



MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR THE CREATION OF  
EUROPEAN RESEARCH INSTITUTES, THE RELATED EUT+  
GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL AND SUPPORTING RESEARCH  
OFFICE

ENGLISH VERSION

BETWEEN the following other partners:

**University of Technology of Troyes** (France), whose headquarters are located 12 rue Marie Curie - 10000 Troyes, France, represented by its Director, Mr Pierre KOCH,

**Hochschule Darmstadt, Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences** (Germany), whose headquarters are located at Haardtring 100, 64295 Darmstadt, represented by its President, Mr Ralph STENGLER,

**Rīgas Tehniskā universitāte, Riga Technical University** (Latvia) with its seat at Kalķu iela 1, Rīga, 1658, represented by its Rector Leonīds RIBICKIS,

**Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta Bhaile Átha Cliath, Technological University Dublin** (Ireland), whose registered office is at North Circular Road 191 Park House Grangegorman, Dublin D07 EWV4, represented by its President David FITZPATRICK,

**Технически университет София Technical University of Sofia** (Bulgaria) with seat at Kliment Ohridsky Bd 8, Sofia 1000, represented by its Rector Ivan KRALOV,

**Τεχνολογικό Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου, Cyprus University of Technology** (Cyprus) with its seat at Archbishop Kyprianos 31 Savings Cooperative Bank Building 3rd Floor, Lemesos 3036, represented by its Rector Panayiotis ZAPHIRIS,

**Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena, Technical University of Cartagena** (Spain), with registered office at Plaza del Cronista Isidoro Valverde, Edificio la Milagrosa, Cartagena 30202, represented by its Rector Beatriz MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ,

**Universitatea Tehnică din Cluj-Napoca, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca** (Romania) with seat at Str Memorandumului 28, Cluj-Napoca 400114, represented by its Rector Vasile TOPA.

Hereinafter referred to as "**the partners**".

Where a provision applies indiscriminately to the "Coordinator" and the "Partners", in the context of this Agreement, they shall be collectively referred to as the "Partners".

The initiative or project "European University of Technology" is also referred to by its acronym "EUT+".

All the active partners for the development of the project are also called "the Alliance".

FIRST OF ALL, THE FOLLOWING IS SET OUT:

Having regard to the second call for Erasmus+ "European Universities" projects,

Having regard to the application file for this call for projects and its annexes, which the partners submitted on 26 February 2020,

Having regard to Grant Agreement N°101004088 (Annex 2) signed by the partners and the European Commission on 16 October 2020,

In the event of a conflict between the terms of this agreement and the Grant Agreement, the terms of the Grant Agreement shall prevail.

HAVING STATED THIS, IT IS AGREED AND DETERMINED AS FOLLOWS:

## 1 European Research Institutes in the Eut+ Alliance

The partners of the European University of Technology (Eut+) Alliance have defined a trajectory of convergence towards common research institutes across Europe to actively enable joint research activities between the partners. To enable these activities Eut+ Research Institutes (ERI) will be established. The emerging institutes are envisioned to become a point of reference for research in Europe. An ERI is a group of researchers and academics from the Eut+ partner universities joining efforts and infrastructures either on an inter- or transdisciplinary topic field or on a concentrated domain specific research area. The form and procedures are described in detail below.

In addition, there are two supporting transversal entities besides the ERIs which are the Eut+ Research Office (ERO) and the Eut+ Graduate Research School (EGRS). The ERO supports research administration and capacity building, in particular, for joint applications in European and other funding schemes. The EGRS supports doctoral or PhD students and Master-by-Research students (MRes) within and outside of the ERIs and helps to organize training and educational activities.

## 2 European Scope

The ERIs are aligned to the Eut+ objectives; in particular, the description of work package 4 outlines the institutes, offices and their relations. The ERI of Eut+ share a common European vision and agree to work along the same Eut+ principles to create, exchange and transfer knowledge. The overall structure of research in Eut+ is shown in Fig. 1.

