**Project Number:** 101017436

**Project Acronym:** EU-CONEXUS-RFS

**Project title:** EU-CONEXUS RESEARCH FOR SOCIETY

**Common Responsible Research**

**and Innovation Strategy**

**Milestone M16**

30 November 2023

**Document Information:**

**Grant Agreement Number**: 101017436

**Project Acronym**: EU CONEXUS RFS

**Work Package**: WP·3

**Outcome Number:** MS16

**Version:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Due Date:** 30 November 2023

**Delivery Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Dissemination Level:** Public

**Task leader:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Participating partners:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Authors:** all partners from EU-CONEXUS-RFS

**Internal Reviewers**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Research Council

**External Reviewers:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Keywords:** responsible research and innovation, public engagement, ethics, gender equality, research education, open access, governance

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **HISTORY OF CHANGES** | | | | |
| Version | Publication date | Status | Partner university | Changes |
| 1.0 | 19/06/2023 | Draft | UCV with input from all partners | Created |
| 2.0 | 29/8/2023 | Draft | Additional input from partners | Updated after review |
| 3.0 | 16/10/2023 | Draft | Input from AUA and final part writing from UCV | Updated for review |
|  |  | ... |  |  |
|  |  | Final |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **QUALITY CHECK** | | | |
| Version Reviewed | Date | Reviewer (Partner) | Description |
| 1.0 |  |  |  |
| 2.0 |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**Table of Contents**

[1. Responsible Research and Innovation: Definition and Key Aspects 4](#_Toc144117830)

[2. Why is RRI Important and Goals of the Current RRI Initiative 5](#_Toc144117831)

[3. Summary of Current RRI-Related Practices among EU-CONEXUS Members 5](#_Toc144117832)

[4. EU-CONEXUS Proposed Common Practices for Promotion and Implementation of Responsible Research and Innovation 7](#_Toc144117833)

[4.1 Public Engagement 7](#_Toc144117834)

[Practice 1. Laymen Conferences and Open Lectures. 7](#_Toc144117835)

[Practice 2. Participatory Budgeting. 7](#_Toc144117836)

[Practice 3. Public Consultation. 7](#_Toc144117837)

[Practice 4. Promotion of Institutional RRI. 8](#_Toc144117838)

[4.2 Research Education 8](#_Toc144117839)

[Practice 1. High-School Level. Introductory Lessons. 8](#_Toc144117840)

[Practice 2. University Level. Professorship Training. 8](#_Toc144117841)

[Practice 3. University Level. Implementing RRI Principles into Regular Teaching (Studentship Training). 8](#_Toc144117842)

[4.3 Governance 9](#_Toc144117843)

[Practice 1. Responsibility for RRI at the Management Level. 9](#_Toc144117844)

[Practice 2. Integration of RRI in Strategic Documents. 9](#_Toc144117845)

[Practice 3. Rewarding Results Related to RRI. 9](#_Toc144117846)

[Practice 4. Systematic Monitoring of Institution's Reputation. 9](#_Toc144117847)

[5. Implementation Schedule 9](#_Toc144117848)

1. Responsible Research and Innovation: Definition and Key Aspects

Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) is a term used by the European Union to describe scientific research and technological development processes that take into account the effects and potential impacts of these activities on the environment and societies. RRI is part of the Horizon 2020 Program and represents an approach to research and innovation that implies all societal actors (researchers, innovators, industry, policymakers, NGOs, civil society organizations, citizens, etc.) working together during the whole research and innovation process in order to better align both the process and its outcomes with the values, needs, and expectations of society. RRI has been defined as RRI is a paradigm that refers to ethical and responsible approaches in science and technology. It as “a transparent, interactive process by which societal actors and innovators become mutually responsive to each other with a view on the (ethical) acceptability, sustainability, and societal desirability of the innovation process and its marketable products in order to allow a proper embedding of scientific and technological advancements in our society”. This means that the impact and effects of new scientific advancements, products and technologies on society should be considered prior to and all throughout their development. RRI encompasses six key aspects relating to Research and Innovation. **Ethics,** whichrequires R&I to respect fundamental rights and the highest ethical standards in order to guarantee greater social relevance and greater acceptance of the results of research and innovation; **Gender Equality,** which seeks to tackle gaps between men and women, for example by ensuring that gender dimensions are taken into consideration in the R&I aspects of decision-making, allocation of funding, and the makeup of teams and organizations; **Governance,** referring to the adoption and practical implementation of (self)regulatory instruments such as codes of conduct, guidelines, technical standards, reporting, and audits that promote participation and power sharing, the integration of different levels of governance, diversity and decentralization, and an expansion of the space for stakeholders’ deliberation; **Open Access,** encompassing attempts to make science transparent and accessible, stressing that results of publicly funded research (publications and data) should be made freely accessible for public use online and should seek to follow the FAIR principle (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable); **Public Engagement,** which seeks more open and inclusive research and innovation processes in which society can be listened to and so awarded relevant input and influence during all stages of R&I; and **Research Education,** which confronts the challenge of better preparing future researchers and other social actors, providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary to participate in the R&I process, as well as equipping citizens to take part in forming science policies.

