. The summer school has to be held in English or it has to be guaranteed that all students can participate in an appropriate manner and no one will be disadvantaged due to language barriers.
- e. A gender balance has to be guaranteed, people with special needs can ask for additional funds.
- f. The Seasonal School must take place within 2022.

Events funded by the Across Seasonal School Fund are not limited to any specific disciplines as long a connection to the key areas is recognizable. Submissions by interdisciplinary teams of researchers from a broad range of Across partners are encouraged.

3. Venue and logistics

Seasonal schools are planned to take place at Chemnitz University of Technology. However, the format of delivery the events depends on the general health situation in Germany and the coronavirus regulations in place at the time the event takes place. Teams of organizers should therefore consider alternatives for fully digitally delivered events. However, remote participation should be an option for on-site events.

Dates and the duration of the seasonal school can be decided individually. Administrative support will be provided by Chemnitz University of Technology .

4. Eligible Costs for Reimbursement/Funding

The following costs can be covered up to 10.000€. Depending the number of applications an additional demand can be granted.

- a. Travel and accommodation costs of students and lecturers to Chemnitz
- b. Catering for coffee and lunch break
- c. Solutions such as software for remote and hybrid classes

* Please see the Joint Mission Statement for further explication.

5. Application process

Interested groups of researchers can apply with a short description (no more than 2 pages) of the programme, an estimated number of students, a list of tentative lecturers and a preliminary budget until May 22 2022. A decision will be made May 30 2022. Please use the enclosed form and upload your application [here](#).

Questions can be directed to the Across project coordinator:

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Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

Application Form for the Across Seasonal School Fund

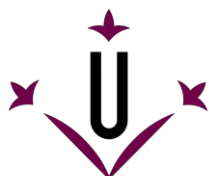
Name			
Institution		Faculty of the organizers	
<p>1. Please describe the program for your seasonal school below while indicating how the seasonal school will address topics of the Across key areas (see JMS) and how it relates to cross-border regions.</p>			
<p>2. Researchers and Teachers involved (If you have yet to designate teachers for your seasonal school, please outline how you will include researchers and teachers from the other Across universities).</p>			
<p>3. To ensure the information flow to all Across-students, please outline how the event will be advertised at the Across universities.</p>			
<p>4. Please describe the application process for prospective participants.</p>			
5. Estimated number of students			
6. Approximate dates of the seasonal school			
7. Preliminary Budget			

Joint Mission Statement

*“Building collaborative leadership
for cross-border regions”*

across

Our Alliance



Universitat de Lleida



„ANGEL KANCHEV“
UNIVERSITY OF RUSE



10 universities
 9 countries
 4 cross-border regions
 100,000 students
 10,000 staff

Rezekna Academy of Technologies (LV)



Bialystok University of Technology (PL)



Chemnitz University of Technology (DE)



University of Perpignan (FR)



Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (UA/associated)

University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev" (BG)



University of Udine (IT)



University of Craiova (RO)



University of Lleida (ES)



University of Girona (ES)



University of Nova Gorica (SI)



Disciplinary background

- Engineering
- Economics & Management
- Natural Science & Mathematics
- Arts
- Humanities
- Agriculture
- Environmental Science


Area of expertise

- Stakeholder engagement
- Living Labs
- Entrepreneurship Labs
- Open Science Teams
- IT Competency Centers
- Policy Support
- Micro - & Digital credentials
- AI

Special programmes

- Joint Degree
- Erasmus Mundus (8)
- LLL Units
- Double Degrees

A European cross- Border University



The European Cross-Border University is built on a strong and long-standing cooperation between ten universities. With contributions from nine countries, we represent most European regions and the diversity of Europe. Our cities are located in four Cross-Border Regions and include the two European Capitals of Culture 2025. Through this unique constellation, we are experienced in developing solutions for the challenges regions face in cross-border contexts and, as a European University, can create strong joint momentum for higher education, the business sector, and society.

