



BURGENSTOCK 2024: ATELIER PROPOSAL ON EUROPEAN ALLIANCES AND UAS

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Following President Macron's declaration on 26 September 2017, the European Commission has developed an initiative aimed at setting up alliances of universities in Europe, known as "European University". Broadly speaking, the aim is to set up spaces conducive to cooperation between partners who know each other and to guide enhanced collaboration. Supported under Erasmus+, the objective is to have between 60 and 65 European universities by 2024. In other terms, this initiative will bring together more than 600 higher education institutions in Europe in 2024, reaching a large number of students and staff.

The European Commission wants to launch the next reform with European alliances to shape the future of higher education. The challenges facing our society will be addressed with new interdisciplinary courses. These will support new dynamic ecosystems. Examples include sustainable future mobilities (virtual, BIP,...), joint diploma, new kind of legal entity, innovative teaching methods and micro-credentials.

Initially excluded, Swiss institutions have been able to participate since 2022 as associate partners of European universities. However, because of Switzerland's position, institutions cannot obtain EC direct funding. For this reason, Movetia has published a special call for proposals to provide indirect funding to Swiss higher education institutions wishing to become involved in the alliances.

Following the publication of the results of the European Commission's call 2022, two UAS took the step of participating in a European alliance: EELISA for the ZHAW and UNITA for the HES-SO. The two University of Applied Sciences (UAS) have been closely involved in the development of the alliances by participating in the drafting of the phase II of the European project and by co-leading activities in these alliances. Considering essential to be a stakeholder in the future of the European higher education area and to be part of the redefinitions of mobility and cooperation, the strategic choice was to participate despite the obstacles.

Although participation is not obvious and there are a number of barriers, the aim of the workshop will be to share the experiences of the HES-SO and the ZHAW in terms of integration into a European alliance and why it seemed important, even essential, to be part of it. The workshop will also be an opportunity to share our experiences as UAS and enable other institutions to draw inspiration from them and develop their own strategic thinking in this area. In addition, the HES-SO and the ZHAW will discuss how to overcome the various obstacles by complementing each other.

Of course, the political issues related to Switzerland's special position vis-à-vis the European Union and Erasmus+ will also be addressed, as well as the financial aspects.

The aim will be to share experiences and provide guidance for universities wishing to become involved in a European alliance or to find out more about what is being done in Europe.





The presentation:

The presentation will focus on the following points:

- Main features of EELISA & UNITA and our reasons to participate in these alliances
- What does it mean to be involve in an European alliance
- Benefits and challenges; also specifically UAS topics are highlighted
- Q&A

The presentation will be based on a PowerPoint. Discussions with the audience will be encouraged by contextualising the practices.

The presentation will be given mainly in English, with sequences in German and French.

Speakers :

The presentation will be given by:

- Esra Hergert, esra.hergert@zhaw.ch, Strategic Project Manager at ZHAW School of Engineering, who has been actively involved in writing the application and EELISA submission phase 2, as well as setting up the project at ZHAW.
- Laurent Dutoit, laurent.dutoit@hes-so.ch, Deputy Vice-rector at the HES-SO, who has been part of the writing of the European proposal and co-lead the task on micro-credentials.

Important links

UNITA: <https://univ-unita.eu/>

EELISA: <https://eelisa.eu/>

European Commission website on European Universities Initiative:
<https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative>