1. Why is RRI Important and Goals of the Current RRI Initiative

R&I has improved our world and our lives in numerous ways. However, alongside the positive impact on the material and physical well-being of society, science and technology sometimes create new perils and ethical dilemmas. They may create controversy and fail to solve problems. In the worst-case scenarios often presented in science fiction, they may lead to societal breakdown or apocalyptic wars. RRI answers these challenges by actively engaging all parties (from researchers and innovators to governments and citizens) through inclusive and participatory methodologies. To be effective, the participation takes place at all phases of the process and at all ranks of governance of R&I (from program planning, through design, implementation, and evaluation). Research and innovation will address societal challenges and be aligned with the values, needs and expectations of the general public. This is not just an ethical or societal issue. It is about improving scientific production, diversifying research programs, and considering the complexities of the real world. The ultimate goals of RRI as well as the current RRI initiative particularly can be framed in terms of research and innovation results and solutions to societal shanges. Specifically, the RRI actions proposed in the present document seek that RRI practices are oriented towards the achievement of ethically acceptable, sustainable, and socially desirable outcomes, all of which should be founded in the openness of science through continuous and meaningful deliberation in aims of incorporating societal voices in research and innovation, ultimately leading to relevant applications of science. In addition, the proposed actions seek to improve the capacities of EU-CONEXUS members to effectively face and resolve emerging and complex challenges of the current world. It is important to note that the current document focuses on the RRI aspects of **Public Engagement**, **Research Education**, and **Governance**, since the aspects of **Ethics**, **Gender Equality**, and **Open Access** have been addressed, developed, and described by specific work groups and commissions within the EU-CONEXUS project. The actions and procedures relating to the aspects of **Ethics**, **Gender Equality**, and **Open Science** are described and can be consulted in the following documents. **Ethics**: EU-CONEXUS Research and Innovation Code of Conduct Regarding Research Integrity - Deliverable number: D1.5. **Gender Equality**: EU-CONEXUS R&I Gender Equality Plan - Deliverable number: D1.6. **Open Access**: EU-CONEXUS Guidelines on Participatory Science and EU-CONEXUS White Paper on Open Science Practices and Barriers - Deliverable numbers: D6.1 and D6.2, respectively.

1. Summary of Current RRI-Related Practices among EU-CONEXUS Members

**Universidad Católica de Valencia (UCV).** In terms of public engagement, one of the most well-established actions is the observatories. The observatories are compilations of news and reports based on recent research findings. There are currently five observatories that are regularly updated and freely accessible to anyone; these are: observatory of freedom in education, observatory of bioethics, observatory of socioeconomics, observatory of disability, observatory of employment. In addition to these observatories, the UCV has also a number of cathedrae which often engage in public engagement actions, such as meeting of interdisciplinary thinkers, seminars, conferences and congresses, exhibitions, opinion forums, interactive work platforms, artistic-research creation projects, and knowledge dissemination. There are currently eleven cathedrae in place: cathedra for women, cathedra Fides et Ratio, cathedra Tomás Moro for social and political studies, cathedra Scholas Ocurrentes, cathedra of charity Santo Tomás de Villanueva, cathedra UCV of art and technology, cathedra Dr. Barcia Goyanes for aging and integral development of elder population, cathedra PASAVAL for leadership and organizational management, cathedra of health sciences, cathedra UMIVALE for research and innovation of work-related pathologies, and cathedra Hartmann for skin scare. In terms of research education, the UCV continuously offers numerous courses and workshop for professors to expand and-or deepen their research abilities. For example, the UCV has recently offered courses in how to prepare a filing for a research ethical committee, how to file for grants for emergent as well as established research projects, how to increase ethics and transparency in research, data management and data analyses in various statistical software packages (e.g., SPSS, R, or Python), or research methodologies such systematic reviews or meta-analyses, to name a few. These courses are updated and-or renewed each academic term and are completely free-cost for professors and researchers working at the UCV. In terms of governance, the UVC has several self-regulatory policies and procedures currently in place. First, the UCV has an ethics committee that reviews all research projects. The committee reviews research proposals involving human participants and their data to ensure alignment with local and international ethical guidelines. The committee’s main responsibility is to protect the subjects involved in the study as well as consider the possible risks to the community and the environment. [Ethics committees](http://www.who.int/ethics/Ethics_basic_concepts_ENG.pdf) have the authority to approve, reject, modify, or stop studies that do not conform to the accepted standards. In addition to the ethics committee, the UCV pursued a strategic plan involving over 300 goals, some of which are closely related to different RRI aspects, such as developing the transfer of UCV's research results focusing on their dissemination and social impact, strengthening the association between the University and other institutions and companies, developing and supporting lines of research that include the study of major contemporary problems and that serve the human community at the national and international level, or promoting events and activities that bring research closer to society and increase its presence in the media. In sum, the UCV has numerous activities and policies that address RRI aspects. Notwithstanding, there lacks a specific and integrated RRI plan that organizes and describes all mentioned activities and policies; rather, they are described and embedded in broader governance and policy initiatives and procedures at the university level.