Our Shared Vision



Towards strong cross-border regions for a stronger Europe

We envision the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as the driving force to truly overcome political, administrative, educational, economic, societal, cultural, and language borders within the European Union for higher education and its relationship with businesses and society. Overcoming these borders particularly affecting the European cross-border regions is not achieved through standardization of higher education, but through being inclusive in every aspect, embracing diversity, multiculturalism, and multilingualism.

The core of the EHEA will be European University Alliances standing and acting together while embracing the individuality, expertise, and unique contribution of each partner. They build joint capacity for state-of-the-art research and education by drawing an ever-growing number of connections between their administrations, researchers, students, programmes, laboratories, initiatives, and regions. With this dense web of interconnected structures and activities, they constitute a new—European—quality of universities with a shared identity.

The students native to the EHEA are European architects of change by following innovative study programs, that are European by design and foster the development of high-level, entrepreneurial, and transferable skills suited to the needs of a fast-changing job market, knowledge economy, digital transformation, and multi-cultural society. They engineer the sustainable development of cross-border regions by generating real social change, cultural integration, a green approach to innovation, new economic opportunities, and employment.

Our Joint Mission



Building collaborative leadership for cross-border regions

The European Cross-Border University is based on the synergistic effect of the complementary strengths of its member universities paving the way for an ambitious joint mission at European scale, namely:

- Overcoming political, administrative, educational, economic, societal, cultural, and language borders to facilitate the free access to knowledge, free flow of people, a strong European identity, a green and digital transition, and boost economic development in cross-border regions across Europe.
- Training proactive professionals who can act and influence social, economic, and scientific development of cross-border regions as a result of the gained deep understanding of their particularities, challenges, and opportunities.
- Gaining and sharing knowledge through Open Science on sustainable models of overcoming the challenges regions face in cross-border contexts by becoming the driving force of state-of-the-art research in this area and crossing disciplinary borders in the process.
- Becoming a reference for knowledge transfer and innovative development of cross-border regions by interweaving higher education and research with cultural, social, and economic engagement.

Our Core Values

We work as a unit.

We are an alliance of European universities. Building upon the combined strengths of our cross-border regions, we create an open-minded multicultural higher education area. Through this endeavour, we overcome borders on our path towards a truly European University. We will reach this goal by empowering people with different backgrounds to work together, united and depending on each one.

We are united in diversity.

We strongly believe in an educational future without borders. Through our actions we transform our cross-border regions not by equalizing differences but by becoming more diverse ourselves. This is why we created our alliance of universities. We draw our strength from a mutual understanding of our regional identities and its power to enable a multicultural, diverse, and respectful coexistence and cooperation.

We create experiences.

As cross-border experts, we are mastering challenges in our cross-border regions, enabling students to study not in our countries, but in Europe. We create common places of lifelong learning and regional engagement helping students to realize their full potential. We create unique studying experiences within finding tools and solutions to break down barriers.



As part of its guiding principles (see page 17), Across upholds and promotes through its activities the key values of the EHEA and the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#), such as freedom of expression, autonomy for institutions, independent student unions, academic freedom, and free movement of students and staff.

GIRONA



LLEIDA

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About Cross-Border Challenges

Cross-border regions are characterized by a dense network of connections between at least two different ecosystems. Neither side of the border can function properly without the other. While these cross-border regions account for 40% of EU territory, 30% of its population, and 30% of the European GDP, they face a multitude of challenges for actors in (higher) education, the business sector, and society. These challenges coincide closely with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined in the Agenda 2030 of the United Nations. These issues are at the heart of the European Union's cohesion policy and are a condition for successful regional integration. Based on our shared experiences in facing these challenges, four focus areas guide the activities of the European Cross-Border University. They can only be tackled through inter- and trans-disciplinary cooperation with contributions from all disciplines (e.g. including Social Sciences, Engineering, Economics, Artificial Intelligence, and Natural Sciences) crossing disciplinary borders in the process.