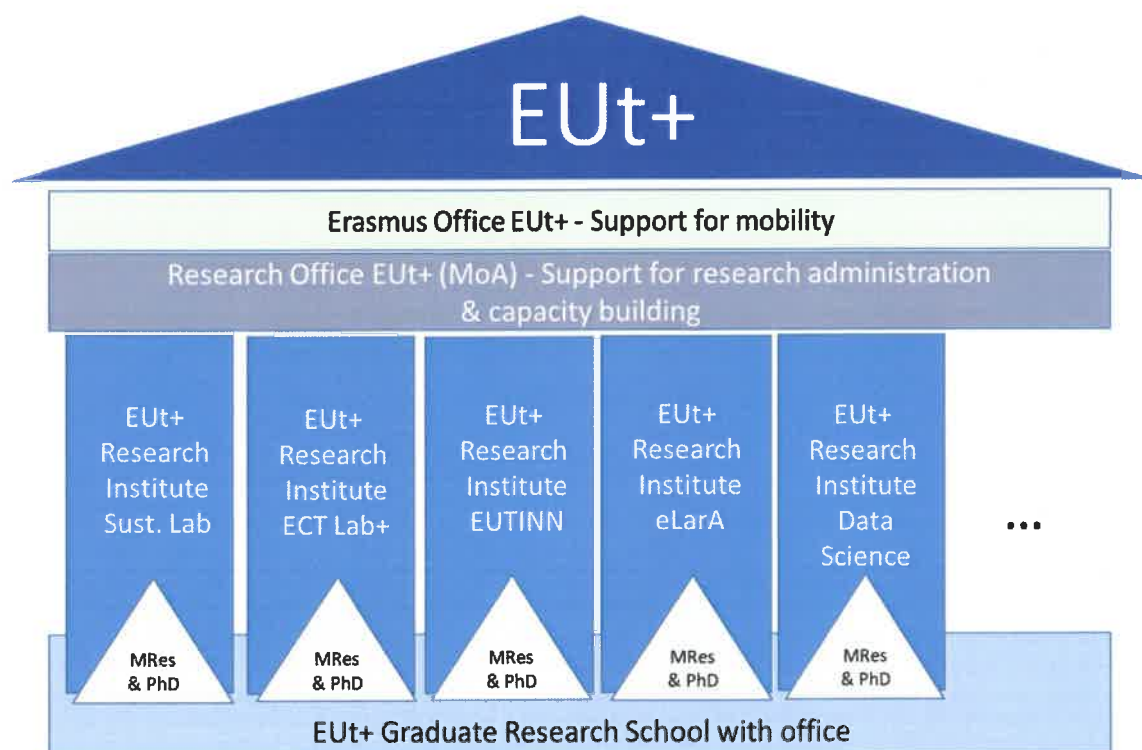


Fig 1: Structure of Research at Eut+

Initially, the ERIs are embedded into the existing organizational structures of each partner university of EUT+. Infrastructure and the institutes’ human resources can be distributed and shared between the partner universities.

The Erasmus Office of EUT+ is the support unit concerning mobility for MRes students, PhD students and researchers.

### 3 EUT+ Research Institutes

The structure of an ERI, its relation to the ERO and the ERGS and the supporting offices is shown in Fig. 2.