**La Rochelle Université.** LRUniv’s governance is collegial and based on institutional representation bodies involving all of the university’s stakeholders, including an administrative council, a training and university life commission and a research commission, made up of external members representing local stakeholders. A health and safety commission produces regulations governing the activities of the laboratories, in particular the standards for the use and disposal of chemical products. Since April 2021, the coordination of the institution’s strategic projects has been carried out by a strategic committee and 10 thematic committees to better identify, evaluate and prioritize projects. Their organisation and minutes of meetings are available on the university’s intranet. LRUniv is the winner of a 10-year "Programme d’Investissement d’Avenir" funding from the French government, which includes the development of a decision support tool in partnership with CNRS, IFREMER and IRD. In terms of public engagement, LRUniv has appointed a vice-president in charge of the "science-society" relationship and has voted a "science-society" strategy in line with the institution’s overall strategy. This is reflected in the creation in 2023 of a science and society service and the signing of the "participatory science and research charter" created in France in 2017. LRUniv is a winner of the SAPS (Sciences with and for society) label, within the framework of which a (mobile) nano-museum is being developed to popularize and widely disseminate SmUCS themes (prototype April 2023). LRUniv is the winner of a 10-year "Programme d’Investissement d’Avenir" (Investment Programme for the Future) from the French government, one of the axes of which is to design new ways of dialoguing with societies for a common appropriation of the issues related to SmUCS. The objective is to create a living open exhibition space with innovative exhibition devices, integrating new media and immersive spaces. LRUniv has created an innovation service “CampusInnov” which activity aims to support the development of a culture of innovation and encourage the link between the needs of society and the capabilities of the research community. LRUniv has created a university chair in "participation, mediation, citizen transition" as a means of promoting this research theme and as an interface between the academic and socio-economic worlds. Lastly, in terms of research education, LRUniv is a laureate of the SAPS label (Sciences with and for society) in the framework of which a "Media and Data LAB" has been developed to raise awareness and train the community in new media and produce media content for scientific dissemination. LRUniv is developing its Long life learning offer to raise awareness. The doctoral School offers several training on research approach, open science, innovation, integrity etc.. subject central in the development of a research career LRUniv is the winner of a 10-year "Programme d’Investissement d’Avenir" funding from the French government, one of the axes of which is to design new ways of dialoguing with societies for a common appropriation of the issues related to SmUCS. It is within this framework that the "Science and Society Service" was created, a transversal service dedicated to strengthening the links between science and society. The deployment of incubation mechanisms (funding + training) to support Science / Art / Society projects is also planned. In March 2023, the first internal call for project "Sciences4all" has been launched. Several events mark out the academic year, such as My thesis in 180 seconds; World Ocean Day; the Not Too Scientific Film Festival; the Science Festival; and the SmUCS meeting, which reflect the institution’s commitment to society.