Focus Area

1

Education in Cross-Border Contexts (SDGs 4, 5, 10)

Higher education institutions across borders create programs and train students for their cross-border regions from different perspectives rooted in different higher education systems, cultures, and languages thereby reinforcing the territorial barriers. Through this, cooperation between them feels international although they are—as neighbours—facing the same issues in their shared cross-border regions.

To become successful agents of change across borders, universities and—through their programs—students need to be oriented globally and locally at the same time.



Focus Area

2

Culture, Identity, Heritage (SDGs 11, 16)

Cultural factors express themselves in many ways and impact all levels of social and economic interaction. As such, cultural differences may be reinforced through our regional heritage, out of which cultural identities emerged, and are closely connected to language barriers. At the same time, cross-border regions may share a joint identity through a common history but remain separated. Overcoming cultural differences or separation in cross-border regions is a key factor for successful cooperation for positive change. At the same time, overcoming cultural differences bears the risk of disregarding cultural identities and losing the connection to our origins in cross-border regions.

To become successful agents of change across borders, we need to become more diverse ourselves by developing and teaching a mutual understanding of our regional identities.



Focus Area



3

Economic and Social Development (SDGs 8, 9, 11)

The combined effect of historical challenges, cultural differences, different economic factors, and different policies let borders act as moderators of economic and social development between countries. At the same time, they are closely linked as more uneven distributions of production factors promote more uneven flows of workforce. Within borders, cross-border regions have been linked to lower economic performance compared to the national centres, higher unemployment, and lower access to universities.

To become successful agents of change across borders, cross-border regions need not act merely within their national contexts, but as one. For this, our students need to develop transferable transversal and entrepreneurial skills with the support of a deep understanding of cross-border regions.



Focus Area



4

Management of Natural Resources (SDGs 4, 7, 13, 14, 15)

From geographical, economic, and political factors across borders different potentials and policies of natural resource (non-)exploitation arise. Their respective management coincides with the technologies that are known, used, and developed across borders. Yet, the consequences of mismanagement of natural resources do not respect borders.

To become successful agents of change across borders, we need to develop a deep understanding of the potentials and consequences of natural resource exploitation in our cross-border regions and jointly develop the technologies and expertise for their sustainable management.



Further Cross-Border Challenges

Four additional cross-border challenges have been identified, which will automatically be covered through activities regarding the four focus areas:

- Comparative law and comparative public administration (SDG 11, 16)
- Sustainable and cultural tourism (SDG 12)
- Migration (including student and worker migration; SDG 11)
- Transport and logistics (SDGs 8, 9)

CHEMNITZ

European Capital of Culture 2025



NOVA GORICA

European Capital of Culture 2025

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Our Key Activities

A Joint Governance Structure

The European Cross-Border University is built on a joint governance structure with sustainability at its heart. It focuses on the integration of resources and expertise, promotes democratic participation and decision making, foresees the needs of future management across a multitude of projects, and at the same time operates independently of project funds and project structures. Through its effective decision-making mechanisms and knowledge management structures across projects and initiatives, the European Cross-Border University is able to make important contributions to strengthening the impact of cross-border regions in Europe.

[simplified visual representation of the governance structure of the European Cross-Border University; 2/3 page]

The General Assembly is at the very core of Across governance. As a democratically elected body, it guides the strategic directions of the European Cross-Border University and—through enabling hybrid participation, on-site or online, by all 110.000 members of Across—promotes a joint, European identity.

Many of these bodies are already active on a provisional basis, such as the Executive Committee, the Rec-tor's Board, the International Student Council, a number of Ad-hoc Working Groups, and a Project Steering Committee from a joint project.

