

# WP4 Call for Proposals

## E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Research Networks

### 1. Summary

---

This document is intended as a call for a wider participation of the researchers in our universities to reinforce the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> research groups established during the first phase of our European University Alliance. During the second funding period, E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> intends to pool expertise and resources for and with its members within the following four Focus Areas:

- 1) Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion for Regions
- 2) Digital Solutions and (Applied) Deep Tech for Regions
- 3) Resilient Economy and Innovation for Regions
- 4) Creative Industries for Region's Identity

The target group addressed by this call is formed by senior researchers, experienced researchers, as well as for young professionals intending to start a career in research in one of the partner universities (including enrolled PhD students).

### 2. E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Long-Term Vision on Research

---

E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> promotes the development of small and medium-sized cities and their rural environments into smart and sustainable regions and shapes a prosperous future with the best possible quality of life for a self-determined people in a progressive European society.

E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> co-creates outstanding ideas and concepts for future universities, integrates challenge-based education, *mission-oriented research*, *human-centred innovation as well as open and engaged knowledge exchange* as interrelated core areas and establishes an exemplary multi-university campus across Europe.

The 21st century is shaped by globalisation, urbanisation, environmental crises, social inequality, digital transformation and rapid technological progress. These developments lead to complex and, in many aspects, disruptive changes that result in the grand challenges as discussed in various policy papers and addressed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> is convinced that the development of small and medium-sized cities and their surrounding areas to become smart and sustainable regions has great potential as an important key to innovative solutions for a prospering European society of the future.

With Multi-i-research networks E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> promotes an innovative approach to co-ideate and co-create mission-oriented research, challenge-based, human-centred innovation and open and engaged knowledge exchange as well as to motivate, encourage and strengthen (young) researchers as well as learners, innovators, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to participate in European collaborations. Multi-i-research networks therefore enable mixed European knowledge creating teams to contribute to the further development of smart and sustainable regions and a future-oriented transformation of the European

Higher Education, Research and Innovation Area. The research networks introduce the principles of resonating innovation cycles into research and are based on cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral collaboration towards relevant challenges.

### **3. E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Focus Areas**

---

Regarding the specific challenges, opportunities and assets of the regions, and their strategic approaches to smart specialisation as well as the strengths and strategic institutional interests of its members, E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> builds on four future-guiding focus areas:

- Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion for Regions
- Digital Solutions and (Applied) Deep Tech for Regions
- Resilient Economy and Innovation for Regions
- Creative Industries for Region's Identity

#### ***Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion for Regions***

The focus area *Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion* addresses most urgent societal challenges arising from the ageing society, rural exodus and migration, as well as from substantial gaps between urban areas and rural regions. Technologies and innovation contribute to and serve the European values and their realization in people's life, empowering and strengthening democracy. Moreover, a more intense exploitation of the potential of social innovation helps creating new jobs and economic growth in the regions. E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> plays a strong role in developing, highlighting and sharing good practices from the regions, addressing forms of neighbourhood support and the resiliency of small communities.

#### ***Digital Solutions and (Applied) Deep Tech for Regions***

The focus area *Digital Solutions and (Applied) Deep Tech for Regions* constitutes the enabling and fast developing framework for several regional challenges. The development and deployment of these technologies in real products and services for society and economy, as well as the skills needed for people to use, implement and further explore them, are the key to overcoming regional challenges. Digital tools and deep tech such as VR/AR, AI, IoT and blockchain technologies contribute to bridge the innovation gap between urban areas and (rural) regions and attracts new deep tech talents in the regions themselves.

#### ***Resilient Economy and Innovation for Regions***

The focus area *Resilient Economy and Innovation for Regions* addresses the challenges of developing and implementing infrastructures, living and working environments, manufacturing, transportation, agriculture and food production which are resilient, green, innovative, supported and enhanced by digitalisation, attractive for people, and strongly connected in a path of regional development. The full potential of the green and digital transition can only be exploited by designing and developing the future of different economic sectors with a strongly connected, overarching, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to education, research and innovation.

#### ***Creative Industries for Regions' Identity***

The focus area *Creative Industries for Region's Identity* addresses the fact that creativity is one of the most important key competencies of our time. Moreover, the role of cultural and

creative spillovers as cross-sectorial innovation motors is widely acknowledged as a stimulant in society and the wider economy. Creative industries are not only important for region's identity and the preservation of their cultural heritage, but they have been one of the first to experiment and adopt digital technologies as well. Cultural content has fueled the development of the internet and creative ideas have always shaped European future. Thus, creative industry is amongst the most important employers in Europe. The particularly high number of self-employed people and SMEs in this sector, as well as the high affinity for remote work, co-working and other approaches of New Work offers numerous opportunities for S<sup>2</sup>-regions to strengthen innovation capacity and create future-oriented jobs.

E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> establishes mission-oriented, cross-disciplinary, cross-sector and cross-actor I-research networks that deal with the development of smart and sustainable regions in its four focus areas. These research networks connect experience in diverse scientific core disciplines, which are already well-established on several member-campuses with recognized scientific staff. The I-research networks include not only researchers, but learners, innovators, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders and (regional) communities that will interact with the international scientific communities and innovation ecosystems and provide widely acknowledged scientific results.

#### **4. E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Bank of Researchers**

---

The E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Bank of Researchers is the main database of all researchers that already work in E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> or would like to join future projects.

If you work at one of the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> institutions and want to be a part of the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Bank of Researchers, you should enroll in this database.

At this moment E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> is starting the reinforcement of the research groups established through the first phase of the project, according to the four Focus Areas defined in the project.

We are looking to include in the Bank of Researchers both senior or experienced researchers and young researchers starting their career (assistant researchers and PhD students).

What can you get from registering in the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Bank of Researchers:

- Get in touch with researchers in the same field from the other partner institutions
- Establish collaboration networks in your area of expertise
- Identify potential specific topics and researchers in order to facilitate common E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> research proposals at European level
- Receive administrative support and counselling in identifying the relevant European Calls for research projects
- Facilitated mobilities and exchanges as support for E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> interdisciplinary cooperation in research
- Connect researchers in groups with relevant ideas and critical mass that might be part of the process to establish Centres of Excellence in Applied Research (CoE) of the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> alliance
- Connect experienced researchers from partner institutions in view of the organisation of the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Joint Doctoral Programmes

- Monitoring and review of research groups' effectiveness, proposals for further measures

As all the four Focus Areas are quite broad and interrelated, any researcher should find his place in one or more of those areas, or even in all focus areas.

As the research groups changed and more information is needed from each researcher (in terms of research interests and profile), the already registered researchers during phase one of E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> are kindly asked to re-register and to add the needed information!

*We are waiting for your enrollment!*

**Enrollment:** Online, from <https://eudres.eu/researchers#join-as-researcher>

**More information:** Radu VasIU, radu.vasiu@upt.ro

**Deadline:** Enrollments are continuous

**Public information:** The WP4 team will make public the first results of the enrollment during and after the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> Executive Board in Timisoara on 6 March 2024.