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Halfway Through our Journey

Monitoring & Evaluating Our Impact





Telling Our Transformation Stories

Towards a more innovative & entrepreneurial built environment





Driving Innovation & Transformation in Higher Education

Empowering Participants with **Insights and Skills**



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Welcome to the Second Edition of

the Accelerate Future HEI newsletter

In this issue, we reflect on **our recent transnational partner meeting**, where the nine HEI partners shared **exciting progress on their Institutional Transformation Acceleration Projects (ITAPs).**

Workshops led by TUM International and Momentum kept the spotlight on key areas like monitoring, evaluation, and impact-driven dissemination.

As part of the implementation of the ITAPs, we look at how partners are pilot-testing Acceleration Services through coaching, working groups, and investment strategy workshops. Meanwhile, project leaders UIIN report on the strides being made in the Accelerate Training Programme it designed and the success of the biannual Cohort Knowledge Exchange events.

This edition highlights three of our partners. It updates you on our two inspiring sister projects, aUPaEU and CATALISI, with whom we collaborate to drive institutional transformation across European higher education.





At the midpoint of our ambitious journey the picturesque island of Tenerife provided our meeting location...



For our ambitious four-year journey, the beautiful island of Tenerife provided the perfect setting to celebrate the achievements of Accelerate Future HEI, explore new training and services, and refine the art of storytelling to showcase our transformation journeys.

Led by UIIN, the Accelerate Future HEI project unites 12 partners from eleven countries, all working towards one goal: fostering more entrepreneurial and innovative universities. Through acceleration services such as training, coaching, and institutional transformation initiatives, the project is shaping the future of higher education.

Day 1

Reflections, Innovation, and Impactful Storytelling

Our first day was packed with valuable discussions and interactive sessions:

- Project leaders, UIIN reflected on the progress made so far and outlined the next steps for acceleration services, capacity building, and knowledge exchange.
- Partners showcased their Institutional Transformation Acceleration **Projects (ITAPs),** revealing how their initiatives are already yielding impressive results.
- The Ideas Market brought partners together to identify gaps, address common challenges, and co-develop innovative solutions to further enhance acceleration services.
- Impact Capturing and Storytelling sessions, led by TUM International GmbH and Momentum Educate + Innovate, helped participants refine their approach to:
 - Measuring and evaluating impact effectively
 - Crafting compelling narratives to communicate transformation success stories. Each partner will create a video of their successes by the end of year four.

Day 2

Exploring Tenerife's Innovation and Entrepreneurial Landscape

The second day took us beyond the conference room and into Tenerife's vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- · In Santa Cruz, we connected with inspiring local stakeholders and learned from their expertise. A highlight was an engaging presentation by **CEOE Tenerife**, where we gained insight into their close collaboration with UEC
- Dr. Julia Ayuso, Director of the **EU School of Sustainability** at Universidad Europea, shared valuable expertise on integrating sustainable practices into entrepreneurial strategies.
- Innovation took centre stage at **COACTFE Arquitectos** Tenerife and the Colegio de Enfermería de Tenerife, where we explored groundbreaking initiatives shaping the future of their respective industries.
- A post-lunch session brought us face-to-face with entrepreneurial professors, who shared how they are turning their ventures into realworld impact.
- Before concluding the day, we took a well-earned break, soaking in the sunset on the beach after two days of insightful discussions and learning.

The Accelerate Future HEI consortium extends sincere gratitude to the wonderful team at Universidad Europea de Canarias for their warm hospitality and **seamless organisation** of both the formal agenda and social activities.

Special thanks to Juan Diego López-Arquillo, Cristiana Oliveira, Cosmin Bolea, and Vivian Garcia-Rice - your dedication made this experience truly unforgettable. With two more years to go, we are more inspired than ever to continue driving transformation in higher education institutions and shaping a more innovative and entrepreneurial academic landscape.



It focused on the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) tool and project advancements.

The **M&E tool** is a comprehensive framework developed by TUM International to help partner institutions track their entrepreneurship development efforts.

This tool is crucial for the project as it enables higher education institutions (HEIs) to monitor their journey towards enhancing entrepreneurial culture and capacity within their institutions. By measuring progress against predefined benchmarks, the tool ensures accountability and provides clear insights into the effectiveness of their strategies.