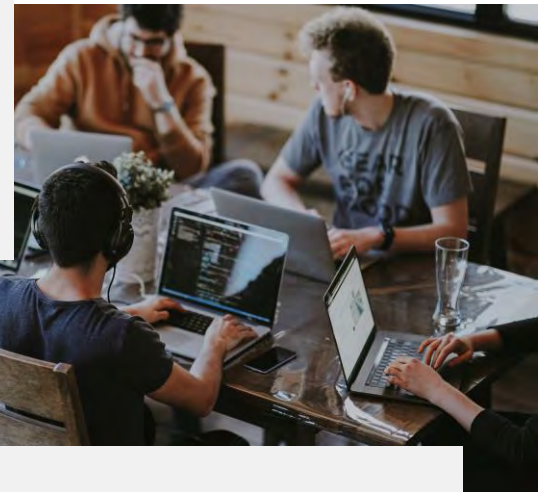
Principles of the Governance Structure

- Student and staff participation at every level
- Shared leadership and democratic definition of long-term strategies
- Clear separation of alliance governance and project management
- Efficient management through sound quality assurance (QA) structures and external QA experts
- Comprehensive engagement of all stakeholders
- Pooling knowledge and sharing expertise
- Scalable structure for a growing number of projects and partners

Our Key Activities

A Joint Digital Space

The European Cross-Border University is a digital first organization. We strongly believe that sustainability at a European Scale can only be achieved through powerful, user-centred, and innovative tools build upon state-of-the-art technologies. Due to the lack of a physical meeting place representing the European University, an E-Campus will be developed with seamlessly integrated components for communication, learning, knowledge representation and sharing, and business engagement. The underlying technology will be based on a knowledge graph, an artificial intelligence technology allowing to represent and process arbitrary knowledge structures with application throughout the E-Campus. The E-Campus will even feature the digital Cross-Border-Engagement Centre—a Third-Place to meet after hours and to digitally attend events, such as the General Assembly together. As an alliance, we are committed to employing Open Source solutions and to providing our own solutions under an open source licencing model. The E-Campus will quickly become the digital heart of the European Cross-Border University



Innovative European Curricula

The European Cross-Border University aims to profoundly strengthen students and staff mobility. For this, it will develop new joint cross-border knowledge curricula, European by design, and built on the joint expertise of the Across members while taking into account the individual needs of all stakeholders in co-creation process with students, business partners, and local authorities. At the same time, several existing curricula at the member universities will be combined into multiple-degree programmes to further built on shared competencies (e.g. Artificial Intelligence, Engineering, Data Science). All degrees by all member universities will benefit from a sustainable digital course catalogue built on existing offers, highlighting and promoting different mobility formats (long or short term; physical, blended, or virtual) also contributing to inclusive education and internationalization at home. As part of all curricula, the development of transversal skills, such as entrepreneurship and data literacy, will be promoted to enable students to become agents of change in cross-border contexts. Here, the European Cross-Border University will follow innovative pedagogical approaches by building a repository of so-called Atomic Learning Units (brief, thematically focused digital learning segments) that can be (re)arranged into digital learning offerings making use of gamification and offering micro-credentials.

Crosser-Border Knowledge Creation Teams

Increasing the body of knowledge on cross-border challenges through excellent research firmly rooted in Open Science and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) is a major field of activities for the European Cross-Border University. Interdisciplinary trans-national knowledge creation teams focusing on the defined key areas will bring together the expertise of all member universities and direct research activities in joint avenues. They collaborate with citizens, businesses, and local authorities to devise and test sustainable models of cross-border region development. In this, the European Cross-Border University firmly trusts in the importance of structured joint PhD programmes. For this, a joint PhD School will be created with Cotutelle-based thesis supervision within the knowledge creation teams and course offerings focusing on trans-versal and entrepreneurial skills at its heart. It will enable PhD candidates to develop the necessary skills to later take effective leadership in the development of cross-border regions.



Life-long Learning and Internship Programmes

the European approach to enable flexible learning pathways. The Internship Programme will enable students to find intern-ships in the vast business-network in the cross-border regions of the European Cross-Border University. The business partners of the alliance will provide students with trained Mentors supporting them to develop practical experience and grow into active agents of change. The Life-long Learning and Internship Pro-grammes will be delivered by teaching and mentoring professionals who received dedicated “teach the teacher” courses to promote their didactic expertise, thereby enabling students to take away the best for their professional careers

The European Cross-Border University will act as a bridge between higher education and the professionals from businesses in cross-border regions through Life-Long Learning and Internship Programmes. Building on the strong network of centres of knowledge transfer and life-long learning of the alliance, the joint life-long learning programmes of Across will be developed jointly by educators and business partners. They enable active professionals to draw upon the cross-border competencies of Across and promote their set of trans-versal skills. Life-long learning programmes will be built upon micro credentials following .

