

Call for participation in the 2020 Learning & Teaching Thematic Peer Groups

Deadline for application: **27 January 2020**

1. Introduction

EUA's Learning & Teaching activities aim to draw attention to the importance of learning and teaching in European higher education discussions and invite EUA members to exchange practices and discuss key considerations. To do this, EUA coordinates Thematic Peer Groups that provide the participating universities with an opportunity for peer-learning and exchange of experience, while at the same time contributing to EUA's policy work on learning and teaching, e.g. in the context of the Bologna Process. The work of the groups also feeds into the European Learning & Teaching Forum organised by EUA on a yearly basis. Further information about the groups is available [here](#).

Through this call EUA seeks participants for the 2020 round of Thematic Peer Groups.

2. Objectives

The main objectives of the groups are:

- to discuss and explore practices and lessons learnt in organising and implementing learning and teaching in European universities;
- to contribute to the enhancement of learning and teaching by identifying key considerations on the selected theme.

3. Themes and the expected outcomes

In 2020, four Thematic Peer Groups will focus on the overarching theme of “**Sustainable learning and teaching**”. Each of the groups will focus on one subtheme of this umbrella topic, namely:

- *Meeting skills and employability demands*: This group will explore how universities can ensure that their study programmes reflect the dynamic demands of society and the labour market. This includes issues such as skills foresight and strategic planning, balancing subject-specific, professional and transferable skills, and identifying fit-for-purpose teaching approaches and learning environments. The group will also address the role of students and collaboration with graduates, employers and society at large in ensuring that university graduates have attributes and skills that prepare them for their future roles in society.

- *Environmental sustainability of learning and teaching:* An environmentally sustainable society requires education provision that builds awareness of global challenges, as well as the ability to find the solutions to tackling them. This group will discuss how learning and teaching can embrace and promote sustainability, but also address the question of whether existing approaches to learning and teaching are sustainable.
- *Learning and teaching for active citizenship:* Learning and teaching are crucial instruments to raise awareness for and to promote civic rights. This group will discuss how curricula and learning and teaching practice address civic education, within the university and in relation to its environment. It will also explore disciplinary differences, and issues such as assessment and recognition.
- *Approaches in learning and teaching to promoting equity and inclusion:* Universities are increasingly concerned with ensuring equal access to learning opportunities, yet such measures often focus on the admission stage and non-curricular support measures. The work of this group will explore how universities can support inclusion and equity and accommodate the different backgrounds, needs and aspirations of learners, e.g. through learning and teaching methods, curriculum design, student-centred assessment methods, and recognition of prior learning.

All themes will reflect on:

- the key challenges related to the theme and how to address them;
- the kind of institutional policies and processes can help address key challenges.

Based on the exchange of knowledge, experiences and practices, each group is expected to summarise the conclusions in the form of a short report that will be published as part of EUA's Learning & Teaching paper series. The work of the groups will feed into the 2021 European Learning & Teaching Forum.

4. Activities and timeline

Eight to ten EUA member universities will take part in each group. In 2020, members of the groups will attend three meetings in different locations across Europe, each lasting one or two days. Meeting venues and dates will be jointly determined after mapping the availability of group members.

A final workshop will facilitate exchange and discussion among all groups. It will be organised prior to the 2021 European Learning & Teaching Forum, which all group members are encouraged to attend, as workshop facilitators or participants. It will provide an occasion to present the group's outcomes to a wider audience.

5. Group chairs

The EUA secretariat will assign a coordinator to each group, who will support the groups' work, organise and be present at all meetings and draft the group's report.

EUA will also appoint one representative among the group members to act as the chair of the group. Chairing responsibilities include the planning of the group's work, facilitation and steering of the discussion during meetings and ensuring that the group stays focused and goal-oriented in collaboration with the EUA

secretariat. Group chairs will receive a fee-waiver (one per group) for the 2021 European Learning & Teaching Forum.

Those interested in taking up this role are invited to express their interest as part of the application.

6. Eligibility

The call is open to all [EUA member universities](#), represented by a vice-rector, deputy vice-chancellor or another person in a senior position with responsibilities in learning and teaching at the university. Participating universities are encouraged to ensure student perspectives are included in the groups' work.

Each university is invited to send up to two representatives to the group meetings.

7. Selection criteria

The selection of group members will be done primarily on the basis of the motivation of the university and the experience in the selected theme, as demonstrated in the application. In addition, the following aspects will be considered:

- geographical diversity;
- balance of institutional profiles (e.g. multi-faculty, specialised);
- engagement of student representative(s) in the work of Thematic Peer Groups.

In case of strong competition for participation in a group, preference will be given to institutions that have not been part of a Thematic Peer Group before. This is to ensure inclusiveness of EUA's Learning & Teaching activities.

Each university can submit only one application and participate in only one of the groups. Applicants are invited to indicate up to two themes in order of priority.

8. Terms and conditions for participation

Universities will participate on a self-funding basis and are responsible for organising and covering their own travel and accommodation for the group's three meetings and the final workshop. There is no participation fee. EUA will cover the costs of joint meals (lunches, coffee breaks, and dinner) during the meetings.

Universities interested in participating in the Thematic Peer Groups are invited to fill in the online application, [available here](#), by **27 January 2020**. For further questions please contact Caroline Marissal (caroline.marissal@eua.eu).

About EUA

The European University Association (EUA) represents more than 800 universities and national rectors' conferences in 48 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Through continuous interaction with a range of other

European and international organisations, EUA ensures that the independent voice of European universities is heard.

For more information about EUA, please visit our [website](#).

To learn more about the EUA's Learning & Teaching activities, click [here](#).

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