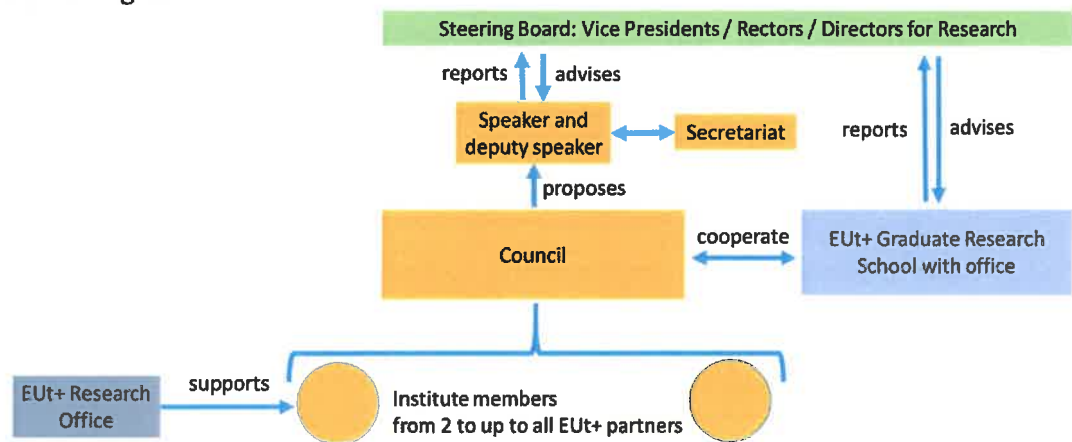


Fig.2: Structure of European Research Institutes

In the following the structural elements are described.

#### 3.1 Steering Board

The vice presidents or rectors, or respectively senior directors for research, of all EUT+ partners form the steering board qua office and each have a deputy assigned. The board takes on an overall perspective and supports the creation and operation of the ERIs. Its function is to be understood as described in the EUT+ application as the intercouncil commission of research.

#### 3.2 Institute Members

The members of an ERI can be researchers from two or more of the partner universities of EUT+ who decide to join activities in the topic field of the institute. For the initial phase researchers may use their home affiliation together with the EUT+ affiliation for their publications.

#### 3.3 Institute Council and Speaker

The institute members elect the members of the institute’s council, one for each member university and related deputy. The elected council members will be delegated by the partner universities involved in the ERI.



For management and communication purposes the council members elect a speaker and deputy speaker from among themselves. The speaker fulfills the function of an executive director. The speaker reports to the steering board, who in turn report to the board of EUT+. The council and the speaker are supported for their daily work by a secretariat.

The council develops a research strategy based on the research topics of the involved members of the institutions. Each ERI will manage its own infrastructure. It is also responsible for conflict management within the ERI in accordance with the steering board and the speaker. This is based on the European Charter for Researchers.

### 3.4 Functionality and Characteristics of an Institute

The characteristics are :

- It is a platform for building research strengths of all partners, enabling researchers to join forces and team up for joint projects, capacity building and implementation of best practices, as well as to share resources and infrastructure.
- An institute complements existing structures of partner universities.
- Participants' research will be carried out locally by mutual consent, enabling lively exchange and mobility.
- The minimum number partners for a European Research Institute is two, to up to all partners of EUT+.
- The question of usage of a common PIC will be addressed in the context of evolving European regulations.

## 4 Foundation of and Membership in an Institute

The following outlines the process for the formation and membership of an ERI:

- Two partner universities of EUT+ are the minimum number for foundation.
- An application of a new ERI is submitted to the steering board. The steering board proposes to the board of EUT+ the foundation of a new ERI.
- An application and proposal of an institute should include a description of planned activities, a justification of the motivation, the lines of research that it covers, a list of researchers that endorse it (with their CVs) as founding members, and associated researchers, together with a strategy and institutional sustainability plan as well as a guideline/process for conflict management.
- There will be individual core memberships for researchers, but double membership is not permitted, although associated individual memberships in other ERIs is possible.
- Only core members of an ERI are entitled to become members of the council, and be recipient of funding of the institute.
- MRes and PhD students are individual members until the end of their studies.
- The application process for membership will accommodate:
  - o an individual person as a member of a partner university submitting a formal application to the council,
  - o a laboratory or research institute from a partner university submitting a formal application to the council in accordance with approval by the partner university,

- an EUT+ partner wanting to become a member of an existing ERI, in which case the partner needs to apply to the steering board and council of the ERI.
- End of membership can be applied for on demand, or by decision of the council:
  - for an individual membership an application is to be submitted to the council,
  - partner university membership can be ended in the same manner as for individual membership,
  - ending an ERI requires an application to the steering board or can be ended by the steering board or the board of EUT+.
- Each member adheres to the internal rules of their European Research Institute.