At the workshop, participants actively engaged in group work sessions, exchanging ideas and refining strategies to measure institutional transformation effectively. A key highlight was the plenary discussion, which explored challenges opportunities in advancing entrepreneurship, digital transformation, and creating meaningful societal impact through higher education.

A Board of Distinguished

Entrepreneurship Experts

TUM International have taken further steps to support the testing partners in their journey towards institutional transformation.

They have successfully established a Board of distinguished entrepreneurship experts who will guide the testing partners. This Board will play a vital role over the coming years, offering strategic recommendations on the institutions' M&E progress and helping to refine their approaches.

The first meeting of this Board of Experts took place in December 2024, marking another milestone for the Monitoring & Evaluation work package within the project. Its members include Eckert, Enno Masurel, Daniela Marzavan, Richard Tuffs, and Adrian Solomon

With their expert insights and mentorship, the Board is expected to greatly enhance the capacity of the testing partners to implement sustainable and impactful changes in their institutions.

As the project continues to evolve, the contributions from both the testing partners and the Board of Experts will be instrumental in achieving the project's ambitious goal: fostering entrepreneurial mindsets and capabilities within European higher education institutions.

Board of Experts



Natascha **Eckert**



Enno Masurel



Daniela Marzavan



Richard **Tuffs**



Adrian Solomon



She recently travelled to the fifth partner meeting to share an update on how they have been sharing and promoting Accelerate Future HEI and developing an understanding of the importance of Entrepreneurial and Innovative Universities while raising awareness about our acceleration services and methodologies.

Having created a Dissemination & Sustainability Plan to support the integration of all stakeholders in the different phases of the project, Momentum created a strong recognisable brand to build awareness and is now building desire by sharing knowledge and results and closely collaborating with our sister projects in a Communications Alliance.



Communications Alliance

A snapshot of our dissemination progress in numbers:



Project Website

Social Media



Project Brochure



Project Videos

At the meeting, Samantha led an inspiring storytelling workshop introducing a fresh approach to capturing institutional journeys.



The session focused on how higher education institutions can craft compelling narratives about their evolution, moving beyond traditional communication strategies.

Using frameworks like Freytag's Pyramid and Simon Sinek's Golden Circle, participants explored how to authentically articulate institutional transformations. The workshop emphasised structuring stories around key elements: identifying changes,

understanding stakeholder impacts, highlighting progress, and defining future trajectories.

A key outcome will be the creation of nine short videos showcasing the reach of acceleration services across European universities. These videos will highlight themes like entrepreneurship, digital transformation, regional impact, and leadership, bringing institutional journeys to life.



Making Progress

At our recent partner meeting, all nine HEI partners shared an update on the progress they are making through their Institutional Transformation Acceleration Projects (ITAPs) St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences are successfully accelerating institutional changes through their ITAP.

ITAP Showcase: St. Pölten University of **Applied Sciences**

Progress updates on their four strategy points:

> Join over 700 of our LinkedIn followers to follow updates and progress from all our HEI partners.

01 **Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship**

- They conducted a status quo and ecosystem analysis.
- Hosted an Internal Workshop in February 2025 with their internal stakeholders of lecturers and researchers.
- Gained valuable insights from Andrew Petter during a mentoring session in January 2025.

02 **Establishing a StartUp Centre**

- Successfully brainstormed activities for the StartUp Centre.
- Initiated a benchmark analysis.
- Have started collaborating with two Austrian universities of applied sciences and formed an Academic Venture Alliance.
- Discussions have started on internal frameworks and guidelines for academic spin-offs.

03 **Stakeholder Relation Strategy**

- They implemented a new customer relationship management (CRM) tool and published the first guidelines.
- They are currently recruiting a CRM Manager to enhance strategic stakeholder relations.
- They are also improving data quality and defining stakeholder criteria.

Knowledge Transfer Strategy 04

- They held a kick-off workshop with the knowledge transfer team last September.
- Organised a science outreach workshop with faculty representatives in November 2024.
- The development process is ongoing and aligns with St. Pölten's Statement for 2025 which is stated below.

"As a European University, we are an inspirational source of knowledge transfer and the acquisition of skills for all people who care about contributing to an inclusive and progressive society."



Towards a more innovative & entrepreneurial built environment

The core team at Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) for the Accelerate Future HEI project is making strides with their mentoring sessions under the guidance of Professor Dana Redford

These sessions, hosted at the **Department of Civil** Engineering, Architecture, and Environment (DECivil), are piloting acceleration services designed to support institutional transformation.