**Klapeida University.** Public engagement at KU refers to the university's proactive efforts to involve diverse stakeholders from the general public, including local communities, in its multifaceted activities, cutting-edge research endeavors, and pioneering initiatives. Involvement of social stakeholders:  KU's dedication to public engagement is embedded in various governing documents that regulate the university's operations. This commitment is evident in the inclusion of representatives from social stakeholders such as employers, professional associations, and students in key decision-making bodies like the University Senate, councils of the university's structural units, and study field committees. Additionally, it is a standard practice to invite representatives from the labor market to participate in thesis and project defense panels. Furthermore, social stakeholders are actively engaged in shaping crucial documents that underpin the university's performance, including the preparation of the University Strategic Action Plan, institutional self-evaluation reports, study field self-evaluation reports, and more. Their input is also sought in the design and implementation of new study programs, fostering a collaborative and inclusive approach. Public outreach and communication: KU maintains a robust and accessible presence in the community through an array of communication channels. This includes the well-maintained KU website, which, according to the KU Activity report (2022), witnessed over 240,000 users in 2022, with nearly 2 million page views per year. The university also leverages social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, disseminates information through newsletters, and issues press releases. These channels serve as effective means to convey information about the university's research breakthroughs, upcoming events, and pioneering initiatives, ensuring that the public remains well-informed. Public lectures and workshops: KU actively organizes public lectures, seminars, workshops, and other educational events that are open to all members of the community. For instance, the Blue Growth Leaders Academy (since 2023 Stakeholder Academy) program, tailored to businesses and organizations, as well as specialists in the Blue Growth sector, exemplifies KU's commitment to knowledge dissemination. These events provide a platform for sharing insights, promoting scientific advancements, and fostering meaningful engagement with the broader community on a wide array of intriguing topics. Public events and open days: KU extends an open invitation to community members, including prospective students and their families, to explore its campus and facilities through open days, campus tours, and public events. For instance, KU's Botanical Garden serves both educational and research purposes, offering a beautiful and informative setting for visitors to experience. On the subject of research and innovation, KU offers a range of research education programs and opportunities for researchers. Professional development: Researchers at KU benefit from an array of opportunities for professional development. They can participate in a variety of internal and external events tailored to enhance their research. Internally, KU organizes workshops, conferences, and seminars facilitated by both Lithuanian and international experts. Furthermore, researchers have the option to engage in formal and informal training opportunities abroad, including workshops, conferences, training weeks, summer/winter schools, and job shadowing, among others. Financial support in the form of grants, covering travel and living expenses, is available to facilitate these initiatives, for example from Erasmus+ programme grants, Lithuanian Research Council grants, KU Science and Study Support Fund etc. Incentives for continuous learning are also in place, as researchers can provide evidence of their professional development activities and receive additional financial rewards in subsequent academic years. To illustrate, from 2019 salary system of academic staff has been modified adding a reward payment for academic performance. The rewarding part is based on the research performance (publication points and amount of attracted funding) and performance in other academic activities (point based categories for research/studies dissemination, participation in research/studies management, etc.). The aim of the reward for academic performance is oriented towards building incentives for diversification of academic activities, supporting publication quality instead of quantity and rewarding attraction of funds. The reward pay coefficient is calculated annually. These principles of a salary system were consulted with the Senate and approved by the University Council. Research centers and institutes: KUhas dedicated research centres and institutes that focus on specific areas of research excellence. For instance, the cutting-edge research conducted aboard the vessel "Mintis" exemplifies the university's commitment to fostering research excellence. These centers and institutes serve as hubs for research endeavors. Development of the new generation of researchers: KU places a strong emphasis on nurturing the next generation of academics and researchers. This process begins during master's and doctoral studies, where research competence training and research project involvement are integral components. Additionally, KU actively supports individual student projects through the University's Science and Study Support Fund, which provides funding of up to 2500 Euros per project. These projects, typically overseen by university academic staff, actively promote student engagement and the regional visibility of research impact. At the doctoral level, training of competences is coordinated and managed by the respective PhD Committee and carried out by the PhD thesis supervisor at the given department or research institute of the University. The education and research process at this stage strictly follows PhD regulations elaborated and approved by the PhD Committee according to the basic national requirements. At the postdoctoral level, detailed guidelines of recruiting postdoctoral researcher at KU have been approved by the Senate at October 21, 2021. Until then postdoctoral research scholarships were distributed only by the Research Council of Lithuania based on expert evaluations of project applications. Funding and grants: KU offers research funding opportunities and grants to support faculty and student research projects. These funds can be used for research equipment, travel to conferences, and other research-related expenses. For example, KU Science and Study Support Fund supports for open access publications and monographs. The focus on relevance of high-quality research is emphasized by KU strategic priorities “Creative person” and “Value for region” (KU Strategic development plan 2021-2030). KU enables relevant, thematically unlimited research of short or long-term significance, supports innovative research groups, interdisciplinary research directions, fosters the diversity of research. Researchers are free to join strategic research directions of Klaipeda University that are approved by KU Senate.  KU Research support fund provides financial support for research work and publishing of results. The accountability of research activities is regulated by “Order of Projects application and monitoring” that defines all necessary approvals before starting the research project. KU constantly invests into the development of research infrastructure ensuring that researchers have access to state-of-the-art facilities and resources to conduct research. For instance, in 2018 the newly opened laboratories of the Sea Research Institute are among the most advanced in the Baltic States. Plagiarism and other violations of research ethics which is tightly coupled to the research quality is defined by Code of Academic Ethics of Klaipeda University. Digital tools for similarity checking (Oxsico program) are available for KU academic and research staff at all occasions where quality of research has to be checked. In summary, KU is actively engaged in various initiatives and policies aimed at addressing aspects of responsible research and innovation (RRI). However, it is important to note that there is no dedicated and consolidated RRI plan in place that comprehensively outlines and details all of these activities and policies. Instead, these efforts are integrated within the broader framework of governance and university-level policy initiatives and procedures.