## 5 Funding

### 5.1 Initial Seed Funding for the first five years

Each partner university will allocate resources by providing infrastructure for use and at least one new PhD student stipend or funding and their environment (e.g. project costs such as consumables, conferences attendance etc.) per year for the first three, maximum four years. The secretariat is to be jointly financed.

The respective amounts have to be negotiated and agreed between the founding partners before the foundation of an ERI.

### 5.2 Funding Strategy

The financial sustainability of each ERI will be linked to the acquisition and achievement of competitive projects and external funding. For this, an institute will develop a specific strategic plan including specific indicators. The indicators will be developed within EUT+ in a holistic manner.

In the same way, the sustainability and viability of the institutes will be evaluated periodically based on the fulfillment of objectives related to the institute's own capacity to raise funds. This monitoring and verification of fulfillment of objectives will be done by the steering board.

## 6 Mobility of researchers and staff

Mobility is fundamental for the European Research Institutes to create cohesion and accelerate the formal and informal exchange of information necessary to ensure a smooth and gradual convergence. Researchers and other institute members are encouraged to spend time at the partner universities, combining research and education activities. At the MRes and PhD level, ideally, several weeks up to one semester is spent with a partner, according to an offer and a free mobility between the partners.

## 7 EUT+ Research Office

This office supports grant applications, administers the funding to the ERIs, collects data for reporting, and provides capacity building in a transformative way

This capacity building may include:

- dissemination of information about open calls,

- review, coordination and support pre-proposal, during implementation and post-proposal,
- collect statistics such as success rate in each topic or call,
- economic justification of research projects.

The creation and formation of the EUT+ Research Office will be jointly worked together the WP 8 of EUT+, in particular task 8.1 regarding projects to support and growth of EUT+.

## 8 EUT+ Graduate Research School

Within the ERIs MRes and PhD students are an essential part. The institutes provide training and support related to their research work. Next to training, knowledge exchange and support for preparing the next generation of European academics for academic and industry oriented career paths at Masters-by-research and PhD level is provided.

Each partner university delegates a member for the EUT+ Graduate Research School. For management and communication purposes the members elect a speaker and deputy speaker from among themselves.

Its various tasks are listed here in chronological order for implementation:

- common EUT+ cotutelle agreement,
- including PhD students in the Erasmus mobility scheme,
- training provision in cooperation with and for the ERIs in alignment with local graduate or doctoral schools,
- including jointly supervised PhD outside the ERIs,
- creation of a joint EUT+ PhD title awarding,
- development of a MRes programme in cooperation with the European Research Institutes,
- building a European degree for Master by Research (MRes) in alignment with the European degree offered by EUT+.

## 9 National and European Framework

In accordance with the call for European Universities, the partners identify the obstacles in the path towards what would be a European Research Institute and negotiate, when necessary, the adaptations, derogations and adjustments needed to progress.

## 10 Implementation

The convergence trajectory for institute creation encompasses the linking of activities so that researchers' common fields of interest are identified and thematic networks are created.

The creation and implementation of ERIs is foreseen in steps. A first wave of institutes will start the process. To enforce the implementation of the European Research Institutes, the eight universities of EUT+ agree on the following operational schedule. The first institutes based on the networks are:

- European Culture and Technology Laboratory (ECT Lab+),
- European University of Technology Institute of Nanomaterials and Nanotechnologies (EUTINN),



- EUT+ Sustainability Lab,
- EUT+ Data Science Research Institute,
- European Laboratory for Pedagogical Action - Research And Student-Centred Learning (ELaRA)

The first four research institutes listed will serve as testbeds as described in the EUT+ EXTRAS.

Further institutes will be founded according to the emergence of joint research interests or thematic networks arising with EUT+.

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