Professor Dana Redford, an internationally recognised authority in entrepreneurship, innovation, education, and public policy, has brought invaluable insights to the project, aligning with its strategic vision. One of the exciting possibilities discussed during the sessions is the creation of a new hub—a potential vehicle for deploying the Institutional Transformation Acceleration Project (ITAP). This hub, tentatively referred to as "BuildHub," aims to promote sustainable innovation in the built environment.

Reflecting on the sessions, Professor Redford highlighted the program's focus on capacity building and interdisciplinary collaboration. He highlighted the importance of systems thinking, which integrates built, natural, and cyber-physical systems. Such an approach is both innovative and crucial for addressing contemporary challenges in the built environment.

In his own words, **Professor Redford shared:**



"One key strength of the mentoring program is its ability to identify and activate existing assets, aligning them with the broader objectives of institutional transformation. The approach to fostering collaboration among key stakeholders - students, researchers, educators, and industry professionals - has set a strong foundation for impactful outcomes.

I also appreciate the initiative's flexibility in addressing the unique challenges of this domain, such as the need to reengage students with civil engineering and architecture through innovation and practical applications. The focus on creating incentives for academic and industry stakeholders such as sabbaticals, knowledge transfer opportunities, and mentorship structures - highlights the thoughtful design of the program.

Looking ahead, the establishment of measurable indicators for the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework will be critical. Prioritizing the mapping of professors and industry partners interested in contributing to the BuildHub vision, as well as refining communication strategies for external stakeholders, will further strengthen the project's impact.

I am optimistic about the potential of BuildHub as a transformative vehicle for sustainable innovation in the built environment. It has been a privilege to contribute to this inspiring initiative."

Professor Dana Redford

Building the Future

The IST core team, comprising Nuno Marques de Almeida, Inês Flores-Colen, António Aguiar Costa, João Vieira, and Inês Lopes, is committed to advancing this initiative. With a focus on innovation, building interdisciplinary bridges, and creating tangible impacts, the team is laying the

groundwork for a transformational shift in how institutional challenges are approached. The ongoing discussions, coupled with the mentoring insights from Professor Redford, have set a strong foundation for creating a hub that addresses the challenges of the built environment and redefines the way institutions collaborate, innovate, and grow.



Shaping Investment Strategies

Each of the nine participating Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is creating an investment strategy to ensure the long terms sustainability of their Institutional Transformation Acceleration Projects (ITAPs).

This initiative, part of a pilot testing phase, is being guided through a series of high-impact Investment Strategy Workshops designed to equip institutions with the tools and insights needed for financial and structural resilience.

Kicking off the workshop series on June 19th, Arno Meerman, CEO of the University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN), led an insightful session focusing on the core elements investment of strategy development.

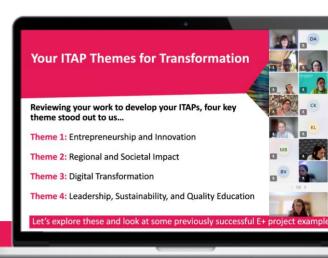
The discussion revolved around:

- Aligning objectives and strategies with partners' Strategic Vision Statements.
- Identifying potential resources (human, physical, and financial) to build on the asset mapping and ITAPs.
- Looking at the need for resources, to get buy-in and determine key players to help partners implement their ITAPs.





Delving deeper into unique value propositions and impact planning. Finnish business accelerator Crazy Town hosted the second and third workshops. These sessions highlighted the importance of positioning ITAPs within societal, academic, and business landscapes.



Mikko Korpela, Director of Crazy Town, introduced the IOOI Framework (Inputs -Outputs - Outcomes - Impact), offering a structured approach to aligning projects with market demands and societal needs. He underscored the importance of "impact thinking," stating...



Toni Pienonen, a partner at Crazy **Town**, provided valuable pointers on funding avenues, including public, private, and hybrid models. He encouraged HEIs to position their ITAPs as "resource magnets," noting...



The latest workshop, led by Momentum CEO Orla Casey, examined the potential of Erasmus+ funding in accelerating institutional change.

Participants explored funding opportunities relevant to their ITAP themes and engaged in hands-on exercises using a project scoping canvas to outline partnerships and project frameworks.

With additional workshops in the pipeline, these sessions continue to serve as crucial platforms for reflection, collaboration, and strategic planning. As HEI partners refine their investment strategies, the groundwork is being laid for impactful and well-funded ITAPs, ensuring sustainable transformation for years to come.