**University of Zadar (UNIZD).** In terms of public engagement*, one current practice of UNIZD concerns the* **involvement of relevant stakeholders in management committees**. A key element in managing the impact on local community is a strong engagement of local community aiming to understand their expectations and needs. So, the representatives of the local and regional authorities, companies and other associations are involved in management committees of UNIZD. Stakeholders engaged serve as an advisory body or economic and social council in providing different activities related to education, science, research, projects, innovation, etc. In addition, a second practice concerns the i**nvolvement in networks of different stakeholders.** Such networks are achieved at international, national and local level and consisted of local and regional authorities, companies and other associations. At first, these networks enable the strengthening of the community's orientation towards RRI goals, but also the exchange of knowledge, experience and good practices of RRI implementation. UNIZD is involved in networks through many common scientific and professional projects and activities. In terms of research eduation, one first practice concerns **educational programmes for employees on RRI.** Educational and training programmes for employees on RRI is one of the ways in which the institution demonstrates its commitment to RRI. UNIZD informs and educates employees on all levels about their obligations or opportunities to contribute the implementation of RRI. This shows the initiative of UNIZD to integrate RRI into all levels of management and business processes. Second, **organization of internal events and initiatives related to RRI for employees and public.** UNIZD organizes various events related to RRI. The aim of these events is to inform, raise awareness and promote the benefits and effects of RRI at the institution and in local community. Events are organized as conferences, presentations of good practices, lectures, seminars, webinars, workshops, forums, public debates, round tables, etc. These events serve also as an initiative to encourage employees and local community to get involved in projects and other activities based on RRI. Therefore, these events have the function of education and promotion on the benefits and effects of RRI, but also to encourage the involvement of employees and other stakeholders in researches, projects and other activities based on the principles and goals of RRI. Lastly, **approving scientific research initiatives and projects related to RRI on institutional level.**UNIZD approves scientific researches and projects in order to be in accordance with RRI. A special body was formed with the aim of determining the regularity of conducting researches and projects related to RRI. In terms of governance, one first practice inolves the **presence of RRI in strategic and other development documents.** UNIZD approach to the application of RRI is significantly reflected in the existence of RRI in strategic documents. These topics are not only mentioned in the institution's vision and mission, but they are also stated in operational documents and plans, goals, measures and indicators and budget items that ensure the implementation of planned activities. Responsible offices and persons are determined to carry out activities and to achieve set goals. **Second, adoption of ordinances regulating RRI.** With the aim of contributing to the realization of the strategy and regulating certain factors of RRI implementation, UNIZD additionally prescribes certain rules intended for academic and non-academic staff. These rules lead at a clearer understanding and guidance of the behaviour of all employees and UNIZD towards the implementation of RRI. Many procedures and rules are regulated by the national law and Ministry of Science and Education. Finally, **existing of special bodies and offices responsible for matters related to RRI.**UNIZD has several bodies, offices and persons responsible for different matters related to RRI on institutional level. Many procedures and rules are regulated by the national law and Ministry of Science and Education, as well the existing of such bodies.

**Universitatea Tehnică de Construcții București.** UTCB is involved in various types of collaboration with the industry, carrying out contracts of specific services of research available for companies, research contracts covering the specialities offered by the seven faculties, and contracts operated on public procurement basis, such as the Ministry of Defence research contracts. Also, the departments functioning at present are involved in public activities initiating and leading round tables, symposia, national and international conferences and inviting to these events’ external collaborators and contractors, guests from other public entities (local authorities), etc. At the moment, there are 19 operational departments (cathedra) in UTCB: Roads, Railways and Building Materials, Strength of Materials, Bridges and Tunnels, Physical Education, Topography and Cadastre, Geodesy and Photogrammetry, Physics, Hydraulics and Environmental Protection, Mathematics and IT, Geo-technic Engineering and Foundations, Hydro-technic Engineering, Thermo-hydraulic Systems and Atmosphere Protection, Electrical Engineering in Constructions and Facilities, Thermo-technics and Thermic Equipment, Building Machinery and Mechatronics, Structures Mechanics, Civil Engineering, Urban Engineering and Technologies, Metallic Engineering, Management and Engineering Graphics, Reinforced Concrete, Foreign Language and Communication. On research education, UTCB organised various classes and workshops for the professors in order to facilitate their research skills. Recently, some of the topics addressed during the courses were focusing on writing a successful publication, preparing a research proposal. Other themes of interest are knowledge transfer fundamentals, commercializing research results, and collaborating with stakeholders. These workshops and courses are open to all researchers and are offered free of charge.