REZEKNE



PERPIGNAN

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(Trans-)Regional Engagement

The European Cross-Border University is an ambitious endeavour to shape the future of the cross-border regions of Europe. This can only be achieved by continually building capacity and creating strong links (1) within cross-border regions between researchers, educators, artists, businesses, politicians, local authorities, cultural initiatives, and—most notably—the citizens, and (2) between the cross-border regions with their regional actors becoming trans-regional actors. Four areas of activities are implemented to achieve this ambitious goal:



Across members include **two universities located in and highly engaged in the two European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) of 2025: Chemnitz and Nova Gorica (together with Gorizia)**. Through this unique constellation, Across will use their involvement in and the Momentum of the ECoCs to promote societal and business engagement for the whole alliance. This will be achieved by disseminating and expanding our cross-border cultural and artistic activities within the ECoCs to all cross-border regions of the alliance.

To physically ground the places of cross-border engagement in the cross-border regions, **Cross-Border Engagement Centres (CBECs)** will be established in the highly frequented areas of the city centres of the cities of four member universities. Building and expanding upon the idea of living labs, they will serve as physical places for (1) public engagement through research-, education-, and arts-oriented activities (e.g. co-creation projects, public lectures and seminars on cross-border competencies) leveraging initiatives of the ECoCs, for (2) university-business-society exchanges in Open Engagement Networks (see 4), and to (3) build a joint identity as physical places genuine to the European Cross-Border University (e.g. for physically taking part in General Assembly meetings). All CBECs will be digitally linked to create a European hybrid place for joint engagement across cross-border regions.





The European Cross-Border University will combine the manifold cooperation with business partners in cross-border contexts into a vast university-business network spanning across a large part of the European Union. This process will be facilitated through participation in the Advisory Board, through Economic Forums, through cross-border conferences focusing on knowledge-transfer, and through new activities following an in-depth analysis of the cross-border regions SMART-specializations. At the heart of these activities will be the **University-Business Gateway** as part of the Across E-Campus to create a dense university-business network that will strengthen collaboration between learners, researchers and potential employers, on the one hand, and trigger joint university-business research initiatives and activities (e.g. through participation in Interreg B projects), on the other hand.

Building upon 1-3, capacity for the joint design of innovative and sustainable models for cross-border region development will be fostered by forming **Open Engagement Networks (OENs)** in each cross-border region with participation from **Cross-Border Knowledge Creation Teams**, Across curriculum committees, the **University-Business Network**, artists, politicians, local authorities, cultural initiatives, and the European citizens. The results of the OENs will be instrumental in the delivery of big, continuously growing, multi-track Cross-Border Conferences taking place in one Cross-Border Region each, and in a hybrid format including the Virtual Third Place of the E-Campus and the Cross-Border Engagement Centres. They will serve as a vitals means for political participation and engagement to promote sustainable change in cross-border regions.



Our Guiding Principles

The European Cross-Border University will make a major contribution to the European Higher Education Area in cross-border regions—and it will do so responsibly. We firmly believe in the following principles and design and implement our activities accordingly.

Sustainable Development!

Across will both focus on building sustainable capacities within its member universities and in its cross-border regions by aligning its activities along EU priorities, the Sustainable Development of the UN, and the principles and recommendations of the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI).

Highlights

- Focus on SDG-relevant cross-border challenges
- Sustainable Governance Structure with a dedicated legal status and independent of project funding
- Communities of Practice pool expertise and make it accessible

Inclusive University!

Across seeks to become a European University for everybody promoting inclusive education and working conditions.