Since its launch in January 2024, the Accelerate Training Program has been instrumental in equipping partner universities with the tools and capacity to drive institutional transformation.

As part of the project, the training program aims to build entrepreneurial and innovative universities capable of making lasting impacts on their ecosystems.

Entering its second year, the Accelerate Training Program, which was designed and is led by UIIN, has already delivered an impressive 10 courses and 21 workshops, drawing 170 registrations and 140 attendances from academic, professional, leadership participants across partner universities. This capacity-building initiative has sparked meaningful conversations about institutional transformation and empowered HEIs to embrace entrepreneurial mindsets and innovative strategies.

Capacity Building Programme Achievements Workshops Registrations Courses

A Program Rooted in Transformation

The Accelerate Training
Program was born out of a
comprehensive analysis of
HEIs' challenges and
opportunities.

From promoting entrepreneurial skills and mindsets among students to strengthening university-industry collaboration, the program offers six targeted training domains tailored to the unique needs of education-focused academics, research-driven faculty, professional staff, and university leadership.

Each training domain is designed to address critical aspects of institutional transformation, such as:

- Developing innovative and entrepreneurial education practices.
- Building impactful research and valorisation frameworks.
- Creating stronger external partnerships and regional innovation hubs.
- Empowering leadership to drive transformative, sustainable change.

Delivered through a flexible modular framework, the program enables participants to customise their learning journeys, combining live workshops, fireside chats with experts, self-paced resources, and collaborative exercises. This adaptability ensures that participants can align their training with institutional goals while navigating their busy schedules





Empowering Participants with Insights and Skills

Participants appreciate the **Accelerate Training Program** for its well-structured courses and actionable insights.

Vivian García, a Project **Technician at Universidad** Europea de Canarias, shares her perspective on the program:



The courses are interesting, well-structured, and easy to follow. They provide valuable insights, such as examples of how universities foster entrepreneurship and share inspiring success stories. I found it particularly beneficial to learn from the successful entrepreneurial initiatives of other universities.

Vivian García, Project Technician



The program's diverse approach has been praised for tailoring content to institutional contexts, equipping participants with the tools to implement their learnings in realworld settings.

However, participant feedback has illuminated areas for growth. Suggestions include adding more practical perspectives by inviting students or alumni from represented universities and simplifying course assignments to focus on one comprehensive task. These reflections highlight the program's ongoing commitment to evolution and improvement.

Building a Collaborative

Knowledge Ecosystem

Beyond individual learning, the Accelerate Training **Program** nurtures a collaborative community among HEIs through biannual Cohort Knowledge **Exchange Events.**

These events serve as platforms for institutions to share their progress, learn from one another, and forge connections with external stakeholders such as public funders and industry partners. By embedding knowledge exchange into the program's DNA, Accelerate is cultivating a network of HEIs dedicated to achieving collective impact.

The program also rewards participants' efforts by providing badges and certificates, ensuring that their achievements are recognised. These certifications not only validate the participants' commitment but also inspire others within their institutions to engage in the program.



Looking Ahead

As the **Accelerate Training Program** progresses, it remains steadfast in its mission to drive lasting transformation in higher education.

Over the next two years, the program will continue to expand its portfolio, respond to participant feedback, and adapt its offerings to emerging challenges and opportunities in the HEI landscape.

By the time the project concludes in December 2026, the Accelerate Training Program aims to leave a empowered institutions that more innovative. entrepreneurial, and connected than before. commitment to capacity building and collaboration, the program exemplifies how higher education can lead the way in solving societal challenges and fostering economic growth.

UCLL

UCLL, a member of KU Leuven Association, is a university of applied sciences that offers a unique opportunity to question the status quo and make room for innovation. We aim to maximise interaction between research and education, whilst taking our students' goals and well-being to heart by making their future our mission.



UCLL has 8 campuses across Flanders, Belgium, in or very close to the amazing and vibrant cities of Leuven, Diest, Diepenbeek, Genk and Hasselt. All campuses are places where our 16,000 students can feel completely at home.

We put maximum effort into our facilities to offer students the perfect working and living environment. UCLL consists of 5 faculties: Health, Social Work, Management, Technology, and Teacher Education. The faculties offer 18 professional bachelor's programmes,11 one-year, advanced bachelor's programmes and 46 postgraduate certificate training programmes. There are 1,700 staff members, of which 529 researchers are employed at UCLL.

