

Call for participation in the 2018 thematic peer groups

Deadline for applications: 15 December 2017

1. Introduction

EUA's Learning & Teaching Initiative aims to draw attention to the importance of learning and teaching in European higher education discussions and invites EUA members to exchange practices and discuss key considerations. In 2017, EUA coordinated four thematic peer groups that covered the link between the research and teaching mission of the university; students' needs for knowledge, skills and competences that are necessary for their (future) professional life and civic engagement; the impact of ever larger and more diverse student bodies; and prerequisites and incentives to foster engagement in developing learning and teaching. The work of these groups fed into the [1st European Learning & Teaching Forum](#) that took place in Paris on 27-28 September 2017.

Following the initial success of the Initiative, EUA is now launching a call for participation in the 2018 round of thematic peer groups. The groups will 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.

2. Objectives

Main objectives of the thematic peer 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 recommendations on the selected theme.

3. Themes and the expected outcomes

In 2018 the thematic peer groups will centre their work on the following themes:

1. *Promoting active learning in universities.* This group will focus on the role of students in co-creating their own learning and will explore how to further foster inclusiveness and collaboration. Universities taking part in this group will be expected to actively engage at least one student per institution in the group's work.
2. *Continuous development of teaching competences.* This group will focus on institutional policies and practices that support teachers in developing their teaching skills and exchange experience with other faculty members.
3. *Career paths in teaching.* This group will discuss professional career paths for teachers in European universities and what can be done to better promote career progression in teaching, e.g. by offering rewards and creating other tangible gains for people involved in teaching enhancement.
4. *Evaluation of learning and teaching.* This group will discuss how universities evaluate learning and teaching at the programme level so to ensure that programmes are fit for purpose and support students in achieving learning outcomes.

All themes will reflect on the following three aspects:

1. What are the key challenges related to the theme and how to address them?
2. How can innovation in learning and teaching be embedded into the theme?
3. What kind of institutional policies and processes can support this development?

Based on the exchange of knowledge, experiences and practices, each group is expected to prepare a short report outlining good practices and key considerations in its respective theme. The work of the thematic peer groups will feed into the parallel sessions at the 2nd European Learning & Teaching Forum, which will be held in February 2019.

4. Activities and timeline

The thematic peer groups are envisaged to be active from January to November 2018. It is foreseen that eight to ten EUA member universities will take part in each group. Members of the groups will be asked to attend three meetings, each lasting one or two days, and additionally a final workshop, where all group members will meet and discuss the outcomes and synergies between the four themes.

Each group will be chaired by one institution and the EUA secretariat will support the groups' work by assigning a coordinator to each group.

5. Eligibility

The Call is open to all [EUA member universities](#).

Each university should be represented by a vice-rector/deputy vice-chancellor or other person in a senior position with responsibilities in learning and teaching at the university. Universities are strongly encouraged to engage the student representative(s) or to consult them internally between meetings.

6. 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 theme in which the university wishes to take part, as demonstrated in the application. In addition, the following aspects will be considered:

- Geographical distribution of universities
- Balance of institutional profiles (e.g. multi-faculty, art, other specialised)
- Engagement of student representative(s) in the work of thematic peer groups.

Applicants are invited to choose up to two themes in order of priority. EUA will compose the groups following the preference, while taking into account the selection criteria. In order to maximise the opportunities for EUA members to participate, a university will only be able to take part in one group.

7. 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. Catering (lunches, coffee breaks, and dinner) during the meeting will be covered by EUA.

Universities interested in participating in the thematic peer groups are invited to fill in the online application, [available here](#), by **15 December 2017 at the latest**. For further questions please contact Goran Dakovic (goran.dakovic@eua.be).

About EUA

The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of universities and national rectors' conferences in 47 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Thanks to its interaction with a range of other European and international organisations, EUA ensures that the independent voice of European universities is heard, wherever decisions are being taken that will impact on their activities.

For more information about EUA, please visit our website: www.eua.be.

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

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