Highlights

- Inclusive curricula (co-created with industry and society) through flexible, remote study options
- Community of Practice on inclusion strategies
- (Gender) equality, diversity and inclusion adopted as core values and implemented in the internal policies and processes of Across

Participatory by Design!

Across includes all groups of stake-holders in its activities and pays special respect to democratic and participatory strategic decision making.

Highlights

- General Assembly as a democratically elected body for strategic decision-making
- Shared leadership of all universities
- Comprehensive business- and society-engagement strategy

Open Everything!

All activities of Across in the fields of research, business, and society engagement are firmly rooted in Open Science, Open Data, Open Access, Open Educational Resources, and Open Source.

Highlights

- Cross-Border Knowledge Creation Teams dedicated to Open Science
- E-Campus built on and contributing to Open Source
- Course materials and didactic innovations offered as Open Educational Resources

Green University!

When implementing its activities, Across takes on the responsibility to minimise its carbon footprint and advocates a green transformation of cross-border regions to provide the future generations it educates with a bearable environmental perspective.

Highlights

- Digital first: The E-Campus and digital offerings are in the centre, print media remain the exception
- Meetings take place in the digital space by default—all on-site meetings are hybrid by default
- Community of Practice on Carbon-Neutral Higher Education

Personal and Academic Freedom!

We are true Europeans, embracing its ideals and fundamental rights formulated by the United Nations and European Union. We promote individuality and free movement to enable flexible learning pathways.

Highlights

- Joint Ethics Board
- Independent Student Council
- Flexible curricula promoting mobility

Quality First!

In pursuit of its ambitious goals, Across takes quality assurance seriously by ensuring evidence-based decision making, goal-oriented action, conformation to universal standards, and cost-effectiveness

Highlights

- Comprehensive alliance monitoring and dataset
- Quality Assurance Committee combining the expertise of all universities
- External quality assurance experts

A Place of Many Colours!

Across seeks to grow further into a diverse European institution embracing and celebrating the rich culture, heritage, and identities of its members.

Highlights

- Cultural and artistic momentum of the two European Capitals of Culture 2025
- European study programmes with mobility at their core
- Trans-regional societal engagement in interlinked Cross-Border Engagement Centres

Education is Power!

Education is the single most powerful tool to change the world for the better. To successfully develop cross-border regions, we not only educate students, but also business professionals, citizens and ourselves in the never-ending journey for knowledge.

Highlights

- Life-long learning programmes built on micro credentials
- Promotion of transversal skill development through Gamification and Atomic Learning Units
- Citizen Science through Public lectures and workshops in Cross-Border Engagement Centres



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Our Long-Term Objectives

The European Cross-Border University will become, over the next decade, reference in Europe and beyond for deep institutional cooperation between higher education institutions by constructing a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) for cross-border region. This will be achieved by pursuing the following long-term objectives:

1

Becoming a **reference for cross-border expertise** and models of sustainable solutions to cross-border challenges through excellent inter- and trans-disciplinary research and innovation, building on the joint expertise, and with the involvement of regional business and societal partners to maximize the impact on society in cross-border regions and beyond

2

Offering **three-cycle study programmes** (including bachelor, master, and PhD) in the four focus areas of cross-border challenges, integrating innovative and inclusive student-centred educational methods, flexible learning pathways, cross-disciplinary approaches, cutting-edge research opportunities and hands-on experience

3

Training **students capable of acting as agents of change** in the cross-border regions through their cross-border expertise and entrepreneurial skills with high employability and the skillset to develop start- and scale-ups

4

Building a modern, comprehensive **digital E-Campus** following an Open Source approach and built upon the European Student Card with rich digital offerings and seamless integration of digital offerings of Across' member universities

5

Promoting **European study experiences** with mobility at the core of each programme to grow into truly multi-cultural institutions and students

6

Creating **strong engagement between the European Cross-Border University, businesses and local authorities and European citizen** in cross-border contexts to build capacity to promote positive change

7

Offering **Life-Long Learning and Internship Programmes** focusing on cross-border expertise and transversal, entrepreneurial skills with the involvement of business partners to help business professionals and European Citizens to shape their cross-border regions