UCLL is proud to be one of the nine HEI testing partners of the Accelerate Future HEI team, as it is in our DNA to always accelerate and move forward. Our Moving Minds DNA is the UCLL educational vision. which aims to deliver bachelor-proof alumni to society. You don't just become a moving mind, you choose it! Every student with a strong and authentic personality, broad-minded and not averse to thinking outside the box, can become a real Moving Mind at

Katrien Vandael and Lotte Ovaere, researchers on this project said "It is a great opportunity to be part of this project and drive UCLL to become an even more entrepreneurial and innovative institution".

Take a look at UCLL's Strategic Vision Statement here to learn more:

UC Leuven-Limburg (UCLL) - Accelerate Future HEI







University of La Réunion



9,000 km away from Europe, the University of La Réunion is the only French and European university in the heart of the Indian Ocean, in one of Europe's outermost regions. This location the centre of the Africa-Asia-Oceania area gives it a significant role as an ambassador of higher education, research and French and European innovation in the area.

A real pillar of the local education and research ecosystem, the University of La Réunion welcomes more than 19,000 students each year. ESIROI is the engineering school of the University of La Réunion. ESIROI aspires to be an exemplary institution in terms of sustainable commitment and inclusion. The school is housed in a magnificent bioclimatic building with low environmental impact and positive energy. The cooling of the building relies on natural cross-ventilation and the abundant presence of vegetation composed of endemic species. This building symbolises ESIROI's expertise in sustainability and has even received a special mention at the Resilient Buildings Awards.

Beyond this showcase, ESIROI makes every effort to train resilient engineers who are aware of social and environmental challenges, and capable of designing new ecoresponsible solutions in the following specialisations: sustainable buildings and energy, food science, and computer science. ESIROI's commitment is evident at all levels. It integrates sustainable development issues in its training programs, its research activities, the recognition of young people's civic engagement, and its actions against discrimination and promoting equal opportunities. Finally, the well-being of students and internal staff is a priority. The school welcomes students from La Réunion, students from mainland France, and international students. It is a rich colourful land, where innovation, diversity, and hybridization create invaluable wealth.

Our role in Accelerate Future HEI

ESIROI-University of La Réunion is one of the nine HEI testing partners of the Accelerate Future HEI team which is working on supporting and enhancing the capability of higher education to undergo transformational changes. We focus on transforming people, operations and processes internally and strengthening our external engagement, adopting global best practices to ensure the internal, long-term impact of institutional change.





Celebrating over 20 years in business Momentum's team spans 24 staff and specialists who deliver over 50 innovation and entrepreneurship programmes per annum, through in-person training, facilitation, mentoring and web-enabled distance learning, specifically webinars and e-learning environments. Each year they equip over six hundred learners through their sought-after classroom training courses and thousands of others through Momentum's blended learning and online courses.

As the lead dissemination partner on Accelerate Future **HEI**, Momentum brings forth its expertise in generating the best possible impact on national, regional and international levels. With marketing at its core, Momentum operates an in-house marketing division specialising in brand development, content generation, communication, public relations strategies, digital media, and social media development of high-impact promotional campaigns.

CLICK AT MOMENTUM TO **VIEW** WITH PARTNERS IN IRELAND & EUROPE

As one of the three acceleration partners, Momentum's activities underpin the work done by the testing partners. They are responsible for creating awareness and understanding of the importance of Entrepreneurial and Innovative Universities and raising awareness about acceleration services methodologies. They do this through a dissemination and sustainability plan which supports the integration of all stakeholders in the different phases of the project and outlines how they can widely share and promote the project results and outputs; as well as set the foundation for further implementation of the results of the project beyond its lifetime.

Samantha Carty, Momentum Lead shares,

"We have put in place the best channels to promote Accelerate Future HEI and created a strong, clear visual identity to engage our target audience. We use carefully crafted interesting content including highimpact design, blogs, promotional materials, e-zines, a dedicated website, infographics, videos and multiple social media channels to maximise reach and impact."

Momentum is proud to be the brand and communication architect behind Accelerate Future HEI.

momentum

Sister Project

aUPaEU

aUPaEU is at the forefront of the transformation of Higher Education Institutions in Europe. Our mission is to provide tangible services to accelerate the transformation of higher education institutions

With the successful delivery of Agora to the Unite! Alliance, we've laid solid foundations for the future. We've also made new connections with new Alliances, initiating new Agoras and fostering collaboration that strengthens our collective impact. Our focus remains on delivering tailored services evolve with institutions' goals, empowering them to meet current and future challenges.