UTCB applies several self-regulating mechanisms, based on internal policies and procedures. The governance process is facilitated by the Ethics Commission who supervises the professional conduct of the researchers and general staff. One the main responsibilities of the Commission are oriented toward prevention and combating of plagiarism, using the provisions of UTCB specific Strategy on these topics. UTCB applied a Strategic Plan for four years, who promoted several research-related objectives, focusing on dissemination of research results, their impact on a social level, the association with industry and other public institutions, promotion of activities that involve research, citizens, and society. Currently, the University organises diverse activities related to research and society, based on several strategies and procedures. Their provisions are correlated in governance actions and policies that cover academic life in general and for the moment there is no specific Plan dedicated to RRI.

**Agricultural University of Athens.**

The Technology Transfer Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship is being developed and upgraded to better support the research and academic community of the Agricultural University of Athens. Starting in 2022, the office has been involved in two funded projects, InnovInAgri and Agribooster, aimed at providing support services to faculty members, researchers, and students of the university. Here's a summary of the key actions and outcomes of the InnovInAgri project:

InnovInAgri Project:

• Collection and evaluation of 27 innovative research ideas with significant impacts on the economy, society, and the environment.

• Creation of a new platform for documenting research ideas, with a focus on their technological development and commercial utilization.

• Training sessions for the academic community by market experts on technology transfer, intellectual property protection, technology development, and current trends in agriculture and food, such as ESG criteria.

• Establishment of two technology startups in the fields of biotechnology (Ce.B.Tec.) and energy (Inventa Energy), with support from the Technology Transfer Office in drafting their statutes and all submission and approval processes.

• Filing of a commercial trademark and three patent applications. A certified European patent attorney is responsible for patent applications, including the Patent Cooperation Treaty, with international patent offices like the European Patent Office.

• Seminars led by the office's team members to inform the academic community about open and upcoming calls for proposals, aiming for more effective participation in national and European projects.

• Advisory support in preparing and submitting competitive proposals.

• Development of comprehensive business plans with the assistance of market experts.

• A significant focus of the project is providing proof of concept support to research teams at the Agricultural University of Athens to increase the maturity level of their innovations and their Technology Readiness Level (TRL).

• Successful organization of the Agri Innovation EXPO, which attracted thousands of interested individuals and highlighted mature research results produced within the university.

• Agreements for licensing and usage rights.

The InnovInAgri is dedicated to promoting innovation, technology transfer, and entrepreneurship within the academic community while enhancing the impact and commercial potential of research ideas developed at the Agricultural University of Athens.

The Agribooster project focuses on developing an entrepreneurial accelerator to foster the maturation of entrepreneurial ideas. Here are the key actions within the Agribooster project:

Agribooster Project:

• Collection and evaluation of 43 entrepreneurial ideas submitted by teams of students in collaboration with faculty members of the university.

• Creation of a platform for documenting entrepreneurial ideas with the aim of further developing them.

• Training sessions for the benefiting teams, provided by faculty members and market experts, covering topics related to entrepreneurship and innovation.

• Specialized advisory support from external collaborators and market experts for the benefiting teams, aimed at preparing business plans.

• Informative and educational activities, including the presentation of entrepreneurial ideas to potential funding companies and funds.

The Agribooster is designed to support and nurture entrepreneurial initiatives by students at the Agricultural University of Athens, facilitating the development and maturation of their ideas through training, advisory support, and exposure to potential funding opportunities.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

AUA offers numerous courses and workshop for professors to expand and-or deepen their educational and research abilities, for example The Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education Center, which ensures coordination and interdisciplinary collaboration in the development of training programs, continuing education, vocational training, and lifelong learning, based on the national and European institutional framework for lifelong learning. The Center can organize and implement non-formal education study programs leading to the award of respective certificates, as well as any kind of work related to lifelong learning.

Also AUA has an ethics committee and gender equality committee too.