8

Taking on a **legal status** with an effective and inclusive **governance structure** that is most beneficial to the joint activities envisioned for the decades to come by engaging in the current discussion for a new legal status of European Universities

Our Long-Term Impacts

Through their deep institutional engagement, the member institutions of the European Cross-Border University are transformed themselves into strong and truly European institutions enriching and advancing their respective national education systems and having profound impacts with-in the European Union:

1

The developed models and trained professionals will aid cross-border regions to **overcome** political, administrative, educational, economic, societal, cultural, and language **borders and their associated cross-border** challenges allowing them to act as united regions.

2

Strengthening the innovation ecosystems of the cross-border regions and stimulating their economic, social, green, and digital development.

3

Universities, businesses, and societies in cross-border contexts have formed **strong trans-regional networks** promoting higher education, life-long learning, and knowledge transfer to their mutual benefit. Access to higher education in cross-border regions is significantly increased.

4

Through **study programmes European by design** delivered jointly by the member universities, mobility of students and teachers, international courses in hybrid or blended formats, and highly distributed research networks have become the new standard.

5

Increased mobility and engaged societies within and between cross-border regions strengthen our **European identity**, facilitate **multilingualism**, let us **become multicultural** ourselves, and bring our attention to the diverse realities of cross-border regions across Europe. Through their deep institutional cooperation, Across member universities themselves have grown into **stronger European institutions**.

BIALYSTOK



CRAIOVA

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Steps on Our Journey

The ambitious objectives of the European Cross-Border University will not be achieved in one day—it will require the continuous dedication of all partners for the decades to come. This is especially true for trans-regional capacity building and cooperation. To guide this path, our strategy envisions four consecutive and overlapping phases.

1 Capacity Building (2023)

The first phase is characterized by building joint capacity. Building on the strong existing collaboration between them, the member universities bring their individual expertise to the table and calibrate their collaboration with regards to the path ahead:

- Full roll-out of the already active Across' governance structure
- Forming Communities of Practice
- Draw together regional networks of each member university
- Analysis of cross-border challenges together with business and society partners and citizens
- Focus on dissemination through a broad set of communication tools at all levels within the member universities
- Building the basis for the E-Campus

2 A strong Joint Identity and Double Degrees (2023-2025)

The second phase seeks to form a strong joint identity at every level of the member universities through joint activities, linked university-alliance structures, and a significant number of mobilities within Across.

- Discussing and introducing a first legal status for Across
- Introduction of events bringing actors of the universities together (e.g. General Assembly, Conferences, Summer/Winter Schools)
- Formation of knowledge creation teams conducting inter- and trans-disciplinary research on cross-border challenges
- Joint digital course catalogue for 100% of the study programs and start of the first double/multi degrees of the member universities intensifying student and teacher mobilities
- Open Engagement Networks for university-business-society cooperation leveraging the momentum of the two European Capitals of Culture 2025

3 Regional Engagement and Joint Programmes (2025-2026)

With a growing joint identity of the member universities, the third phase puts a stronger emphasis on the engagement of business and societal actors to apply the first results to the cross-border regions.

- Cross-Border Engagement Centres are opened in the city centres
- The joint bachelor's and masters' programmes start
The Joint Doctoral School is opened based on the work by the knowledge creation teams
Revising the legal status based on recommendations from the European Commission and the contribution of the new status to the joint cause

4 Trans-Regional Cooperation and Scale-Up (2026-2035)

In the fourth phase, trans-regional exchange is promoted. An emphasis is put on the continued delivery of the activities in cross-border contexts developed so far. An additional focus lies on the scale-up of alliance cooperation through new joint activities.

- Large-scale Cross-Border Conferences
- Exchanging knowledge, expertise, and developed models between Open Engagement Networks of the cross-border regions
- Scaling up joint activities and innovative capacity through new education- and research-oriented projects
- Expanding activities beyond the genuine cross-border regions of the European Cross-Border University and later beyond Europe



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Let's start.
Together.