Acceleration Services

Acceleration services support institutions in their pursuit of sustainable transformation. Through the Agora digital platform, aUPaEU delivers customized services to Higher Education Institutions. Browse our catalogue of acceleration services:

- Supply of Agoras
- Collaborative R&I **Proposals**
- Events

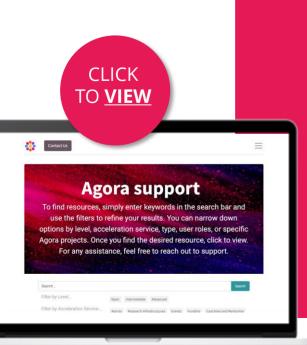
- Research Infrastructures
- Showcases
- Stakeholder Management



Agora Support

Agora Support is a new platform designed to provide comprehensive resources for navigating services across multiple Agoras. The platform is available to everyone looking to improve their knowledge and make the most of our services, especially for Agora users and administrators. Agora Support provides users tailored support based on their role, experience level, and **specific needs**. Easy access to:

- Step-by-step tutorial videos
- Comprehensive guides & documents
- Any other support material to navigate Agoras



Sister Project

CATALISI





Institutional Transformation

The CATALISI Learning Hub is an innovative, openaccess platform designed to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing in research and innovation. Whether you're an academic, policymaker, or industry expert, the Learning Hub provides:

- A rich repository of webinars and materials covering key topics such as Open Science, Digitalisation, Gender Equality, and Institutional Change.
- Insights from experts on best practices, research findings, and strategies for accelerating transformation in HEIs.
- · A space for sharing inspirational examples and engaging in discussions to drive change.

Watch our video! https://youtu.be/Kv48WPJXOYw

Check out our latest webinars and learning





CATALISI Funding Opportunities API

Finding the right funding for research and institutional projects can be overwhelming. The CATALISI Funding Opportunities API makes it easier by offering a one-stop platform to explore all funding programmes tailored for HEIs, including:

- Horizon Europe (HORIZON)
- Erasmus+ (ERASMUS+)
- Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)
- Creative Europe Programme (CREA)
- EU External Action (RELEX)
- Single Market Programme (SMP)
- Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL)
- EU4Health Programme (EU4H)
- Innovation Fund (INNOVFUND)
- Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV)

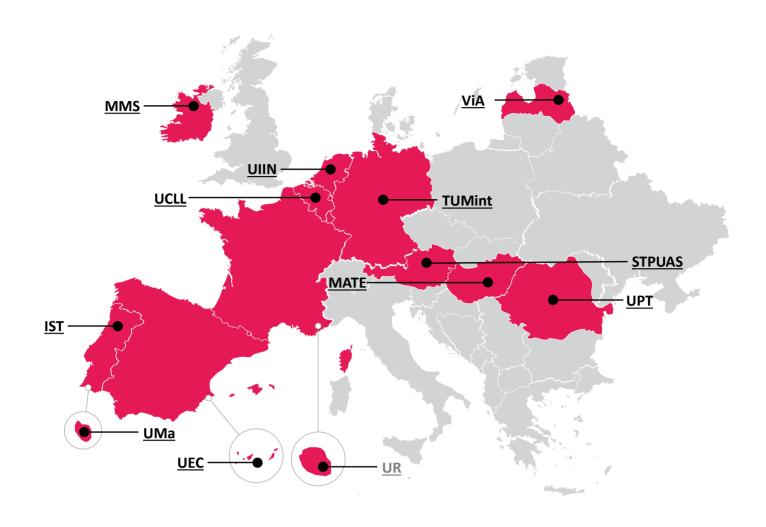
- EU Bodies and Agencies (EUBA)
- European Solidarity Corps (ESC)
- European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)
- Justice Programme (JUST)
- Euratom Research and **Training Programme** (EURATOM)
- Pilot Projects & Preparation **Actions (PPPA)**
- European Parliament (EP) ...and many more!

Don't miss out! Explore funding calls for 2025 & apply today!



Watch our Video: https://youtu.be/1TNniQT-z3o









Follow our journey



To learn more visit the project www.acceleratefuturehei.eu



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