The Ethics and Research Integrity Committee was established with the aim of providing ethical and moral assurance for the reliability of research projects conducted. Specifically, it checks:

a. Whether a research project to be conducted at the Agricultural University of Athens has been designed in a way that respects the value of human beings, the autonomy of participants, their privacy, personal data, as well as the natural and cultural environment.

b. Whether a research project to be carried out at the Agricultural University of Athens complies with current legislation and aligns with generally accepted ethical and research integrity principles, both in terms of content and the conduct of the research.

The committee has established the boundaries of research activity and the obligations of researchers. Some of these are the following:

a. Research must be conducted with respect for scientific truth, academic freedom, life, nature, and the environment.

b. The research methodology should be or become transparent. Researchers should be aware of the applicable legislation.

c. Researchers are obligated to disclose the sources of funding for their research work.

d. Researchers are required to abstain from procedures or decisions that involve a conflict of interest. Researchers must adhere to all recognized safety rules in their respective scientific field.

e. Researchers have an obligation of mutual respect and the right to equal treatment. The individual contribution of each researcher to collective research efforts should be recognized.

In 2022, the Gender Equality Committee was established at the Agricultural University of Athens for a three-year term. It serves as an advisory body to promote gender equality at all levels of operation and in all processes of academic life. The objectives of the Gender Equality Committee at the Agricultural University of Athens are:

a. To ensure, strengthen, and integrate substantive gender equality into the educational, research, and administrative processes of the institution.

b. To promote gender equality within the institution through institutional and organizational change.

c. To provide training to members of the institution on gender and equality-related issues and the development of relevant skills.

d. To promote gender equality and combat stereotypes and sexism in all areas of the institution's operations (communication, teaching, research, decision-making positions, etc.).

e. Integrating the dimension of gender equality into research and teaching.

f. Cultivating and encouraging a culture of peaceful coexistence, cooperation, and dialogue between genders.

Also Some specific and important objectives include:

a. Balance Between Professional and Personal Life: Achieving a balance between the professional and personal lives and the academic-professional development of women.

b. Equal Participation in Leadership and Decision-Making Positions: Ensuring balanced participation of all genders in leadership roles, positions of responsibility, and decision-making processes.

c. Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Advancement: Promoting gender equality in recruitment processes and professional advancement.

d. Integration of Gender Perspective in Research and Education: Incorporating the gender dimension into the content of research and education.

e. Addressing Gender-Based Violence, Including Sexual Harassment: Combating gender-based violence, including addressing issues of sexual harassment.

These objectives are crucial for advancing gender equality within the institution and fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment.

1. EU-CONEXUS Proposed Common Practices for Promotion and Implementation of Responsible Research and Innovation

# **4.1 Public Engagement**

Practice 1. Laymen Conferences and Open Lectures.

Presentations and lectures that adopt a level of detail and complexity that can be understood by the general population (or specific audiences). Universities and/or faculties could seek to organize, advertise, and conduct (at least) two of these laymen conferences and/or open lectures per academic term. In them, research processes (what is done and how) and results (what has been found and how that is helpful) are communicated to attendees from the general population.

Practice 2. Participatory Budgeting.

Participatory budgeting can be carried out in many ways. For instance, one initial action is to involve pertinent civil and/or professional associations in decisions regarding the assignment of grants. These associations could be presented with the competing research or innovation projects and rate these different projects on a number of aspects (e.g., practical relevance, size of societal impact, and urgency). These scores are later taken in consideration by decision-makers in order to select the projects that will receive grant/funding.

Practice 3. Public Consultation.

Researchers, innovators, and decision-makers could seek to meet with pertinent civil and/or professional associations, based upon researchers’ field of research (e.g., families with autistic children associations, small businesses associations, unions, high-school teachers associations, etc.). These meetings should seek to receive real-world information from potential beneficiaries of research results in order to identify pressing issues or innovation possibilities devised by those who are actually part of the target group or population.

Practice 4. Promotion of Institutional RRI.

This includes the creation of various materials related to achievement and/or advancement of RRI and their promotion through various media. Materials can be written (e.g., magazines or newsletters) and/or virtual (e.g., video) and should be distributed and/or showcased at within the institutional level and at the local level. If possible, participation on national and/or local radios and televisions can be pursued.

# **4.2 Research Education**

Practice 1. University Level. Professorship Training.

EU-CONEXUS members should ensure that their universities offer courses, workshops, and/or seminars on RRI for university professors and researchers. This point is of particular importance, as it makes it possible for these individuals to further transfer these principles to other groups, such as high school teachers (action 1, above) or university students (action 3, below). EU-CONEXUS members could also favor and motivate their staff to attend external courses, workshops, and/or seminars on RRI.

Practice 2. High-School Level. Introductory Lessons.

Introductory lessons around RRI principles, such as inclusion or diversity, can be integrated into class activities. For instance, students can be asked to identify key RRI-related aspects within lessons (whatever its specific topic) or academic activities, reflecting on group processes, values, routines, and assumptions (reflective dimension) while prompting students to make the necessary changes to their plans and methods (adaptive change dimension). In order to facilitate this, EU-CONEXUS members could offer high schools in their respective regions practical short training sessions on those RRI dimensions more suitable for such young students (i.e., 12 to 18 years old), such as ethics, equality, and public engagement.

Practice 3. University Level. Implementing RRI Principles into Regular Teaching (Studentship Training).

Professors, lecturers, and teaching assistants should incorporate RRI principles into courses syllabi and/or teaching guides, integrating some or all of the RRI dimensions across and throughout course topics and activities. Besides incorporating basic RRI principles across degrees’ courses, specific courses for further training and education of those students interested could be made available; and, of course, an RRI course should be highly encouraged or mandatory in the context of PhD projects.

# **4.3 Governance**

Practice 1. Responsibility for RRI at the Management Level.

Top managerial positions should be involved in the implementation of RRI practices, indicating seriousness and implication. This can be achieved by appointing a member of the management or executive board who will be responsible for supervising and monitoring institutional RRI. This responsibility can be also assigned to some institutional office or department. Such responsibility leads to the implementation of the RRI's plans and programs and achieving of required results.

Practice 2. Integration of RRI in Strategic Documents.

The application of RRI should be reflected in the existence of RRI in strategic documents. Not only these topics should appear in the institution's vision and mission, but also stated in operational documents describing the plans and goals as well as measurable indicators and budget items that ensure the implementation of planned RRI activities.

Practice 3. Rewarding Results Related to RRI.

If RRI is one of the strategic and long-term orientations of the institution, then the achieved results of individuals should be rewarded. The ordinances and regulations (previous activity) can clearly explain the connection between the effects and the award, that is, the criteria required to be awarded. The reward can be given in the form of tangible and intangible motivation factors.

Practice 4. Systematic Monitoring of Institution's Reputation.

Monitoring institutions’ reputation in terms of RRI among local population, communities, and pertinent associations. This shows care and professionalism but moreover it provides valuable external feedback on the success and effectiveness of institutions’ RRI efforts. This strengthens the connection with the general population and local agents and opens up possibilities to initiate actions aiming to correct or strengthen specific actions, as well as to prevent potential damages and declines in institution's reputation.

1. Implementation Schedule and Implementation Priorities.

The proposed RRI practices should be implemented by all members of the coalition within a maximum period of two years (24 months) upon approval of the current strategic document. In doing this, we identify **three specific priorities** – namely, **layman conferences and open lectures** (in the public engagement domain), **professorship training** (in the research education domain), **and responsibility for RRI at the management level** (at the governance domain). These priorities have been selected due to their seminal nature within their specific domains. For instance, public engagement involves aspects such as participatory budgeting and public consultation, which would be most beneficial and effective if general population have opportunities to be informed, exposed to, and educated on the matters on which their participation and consultation will be requested. In the same line, research education involves aspects such as introductory lesson to RRI principles at the high-school level as well as implementing RRI principles into regular teaching (i.e., studentship training). These actions would be most effective (and perhaps only truly possible) to the extent that professorship is trained and familiarized with RRI principles and practice. Hence, in order to successfully implement actions within the research education domain, it is crucial that professors are first proficient on the matter. Lastly, the actions proposed within the governance domain include the following: responsibility for RRI at the management level, integration of RRI in strategic documents, rewarding results related to RRI, and systematic monitoring of institution's reputation. Of these, responsibility for RRI at the management level should come first, as it is managers who can effectively promote and enforce the other activities – indeed, if managers are not held accountable, it is unlikely that integration of RRI in strategic documents, rewarding results related to RRI, and systematic monitoring of institution's reputation will be carried out. The following table summarizes the proposed activities and suggested priorities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RRI Domain** | **Practices** |
| Public Engagement | * Laymen Conferences and Open Lectures - Priority * Participatory Budgeting * Public Consultation * Promotion of Institutional RRI |
| Research Education | * University Level. Professorship Training - Priority * High-School Level. Introductory Lessons * University Level. Implementing RRI Principles into Regular Teaching (Studentship Training) |
| Governance | * Responsibility for RRI at the Management Level - Priority * Integration of RRI in Strategic Documents * Rewarding Results Related to RRI * Systematic Monitoring of Institution's Reputation |